

Raleigh Christian Advocate

VOL. XXXII.—NO. 3

THE ORGAN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

ESTABLISHED 1855

REV. E. T. B. REID,
Editor and Publisher.

RALEIGH, N. C., WEDNESDAY, JAN. 19, 1887.

\$2.00 PER ANNUM
Payable in Advance

For the Advocate.

Our Virginia Correspondence.

BY REV. JOHN E. EDWARDS, D. D.

TIME FLIES!

The noiseless stream of time bears us, with the absolute certainty of destiny, to the ocean of eternity. Another year has been swallowed up in the vortex of the irrevocable past that has already engulfed all the artificial divisions of time since the world began. Another year has been added to the history of our race; another year of church history has been added to the past; another year of our national history is closed up; another year of our short lives is behind us. But there is no pause; no stopping station in our transitory existence where we can rest and take a survey of the path over which we have travelled. What we call the present glides away like a bubble on the rolling stream, or flows behind us like the milestones on the railway, even while we speak of it. It is gone before we can make our reckoning. The years go by, and we grow old so quietly that we are startled when we wake up to the fact that fifty, sixty, seventy years have intervened between what we call the present and the day that gave us birth! When life is young and the dew of the morning is on us, we think it will be a long time before the sun reaches the meridian. The days, and weeks, and months, and seasons all seem longer in the morning of life than they do in the afternoon of the changeful day of our mortal existence. Alas for us! With many the sun does not reach the meridian; or, reaching it, the luminary drops down at noon. When once the meridian is passed, and the sun is on the western slope, it goes down very fast. The shadows grow long; the dusk of the evening gathers on the hither side of the hills that bound the horizon. "The night cometh."

A DAY AT A TIME.

God gives us but a day at a time. Each day has its morning, noon, and night. A single day is a sort of miniature life. The successive days, as they come and go, if properly improved and well spent, will, in the end, round off a well spent life. The true philosophy of life is to live the true religion of life, is embodied in the brief sentence, "Live a day at a time." Take no over-anxious thought for to-morrow. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Each day brings its quota of duties, burdens, and trials. Take these as they come. To-day well spent is the best preparation for to-morrow. Most of the troubles and anxieties of every day life are borrowed from the future. It is not so much what we are burdened with to-day that makes us unhappy, anxious, and disquieted, as it is what we anticipate in the future. We stagger and grow weary, and too often become querulous and unhappy, by taking upon ourselves the solitudes, and cares, and probable afflictions—personal and domestic—that lie somewhere in the future, forgetful of the fact that the grave, of to-morrow, may give us a peaceful seclusion from the apprehended evils, that fill us with trouble and anxiety to-day. God, as has been said by some one, has mercifully distributed the burdens, duties, and cares of life, in three hundred and sixty-five parcels, and he gives us only one parcel or package at a time. This we can easily bear, and carry through the day. Let us cheerfully and heroically accept the burdens of to-day; and then, after a night's repose and refreshment, take the package of to-morrow, and go on, from day to day, till our Father God tells us to lie down in the grave, and rest from our labors forever.

WE KNOW NOT WHAT SHALL BE ON THE MORROW.

We cannot penetrate the future. An impenetrable veil hangs in such close proximity to our eyes that we cannot see an inch beyond the present moment. We are, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, hastening along a hidden path, shrouded in darkness, without any head light shining upon the way. The engineer on the railway has a drummed light, blazing on the front of the locomotive, which reveals the steel rail sufficiently far ahead to disclose to him the gaping chasm occasioned by the sweeping away of a bridge, or to see the obstruction thrown across the track by the storm. He sees the danger in time or him to reverse his engine; and, by modern appliances to put on the brakes, and thus to save himself and the lives of the passengers, from sudden destruction. But we must drive on in the dark without any device by which we can protect ourselves, or our friends, or families, from the perils that endanger our safety on the path of life. "We know not what a day may bring forth." We are ignorant of what awaits us the next hour—the next breath. We may be a head-heat of death, and yet be without any apprehension of its near approach. The lesson is: "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man shall come." We are ignorant of what awaits us to our final account, and seal up our destiny for eternity. It is eminently proper for us, especially at the beginning of a New Year, to think on these things, and to enter up new purposes, by the help of God, to "walk by faith and not by sight." Faith, not sight, not sense, is the condition of the Christian life. Many of the leading doctrines of the Bible are addressed to our faith as opposed to sight. The future state—

heaven, hell, the resurrection—are addressed to our faith. We live by faith, as Christians, and we die by faith. But, enough on this line.

ANOTHER SUBJECT.

"Variety is the spice of life," the reader knows the rest. A *variety* or other article in the contents of a weekly paper must have in it something of "variety" to ensure its popularity. Methodism, in its essential features, is the same as in the days of Wesley in England, and as in the days of Asbury and Coke in America. It is the same, modified by the changes which have taken place in our population, in the multiplication, of pastoral charges wrought by Sunday-schools, missionary enterprise, educational movements, as also by reason of the fact that our preachers now have families, a thing that was comparatively rare in the earlier days of Methodism, in this country. Formerly the class-leader did the greater part of the *pastoral* work; and it is only in the last fifty years or less that our itinerant preachers have even been called *pastors*. Parsonages have been built and furnished for the accommodation of the pastor; or, as he is still called in the Discipline, "preacher in charge." There is such a thing as family and home connecting themselves with the itinerant preacher's life, in our day and time. In the days of Asbury, and even down to a later day, our Bishops left at liberty, as they were fully empowered to do by the government of the church, to transfer a preacher from one Conference to another, even without consulting him on the subject. But the time is past in which any of our Bishops, of the present day, would think of taking up a preacher, with his family, and violently disrupt his ties to his Conference, and transfer him across intervening States to another Conference, without conferring with the preacher himself, and consulting with him, in a fatherly, friendly way, as to his convenience and willingness to be so transferred. It is fairly to be presumed that, in all the transfers made by our Bishops, in these later years—more particularly of preachers with families, and bound by family and social ties, to their Conferences respectively—the preachers have, directly or indirectly, given the Bishops to understand that they were "loyal Methodist preachers," as the phrase goes, and were willing to leave themselves in the hands of the Bishops, to be used as they might deem best for the good of the church, knowing of course, in advance, where the Bishops were going to send them. I state what I suppose to be facts, and do not pronounce the slightest censure on the preachers consenting to be transferred, even if it were half way across the continent, on such conditions. Indeed, I think it would be not only unwise, but in many instances positively wrong, for the Bishops to make the transfers, or for the preachers to accept them on any other conditions. It would, in my judgment, be an impeachment of the wisdom, and a reflection on the humanity of the Bishops to suppose for a moment that any one of them would take up a preacher with his family and transfer him to another Conference, near, or remote, no matter how good the appointment to which he assigned him, without first satisfying himself that such transfer would be acquiesced in by the preacher so transferred. Where transfers are desired by our preachers, from one Conference to another, on account of health, family relations, or other like considerations, the Bishops ought, unless overbalanced by counter considerations, to grant such transfers, with the understanding, of course, that being transferred they are expected to accept such work as may be assigned to them after the transfer is granted, and not as a condition, in advance, that a certain creamy station, or other desirable charge is offered as a premium for the transfer. Transfers ought not to turn on such pivotal points. The itinerancy is a grand thing righteously administered. So note it be. Amen.

LOCAL NOTES.

In conformity to old Methodist usage the "Watch Night" service was observed by the Methodist Churches in Danville, and also by the church in North Danville, Mount Vernon and Floyd Street united with the Main Street Church in this service; and notwithstanding the extreme inclemency of the weather the congregation was good, and the exercises pleasant and profitable. The "week of prayer" ordered by the Evangelical Alliance was also observed by the churches in Danville—all the churches uniting in these meetings for prayer and exhortation, which were held every afternoon, from 5 till 6 o'clock. The meetings took the round of the principal churches, and were conducted by the pastors of the different denominations in turn. It was indeed a beautiful spectacle to see the people of all classes and denominations turning out, in large numbers, filling our churches, and engaging with such spirit and heartiness in these delightful meetings. They will be productive of good in the community.

Rev. A. C. Bledsoe, D. D., has fully entered on his pastoral work in North Danville. At present the congregation worships in the fine lecture room of the church, the audience room being, as yet, unfinished. The work, however, is progressing, as the weather and other conditions will admit, and probably by May the house will be ready for occupancy; and, when finished, it will

rank second only to Mount Vernon in Danville, and Park Place in Richmond, in point of architectural design, finish, taste, comfort, and convenience. The church stands as a monument to North Danville liberality and enterprise, and an ornament to this rapidly growing town.

Danville, Va., Jan. 10th, 1887.

For the Advocate.

The Rambler—On Dancing.

"What harm is there in dancing?" The roguish beauty looks up into your right reverend face so earnestly with her innocent inquiring eyes. Will you give her an answer? Ah, no! she does not want it, and if you did you would make her blush to the tips of her pinkish ears. And yet you will venture. You will talk to her solemnly of mis-spent time and of the power of influence; you will discourse scientifically of late hours, and of low-neck dresses, and of midnight air; you will even venture to hint at the evil of social mixtures; but you know when you have gone thus far that you have not answered her, and you do not dare to go farther. And she knows it too: what a delicious discovery she has made, that even her minister could not present a serious objection to dancing!

"What harm is there in dancing?" Are you a Methodist? Then you must excuse me: it is not a proper question for a Methodist to ask of her pastor. Dancing may be as innocent as a baby's prattle, but when you became a Methodist you made a solemn vow to all intents and purposes not to dance, and the question for you now is not, is it wrong to dance? but is it not, to break my vow? The church opened her arms wide to receive you, and she has cared for you, and she has carried you, and out of the gratitude of your heart you go all the day long singing:

"O mother dear, Jerusalem!"

and now when night comes will you go over to the enemy and by violating your vows bring her into open contempt? It is a depraved child indeed who stabs his mother as she presses him to her bosom.

But here is a young man who has never joined the church: he is only an honest searcher after truth and he is willing to walk in it when he finds it. Surely he has a right to ask the question. Shall he be answered? Shall the pastor whose duty it is to dispense the truth strive to elude the question with a few trifling arguments merely because the plain truth may be too harsh for polite ears?

Here are a few probes which may find something: Why do you dance? "Because it gives us pleasure." Whence comes the pleasure? From the music? If you were compelled to sit still and listen through seven mortal hours to the sweetest strains that ever were drawn from a violin, you would wish in your heart that all the violins in creation were in the bottom of the ocean. From the "poetry of motion"? If you had to trip and slip and slide over a greased floor: all by yourself from ten o'clock till cock-crow you would think the "poetry of motion" was the invention of the biggest crack-brain out of the madhouse. Why don't young men enjoy dancing with their brothers? Why do we not have dances for young ladies only? Why does the girl who waltzes with her brother get tired very soon and go home before midnight? Why is it impossible to break up a ball at ten o'clock? Why is it that the ball opens with a square dance and after midnight, when all the old people have gone home, the quadrilles are struck out of the programme and there is nothing but waltzing? Why is it that some young men occupy a *social* position in the ball-room which they are not allowed to occupy elsewhere? Why are not high-neck and long-sleeve dresses fashionable at balls? Why may not a preacher dance? Has God given us two sets of rules for living—one for the clergy and one for the laity? Why shouldn't good Sister Dorcas, whom everybody believes to be a saint, dance? Why is it that nearly all the greatest and best in the history of the church have publicly condemned dancing and not one truly great man can be quoted in favor of it? Why does one who has been dancing during the week feel specially uncomfortable at communion the following Sunday? Why does a dance in a village stir the religious revival in the bud?

"But dancing is good exercise and our girls do need exercise so but, you know," That is a fact. There are no girls in the world who need exercise so much as these city darlings. Poor mother with the dear, tired hands, who isn't complained for want of exercise in five years, gets up with the dawn, gives us breakfast, dresses the babies, sweeps the house, makes up the beds, bakes a cake, and sends a cup of tea up to Miss Sophia's room at 11 o'clock; and by-and-by when the dear darling comes down and begs mother for another cup for that horrid headache, why, there is nothing on earth for her to do and she really must go to the ball to-night for a little exercise, you know.

"But there is a time to dance." That too is a fact. But you are the last man

alive to dance according to Solomon and the Scriptures. Get your fiddlers together and try it. Put the young men on one side and the young ladies, with long-neck dresses, on the other. If you are ready Brother Jonathan will raise the tune. Now begin:

"Sing praises unto the Lord—sing praises!"

Ho, there! You young men, keep on your own side. What's the matter? Why don't you keep on? Ah! "there is a time to dance," and a time to be sincere.

Uncle Moses Smiler has been writing again. Says he: "Now there's Jerushy Daniels, as purty a gal as ever I seed; I was talkin to her t'other day an she dey up an sed spiteful-like, 'ye, she had been dancin, an she'd git agin, an the preacher, hed better say nuthin to her, nuther, fur if he did she'd git mad an not sing any more in the quire. Thet beat my eyes. A gal jines the church an you's the shepherd where she's one ov the leetle lambs; an when you see her in danger ov bein chewed up by the wolves or skinnin herself on the rocks you go to her tender like to protect her. 'Go way!' sez she, turin red. 'If yer say anything to me I'll git mad. Go way!' O Mister Preacher, what an awful fix you'll be in if she gits mad and dont sing no more in the quire!"

EDWARD L. PELL.

For the Advocate.

A Letter From Dr. Hoss.

MY DEAR BRO. REID: I take it that you want news and not reflections. Quite recently, it has been my good fortune to mix considerably with the churches in the Tennessee Conference. They seem to be doing well without any exception. At Clarksville, a town of about 5,000 inhabitants, an elegant house of worship has just been completed at a cost of a little over \$40,000. The next thing is a fine new parsonage. It will soon be under way. At Murfreesboro, a similar enterprise is on foot. In the city of Nashville, the indications are that the present year will witness the erection of three new churches. The first of these, Foster Street or McFerrin Chapel, is already well on the way to completion. It will cost \$8,000 or \$10,000 and will be the prettiest small church here or hereabouts. The Tulip Street folks expect to spend \$50,000 or \$60,000 dollars, and West End, near the Vanderbilt University, talk of \$25,000. These facts all indicate progress. It is also to be noticed that there are many other tokens of increasing vigor in the style and type of our church life. Let us hail them all.

We have had the great pleasure of listening to Dr. Philip Schaaf. He lectured before the University three times, once on the poetry of the Bible, once on the English language of the world, and once on Bible Lands. There is only one judgment, thoughtful, and instructive. In social intercourse, Dr. Schaaf is very agreeable. His German brogue does not detract from his utterance. He has a keen relish for a good joke, and, like so many other men of profound and varied erudition, is generally modest. In personal appearance, he is noticeable. His height is about 5 ft. 10 inches. His head is covered with a heavy stock of perfectly white hair; his eyes are very bright, his mouth a little one-sided, and his whole face mild and benevolent. The boys will hereafter read his books with new interest.

You have perhaps noticed that Dr. Rankin, pastor of the Centenary Church at Chattanooga, Tenn., has published five sermons in a pamphlet form. "What I Saw in a Bar-room." They are, of course, designed to aid the current reformation on the subject of Temperance. Dr. Rankin seems straight, and hits hard. He has gained a great reputation for fearlessness in handling popular vices, and deserves it. These sermons ought to have a wide circulation. They are simple, strong, severe. I predict an extensive sale for them.

Funny things sometimes happen in the pulpit. This is especially the case when the preacher is doing business on borrowed capital. Let me tell a tale. Once upon a time, not one thousand miles from the city of Nashville, a District Conference was in session. On Thursday morning, a popular visiting brother was put up to preach. His text was: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go." The sermon, though not profound, was very clear and good to the use of edifying. Everybody got happy; there was even some shouting in the camp. Well, the visiting brother took his departure; and, on the next day, another one came on, and was also invited to hold forth. When he selected the same text, there was a general opening of eyes, and pricking up of ears. As he proceeded to lay down his proposition after proleptically, the audience began to smile, and when he wound up with the same application and exhortation, it was difficult to keep down the merriment. But the story does not end here. On the following Sunday the first brother above mentioned happened in a little way on the E. T. V. & G. R. R., and was again asked to preach. Of course, he did not refuse, and of course his text was: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go." One week later, a Cumberland Presbyterian preacher passing that way followed him on precisely the same lines. The next Summer, I was at a religious gathering about one hundred miles distant. By

this time, the joke was in the air. Several of the preachers knew of it, and when the good brother of whom we have been chiefly speaking came in and was appointed to occupy the pulpit, the inquiry was pretty general, "Will he bring out the children of Israel," and sure enough he did. I afterwards heard him repeat it in another State, and learned that it was a regular sugar-stick with him. In the meantime, at least two other preachers began to use it, and there might have arisen some serious dispute as to its ownership if it had not been found *verboten*, or nearly so, in an old number of the *Honorable Review*. I had almost forgotten it, when it was brought to my mind a few days ago by one of my students who had just heard it again from a metropolitan pulpit of another denomination. I now move that the text and sermon be granted "an indefinite leave of absence." We are all borrowers. More or less, our whole intellectual life comes from foreign sources. Absolute originality is one of the rarest of things. But that a preacher should appropriate bodily the discourse of another man, and even be proud of the reputation he makes in delivering it, passes comprehension. The University is just closing up its first twenty weeks of the current session. The intermediate examinations will begin next week. The indications are that we shall have a considerable increase of students.

E. E. HOSS.

Nashville, Tenn., Jan. 10th, 1887.

For the Advocate.

A Cabinet of Anecdotes and Illustrations.

BY REV. H. T. HUDSON, D. D.

THE STOLEN SERMON.

A president of a College, and a theological student were invited out in the country to dedicate a church. On Saturday night, they slept in the same room. The president asked the young preacher to read to him his sermon. It was done. The old president, having a good memory, took it all in. When he went to enter the pulpit Sunday morning, (being a very fat, bulky man) he found the door small for entrance; so a ladder had to be provided for him to climb over. In this way he entered the pulpit by climbing over. When he got in, he preached the young minister's sermon from beginning to end. In the evening, the young man was put up to preach. He began by making an apology to the effect that he had hastily arranged a few thoughts to meet the hour, that the sermon he had carefully prepared and expected to preach, had been delivered by the brother who occupied the pulpit in the morning. Then glancing his eye at the old president, he slowly read the following text: "He that entereth not in by the door, but climbeth up some other way is both a thief and robber." A ripple of laughter ran over the congregation, and the face of the president turned red as a beet.

"RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL."

This is the glorious Spirit of the blessed Gospel. It is the essence of true religion. The fallen nature of man is just the opposite of this. Ancient tribes overcome weak tribes and destroyed them just because they had the physical power to do it. Such military men as Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Caesar, and others, swept like cyclones of destruction over other nations, just because they had the military power to do so without any regard to the principles of right. They conquered by brute forces. The iron handed men ruled the world.

But the benign spirit of the Gospel brought the power of winning love to bear upon the minds of men. The Gospel comes to open prison doors, to beat swords into reaping hooks and spears into pruning knives. This is the heavenly Spirit that turns a smiling face to scowling ones. It is a kind disposition beaming on the hating one. It is calmness quieting violent turbulence. It is patience clothed in sweetness, disarming the wrathful man of his evil intentions. It is the lamb overcoming the lion. The law of the Gospel is the law of kindness.

This law of returning good for evil is the king that conquers in the long run. It is bound to win the day. It carries in its hand the omnipotence of sweet-compelling love. "We love Him because He first loved us" is the grand principle that is to conquer the world. The following illustration will show that kindness overcomes where force fails:

A dispute once arose between the Wind and the Sun, which was the stronger of the two, and they agreed to put the point upon this issue, that whichever soonest made a traveller take off his cloak, should be accounted the more powerful. The Wind began, and blew with all his might and main a blast, cold and fierce as a Persian storm; but the stronger he blew the closer the traveller wrapped his cloak around him, and the tighter he grasped it with his hands. Then broke out the Sun; with his welcome beams he dispersed the vapor and the cold; the traveller felt the genial warmth, and as the Sun shone brighter and brighter, he sat down, overcome with the heat, and cast his cloak on the ground.

Thus the Sun was declared the conqueror; and it has ever been deemed that persuasion is better than force; and that the sunshine of a kind and gentle manner will sooner lay open a

poor man's heart than all the threatenings and force of blustering authority. This law of returning good for evil ought to be taught diligently in our families, which are God's school and training ground. Teach your little girl to give apples to the girl that pouted at her and called her by some ugly name. Teach your boy to return good to the boy that maltreated him.

THE TOBACCO CHEWER CHAWED.

James Axley was a pioneer Methodist preacher in east Tennessee. He was a bold reprove of sin, a direct preacher, and quite eccentric in his manner. Hugh L. White, a noted public man in Tennessee, relates the following anecdote illustrating Axley's boldness in reproving misbehavior in church. Axley arose on one occasion and looking over the congregation, said, it was a painful duty to reprove, but it had to be done. He first reprove a man for going out during service and coming back-stamping the mud of his boots at the door. Then he reprove some girls for giggling and some else for sleeping. Judge White said he enjoyed it all hugely, and at the same time he was enjoying a good chew of tobacco and spitting the saliva on the floor in front of him. After Axley had got through with the rest he turned to White, pointing his long bony finger at him, said: "Now, look at that dirty, nasty, filthy tobacco chewer, sitting on the end of that front seat. See what he has been about! Look at those puddles on the floor; a frog would not get into them; think of the tails of the sister's dresses being dragged through that muck."

The mortified Judge never chewed any more tobacco in Church. It would be a good thing, if all the preachers should act the part of Axley when they see men soiling the floor of the church in the same way. It is a very filthy habit, yet how many, even of church members, follow the practice.

Foolish Protestant Parents.

A Roman Catholic priest is reported to have said in a sermon, a few days ago, that "one-third of the number of students in Catholic convents in this country are of Protestant parentage." Whether this is true or not, we have no means of knowing; but that many Protestants are reckless enough to do this we do know, and in not a few cases their daughters become Roman Catholics.

A long and very interesting account of the influences brought to bear upon a young lady of our acquaintance—influences most subtle, and all the more dangerous because nothing offensive or aggressive was done—was recently given to us by her as she was on the way for a visit to the institution from which she had been graduated. We may some day print it.

Some of the Roman Catholic schools are better than some Protestant schools, but upon the average Roman Catholic schools are less thorough and practical than those supported by Protestants, and, except in a few cases of unusual strength of mind, or positiveness of conviction, they either produce an utter indifference to religion or develop a strong tendency to Romanism.

Probably the priest greatly exaggerated the number; but it is large enough to justify an earnest caution against such folly.—*N. Y. Christian Advocate.*

For the Advocate.

Unbelief.

In human nature there can be nothing blacker than unbelief. It impeaches God's wisdom, power, goodness, justice, mercy, truth and faithfulness. It holds up the God of truth as unworthy of credit. It makes him a liar. It charges him with perjury. It derides all his goodness and despises all his mercy. It makes light of the bloody sweat and dying agonies of his dear son. It is a sin against the law, against the Gospel, against the divine attributes, against every person in the Godhead, against the highest testimonies against our own best interests, against the only way of life and salvation.—*Phonix.*

An Indian's Answer.

When I was a boy, about twelve years old, a good man, and intimate acquaintance of my father's, came to our house and spent the night. He had been a surgeon in the Revolutionary War. This good man had become much in love with the principles of the Friends. He told us in the evening the following little story, which made an abiding and pleasant impression on my young mind: One day a white man, on meeting an Indian, asked him, "Why don't you kill the Quakers as well as other people?" The Indian answered, "Me no kill Quaker; Quaker no kill me." There is a great volume of important meaning in these plain words of the Indian, which the rulers and soldiers and common people of the world should consider and heed. Love begets love. Peace begets peace.—*J. H. in a language of Peace.*

Repeating tears are the joy of God and angels. Doves delight to be about the waters; and surely God's spirit (who once descended in the form of a dove) takes great delight in the tears of repentance.

RENEW your subscription.