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"AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—John viii. 32.

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HAS THE MODERN PULPIT LOST SOME OF ITS POWER?

By Rev. H. C. Miller, D. D.

(Special address delivered in connection with the Fellowship Dinner at the mid-winter meeting of Catawba Presbytery.)

Mr. Moderator, Brethren of Catawba Presbytery, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I consider it quite an honor to be with you today and to be your guest speaker upon this occasion.

The introduction of your presiding officer reminds me of the fatal honors of a young life guard. A woman visiting one of the beaches, missed a young guard who had been there many years and had won many medals for life-saving. She asked an old salt what had become of him.

"Well, Miss," he replied, "one day when off duty, poor Bill fell into the water and the weight of his medals carried him down." It may prove true in this case while I discuss with you the selected subject.

A well informed man of wide experience recently said he had spent several weeks attending Summer Training School for young preachers and that he had heard no word spoken to them about becoming great preachers. They were instructed in Religious Education, Social Service, Community Work and many other things, but the pulpit, the preacher's throne, was left out, and the preaching hour, the greatest hour of the preacher's life, was not mentioned. The same man then said: "We are having a poorer type of preaching than we had ten years ago." Hence our subject: "Has the Modern Pulpit Lost Some of Its Power? If So, What May Be Some Contributing Factors to This Danger?"

We are all familiar with this two-sided question. We have read the pros and cons. Perhaps many have formed an opinion. The one side contends the pulpit is as strong, as powerful today as during by-gone days; that it is even stronger because of superior advantages possessed by the modern men of the cloth.

The other side is as loud and insistent, declaring that the pulpit has lost much of its compelling force; that it does not exert the same influence upon the hearts and lives of men; that in by-gone days, even kings and emperors retreated, quaked and trembled before the Gospel bugle and bugler.

Now, if and when the church is crowded, it is either emotionalism or so called modernism; e. g., you may take either side and get results as the man in the Missouri-Kansas case, etc.

However, leaving the first part of the question as being too wide for any general decision, we may profitably face facts and consider some factors contributory to this danger—the curtailment of pulpit-power.

First: Multiplying machinery of the modern church, along with modern life. Take our own branch, for instance. A few years ago the many Boards were consolidated for greater efficiency. We are not critical of the efficiency side, yet we know the multiplying of machinery entails more details. This in turn means either more men to operate or an extra load upon those at the wheels. The program of the church is ever expanding; more order blanks, special days and various activities, etc. In so many cases the preacher is depended upon entirely to carry out these orders, not only to plan the work as indicated, but to work the plan. Certainly this should mean a cutting down of his energy in a definite direction. Especially is this true of great preaching,

which requires much time, meditation and prayer. It takes more energy to do real preaching than almost anything besides. The multiplying of machinery may, then, be a factor contributory to the lessening of pulpit power.

Second: Economic strain—The Bread and Butter question. This is no myth. It is real, practical and has become increasingly acute with the new order of things. We use the term bread in its widest meaning.

Most necessities of life have advanced a hundred fold. Twenty years ago you could have sent three children through college for the price of one nowadays. While we have no quarrel with the advanced cost of education, we are trying to stress the fact, viz., these conditions weigh heavily upon the hearts and shoulders of the preacher as upon other men, sapping his energy and dampening his spiritual zeal.

Then, too, the Dead Line Problem is ever before us. It gives much concern to many. It certainly concerns us at this stage of the game. But you say, the Pension Plan takes care of that. It has not immediately rendered this problem harmless especially for our group. It will take many more years for the churches to enter in a thorough, business-like manner, this laudable scheme.

Here is a church, for instance, paying \$1,800.00 per year. This plus 15 per cent for manse gives \$2,070.00. Ten per cent of this equals \$207; 7 1/2 per cent of this brings to the church \$155. Now the church, self-sustaining—and until this happens to a larger number of our churches we are not going far, nor are we going to receive as much recognition as we deserve—will not so readily add \$155 for the preacher's insurance as they now see it.

We do not say it will not come, but facing the facts as they are now, this has not generally come to pass. The number of churches and ministers whose insurance is not only signed up for, but paid, would be much smaller if the Board did not assume the 3 per cent of the say, \$600.00 stipend. Such does not pay 7 1/2 per cent on \$1200 but 3 per cent on \$600, etc.

Because of economic conditions faced not by the fathers, because of the dead line problem not wholly solved, the tendency is to take on side lines, which in many cases become the main line, cutting pulpit efficiency. It is a super-man that can man a school five days in a week and do great and glowing preaching two times on Sunday. Take it or leave it. Facts stand. For example, an expert in say, Ford's factory depends upon concentration upon the job in hand to get efficiency. Gives entire energy to the one thing and gets results. Why? Not bothered about his pay check, etc.

The minister prepares his sermon; Sunday comes but it is stormy, or if it is a country church, perhaps some big man has died and certainly the funeral will be kept over for Sunday. Only a few are out to service. Monday's bills are facing the preacher. He knows it is a rare case where his officers will go out and collect from the absent members so that he might get his money for the coming morning. You tell me he can drive home his message with full steam, and I raise a reasonable question.

(Continued on page 4)

MID-WINTER SESSION CATAWBA PRESBYTERY

By A. H. Prince, Permanent Clerk

The sixty-sixth session of Catawba Presbytery convened with the Seventh Street Presbyterian church, Charlotte, Rev. R. P. Wythe, D. D., pastor, Wednesday, January 6, 1932, at ten o'clock A. M. The opening sermon was preached by Yorke Jones, from the text the Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Acts 20:26. "Therefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men." The central theme of this discourse impressed "Paul, Pure of the Blood of All men." After the sermon the Presbytery was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. The roll was called. Over thirty churches were represented by ruling elders.

Dr. H. C. Miller, of Yadkin Presbytery, Rev. W. H. Thomas, of the Pee Dee Baptist Association, and Rev. W. F. Mason, of the Catawba Baptist Association, were accorded seats as corresponding members.

A period from 11:45 to 1:30 was given over to study and discussion of the book, "The Ruling Elder" (McAfee) by Dr. Charles H. Shute, Professor of English Bible, Johnson C. Smith University, and "The Every Member Canvass; Why and How?" by Rev. H. Wilson, D. D., pastor of Westminster church, Concord.

Each of the discussions claimed the closest attention and seemingly successful consideration of the part of the Presbytery. The outstanding characteristics and the importance of the ruling elder as emphasized in the book were greatly emphasized and magnified by the conductor.

The every member canvass received no less consideration with an earnest appeal for each church to enlist its constituencies to share with a deep spiritual consciousness this divine obligation.

The Fellowship Period

The period from 1:30 to 3:30 was spent in fellowship in the Sunday school auditorium of the church, presided over by Rev. F. C. Shirley. A delightful and appetizing dinner was served by the ladies of the Seventh Street church. The Revs. Thomas A. Jenkins and A. H. Prince kept the Presbytery jubilant with pep songs and hearty yells.

Guest speaker for this period was the Rev. H. C. Miller, D. D., pastor of the St. James Presbyterian church, Greensboro, N. C. Dr. Miller delivered a well thought out and systematic address on the question, "Has the Modern Pulpit Lost Some of its Power? If So, What May Be Some of the Contributing Factors to This Danger?" declaring that with the multiplicity of temporal things and machinery in our churches together with pulpit appearances and the lack of a burning message of Christ, the power of the pulpit has been greatly lessened. Dr. Miller made earnest appeal to "Loose the Minister and Let Him Go."

Business Period

From 3:30 to 5:00 o'clock P. M. the business and reports from several special committees were had. Dr. Pinckney W. Russell made report on Bills and Overtures, and also on revision of the Book of Discipline. Dr. L. B. West, Chairman of the Committee on National Missions, submitted a report touching upon evangelism among the churches in the Presbytery. This report called for an extensive and intensive evangelistic campaign beginning in March and closing at Easter.

A goodly number of the churches in the Presbytery

paid their General Assembly apportionment at this meeting. Popular Meeting

The evening session was given over to the laymen of the Presbytery. Elder R. L. Douglass presided. Music was furnished by a male chorus from the Presbytery, with Mr. W. H. Brown, a theological student at Johnson C. Smith University assisting. Elder W. H. Stinson, of the Biddleville church, Charlotte, was the main speaker. He spoke on "Why Neglect Church Property?" The address was pointed and forcefully presented. An appeal was made for ministers to move to their fields that they may do the effective work which is so much needed in building and upkeep.

In the absence of Elder Junius Fox, of the Woodland church, who was to speak on "The Christian's Personal Living," Mr. Thomas Bullock, a young man in Smith University, greatly impressed the audience with a short message on the theme.

The Presbytery was well attended considering the inclement weather. The enthusiasm was far above that of any previous meeting. Indications were prevalent that "Catawba" is making progress and only time is required for the full realization of the things to make for a Utopia in the Church.

The Presbytery adjourned to meet the first Wednesday in April with the Black's Memorial Presbyterian church, Monroe, N. C.

EAST TENNESSEE HAS ANOTHER YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEAGUE

By Ethel E. Goines

The first Young People's League in the Presbytery of Birmingham was organized in the Alabama and Middle Tennessee Section, Saturday afternoon, December 19th, 1931. This initial meeting was held at the Miller Memorial Presbyterian church, Birmingham, Alabama. Despite the inclement weather and the fact that the meeting was held just one week prior to Christmas the response from the young people was almost one hundred per cent. There were twenty-three delegates. They represented four of the five churches which this section comprises.

The first hour of the session was given over to indoor games conducted by the Director. The period of recreation was followed by a very beautiful and effective service of worship. The theme was: "Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come," led by Miss Frankie Nichols, Birmingham, Ala. A helpful and inspiring message was brought by Rev. W. M. Sample, pastor of Miller Memorial church.

The house was then called to order and a discussion of the possibilities of a Presbyterial organization among young people followed. In the course of this discussion Rev. W. M. Sample spoke from the subject, "The Purpose of the Young People's League." The Presbyterial Program for Young People was presented by Miss E. E. Goines. The fact that the young people wanted the League was signified by a unanimous vote. Organization was then in order. The following officers were then elected from the floor:

President, Mr. Harold Edward Kerr, Birmingham, Alabama.

Vice-President, Mr. Elijah J. Marbury, Anniston, Ala.

Secretary, Miss Vivian Henderson, Birmingham, Ala.

Assistant Secretary, Miss Elizabeth Parker, Birmingham, Ala.

Treasurer, Miss Price Doby, Shiloh, Alabama.

That the decisions of youth are usually fair and constructive was thoroughly demonstrated at this meeting when the young people themselves

chose so promising a group of officers. The installation service was conducted by Rev. A. W. Rice, of Calvary church, Anniston, Ala.; after which the President-elect took the chair and proceeded with the business.

The topic, "Our Local Church," was introduced by the President, Mr. Harold E. Kerr, who gave a very thorough discussion of the point, "What Constitutes a Presbyterian Church?" Then Miss Vivian Henderson in a pleasing manner spoke from the point, "How May One Become a Member of the Presbyterian Church?" During the discussion which followed, Miss Price Doby, representing Rock Springs church, Shiloh, Alabama, and Mr. Elijah J. Marbury, of Calvary church, Anniston, Alabama, gave brief, original and satisfactory answers to the following questions, respectively: (1) What is your idea of a good church member with regards to family life? (2) What is your idea of a good church member with regards to business life?

Another high point of the meeting was the Fellowship Dinner. The dining room itself suggested immediately the fine taste and artistic ability of the young people of Miller Memorial church. The colors were red and green, symbolizing blood and life, reminding us at once of the great meaning of Christmas. During the dinner hour there were numerous outbursts of laughter and applause following brief expressions made by those who had met the request, "Speech! Speech!" There was every indication of the fact that the youth of Birmingham Presbytery had at once found in the League and opportunity for fellowship, and joy.

A brief consecration service, conducted by Rev. Sample, assisted by Rev. L. R. Taylor, Sabbath School Missionary of Birmingham Presbytery, closed the meeting.

MARY ALLEN GIVEN "A" RATING BY THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES

President B. R. Smith received notice a few days ago from Mr. Arthur D. Wright, of the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools of the Southern States, that at its recent meeting Mary Allen Seminary was granted full rating as an "A" Class Junior College. This rating is a result of a visit to the institution in the early Fall by a committee appointed to make a survey of Negro colleges of the South. The Southern Association of Colleges is the chief rating agency of the South and one of the leading rating agencies of the country. Thus far it has given only three Negro colleges "A" rating: Fisk and Talladega as senior colleges, and Mary Allen Seminary as a junior college. Of the three, Mary Allen Seminary has the distinction of being the only one having a Negro President. It is also the only "A" class Negro college west of the Mississippi as rated by the Southern Association of Colleges.

Mary Allen Seminary is a junior college for women located at Crockett, Texas, and operated by the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. It has a long history of distinctive service in Texas and the South and is now looking forward to the celebration of its forty-fourth anniversary. Until eight years ago the President and faculty were white. Since then Dr. B. R. Smith has been its able and aggressive executive. At his coming Mary Allen was an unaccredited high school in Texas. Under his leadership it has advanced to an accredited high school, an "A" class junior college of Texas, and finally to one of the three "A" class junior colleges of the South, ac-

ording to the rating of the Southern Association of Colleges

Mary Allen Seminary has achieved this place of distinction among Negro colleges against great odds. It serves in a unique way the Negro womanhood of Texas and the wider South. Its program is one of limited enrollment, personal attention to the students, and Christian education, together with the highest in academic training as evinced by its present rating. Mary Allen looks forward to a wider field of more useful service under the leadership of its President and his associates.

A. O. STEELE.

LIBERTY CHURCH AT TROY, N. Y., TO CELEBRATE NINETY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY

The following paragraph from "Troy's One Hundred Years—1789-1889," by Arthur James Weise, M. A., page 180, is of especial interest at this time when the Liberty Street Presbyterian church is planning to celebrate the ninety-second Anniversary of the organization of the work as a Presbyterian church:

"The site of the Liberty St. Presbyterian church was purchased by the city on June 30, 1834. A few months later the session-house of the First Presbyterian church, having been removed to it, was fitted for a church for a congregation of colored people. On its dedication on Thursday, November 27th, Rev. Theodore S. Wright officiated. In the following week, a day school for colored children and an evening school for adult colored people were opened in the basement by William Lively. No distinct church organization worshipped in the building until 1840. On January 17, that year, the Common Council appointed Thaddeus Bigelow, William Rich and Alexander Thuey trustees to take charge of the property until an incorporated society of colored people should purchase it. Thirty-three members of the First Presbyterian church, having received letters of dismission from it, and having been organized into a Presbyterian church on January 17, 1840, by a committee of the Presbytery of Troy, consisting of Dr. N. S. S. Beeman, pastor of the First Presbyterian church, and Rev. Fayette Shepherd, were on February 3, 1840, organized into the Liberty Street Presbyterian church of Troy, N. Y., electing William Rich, Alexander Thuey and Peter Jackson its trustees, and, on February 6th, purchased the property for \$1,000. The Rev. Henry Highland Garnett was called to the pastorate of the church, and served the congregation from 1841 to 1848 with marked ability."

The events connected with the observance of the anniversary will include worship services, with historic reference and emphasis, on Sunday, January 17; public meeting and reception, Monday, January 18, 8 P. M., and an afternoon session of the Presbytery of Troy in the improved building of the Liberty Street church on Tuesday, January 19, from 2 to 4 P. M., when the building will be inspected, reports concerning the improvements will be received, and a conference on the Missions Among Colored People phase of the work of the Board of National Missions will be conducted by the Presbytery's Committee on National Missions, Rev. Seth N. Genung, chairman. The chief address of this conference will be given by Dr. John W. Lee, D. D., Field Representative of the Division of Missions for Colored People for Work in the North, and his theme will be "Church Extension Among Colored People in the Presbyteries of the North and West."