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## For the Advocate. Our Virginia Correspondence.

BY REV. JOHN E. EDWARDS, D. D.  
REV. HEZEKIAH G. LEIGH, D. D.  
In reviewing the North Carolina Conference from 1837 to 1845, the period of my connection with it as a Conference, there was no one individual member of the Conference, in my present estimate of the men, that occupied a more conspicuous and prominent position, during that period, than the Rev. Hezekiah G. Leigh, D. D. He was admitted on trial in the Va. Conference in 1818, in company with that great man, Peter Doub; and, that eloquent man, Geo. W. Charleston; and others less generally known and remembered. Hezekiah G. Leigh soon rose to eminence as a preacher. As early as 1822 he was stationed in Petersburg, Va.; an appointment which at that time was second to none in the Conference. As an evidence of his popularity and success he was returned to the same charge in 1823. But the other day I attended the funeral of John Stroud, one of the best men that ever lived, and one of the oldest Methodists in Petersburg, who was converted during a great revival under the ministry of Mr. Leigh, in 1822. Old Brother Stroud—"Uncle Johnny," as we called him, has frequently told me of the wonderful power that attended the ministry of Hezekiah G. Leigh during these two years, 1822-23. He was a handsome young man, of pleasing manners, and of captivating address. The best people of the town flocked to hear him preach.

HOW HE ADVANCED.  
In 1825 Mr. Leigh was made Presiding Elder of the Meherrin District, then extending from Lynchburg to Petersburg; and, in the early days of my ministry I used to hear marvellous stories of the wonderful effects produced by his great sermons. He made a lasting impression, by his preaching, all around his large District, and was instrumental in the conversion of many souls, and in building up the Church. He continued for four years on the Meherrin District.

It was while Mr. Leigh was on this District, embracing the counties of Brunswick and Mecklenburg, that the question was first mooted of building a Methodist College, to be located on the border line between Va. and N. C. Before he left the District steps were taken, looking to the establishment of the College.

## COLLEGE AGENCY, AND PRESIDING ELDERSHIP.

In 1829 Rev. Hezekiah G. Leigh was appointed College Agent, and it became his duty to traverse the whole of the Va. Conference territory in the prosecution of his work in raising funds to build the College. He continued in this agency till the Conference of 1834, when he was appointed Presiding Elder of the Petersburg District, on which he continued till the Conference session of 1837, held in Petersburg, at which time the N. C. Conference was set off from the Va. Conference; and Hezekiah G. Leigh, henceforward, became identified with the N. C. Conference, till summoned from labor to reward.

## PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS.

In 1836 I was on the Mecklenburg Circuit, as "helper" to Rev. Benj. Kidd. By the way, Mr. Kidd was not satisfied with my doing my own share of the work on the Circuit, but, having a young and beautiful wife with whom he liked to stay, he made me preach for him on the few rest days that fell to me. This by the way, Rev. H. G. Leigh was my Presiding Elder that year; and, as his residence was in Mecklenburg county, and near the College, I saw more of him that year, than I should otherwise have done. Presiding Elders, in those days, commanded the services of the preachers on their Districts; and, sometimes, without a moment's warning, ordered them to report for duty at camp-meetings fifty or sixty miles away. In the Fall of 1836, Mr. Leigh wrote to me to go to a camp-meeting in Northampton county, at least fifty miles from the nearest point on my Circuit; and, further more ordered, that as soon as the meeting closed in Northampton, which he could not attend, I must go to a camp-meeting at Poplar Spring, within four or five miles of Petersburg—thus taking me two weeks from my Circuit.

It was at that camp-meeting in Northampton I first saw Thomas G. Lowe, and heard him preach. His sermon then gave no doubtful augury of his future popularity as an eloquent preacher. It was in Petersburg, the Sunday before the camp-meeting began at Poplar Spring, that Mr. Leigh, my Presiding Elder, put me up to preach to an immense crowd attracted

to hear the great Dr. Olin. I had just reached Petersburg Sunday morning in time to get to old Union St. Church at 11 o'clock. It was Mr. Leigh's Quarterly Meeting. Dr. Olin, President of R. M. College, had been advertised to preach that morning. Just before 11 o'clock, after the congregation had assembled, Dr. Olin was taken sick, and could not preach. I entered the Church, in blissful ignorance of the fact that Dr. Olin was expected to preach; and Mr. Leigh, without informing me of the fact that Dr. Olin was expected to preach at that hour, laid hands on me as soon as I entered the Church, and told me to take the books and preach. In these days we—of the rank and file—obeyed orders. Happily for me the congregation had never seen Dr. Olin, and did not know there was such a being in existence as myself. I was therefore mistaken for Dr. Olin. When I was done, some of the old sisters put their bonnets into each other, and said: "The Doctor is a much younger man than we expected; but, he is certainly a great preacher." A name goes a long way sometimes. It certainly did on that occasion.

## APOLOGY.

I did not intend to write so much personal to myself when I began this letter, but the deflection shows off my Presiding Elder, at least in one aspect of his character. He was not ready to preach that morning, and he was not willing to fill the great Dr. Olin's shoes. He knew that I had no reputation to lose, and he thought he might put the task on me. I cannot say that I exactly approved of the step, but it was useless to debate the point with the great official. He even made me preach the next Sunday morning at 11 o'clock, at the Camp-Meeting—this he did however for another reason than that which controlled him on the previous Sunday. I will not explain.

## FURTHER RECOLLECTIONS.

Rev. H. G. Leigh, at the time of the division of the Conference territory, was appointed Presiding Elder of the Raleigh District, and I was assigned to the Raleigh Circuit; so he was my Presiding Elder again, for two years—1837-38. So far as my observation and recollection go, it is to the effect that Dr. Leigh—for he received the Doctorate from Randolph Macon College—did not uniformly sustain his reputation as a great preacher, during the time I was associated with him in the N. C. Conference. There were times however when he did rise to the top of his great power. But, he needed a stimulus to a great effort. A large congregation; the presence of men of note and distinction; the impression on his mind that there were great expectations—that the people were on tiptoe to hear. These things had the effect to excite him, and to bring out his great ability. When fully aroused he never failed to meet expectation. I heard him at a camp-meeting, at Soapstone, in the Raleigh Circuit, in 1837, when he came fully up to the top of his ability, and carried everything before him. He was dramatic that day, in a high degree. His word painting was to the life; and the action was suited to the word. There is on fiction in saying that his audience was positively entranced.

## A QUOTATION.

I quote from the Centennial address delivered by myself at the Portsmouth Va. Conference, held in 1882. Speaking of Hezekiah G. Leigh, I said: "He was a very *Apollo Belvidere* in physical stature and proportion. Bright complexion, blue eyes, and aquiline nose. His voice was round, full, and musically modulated. His style was modulated after the best Masters of rhetoric in the pulpit. As a preacher, he had but few equals, and no superiors in his day. He was often tender and pathetic; but, at times he dealt in "the terrors of the law," and, on such occasions he was transformed into a Moses, on Mount Sinai, with fiery clouds around him—the glare of the lightning on his brow, and the voice of the embattled thunder shaking the smoking rocks around him. From these sublime altitudes he descended, by easy gradations, to the sunny vale below, where he stood, amid flowers and sunshine, pointing to Calvary; and, with tones as sweet and plaintive as the cooing of a dove, he pleaded with sinners to be reconciled to God. On such occasions he grew eloquent and carried everything before him like a Summer gale."

Dr. Leigh finished his ministry, and died comparatively young. He is held in remembrance as a great preacher; as one of the founders of Randolph Macon College; as a good man—an honor to his Church, and a benefactor.

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Rev. Dr. Bennett, President of R. M. College, spent yesterday (Jan. 13th,) in Petersburg, preaching his great Centenary discourse at Washington St. Church in the morning, and at Wesley Church at night. He commenced taking Centennial offerings for the College. In the morning he realized about \$300. At night he did well at Wesley. Dr. Bennett intends to make the most of the Centenary year for the benefit of Randolph Macon College.

The bad weather has, to some extent, interfered with our preachers on the Circuits, in getting settled, and fully at their work.

The Young Men's Christian Association continue, again this week, their daily prayer meetings. Last week they were held every evening at the Washington St. Methodist Church. This week they will be held at the Washington St. Baptist Church. The attendance is large, from day to day, and the meetings are full of interest.

Rev. Mr. Kerr, pastor of Tabb St. Presbyterian Church, has resigned the pastorate of this Church, and will probably accept a call to the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond. It is understood here that there has been a want of agreement between Mr. Kerr and his session, as to whether the pastor or the organist should have control of the Church music. He claimed control. The organist, sustained by a majority of the Elders, claimed that he had control, at least to some extent. The misunderstanding drives an earnest good preacher from Petersburg. I state the case as it has come to my ears. I certainly would not make an erroneous statement.

Petersburg, Va., Jan. 14th, 1884.

## For the Advocate.

### Our Western Letter.

#### IN AND AROUND LOS ANGELOS.

From our special correspondent.

In coming from San Francisco over the S. P. R. R., the gateway to this section of Cal., is through the San Fernando Tunnel, said to be the longest, but one, in the United States. Emerging from the tunnel we then soon enter the San Fernando valley, and as we pass along down grade, we pass the old mission of San Fernando, the former home and headquarters of Andres Pico, the generalissimo of Los Mejanos in 1846, who, in the Mexican war, at the head of a small army, confronted Gen. Fremont on the slope of El Gabilan, only to be put to an inglorious flight before the veterans under the Path-finder, who came like a whirlwind to this place and planted his cannon upon a hill overlooking the town, not over 100 yards from where I now write. It is worthy of note to mention that two of the cannons brought into this valley by Gen. Fremont are now to be seen at the court house doing silent sentinel work; they show plainly the effects of time and rust, having been buried for years, and are interesting relics of those days when our government had that little brush with Mexico and, having whipped her into subjection, took a slice of her domain of which this section is a part.

The old Mexican general above mentioned walks the streets of Los Angeles almost daily, his whitened locks and tottering steps tell the tale of hastening time that soon will cut his form low.

Leaving the old mission rancho we soon reach the Los Angeles River and see all around vineyards, groves and Eden looking homes. Visitors usually are taken by surprise on their first arrival in the city, with all that has been heard and read concerning this place it is difficult for the mind to grasp the realities of the surroundings of Los Angeles, the Queen of the Angels, as the name implies. Coming in the winter season the surprise and admiration are the more noted. The beauty and freshness of spring and summer meet the eye everywhere and one is not long in finding out that he is in a thriving, bustling city, beyond what he expected. The inquiry soon arises in the mind of the writer, what is it that supports and gives such prosperity to the place? Just here we will take a glance at the early settlement of the country. As early as 1534 Fernando Cortez, of Spain, undertook to Christianize the Indians who held dominion over the Peninsula of California, but the undertaking was abandoned and no other effort was made to settle the country until 1769, when an expedition by water and one by land was sent out from the City of Mexico under the auspices of the Franciscan Order of the Roman Catholic Church. The government of New Spain aided in the work, so that in 1771 their missions were established within the territory of what

is now Los Angeles county. Cattle, horses, sheep, goats and hogs were brought in from old Mexico and soon the missions were in a flourishing condition, thousands of the native Indians were converted to Christianity, and in time there was a mixed race of people here. Vineyards were set out, orchards planted and farm crops cultivated; however the principal industry was that of stock raising, and thus matters continued until, in 1846, California was annexed to the United States, when the American people of Anglo-Saxon origin began to mix in with the former residents. In 1812, December the 8th, the day of the yearly feast of the Roman Catholic church in commemoration of the conception of the Virgin Mary, an earthquake occurred at the hour of Holy Mass, the building fell and crushed to death many of the worshippers.

What is now the Los Angeles River was unknown as a river until a great flood in 1832 cut a channel to the ocean. Before this the waters spread over the plains in various directions, settling in low places and disappearing. At that date, where now are dry lands, lakes and swamps were common and a considerable forest of timber was growing in the valley which mostly disappeared after the channel of the river was opened and the land thus drained.

The town of Los Angeles was laid out August 26th, 1781, and was first settled by twelve families, former soldiers of the Spanish government. The town finally became the seat of Government of the Peninsula, and occasionally civil wars caused much commotion among the people. As stated before, during the Mexican war, Col. J. C. Fremont held possession of the town. Later, however, he left it, and again the Mexicans took possession, and resisted the approach of Commodore Stockton and General Kearney. Quite a battle was fought on the plain near the city, which ended in the repulse of the Mexicans, and Stockton and Kearney took possession. Los Angeles has always, since its first settlement, been the principal town in Southern California, and at the time of the Mexican war, contained about 100 inhabitants.

In 1850 the country began to settle up with people from the states, and an impetus was given to agricultural pursuits. The outlet for traffic and travel was via water from the bay on the coast, some twenty miles south, to San Francisco. The old Spanish part of the town was composed of low buildings constructed of sun-dried brick. Quite a number of these buildings yet remain, but are gradually disappearing before a much better class of buildings. In 1852 the first kiln of burnt brick was made, and some fine buildings put up the following year. The prosperity of the city has been continued up to the present date. However, during the war of the rebellion a kind of reign of terror prevailed, which caused, more or less, a stagnation of business. There being people here from various sections of the Union, as one might suppose, bitter animosities were engendered and many a murder was committed; "going out to hunt" meant hunt for men, often the talk at saloons at night would be about the game "bagged" and where it could be found.

Three years ago, when the Southern Pacific R. R. opened up easy communication with the East, a new era of amazing prosperity for Southern California—or tropic California, as it is called—opened up, and the whole country has had a continual boom, and it seems there is no let up. The stream of emigrants, sight seers, health and pleasure seekers, is increasing all the while. Los Angeles is, today, a city of strangers; the crowds on the streets and about the hotels, post-office, and on the lines of travel, remind one of a great mining excitement. As an instance, we have seen two lines of strangers, reaching from the postoffice delivery windows, out onto the pavements, and half a block down the sidewalk, stand waiting for more than an hour, to get their mail. There is a free mail delivery throughout the city, yet the postoffice officials don't seem to be able to cope with the rapid increase of business in a way satisfactory to the public; an earnest effort is being made to get an appropriation by Congress to build a commodious postoffice building here. The city authorities too are unable to make the necessary improvements on the streets to keep the way clear. One grand mistake was made in laying out the business streets; they are too narrow, the sidewalks especially. The city is laid out in an irregular manner; some of the streets in a zigzag manner, others pointing in, like the rays of the sun, to a focus. The streets on the hills and bluffs require an immense amount of labor to grade them down to a passable condition. The city is

just beginning to get out of its "short petticoats," that is, to build high storied buildings, but now that real estate men are figuring on two, three and four thousand dollars per foot front, downward and upward space will be utilized. In our next we will speak of the beauties and wealth of this remarkable country, and its peculiar climate, and give a truthful account of its real merits and demerits.

J. S. F.

Los Anglos, Cal., Jan. 1884.

## For the Advocate.

### Gen. R. B. Vance.

MESSRS. EDITORS: Your editorial upon the course pursued by Gen. Vance in the U. S. Congress, will receive the endorsement of every good man in N. C. I feel like reaching my hand all the way to Raleigh to grasp your editorial hand and give it a hearty shake, urging you, as one of the great exponential elements of moral sentiment in the South, to write on along that line of thought.

The Press of the country has more to do in creating public sentiment, than any other instrumentality wielded; and yet, with sorrow I write it, our periodicals, both secular and religious, are governed too much by a morally false and degrading sentiment. It seems that a great many editors are afraid to speak out "in Church," lest they may lose subscribers, or at least, call upon themselves the anathemas of a besotted class.

Now, it seems to me, that every public servant of the people is, in the very nature of things, under a most absolute moral necessity, to be a servant of God. An irreligious legislator, either of State or Nation, is a moral absurdity. He stands in violation of the great eternal principle of fitness of things. He can no more be a true philanthropist, than the devil can utter a pious prayer. "The imagination of his heart is only evil, and that continually;" hence, self must and will be the god at whose shrine he constantly worships. If the motion will contribute in making him more popular with his constituents or party, why, he is in for it with tongue and vote. But, if, on the other hand, the motion is calculated to render him unpopular with the drunken rabble, though it would prove the salvation of half the nation, he talks and votes against it.

Not so, however, with "General Bob Vance," as the mountain people call him. He watches for the social and moral interests of all the people. Such has been his course from the beginning of his public career. He has proved his faith by his works. And though he is what politicians call a *thorough democrat*, yet such has been his fidelity to the peoples' interest that good men of all parties vote for him in preference to any other man. I know Gen. Vance, and had I a thousand votes to cast, I would cast them all for him.

R. L. ABERNETHY.

## For the Advocate.

### A Sermon by an Indian Chief.

The announcement in "The Evening Star," of this city on last Saturday, that "Rev. Samuel Checote, for many years principal Chief of the Creek nation, would preach in Mount Vernon Place M. E. Church, South, at 11 o'clock Sunday morning," drew a very large and appreciative audience at the morning service.

The Rev. Samuel Checote is a tall venerable looking man, fluent in speech and graceful in deportment. He has been a regular minister of the gospel in the M. E. Church, South, for thirty years.

He took for his text St. John, iii. 16. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He spoke in the Creek dialect, which was interpreted by Mr. D. M. Hodges, of the Creek nation.

His theme was: God's love to man in the gift of His Son, and the adaptation of the gospel to all nations and tribes of men, the one great need of humanity and the balm for all its woes. He preached with great earnestness and the effect was visible upon the large and deeply interested congregation. His illustration of the advent of the Son of God into the world was beautiful and sublime. He alluded to the fact that John Wesley came to this country to preach this same gospel to the Indians of Georgia, more than 100 years ago. Since then large numbers of Methodist Missionaries have been among them, teaching and preaching until they have become Christianized, have a Conference, and ministers and membership numbering between 5 and 6,000, which is under the supervision of the M. E. Church,

South. He spoke of the progress religion and education among the tribe and said they were living in peace and advancing in the arts of Christian civilization.

He said this was the first time he ever preached to a congregation of whites. He commended to them that gospel which had done so much for the Indian, and said it was adapted to all classes and conditions of men. The sermon and the occasion will, no doubt, be long remembered, and who can tell, but what this Aboriginal brother preaching the gospel of the Son of God, through an interpreter, at the Capitol of this great nation, may be the means of saving some souls from eternal death.

At the close of the sermon the large congregation joined in singing to the tune of Cornation, that grand old hymn:

"All hail the power of Jesus name,"

This stanza:

"Let every nation, every tribe,"

"On this terrestrial ball;

"To him all majesty ascribe,

"And crown him Lord of all."

Seemed to have a peculiar appropriateness, and beauties never seen before.

Truly yours,

ROBERT W. BEST.

Washington, D. C., Jan. 14th, 1884.

## Methodism Comparatively.

We get the following in a letter from a correspondent of the *Alabama Advocate*:

One hundred years ago organic Methodism was planted in America. It had been preceded from 100 to 200 years by other communions. Roger Williams organized the first Baptist Church in 1638—245 years ago, 145 years before the Methodists. After nearly 250 years' work the regular Baptists number 2,500,000 members in America. All forms of immersionists now number about 3,000,000. The Presbyterians entered America in 1684, about fifty years later than the Baptists, and 100 years in advance of the Methodists. After 200 years work, that communion, in all forms, Northern and Southern, and Cumberland, numbers 1,150,000 members. The regular Presbyterians, North and South, have about 900,000 communicants. The Protestant Episcopal Church came with the earliest English colonies, about the year 1600. This was nearly 300 years ago, or a little less than 200 years in advance of the Methodists. After nearly 300 years' work, she numbers on her rolls 339,000 communicants. From this it appears that the Episcopal Church was nearly 200 years before the Methodist in America. The Baptist 150, and the Presbyterian 100 years.

In 1784 organic Methodism started in America with a few small classes and a mere handful of members. In 1884 she numbers in her communion 4,100,000. This is 1,600,000 more than the regular Baptists; 1,100,000 more than all forms of immersionists; 3,000,000 more than the Presbyterian, and 3,761,000 more than the Episcopal.

In 1784 Methodism had no College in America. In 1884 she has over 300 Colleges, Seminaries, High Schools and Universities.

In 1784 Methodism had no churches in America worth the name. In 1884 she has 25,378 churches, with a seating capacity of nearly 7,000,000. She is adding to this list, with an ever increasing ratio, 1,000 churches a year. One branch of Methodism is building over seven hundred churches every year.

In 1784 Methodism had no publishing interest in America. Starting in 1789, in New York City, with a borrowed capital of \$600, in 1884 she has in publishing interests nearly \$10,000,000, sending from her presses in books, tracts, periodicals and papers, millions of pages annually.

In 1784 Methodism had in America but a few hundred adherents. In 1884 her adherents, besides her membership, number over 20,000,000 souls.

In 1784 Methodism in general had but a few missionaries in the foreign field. In 1884 she has in Asia—including Japan, India, China and Ceylon, 471 regular and local preachers and nearly 1,500 members. In Africa, Australia and the Polynesian Islands, she has in regular and local preachers 4,400, and a membership of 150,000. In 1784 Methodism had in America but a very few preachers. In 1884 she has in regular and local preachers 58,444.

Life is made up not of great sacrifices and duties, but of little things, in which smiles and kindness, and small obligations, given habitually, are what win and preserve the heart and secure comfort.