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DR. JNO. E. FOARD, President.
Rev. Wm. H. CUNNINGHAM, O. G.
Rev. J. H. HESTER, and ZENO H.
FOARD, Prop.

TERMS.

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Original.

"The Army Mission."

Mr. Editor: I desire through the columns of the *Advocate*, to submit a few thoughts to the ministers and laity of the Church in the North Carolina Conference, on the subject of supplying the troops from North Carolina with ministerial aid. I do so with extreme reluctance. Several weeks ago I prepared an article on the subject, but withheld it, hoping that some one else would discuss the matter. I now write with the hope of calling out abler pens, and those who have less repugnance than I have, to appear in the public journals.

North Carolina has now in the field sixty-five regiments and nine battalions, besides a number of detached companies. Many of these regiments have been in service for more than two years, and have never had a chaplain. Our sons have nestled away by disease or fallen on the field, and have had no minister of Christ to direct them to a bleeding Saviour, or to administer to them the consolations of religion in their sufferings.

This, I suppose, is not because of the scarcity of ministers, or of their unwillingness to serve, or because the Church was not able or willing to support them.—When the war was first opened, the Legislature of North Carolina made provision for the appointment of chaplains, to minister to the religious interests of the regiments as fast as they were formed.—Under his administration it constituted a part of the organization of every regiment. Unfortunately for the religious interests of our troops, they were at an early day transferred to the Southern Confederacy. Then different counsels obtained, and soon nearly all the Chaplains appointed by State authority resigned. A general apathy on the subject followed. The few Chaplains who remained amidst all the discouragements which surrounded them, have since strayed a glorious harvest, and those who "went forth weeping, bearing precious seed," have since "returned rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them."

The harvest is now ripe, but the laborers are few. The question therefore comes up to us as Christians, how many more laborers be sent forth?

Three of our Bishops have published a statement, in which they inform us, that "at a recent meeting of the Bishops and Board of Managers of the Missionary Society of our Church, it was determined to send several missionaries to the Confederate army." For this determination two reasons are assigned. The first is, that "it is well nigh impossible to furnish Chaplains to every regiment without breaking up the organization at home." I confess my surprise at that announcement. If true of other portions of the work, it certainly does not apply to North Carolina. Before our State was invaded we had preachers enough, to fill every pastoral charge in the Conference. We have them yet. Nineteen charges are now within the enemy's lines, which leaves us a surplus of about twenty preachers without work. There are four leading denominations in North Carolina, who are doing fully as well as the Methodists, in furnishing Chaplains—indeed better.—Our proportion in the State would only be about twenty. But our Conference bounds do not include the whole State.—A portion of the Virginia Conference lying in this State is in the enemy's lines also, and the preachers who have left those charges, if added to ours who are without work, would increase the surplus of Methodist preachers in the State, to at least thirty. Now how the supplying the army, with fifteen or twenty additional Chaplains from our Church in this State, is to disturb the organization at home, I cannot conceive. I think it involves a difficulty which the three Bishops will hardly be able to explain. What is true of North Carolina is also true of other States and Conferences. Kentucky, Mis-

souri, Arkansas, Tennessee, Louisiana and portions of Virginia, Mississippi, Alabama and South Carolina are in the enemy's lines. Where are the preachers? Many of them who have been driven from their work, must be in reach of the Bishops and could fill Chaplaincies. So far as I can learn, no minister from North Carolina has yet been called to serve as an army missionary, although the State has 60,000 men in the field. I do not mention this as a complaint but as an argument. It proves this: that while the N. C. Conference has a surplus of preachers, more than enough to supply its proportion of Chaplains to every regiment in the army, other Conferences must have a still larger surplus, as it has not been found necessary to call on the N. C. Conference for a single preacher for the army mission, or it proves that in the judgment of Bishop Early, there is no man in our Conference fit for the work.

The second reason assigned is, that the Government is heavily burdened and cannot bear the expense of chaplains. This to me is more astounding than the former. The government says it can "meet this want," and has provided by law for a Chaplain to each regiment. Hence there is a difference of opinion between the three Bishops and the government.—Which is most likely to be correct? Let us see. In every regiment there are forty-five commissioned officers. The pay of the lowest is that of second Lieutenant. The pay of Chaplain is the same. The three Bishops do not question the ability of the government to pay the forty-five, but gravely tell us that it cannot pay the forty-sixth. That is the last straw which breaks the camel's back. But who pays these officers? All the people of the Southern Confederacy. To whom do the three Bishops appeal for enlarged liberality to "meet this want" which they seem to think all the people cannot meet?—Why to the Methodists of the Confederacy? If all cannot "meet this want," how can you meet it?—attention to the fact, that these two reasons which I have been reviewing, are the only reasons given by the Bishops for this new missionary enterprise, for the support of which you are appealed to for unwonted liberality. I have shown that these reasons are founded upon incorrect assumptions.

Let us now turn to the action of the Missionary Board itself. The second resolution of the Board reads as follows:

Resolved, That the Bishops be, and they are hereby authorized and requested to appoint such General Missionaries to the various departments of the army, as in their judgment the demand requires, and the funds of the Society may justify; provided, that they shall not appoint more than one General Missionary to each Army Corps.

My first objection to this action of the Board is, that it is an usurpation of power not guaranteed to it, either by express grant or implied, by the Discipline, and that it is an infringement of the rights of the Annual Conference. Whether are we drifting? The Board says it "authorizes and requests" the Bishops, &c. I suppose it may request whatever it chooses, but when it presumes to authorize a thing, it may be pertinent to inquire, where did it get the right to authorize any such thing? Who authorized it to convey any such authority to others? The only authority which it has is that which the General Conference gives it, as expressed in the book of Discipline. On pages 228-29, the Discipline says, the Board shall have authority to make by-laws to regulate its own proceedings—to appropriate money to defray incidental expenses—to provide for the support of supernumerary missionaries, &c.—to print books, &c.—to present a statement of its transactions to the annual meetings and to the General Conference. On page 244, it has authority to fix the salary of its Secretary, and on page 246, authority is given to fill vacancies occurring in the Board. No one, I judge, will pretend that the authority it claims, is to be found in any of the above items? But the above is all the authority conferred upon the Board by the laws of the Church.

True, on page 261, it is provided that an annual meeting of the Board shall be held, at which time, in conjunction with the Bishops it shall determine what foreign fields shall be occupied, &c. That gives the Board authority, not of itself, but in conjunction with the Bishops, to supervise our foreign missions. And on page 246, a like authority is given to annual Conferences over our domestic missions. I will not insult the intelligence of your readers by presenting an argument to prove, that by sending ministers

to preach to our own citizens—to our fathers, brothers, and sons in the Army, is not a foreign mission. That would be as ridiculous as to attempt, seriously to prove, that a meeting held in the month of April, was not an autumnal meeting!

The only answer to all this, which I have heard, is, that the necessities of the case required this departure from the law. I answer, that had as our Church regulations are in regard to our Missionary operations, and in my judgment they are bad enough, I am not prepared to admit that they are so bad as to render it necessary that the Bishops of the Church and the Missionary Board should over-ride or ignore the law in order to do good. But it may be answered, it is a small matter, so that good be accomplished, whether it be done in strict accordance with law or not. It may be small in itself, but it is not so in its practical results. When men violate one law of the Church under the plea of necessity or expediency, they soon reach a point when they can violate any other law, though no such imaginary necessity exists. A proof of this is at hand in the action of this same Board in fixing the allowance of the General Missionaries to the Army. The Discipline expressly says, "The sum allowed for the support of Missionaries shall not exceed the usual allowance of other itinerant ministers," page 242. The amount allowed to other itinerant ministers, is regulated by their being married or unmarried, and by the number of children they have under certain ages. This rule has been ignored by the Board. It has fixed the allowance of each General Missionary at \$3,000 per annum, without regard to the size of his family.

Now, I am no advocate for our present system of finance. I think a much better system might be adopted. But while the present is the law of the Church, I insist that it be enforced and applied, especially to those who have it in their power to amend bad laws, and substitute better ones. When men believe that they can feel, is the application of an oppressive law to themselves.

The last objection I shall at present offer to the action of the Board is, that it is wholly inefficient. It "authorizes and requests" the Bishops to appoint missionaries to our army, provided they do not appoint more than one General Missionary to each Army corps. Now an army corps when full is about 40,000 men.—All experience shows, that one minister to a regiment, has all that he can do. The Legislature of North Carolina thought too necessary at first. The Missionary Board restricts the Bishops to one to about 40 regiments, giving one man the work that would require 40 to perform. We may easily imagine how it will be done, and what amount of service the troops of North Carolina will receive, scattered as they are among the different corps in Virginia, Tennessee and in this State. The practical result must be that after the people of North Carolina have responded to the appeal for "enlarged liberality," our soldiers will get but little missionary service from this source.

But the answer to this is, that these are General Missionaries, who are appointed to superintend the work. What work? Who have we in the army to superintend? Is it the few Chaplains of regiments we have there? If that be the intention, I presume the humble Chaplain as he toils and suffers in his arduous work and receives from the government his \$900 per annum, will promptly tell these \$2,000 men, that his Colonel has charge of him, and that he can get along without any other superior.

But it may be said, other missionaries are to be appointed. Where is the provision for that? The Board has made no such provision, if it required the authority of the Board to appoint more than one. But if it did not require its authority at all, its proceeding in this matter is a ridiculous farce. But the Bishops have acknowledged its authority and are acting under it. They will of course not go beyond the authority thus given them, and nothing will be done. Yes, this much will be done. The people of North Carolina will contribute large sums of money to send preachers to serve their brave sons, brothers, husbands and friends in the army, but they will receive precious little service, and those who appeal to them for money for this mission, will be called on to explain why the troops from North Carolina are not being served, and what has become of the money. General distrust will be the consequence at home,

and in the army there will be no change for the better.

But Methodists of North Carolina, are we relieved of responsibility in this matter? Are we to sit down quietly at home and enjoy all the advantages of the gospel, and leave our own children and brothers to fight our battles, and do nothing to furnish them with the word of life and the means of grace? Truly, we would be guilty not only of the blood of our brethren, but of the blood of our own children. The means are in our own hands. Let us act at once, and instead of waiting for this dilatory and inefficient scheme; let us adopt one that is practical and that can be carried into operation at once.

In the absence of any other, I will suggest the following as feasible. And first, let us co-operate with the Government to furnish a Chaplain, in conjunction with other denominations, to each Regiment. Let the Methodist Church in North Carolina furnish her full proportion. This would only require two or three preachers from each Presiding Elder's District. Let the Presiding Elders at once ascertain from the preachers who will volunteer for this work. Let there be a meeting of the Presiding Elders and one layman from each District, at the earliest day, say at Greensboro, the third Wednesday in August next; and for the sake of convenience, let the District Stewards be the laymen to attend that meeting. Let the Presiding Elders agree upon the men who shall go as Chaplains, and let the laymen estimate the amount necessary, to be paid to each one, in addition to the amount paid by the Government. Let the case of our faithful Bro. Betts, who has labored ever since the opening of the war as a Chaplain, only for Chaplain's pay, be taken into consideration, and let him be put on an equal footing with those now to be sent out. And if there be other Chaplains of our Church from North Carolina, let them be included. When the men are selected for the work, it would be well for their respective Districts to compose the meeting suggested, to sign a recommendation to the Chaplaincy for each man selected, and let them be forwarded at once to the Colonels needing Chaplains. That would secure their appointment and guard the Colonels against the application of improper men. After the plan has been adopted and the amount necessary to be raised ascertained, let it be assessed to the several Districts according to ability, and collections forthwith taken up to meet it.

I do not insist upon this plan in any or all of its features, but I only suggest it in the absence of any other, except the plan of the Board of Missions. It has to my mind, superior claims to that. First, it violates no law of the Church and infringes upon no one's rights. Secondly, it co-operates with the Government according to its plan authorized by law. Thirdly, it secures for the army 40 preachers instead of one. Fourthly, it is more economical; instead of calling upon the members and friends of the Church, who also have to bear their equal proportion of the expenses of this war, to contribute \$3,000 for the support of each preacher sent to the army, it secures the \$900 for each Chaplain pledged by the government, and only requires the raising of the deficiency to make up each man's support. In taking up the collections let them be raised for that specific purpose. Do not call them Missionary collections. That term has been sufficiently abused.

Hoping to hear from others on this subject at an early day, and earnestly desiring that some efficient plan shall be promptly adopted, to send the gospel to the army and to do our full share in this work, I subscribe myself,
Your brother and fellow laborer,
WILLIAM CLOSS.
LOUISBURG, July 14, 1863.

The Matter.
Bishop Doane, on the death of Rev. Dr. Wharton, said: "He is to be added, on his own testimony, to the host of great and good men who have owed their greatness and their goodness, under God, to a mother's precepts, and tender caresses," he says in a little sketch of his first fifteen years, "are still fresh in my memory, and frequently present her dear image to my mind. Until eighty five years of age, he was accustomed to speak of these benefits with the fervor and susceptibility of youth."

To-day is ours. Work while it is called to-day. Work what? Do the duty which lieth next you. Work out your own salvation. Do works meet for repentance. Do with thy might whatsoever thy hand findeth to do. Work how?—Earnestly, faithfully, courageously, humbly, lovingly, prayerfully.

Selections.

Religion in the Army.

We clip the following extract from this subject from the report of Rev. Mr. Dickinson, Superintendent of Colportage, to the recent General Baptist Association of Virginia:

Modern history presents no example of armies so nearly converted into churches as the armies of Southern defence. On the crest of this flood of war which threatens to engulf our freedom, rides a pure Christianity; the gospel of the grace of God shines through the smoke of battle, with the light that leads to heaven; and the camp becomes a school of Christ.

This accords with the great law of Providence—that what ministers to the peace of mankind should be born out of commotion—that when the evil of the world beats on us as a storm, the clouds should distil the manna of His goodness. When, shortly after Christ's ascension, a furious persecution broke out against His followers, who enjoyed quiet and the peaceful blessings of the gospel at Jerusalem, and Stephen was stoned, it seemed to be a sad and overwhelming calamity to the church, but it only opened a new sphere for the church's activity, and led to the diffusion of the gospel. "They that were scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, went everywhere preaching the word." "The word grew and multiplied," and "many became obedient unto the faith."

We may look for like results in the persecution which Providence permits to come on our land as an overflowing scourge. We have already seen them; those of us, at least, who have sought out the works of the Lord. From the very first day of the unhappy contest to the present time, religious influences have been spreading among the soldiers until now, in camp and hospital, throughout almost every portion of the army, revivals display their precious, saving power. In one of these revivals over three hundred are known as having professed conversion, while doubtless there are hundreds of others equally blessed, whose names, unrecorded here, find a place in the "Lamb's book of life." This revival is still in progress, with unabated interest. And if such be the state of things now, what may we not expect of God's people, with one heart and one mind, come up to "the help of the Lord to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

In many who have been called to share the privations and perils of military service, there has been a marked development of the Christian character. The repose of home, before the war, had seemingly lulled them to slumber. If not forgetful of their obligations, as well to the heathen at our doors as to those afar off, they were unobservant and retiring in religious matters—shrank from the publicity of active labor for the Lord—stood idle in the vineyard. But thrown amidst the stirring incidents and confronting the doubtful issue of a campaign, they have awakened out of sleep. They have felt themselves moved to speak for Jesus; have counted it a privilege to testify, in the audience of their assembled comrades, or in the unreserved private intercourse, "the things which make for the peace" of the soul. A chaplain communicates the following fact, which exemplifies this remark: "Captain J., a Baptist brother, has recently begun to pray in public, and occasionally he delivers an exhortation. He is now so much enlisted in the Master's service, that he has consented to take my place for some weeks, while I shall be absent on furlough, and conduct the meetings. The war is wonderfully developing his gifts." We may confidently expect that many soldiers will be called to tread this path; will be conducted through the camp into the pulpit, as indeed some have already been.

The influences which have quickened spiritual life in these believers, have given birth to it in multitudes who entered the army strangers to the grace of God. Far from home and friends, toiling on the march, or languishing in the hospital, their eyes have been turned to Him, whose love shed abroad in the heart, is "strength in the time of weakness, light in the time of darkness, joy in the time of sorrow," life in death, life beyond death. How often have chaplains and colporters heard the penitent exclaim, "I thank God for this sickness, this wound, this absence from home, for it has been instrumental in leading me to the Friend of sinners!" So strikingly does Providence prepare the soil for the sower, bearing the precious seed of saving truth. Scepticism, pride, the hope of long life, the lust of gain, ambitious worldliness,—these and other barriers which often interpose between the souls of men and the service of God, are, in the cases of thousands in the camp, and especially in the hospital, taken out of the way, by the stroke of that rod which is smiting the nation to save it.

POWERFUL SPEAKING.—Many are misled by the admiration of what is called a powerful discourse, forgetting that that is the most powerful which best effects the object proposed. The power of a simple of gunpowder or of a piece of ordnance, is tested, not by the loudness of the report, but by the depth of the impression made on the target.—Archbishop Whately

The Great Need.

In every stage of the world's history some conspicuous want has ever shone forth in the church. Though it has assumed various forms in the days gone by, giving a wide field for debate as to what that need may have been, we hardly think many will fail to agree with us in believing that a want of heart sadly characterizes the religion of our day. Few in this land of light and privileges can throw the mantle of ignorance over their failure to improve the opportunities of "increasing knowledge." Kings and prophets longed to see, and died without the sight of those blessed truths which a living child hears while kneeling at a mother's knee. No, this unclean may be laid to no soul now.—On the contrary we hear oftentimes too much to be properly digested, nay, to dissipate in books and sermons. The religion of Jesus was intended to find its choicest soil in the garden of the heart—the mind being the medium through which these blessings were to flow. Compared with us the disciples themselves were deficient in knowledge, and yet how far above us are their flights of grace. And why with all our multiplied privileges are we so clogged in our journey heavenward—so faint in our endeavors after the unfading crown? It is because we want heart-warmth, earnestness, life. An easy thing it is to admire beautiful sentences in a sermon, and feel all aglow while soaring on the wings of some poetic thought. But alas! when we descend to the constant labor, the dry details and practical duties begotten of every day, how little do we become! Sentiment, a love for the beautiful, pretty thoughts, Christ did not intend to incite these. We must look elsewhere would we find it.—Religion is a thing of the heart—sublimating every desire, purifying every thought, and throwing a halo around all the affairs of life. And if we reach heaven, this sickly life must be mortified, and throwing off the covering of sentimentalism, we must brace up ourselves for a long struggle, a fierce conflict, and give God our hearts.—*The Southern Churchman.*

The Beginning.

Reader, the beginning of all saving religion is to become acquainted with Jesus Christ. This is the corner-stone of Christianity. A watch without a mainspring is not more useless than a religion without Christ.

But let me not be misunderstood. It is not the mere knowledge of Christ's name that I mean, it is the knowing his mercy, grace, and power; the knowing him not by the hearing of the ear, but by the experience of your heart. I want you to know him by faith—I want you to be able to say of him, "He is my peace and my strength, my life and my consolation, my Physician and my Shepherd, my Saviour and my God."

Why do I make such a point of this?—I do it because in Christ alone "all fulness dwells." Col. 1:19. In him alone there is a full supply of all that we require for the necessities of our souls. Of ourselves we are all poor empty creatures, empty of righteousness and peace, empty of strength and comfort, empty of courage and patience, empty of power to stand, or go on, or make progress in this evil world. It is in Christ alone that all these things are to be found—grace, peace, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

It is just in proportion as we live upon Christ that we are strong Christians. It is only when self is nothing and Christ is all in our confidence, it is then only that we shall do great exploits. Then only are we armed for the battle of life, and shall overcome. Then only are we prepared for the journey of life, and shall go forward. To live on Christ, to draw all from Christ, to do all in the strength of Christ, to be ever looking unto Christ, this is the true secret of spiritual prosperity. "I can do all things," says Paul, "through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13.

Reader, do you want to make a beginning in religion? Go as a humble sinner to Jesus Christ and entreat him to save your soul. "This is the right end of the rope. Begin here.

"Is your Soul Safe?"

Such was the question addressed recently by a young Christian officer, well known to me, to a brother in arms, who was running eagerly in the paths of folly and sin. The question was put under the canopy of heaven, at night, as they walked together. It was an arrow from the Spirit's quiver. It led to repentance, faith, newness of life; and now the young convert and Christian soldier is seeking the salvation of others once his associates in evil.

Answer, then, O reader, the question now. "Is your soul safe?" Yes or nay—*is your soul safe?* Are you in Christ by living, personal faith? Have you the evidence that your sins are forgiven you through His blood, that His robe of righteousness covers you, and that His Spirit has made you a new creature? If not—seek salvation now—*EVERY NOW!* Believe, and live. And if you are safe yourself, go forth as Christ's ambassador, and gently, lovingly, tearfully, earnestly, faithfully, say to brother, sister, acquaintance, neighbor, "*Is your soul safe?*"

TEST OF CHARACTER.—If you have really given up your heart to God in private, your life will show forth the praise of God in public: if God has the heart, he is sure of the life.