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A sweeping verdict for QUALITY

COMMENT ON VARIOUS MATTERS

By J. M. Fleming

It was refreshing and inspiring to meet with the Confederate veterans in Lumberton Wednesday. We think there were only about twenty-five of them present. One of the sad features is that the crowd is smaller every year. One by one they fall out of

the ranks at the call of their Captain. The consoling thought is, that while their ranks here are thinning they are swelling the numbers in the best beyond.

Lumberton's quartette sang "Tenting On the Old Camp Ground," to the delight of everyone present, both old and young. We have heard them sing in the city churches, in college chapels, on convention floors, and in

patriotic choirs, but it must be an established fact that Lumberton's quartette—Ed. B. Freeman, Frank Gough, J. Pope Stephens and C. B. Skipper—is as good as the best.

Mr. Robert A. McIntyre made a most excellent speech entirely befitting the occasion. We have always been interested in the young men and esteem it a privilege to avail oneself of every opportunity to encourage them. Lumberton has several very bright young fellows of which she, no doubt, is justly proud.

Jefferson said he never saw a beggar from Georgia, and Dickens is quoted as saying that one in Boston was like a flaming sword. Up to 1830 there were no fortunes in the United States and no paupers, but now there are more paupers and more millionaires than anywhere else in the world.

This week the Baptist will be crowding the streets of Florida's chief city. Another page of history has been added to our book of denominational progress. We hope it may be somewhat worthy of us. But we fear it is spotted with unfaithfulness to Him and too conspicuous with our own ways, desires and teachings. If this is true we shall be sorry some day.

Three years ago it was said that to hold our own (meaning all Christian denominations in the United States) it required two and a half million converts. There were only eight-hundred thousand that year—just one-third of the required and stipulated number. The number has not been gained only in the corresponding ratio of three years ago. Who has the other two-thirds?

Some one said not long ago that if we could have only twenty-five genuine Christians and each one of these would win only one other the first year—making fifty Christians at the close, that in twenty-five years at that rate we would have a converted world. This is one of the troubles. There is too much figuring and telling what might be and not

enough holy living and earnest praying in order to bring things to pass. What is geometrical progression even though it be raised to the twenty-fifth power if the good Father's plans are left out?

We heard a preacher giving out some aphorisms sometime ago and jotted them down, not knowing whether he was right or wrong. They follow:

"Going to church is not working for the Lord, it is only going up to His boarding house."

"Praying is not working for the Lord, it is only dunning Him or asking Him to pay us off for doing nothing. When we have not worked for Him, He doesn't owe us anything."

That mighty man said he was preaching the gospel, but it seems that anything a fellow can think of to say may be easily called the gospel. The scientists are about as numerous as were the Sadducees in the days of our Lord upon the earth. They appeared to think their system of ethics, education and religion was ideal only to find themselves hopelessly in the night and blight of ignorance.

What if science in our day shall dethrone God? What Adeal will remain for mankind except an educated selfishness culminating in perpetual war? Educated depravity is but a machine of destruction. Germany is a concrete example verifying this statement, while on the other extreme is Russia submerged in ignorance and almost if not altogether as dangerous—though more to be pitied.

The religious leaders of our day are clothed with a fearful responsibility. Many of them are teaching and causing many to believe a doctrine concerning the origin of life and the destiny of man which, if universally accepted, must result in infidelity and atheism and in the enthronement of the Goddess of Wisdom.

Many of them are uttering very soft words and sweet. They say certain preachers are too plain. They will have better success in their music if they will run the soft pedal. As this scribe sees, it would be a thousand times better to return to the days of Jonathan Edwards and Bartholomew Fuller, the days when faith did not doubt and when God, the eternal made the heavenly message real and vital in the lives of men and women. It is far better for us to not cast away the sacred things. The writer does not understand it all, and can explain but very little of the things of life, but with Newman and the remnant whose faith has been honored, we may give heed to that voice that speaks so clearly to our hearts and consciences.

NORTH CAROLINA LEADS NATION IN PAYING UP DEBTS

Its Repayments to War Finance Corporation Exceed Any Other State—McLean Gratified by Its Splendid Showing.

E. E. Britton in Raleigh News and Observer.

Washington, May 12.—That North Carolina, of all the agricultural and livestock states, stands at the top of the list in its ability to meet obligations, and in the promptness with which it does this is shown by some facts concerning the situation throughout these states as shown in statistics having to do with the War Finance corporation. North Carolina has the distinction of having made the re-payment of the largest sum of advances made by the War Finance Corporation to the various states. With over \$8,000,000 having been advanced to the banks of North Carolina for loans for agricultural purposes, these loans have been repaid in such amounts that there has been returned to the War Finance corporation above \$1,500,000.

While in many of the other states the amounts borrowed have been

largely in excess of the amounts advanced to North Carolina, the repayments from North Carolina are far in excess of the returns made by any of the other agricultural and livestock states. This is an evidence that conditions in North Carolina are better financially than in the other states in the list to which advances have been made.

The information of the gratifying state of affairs was obtained today from Angus W. McLean, of Lumberton, director of the War Finance corporation, whose term of office as a member of the board expires next week, having been made a member of the board on May 17, 1918, by the appointment of President Wilson. Mr. McLean says that he is gratified by the fine showing made by North

Carolina and that while depression exists, it is more largely confined to the eastern section of the State, and to the cotton growing section, but that despite this depression conditions in North Carolina are comparatively better than in the other states.

As yet there is no intimation as to who will be named as the successor to Mr. McLean. He is the only one of the four members of the board who was born and reared on a farm and who has had a life-long experience in farming.

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