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### CONFERENCE WORSHIP.

To make our Conference seasons of spiritual power worship must be prominent. The tendency is to retire and crowd out the worship, and give place and prominence to other objects. This will be fatal if not arrested. In every Methodist institution the spiritual element must prevail, or else our backslidings will be assured, and our Conferences will facilitate and increase them. We must protect rigidly and strongly the worship, by giving certain prominent hours sacred to that object. Let there be a sun-rise prayer-meeting; begin the day with sacrifice and praise. Set apart every night for preaching—no suspension or interference with this. Give the afternoons to boards, committees, societies. Let Conference and connectional men and interests be treated with respect, but let them know that these are interests paramount to those represented by them, and that the vitality and increased vigor of the church is to be secured by our close communion with God; that Conference business is important, general and connectional interests are not to be neglected, but that these are kept in their best order and security when there is much prayer, and in an assembly, in which in answer to faith and prayer, God comes down to reveal himself in sensible power.

The presence of the leaders of the Conference at these seasons for Divine worship will be impressive and weighty. The absence of the controlling men of the Conference from the worship is often conspicuous, and always damaging. Sometimes the leading members act as though dignity was a substitute for worship; reputation a substitute for prayer, and leadership relieved from the sacrifices and details of God's service. If the presence of these men give dignity and success to the anniversaries, their absence discredits the season of prayer. If they are notably present and figure on the programme, and are notably absent at the worship, the effect is to discount the worship in the esteem of all. The leaders ought to look after the minutest interests of the church—in their eyes the very stones of Zion should be precious; its walls beautiful, but to whom its spiritual interests are the most ravishing; its holiness the most perfect beauty; its worship the supremest delight—the most important business.

It is to be kept in mind that the merely going through the session of Conference, with a praise worship and business spirit; the securing good results and a quiet season, do not necessarily betoken or secure the presence of God. It is not the performance of business in the most quiet and orderly way; not a brilliant and successful anniversary; not the tact and force of management. These may all be present, with all the exhilaration of success, while underneath, the spiritual may lie crushed and dead. God comes only in response to the spiritual; a lowly, contrite, trusting heart, flowing out in prayer draws him, to this he reveals himself, and the revelation is imposing, sensible, lasting. Business is neither to be neglected nor slighted, but God helps to do business well.

We need mighty outpourings of God's spirit at our Conferences, to make true and good Methodist preachers of us all, to take pride, vanity and the world out of us, in a bunch. To destroy the works of the flesh, these will be there, a measure in all, the aggregate fearful, and some phases of the Conference will help to call them into action.

**Ambition** will be there intriguing, seeking the best place; prostituting the church of God to its unhallowed lusts. **Policy** will be there trimming and balancing; with worldly-wise ways and schemes which mar the cross.

**Money** will be there in the hope of salary; family maintenance; veiled covetousness.

**Convenience** will be there arranging a place to suit its plans and surroundings. Plans and counter-plans; good and bad places; places which will not suit preachers; preachers wanting places; places wanting preachers; in this vexatious waste and wear prayer is often hindered. How we need a mighty deluge of the Spirit to destroy the bad and help the good, to fuse, cement, dovetail.

The laymen need it that they may not lay unsanctified hands on God's altar; its wisdom they need to guide them in all their churchly and secular business ways.

Presiding Elders and Bishops need it to be stronger for Christ than for self, society, money, or the world; strong to stand and stem every unholy current, to hold the appointments, and preachers for Christ and him alone, without variability or shadow of turning; viewing their solemn responsibilities in the light of eternity.

The preachers need it, to accept in humility and faith, their appointments

and disappointments. They need it that all the year their "walk may be close with God; calm and serene their frame;" that with joy and holy triumph they "may endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of their ministry."

Conferences full of Divine power will be epochal and transitional; will give tone and character to the whole church. May God give us such Conferences and begin this fall.—*St. Louis Advocate.*

### A WELL ORDERED FAMILY.

It was our privilege not long ago to be a guest for several days in the family of a gentleman whose name there is no occasion to mention. We arrived at his house, by previous appointment, late on a certain evening, and found only himself and wife, with their eldest son, a student in college, whom we judged to be about sixteen years old, and a daughter, perhaps two years younger, waiting for us. Very soon the young people, affectionately kissing their parents, and taking their leave courteously of us, retired to their apartments, an example which was speedily followed by us all. Having been duly notified that their breakfast hour was at eight o'clock, and being admonished by the glimpse already had, that in that house order reigned, we were careful to present ourselves in the family room, which we found to be the breakfast room, several minutes before the time, where we were kindly welcomed by both the parents, and engaged with them in cheerful conversation.

Almost immediately the son and daughter, whom we had met the evening before, came in, passing directly to their father and mother with their morning kisses for each, and then offering to us their kindly salutations, with inquiries for our welfare. A moment later came in gaily, but without boisterousness, the younger children, each claiming the parental kiss, and then after a brief inspection all around, at a modest signal, which came from I know not where, all quietly ranged themselves, still standing, in their respective places at the table. Then the father, in a few simple words, thanked God that they were permitted to meet again in health and happiness around their bountifully spread table. He rendered thanks that while so many suffered of want they had enough, and besought His blessing on them and on their food, with grace that they might be sincerely thankful and have hearts to care for the poor. Having then spoken a few words to the children, we quietly seated ourselves and began the breakfast.

Very soon, though knives and forks were not idle, there broke out a little flutter of conversation. George, a little six year old, had a report to make on the condition of his sick rabbit, and Mary, a four year old, a real sad story to tell of an accident that had befallen her new dolly; to all of which the parents listened with the kindest sympathy, and were ready with their best suggestions of relief. This was soon interrupted by the entrance of the old nurse with baby, who having been first presented to father and mother, and tenderly caressed by them, was promenaded around the table to be noticed and caressed in turn by his brothers and sisters before being dismissed with acclamations. It was plain that baby was no ordinary personage, and was being early disciplined in the fashions of the house.

What struck us especially and most pleasantly was that each child was neatly and tidily dressed, with not the least mark of haste or negligence; and this the more when we learned afterwards, that except to the very youngest, no assistance was given, not a pin was wanting, nor button drawn away, nor shoestring untied. The morning toilet had been left all to themselves, subject only to the mother's keen and rapid search as they severally presented themselves to her on entering the breakfast room. We learned that for any failure to bear this examination the delinquent was inexorably dismissed to solitary breakfast in the nurse's room. During the whole time of our stay in that family, it gives us pleasure to say that not one case of delinquency occurred, though we did not fail to observe each morning how sharply the mother's eyes conducted the inspection, not overlooking teeth or finger-nails. These children were so genuinely anxious to obtain the mother's kiss of approval that we scarcely know which would have been more grieved, they or we, had they failed.

The family morning worship, at which the whole household were present, followed immediately on the breakfast. Then there was a romp for half an hour, in which old and young participated, on the lawn and in the garden. Dignity was laid aside, and all went into it with a light hearty goodwill. Some newly cut grass was lying

handy, and father and mother got a merry pelting. But at the sound of a bell, a sudden hush fell on the scene. Father went to his office, mother went to her house duties, and the children to their lessons.

We can not begin, for want of space, to enumerate the things about this home which are worthy to be told. Six days, among the happiest of our life, we spent in it, and not once were our eyes offended, or our ears pained. It seemed to us a fitting type of heaven, the very abode of order, peace, and love; and no words can describe the sweetness of it. The only sad face we saw there was that of little George mourning for his dead rabbit. Not one harsh, or petulant and impatient word was spoken by either parent or child. There was never hurry, never confusion, never anything out of time, or out of place.

Once having an opportunity, before we took our leave of this charming family, we congratulated these parents on their remarkable success in the training of their children, and begged them to explain it. They both seemed pleased, and without hesitation the father answered: "Under God, the most important thing of all is that I and my incomparable wife are entirely of one mind, and work heartily together, making it the chief concern of our lives to bring up our children in God's fear and favor. It is our study by day and by night, and we do not find it a hardship, but a joy. Our trust is in the Lord, and in the influence of His word and Spirit. We exact implicit obedience of our children, and endeavor above all things to cultivate their affections. We never deal harshly with them, nor unjustly, and never deceive them, and are far more anxious to be loved and trusted by them than to be feared. Any other fear than the fear of love we deprecate and dread. Moreover, we endeavor to keep away from our house all hurtful influences. A domestic of either sex who shows a turbulent or disorderly spirit, or appears to be in any way unprincipled, we do not harbor for a day."

We asked: "Do you ever use the rod?" He answered: "Our children know that there is one, but they do not expect that it will ever be used, nor do we. This rod is for the fool's back, and our children are not fools. Good citizens know well that the state has scaffolds and prisons, but they have no fear that they shall be hanged or cast into prison, nor does the state intend they shall be. The rod in our house is for capital punishment, and for capital offenses would be brought out; but our policy is preventive, and we do not look for capital offenses to be committed."

Happy are the children born in that house. O, why should there not be more well ordered families! Nothing is wanted but well-ordered parents, who will not have their gray hairs be "brought down with sorrow to the grave." In the families we have described, the process of training is begun in the cradle, and is never interrupted.—*Albion, in Pittsburgh Christian Advocate.*

### AFTER THE ELECTION IS OVER.

Before the result of the election is known—while, in fact, it is proceeding, these words are being printed. Hence they should be read by men of all parties with candor.

It is very hard to see how men of ability and honesty can differ from us. If they are dishonest, the case is plain; if they are honest, but of weak intellect, it is easy to explain why they differ from us. But we know that we are of clear understanding, and feel that we are honest; how then can they be both and differ from us? If, for every time the phrases, "No sensible man can fail to see," "Every honest man knows," "Every man of common sense and common honesty knows," etc., have been uttered during the past three months, the Church received but the coin of least value, its treasuries would be full to overflowing. Yet there is nothing that a sensible man may not fail to see, or an honest man fail to know, or one who is both fail to recognize.

In popular argument the next step beyond these harmless phrases is, "If any man says so and so, he is a liar." "If any man votes for a thief or a libertine, or a demagogue, or a fanatic, he is one himself." By means of these phrases, uttered under excitement, friends have been alienated, Church members have been put at sword points, and communities filled with bitterness.

Our counsel is for every man to stretch out his hands to his neighbor. The election over, the President is the people's President; the Government must endure the strain. The things that could be shaken have been fearfully shaken, and the things that remain must be strengthened. Let the wrangling be forgotten. The shoemaker must make shoes, the tailor clothes, the physician attend to his

patients, and the lawyer his cases, and the minister must preach the Gospel.

It is often perilous to apologize in detail for words spoken in the heat of controversy. The danger is of getting angry and fighting the battle over again. "He insulted me and would not apologize," said a friend to another, of a third. "I did apologize," said he, when spoken to. "I smiled, held out my hand, and spoke, which was as much as I could risk."

The winners should hold out the olive-branch at once. The defeated are sore; let not their temptations to ill humor be increased by the prolonged exultations, and especially by the taunts, of victors.

In one of our churches there were two life-long friends who divided on politics. After the election the defeated partisan was gloomy and distant, but went to church as usual. One evening in the prayer meeting he said: "Brethren, we have different opinions about Hancock and Garfield, but thank God we are of one mind concerning our Lord Jesus Christ." The simplicity with which it was said melted his estranged friend and all who heard it.

What is religion worth if it cannot endure a difference of opinion?

What is friendship worth if it is purchased at the price of mental subjection?

In the present outlook, unity, peace, cheerful co operation in church and business, are necessary to maintain the prosperity of the country. Therefore, let every man "help his brother, and say unto his neighbor, Be of good courage."—*N. Y. Christian Advocate.*

### For the Advocate.

#### OVERWORKED MOTHERS.

BY REV. J. W. VANDIVER.

The details of practical domestic life, are wonderfully overlooked. We enter a lovely home, where neatness, plenty, loyalty, and love abound, and we exclaim mentally, what a happy family: while the energies of the dear wife or mother, have been worn into frazzles, to keep up the showing upon which we look with so much admiration. Not a clamor, from a hurt toe, to a fall down stairs, but must come under the soothing treatment of a mother's hand. Not a requisition from red shoes up to ponies and pianos, but is made to her sympathizing ear. Not a change in apparel, not a toy, or a school-book, can be intimated, but her judgement must be consulted. All the controversies among the children, as well as all the neglect and imperfection of servants, go immediately to her court for adjudication. Added to this, we might make a list of local duties,—to keep every thing in "taste," and "in place," and a volume could be written. Think of sweeping the floor, painting the hearth, oiling the andirons, and dusting the mantle and the furniture, over three hundred times a year; Think of bringing fresh water from the well or spring over a thousand times per annum. Think of carrying scraps to a stupid little tight skinned pig, nine to twelve hundred times, before it is of sufficient size to make food for the family. If the numberless duties of the house and family leave an odd thirty minutes for the poor woman to think her own thoughts, or snatch an idea from her church papers, or the Lord's Word, it pops into her head that the flowers, and the shrubbery, and the vines must have her attention. And my connection with the seed trade for the last several years, has shown me, that very largely, the duty of buying the seeds, projecting, and cultivating the garden, devolves upon her. Servants are furnished of course but what woman that doesn't know that no help is preferable to a green negro in the garden?

But the unceasing care for the dear children at home,—some of them sickly and pettish, is what is bringing many noble hearted mothers to premature graves. Excitable as she is affectionate, how often would a philosopher guess, she would jump or start unceremoniously in twelve months? Not less than thirty-five hundred times!

Now, not a word is said against the gallantry, or chivalry, of Southern men; for no more generous husbands ever led trusting wives to the altar. But these wrongs exist, by oversight, or a want of close, scrutinizing thought. We ease our head down upon a tempting pillow and leave a wearied wife in charge of sick child because it prefers her, and because she is kinder and tenderer in her nature, and therefore better adapted to the work. Such proprieties exist in the very best families; and often without a single thought of neglect upon the part of a doting, loving husband. But female nerves are not made of iron; they need relaxation, and rest, and refreshment; or premature disease will supervene, and perhaps death close the picture. I want it to go out in black and white,

that thousands of the purest, of the best and most affectionate wives, are shortening their useful lives by continuous and anxious care for their families. They need a word of sympathy, a stream of out-door atmosphere; a beam or so of sunshine; to see the hills and dales; and listen to the songs of birds, and the murmur of streams. Weaverville, N. C.

### PHILOSOPHICAL CANT.

[FROM DR. DEEM'S ADDRESS IN "CHRISTIAN THOUGHT."]

Perhaps, also, we cannot warn one another too often of the danger of falling into "cant." In philosophy and in science it is just as easy to acquire the habit of using words which have been emptied of their meaning, as it is in religion.

Into our modern philosophical discussions has come the word "unthinkable." It is of such frequent use that it might be well to ask those who so often take refuge under it as a shield when they are attacked, and so often hurl it as a javelin against any statement they oppose, what they mean by it. Do they mean "inconceivable"? But "conceivability" is not held by metaphysicians as a criterion of any truth which can be proved, and there are many things accepted by all classes of thinkers as true which are not conceivable. The expansion of space infinitely is inconceivable. So is an interminable series, so the approach of asymptotes. Is there absolute knowledge of any kind that is "thinkable" in the sense of being "conceivable"?

How could any proposition be declared unthinkable unless it had been thought somehow? The agreement or disagreement of the terms of a proposition may be declared axiomatic, or demonstrable, or probable, or possible, or impossible, or absurd, but there must first have been thought of the meaning of the terms, and thought of the statement of the agreement or disagreement of the terms, but nothing can be declared in this sense "unthinkable" until after it has been thought; a process which would prove it not unthinkable.

But in regard to any proposition, suppose that two men state, the one that to him it is thinkable, and the other that to him it is unthinkable; which is to decide, or who is to decide? A might say that B could "think" it if he would, and the retort of B might be that A was wholly mistaken, and that, assuming his truthfulness, he only thought that he thought it.

Can any man go further than to say that he is not capable of "thinking" it? But suppose a million of men, or many millions, should asseverate that a proposition was unthinkable to them, would that prove it unthinkable absolutely; nor would it be proved, so long as there existed a single intelligent personality who had not been heard from on that subject. Nor would the unanimity of the race now existing establish the unthinkability of any proposition. To Lucretius it would have been "unthinkable" in the sense in which the word seems to be often used, if in objection to his corpuscular theory he had been told that there is no "up," and consequently no "down," in the material universe. With our cosmical ideas the absence of "up" and "down" is very plain. If he had heard the statement, and had said "that is unthinkable," he could only have meant that it seemed impossible for him to co-ordinate it with his conception of the universe; and so it was. After all, is not that which is really meant by this expression, as it is now generally used? If that be all, why is it not so stated? Is it not arrogance to assume that any man knows what can and cannot be thought? When any man says of an idea that it is unthinkable, he virtually asserts that his intellect is the measure of all capability.

Those who are fond of the phrase are probably so persuaded, but if that be true it unfits them for every office of teacher, of either philosophy or ethics. It sounds like the protest of the imbecile, or the brag of the bully. Then, there is the word "unknowable." It is ordinarily employed with a capital initial, to represent what would stand for God if the writers were compelled to admit that there is such a thing or being as God in the universe. Manifestly this is what they do not wish to do. The connection in which the word occurs shows to those who look below the lines the secret desire which is embodied in a marked argument to prove that there is no personal Creator of the universe. The intimation is that we can never know whether there be such a God or not. This sly process finds some acceptance made for itself in the universal consciousness of mankind of inability to comprehend God. The nature of matter in its essence was just as well known to the first man as to any man, to the untutored Bushman as to any professor

of science in any university; and the fact that our progress in science and philosophy through the ages has brought no man nearer than any other man to a knowledge of the nature of matter, while all men have always known the fact of its existence, and many men have learned much of its many properties, should cause all thinkers to perceive that a denial of the existence of God and of our capabilities to know his attributes because in his essence he is unknowable, and so make one word which is true of one concept and false of two others stand for all, raises *prima facie* evidence of philosophical unfairness.

### SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTION OF CHILDREN.

A Methodist brother, whose little daughter was attending the Sunday-school of another denomination, remarked that in such matters he thought children ought to choose for themselves. He considered his course a great expression of liberality—a rebuke to narrow, bigoted sectarianism. But we regard it a sickly sentimentalism that has in it neither reason nor religion. The idea of a child making selection of theological instructors—of following its own fancy or folly, and for a parent to approve and applaud! Every father, by Divine appointment, is the prophet, priest and king of his own household. The duties of these officers are imperative, and can not be neglected or evaded. He is to instruct, counsel, control and direct his children. They can not be allowed to command their own actions without hurt to themselves, sorrow to the parent and a violation of the law of God. We have known a few Methodists who refrained from baptizing their children for fear that they might be dissatisfied with it in after years and prefer another mode. Without hesitancy we say such persons commit a moral wrong. If they believe the Scriptures teach the right and duty of infant church membership, wrong is done if it be denied to the little ones God gives them. What they may do in after years is not their concern. If they choose to repudiate their child baptism and consecration to God, upon them rests the responsibility. But the parents' duty is plain. All such quibbling is unworthy of a healthy religious life. Let present duty be discharged whatever the evolutions of the future.—*New Orleans Advocate.*

### THE DUAL BIOGRAPHY.

For reasons that are controlling and that make the work to me a sacred duty, I have undertaken the preparation of a volume commemorative of Dr. Lovick Pierce and of his son, Bishop George F. Pierce. I do this because the dead wished it, and their families desire it.

The material for the work is rich and varied, but it is widely scattered. To be useful to any, it must be brought together. There are thousands of letters preserved in desks and hundreds of illustrative incidents held in the memory of friends, that would be invaluable to me. I ask earnestly for both the letters and incidents. I will be thankful for any letters from either the "Doctor" or the "Bishop";—they both had a trick of saying the best things in the most unexpected way. Many of their brightest and wisest sentences occur in short private letters.

If any friend will lend me a copy of Bishop Pierce's "Bible Speech," delivered in New York in 1844, I will be grateful.

The work will not "appear at once;" it will take time; a biographer should at least have opportunity to do his work well.

ATTICUS G. HAYGOOD.

OXFORD, GA.

For the Advocate.

### CONFERENCE NOTICE—NO. 2.

Rates over the various Railroads have been obtained as follows: Raleigh & Gaston, Raleigh & Augusta, and C. C. Railroads, three cents per mile each way. Richmond & Danville and Western N. C. Railroads "will grant the usual rates." This is all the satisfaction I could obtain. The W. & W. Railroad, 3 cents per mile each way. The A. & N. C. Railroad, 3 cents per mile each way.

Will the Presiding Elders please send me the names of their Delegates. E. A. YATES.

"If you ask me how you may shorten your sermons, I shall say, study them better." We are generally longest when we have least to say. A man with a great deal of well-prepared matter will probably not exceed forty minutes. When he has less to say he will go on for fifty minutes, and when he has absolutely nothing to say, he will need an hour to say it in."—*Spurgeon.*