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REV. FRANK L. REED, Editor and Publisher.

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For the Advocate. Our Virginia Correspondence.

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

"THE HOME OF OUR CHILDHOOD."

Time with its ruthless hand plays its grim and cruel games upon the face of things. After the sun of life has passed the meridian and begins to drop down towards the horizon, we instinctively turn our eyes backwards and try to conjure up the objects and incidents that are interwoven with life's young dream; and, it may be, half audibly repeat: "How dear to my heart are the scenes of my childhood;" and, looking through the mist of irremissible tears, the dear old home, with all its cherished associations comes back to memory, as a palpable reality. Seen in the distance we invest it with a charm and fascination that has a kinship to the Eden of innocence and beauty in which our first parents spent the morning of life, ere the blight of the curse had despoiled the flowers of Paradise of their fragrance and bloom. Fancy invests each well remembered object with a garment of bewitching loveliness. All the dark days are forgotten. No sigh of sorrow, no pang of pain; no fear of bitterness; no blasted hopes, no blighted prospects are recalled. We see nothing but that which is clothed in the habiliments of beauty; nothing that is cold, or repulsive. The garden is fragrant with fresh blown roses; the law is unsmiled on the beds of pinks and violets; the creepers hang in graceful festoons from the trellised arbors; the honeysuckle perfumes the morning air; the old china tree in the yard, and the chestnut trees in the lane; the apple trees that hang over the garden railing; and the wide-spreading oak that shelters the spring; the hawthorn hedge, and the clusters of elders along the branch, all are beautiful and attractive as seen in the morning light of memory, when age has dimmed the eye, and the shades of the evening that precede the coming night are falling around the path that must soon end in the grave.

DISENCHANTMENT.

Return to the scenes of our childhood, after long years of absence have increased, has the effect to disenchant the mind and heart of many a fondly remembered habitation. Apart from the changes wrought by the remorseless hand of time, the unwelcome discovery is made that the ideal had dominated the real in the fond recollections of the home of our tender years. The same hills, and streams, and hedges, and fields, and forests, together with the old homestead, and garden plot, and stream-curve range of woodland hermitage, but all wear a different aspect from that presented to the eye in the days of our childhood, and early youth. To be sure, many of the features, natural and artificial, have changed their expression under the passing and corroding hand of the relentless destroyer, and yet the natural beauties that remain no longer wear the expression that imprinted itself on the youthful mind. The sweep of the sky and meadow and is more contracted; the contour of the hills and meadows is less graceful, and the whole landscape less picturesque than the transcript from the original on memory's page. Only the clumps of rue and sage, and the thorny clusters of roseberry, and raspberry briars remain where, as seen through the lenses of childhood, we depicted flowering shrubs, and fragrant carnations, and blushing roses. The spring, under the sheltering branches of the gnarled and knotted oak that towered above it, no longer the crystal fountain that quacked the thirst with its cooling draughts when the beaded perspiration ran on the brow of boyhood; and the same walk, that warred with wintery winds, and flashed its shining leaves in the summer gales, by some curious freak of nature, has become dwarfed in nature, and robbed of the beauty that invested it in the days of our youth. If we would not have the fascinating pictures that the scenes of our childhood have hung up in the halls of memory, utterly marred, and divested of their enchantment, it were well not to revisit, after long years of absence, the old homestead, where we were born, and where we spent the impressionable years of our early life.

"MYSTICAL LORE."

When "three score and ten" have made their registry on the brow, and the rounded limb and robust frame of their elasticity; when the eye becomes dim and the ear heavy, life with its varied scenes presents a change of aspect from that which it presented in the eye and to the mind in the spring-time of our earlier years. The varnish of veneering that concealed real character, by insensible stages, gradually fades away, leaving ugly scars and deep wrinkles where innocence and purity once shined. The untroubled and untroubled eye when life was young and clear more and things become stripped of that which invests them with value. The show and show and conventional politeness cease to deceive; and mere professions, which once misled upon our trustful credulity, blattery and complimentary phrase are all duly detected, and put down at their real value. Not that advancing years are

necessarily suspicious, but that the "mystical lore" of the evening life gives an insight into the real value of a thousand things whose intrinsic worth has been misjudged and over estimated by reason of the false standards applied in determining their merits and excellence. Long experience and observation, where the mind is free from prejudice, are great teachers. On the one hand they disabuse the mind of early misconceptions; on the other they foster and mature all the elements of knowledge implanted while the mind was in a plastic and formative state. It is only where there is a failure to heed the teachings of experience and observation that old age becomes querulous, morose, fault-finding, and censorious. There is nothing more attractive and beautiful than a bright, cheerful, uncomplaining old age. It is symbolized in a glorious, unclouded, autumn sunset, the dusk of the evening mingling with the golden light that flushes the whole heavens, as the sun sinks below the horizon.

AN APOLOGY.

The foregoing was written sometime ago, suggested by a glimpse of the forests, and fields, and old familiar haunts associated with the recollections of my early boyhood. It will at least serve to give "variety" to the columns of the ADVOCATE devoted to "original correspondence;" and may serve to impress some of my more youthful counsellors, critics, and advisers with the belief that I am not altogether out of sympathy with the young, on the one hand, and that I have not become querulous and fretful in old age. I cheerfully allow people to differ from me, without feeling a particle of acrimony towards them on that account. I have no animosities, no grudges, no resentfulness towards any mortal on earth. Personally, I am at peace with God and all mankind. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus." I have seen a good deal in my day; among other things I have seen some very smart young men. Sometimes I have seen smartness that verged on impertinence. I have had occasion to change and modify a good many of the views and opinions honestly entertained and pertinaciously defended by me at an earlier period of my life. I am therefore very indulgent in my feelings even towards those who charge me with "slandering" the "sainted founder" of Methodism. I am rather amused than offended by such allegations. Now, my friendly reader, don't jump to too wide a conclusion. That good man, the Rev. John D. Blackwell, D. D., who died a short time ago, wrote a letter to me only a few months before his death, in which he used this sentence: "I am sometimes so upset by the obliquities of professedly good men that I almost wish I could go to heaven, if I were not a little afraid of heaven."

SOMETHING ABOUT DANVILLE.

Danville now has street cars, running from the Richmond and Danville railroad depot to the corporation limits on West Main Street—a distance of something more than a mile and a half. During the year there have been large and extensive additions made to the system of sewerage. Electric lights blaze on every street. A large number of hands is now engaged in excavating a new reservoir, on the most elevated point contiguous to the city, and of much greater capacity than the old reservoir. A tract of land has been purchased by the city for an extensive park. A new cotton mill is in process of erection, and will be put in operation before the winter sets in. This mill, added to the two large mills already in operation, will give employment to an increased number of hands, and contribute to the thrift and prosperity of the city. A new iron bridge, of elegant design, has been put up, during the year, across the Dan River, connecting Danville and North Danville. The new Methodist Church in North Danville is nearly completed. It is an elegant house of worship, and compares favorably, in point of architectural presentation and elegance of interior finish, with the best and most attractive churches in the State. In addition to the foregoing an immense amount of paving has been done on the streets; and, just now, the main thoroughfare leading from Main Street to the National Cemetery is in process of being paved; so that it may be said truthfully that no city of its size in any of the adjoining States has kept pace with Danville in the march of improvement. It is rapidly taking on the air and port of a city. With all it has delightful society.

A WORD TO BROTHER NASH.

Brother Nash must excuse me. I am entirely too obtuse to perceive the pertinence of his explanation to the point of inquiry raised by me in the card to which he refers. His learned and labored effort at explanation is as "clear as mud" to my mind. That, of course, is on fault of his. He is not expected to give brains and ideas too. So far as I am concerned, personally, Brother Nash must allow me to differ from him. I have no unkind feelings towards him, therefore I do not differ with him. In my simplicity I still inquire: "does spiritual regeneration by the Holy Ghost, (what we as Methodists call conversion), give the subject of this change the title to, and the qualification for heaven, in the event of death; or, is there something other than this change, and beyond it, condi-

tioned on an act of faith in reference to it, indispensable to our admittance into heaven? Bro. Nash may call this question a "scare crow," if he pleases. He keeps at a respectful distance from it. Personally, I, in common with all the Methodist preachers I have ever known, believe in *Scriptural* holiness. It is a great deal better, however, in my "humble opinion" to live it, than to profess, prate, and quarrel about it.

FURTHER NOTES.

This is Monday, Sept. 5th. Last week I again went "over the line," and preached in the Methodist Church at Ruffin. Brother Round had commenced a protracted meeting there, which I am happy to learn, has been crowned with the conversion of more than twenty souls. Last night, the Rev. J. A. Cunningham, Presiding Elder of the Greensboro District, came into Danville, from his Quarterly Meeting at Shady Grove, and preached an eminently practical and profitable sermon to a large congregation in Mount Vernon Church. Our people were delighted with his visit, and benefited by his sermon.

We are beginning to get in sight of the approaching session of the Va. Conference, which is to meet in Danville, Nov. 17th. Bishop Key is expected to preside.

Since my last letter, Rev. E. N. S. Blogg, another member of the V. Conference has died. He was universally beloved, as a most estimable and excellent man. This makes 10 of our preachers who have died during the present Conference year.

The Danville College for Young Ladies opens on Wednesday of this week, Sept. 7th. Already most of the teachers are in place and ready for work, and the boarders are coming in, with the prospect of quite a large number of pupils as were matriculated the past year.

Danville, Va., 1887.

For the Advocate.

One of the Fathers.

BY REV. T. S. CAMPBELL.

REV. STITH MEAD.

A letter in the RALEIGH CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE a few months ago from Rev. G. G. Smith and one very recently in the *Christian Advocate*, of Nashville, by the assistant Editor, Rev. W. A. Chandler, make honorable mention of Rev. S. Mead as a pioneer Methodist preacher in Georgia; and as having introduced Methodism into Augusta, and built the first Methodist Church in that city. Bro. Smith, or his printer, made the mistake of naming him Stephen instead of Stith. It happens that I was well acquainted with him, when a boy and a young man. He was Presiding Elder of his parish in 1805, 6, 7; was his pastor the year I was born, and again five years after. When I was under deep conviction and spiritual distress, a boy of fifteen, he took special charge of me; gave me the instruction I needed and led me to Christ; so that I trusted in him as my savior. Subsequently he was frequently at my father's and showed a peculiar interest in the religious culture of my brothers, sisters, and myself. A holy influence was felt where he went and a cheerful abiding in Christ followed his visits. There was nothing ascetic in his religion, or so dignified as to make even the most humble or timid feel the slightest degree of embarrassment in his presence.

He was born in Bedford county, Va., Sept. 27th, 1767. His father, Col. William Mead, was a farmer of considerable wealth and served with distinction in the Revolutionary War. At the time of his death in 1835 being about sixty-eight years old, he owned a small farm in Amherst county, two miles from Lynchburg. On it he lived in a comfortable little cottage. On a lot donated by himself, he, with such aid as he could obtain, built Mead's Chapel and organized a Society. Here he and family worshipped; it being regularly supplied by the circuit preachers. Here he ended his earthly pilgrimage and was buried. The Chapel is gone, but the monument over his grave yet remains. Entertaining a reverential respect and warm Christian affection for him, I made it a duty, as it was a privilege, on my annual visits home, to visit him. He was a ripe Christian, and it was a benediction to enjoy his society. When about eighteen years old his father, who had removed to Georgia, put him to school at Augusta. I have a very distinct recollection of having heard him speak of his experiences in Augusta, especially when he was sent there to preach. In 1789 he came to Virginia on business. He reached Bedford in the time of a great revival conducted by C. S. Moore and others. In a few days he was happily converted, being in his twenty-second year. In July 1790 he records that he was made partaker of "Perfect Love." I am persuaded he never lost the joy of so deep an experience. The minutes show that he entered the ministry in 1792. The Conference obituary by mistake makes it 1793. He traveled various circuits in Virginia till 1799 when he was stationed at Augusta, Ga. This is the first time Augusta is found as an appointment of the Conference. In 1800 he was appointed to Burke and Augusta with W. Arent. In 1801, 2, 3, he was Presiding Elder of Georgia District. This included about the whole State. Up to about this date the work was regarded as a whole; and the Con-

ference as one so that no note was ever made of transfers; hence it was legitimate to send Stith Mead, or any other, from Virginia to Augusta or any point where the goodly judgment of the bishop might see best. In 1804 he was again in Augusta. In 1805, 6, 7, we find him in Virginia on Richmond District. In 1808 he was stationed in Richmond. This year was signalized by a gracious revival among the convicts in the State Penitentiary, mainly through his labors. A society consisting of forty-eight of these convicts was organized with a class leader. He continued in various charges until 1816 when with health impaired he located. He did not marry till of mature age, perhaps above forty years, when he married a lady many years his junior. He had his home in Lynchburg. Here he was very useful and was chiefly instrumental in building the first Methodist house of worship in that city. His location was soon after the close of the war of 1812. There was a great boom in real estate, especially unimproved city and town lots. He had considerable patrimony. He must needs do something to support his family and better his fortunes. He made investments that were unfortunate; a crash came. He was financially ruined. During the time of his location he was often engaged in revival meetings where he never labored in vain. It seemed in fact little fitted for any secular employment. His talent did not lie that way. Of what he saved from the wreck he secured the little home where he closed his life.

He was of medium height, slender built, not muscular, but quite attenuated; had a pleasant address, a voice of considerable compass and sang well. As I first remember him he dressed in the old style, with a shad or quaker coat, of ample skirt and length, knee breeches and buckles, long stockings and fair top boots. Hat corresponding, broad brimmed. As he went on horseback, saddlebags of long size and gambadoes were essential equipments. Had he carried more flesh he would in my early days have completely filled my ideal of a patriarch. He looked patriarchal. He was patriarchal. He lived a sojourner. The Conference obituary says "he was not distinguished by great talents, or literary attainments, but was eminently useful." "A holy emotion signalized his ministrations. There is no doubt that he was instrumental in promoting those revivals in the Southern States which yet remain in their effects upon society and the church of God." The subject of this sketch was never robust. His life had been much worn before his location, and with his failing fortunes had failed still more. In 1827 he was by vote of the Virginia Conference re-admitted to membership and placed as a beneficiary on the roll of the superannuated. Here he remained till removed to the higher felicities. But he wanted to do something for the Master and the good of man. He looked to a field not supplied, and undertook what he called, and truly, the "James River Mission," reaching from Lynchburg to Richmond. He went down one side and up the other preaching to neglected neighborhoods, and out-of-the-way places; to white and colored. When he reached Richmond he held special services for the convicts in the Penitentiary. My father's was one of his resting places. We were often thrilled by the narratives he gave of his meetings and successes in the conversion of souls. He served in this volunteer mission about two years, Old and feeble as he was, he abated none of his zeal in the sacred cause, but continued his labors as far as his strength would permit. In his last moments he evinced perfect resignation to the will of God, commending his family to God, he died triumphantly in the faith.

Lexington, N. C., Sept. 2nd, 1887.

For the Advocate.

Our Washington Letter.

(From our Special Correspondent.)

President Cleveland has withdrawn to the seclusion of Oak View for several weeks vacation and announces his purpose not to visit the White House during that period except to attend to important public business. With the single exception of Secretary Bayard, all of the President's official family, including Private Secretary Lamont, are on their vacation, and Washington is at its dulllest now when you take away the Chief Magistrate, the Cabinet, and Congress, the city's chief attractions are gone.

The political quid nuncs have been aroused from their summer languor by the visit of Speaker Carlisle to the Capital, but that distinguished gentleman declares, in an interview, that he is simply here on Departmental business, and that no political significance whatever attaches to his presence in the city, and he further states that he knows nothing of the alleged Democratic conference about which the newspapers have had so much to say. I learn that there is a pretty prospect of a first class family row among the Democrats, upon the meeting of Congress, over the confirmation of United States Treasurer Hyatt's nomination—the revolt being led by Senator Voorhees because of the Treasurer's refusal to dismise from his office Jerome Burnett, an Indian Republican politician, holding a \$2,500 clerkship, and replace him with a Democrat of the Senator's selection. Mr. Hyatt is thought to be a Mugwump, and Senators Voorhees, Beck and Vance, all members of the

Finance Committee, announced their purpose to knife him when his name comes up.

The annual reports of the Bureau of the Interior Department are beginning to come in—the first being that of Commissioner of Patents Hall, which shows that 40,678 applications for patents were made during the past fiscal year, and that the office is well up with the business in some classes of its work. The receipts during the year were \$1,150,046; the disbursements were \$981,644. The deficiency of the late financial clerk, Levi Bacon, is still \$22,422. He renews the recommendations of his predecessor, that the Patent Office be provided more space and better facilities, and that the model hall and the library room be enlarged and repaired.

The partial report of Senator Cockrell's investigating committee shows that in a number of cases the work in the executive departments is far behind. In the War Department it is estimated that it will take four or five years to adjust the claims under the act of July 5th, 1864. Congress having imposed extra work on this Department should supply additional clerical force, as a matter of justice, and the same claim holds good in the Pension Office, except that the clerks of that Bureau, by laboring longer hours, without increased pay, have caught up with their work.

After working five years, the architect announces the completion of the Pension building, at a cost of \$900,000. It has been occupied two years in an unfinished condition, but it is now one of the most spacious, well lighted, ventilated and fully equipped public buildings in the world—having all the latest appliances and improvements for the comfort and convenience of its occupants. The galleries are two thirds of a mile in length and the record room is sixty two feet above the hall, and for the purpose of conveying baskets of heavy documents these long distances, an elevated railroad track has been provided which will be very useful.

Of the thirty-six millions of trade dollars coined, only about eight millions have been presented for redemption, and of these half a million have been re-coined—mostly into dimes; the period for redemption having expired on the third inst., no more can be redeemed.

A late statement prepared by the Treasury shows that during the month of August there was a decrease of \$737,370 in the total circulation and an increase of \$10,216,200 in the total cash in the Treasury.

President Cleveland, Secretary Fairchild, and Congressmen Carlisle, Mills, and Scott are engaged at Oak View in preparing a tariff reform bill, which is designed to command the unanimous support of the dominant party, though it is understood that Ex-Speaker Randall, who is in the city, was not invited to the consultation. It is believed by well informed persons here that the Administration will stake its whole influence upon the fate of the proposed measure.

The Internal Medical Congress has been in session all of this week, opening Monday with President Cleveland and Secretary Bayard officiating and making brief addresses of welcome—both distinguished gentlemen being greeted with generous applause. At night the doctors were honored with a great ball and banquet at the Pension Office, followed next night by a reception by the President and his wife, at which they are said to have shaken hands with 6,000 people. Each day the Congress meets in sections and listens to learned essays on the most subtle diseases of the human system and the best methods of treatment in such difficult cases, while the evenings are generally devoted to social festivities, which seem to be thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated by the city's guests, each of whom bears upon his breast a medal and a blue rosette, as a distinguishing mark.

The papers have been filed by Mr. Thobe in his contest for Mr. Carlisle's seat in the Fiftieth Congress, and it is noted as a remarkable circumstance, that the Ex-Speaker makes no response, although the Chinese Minister has returned from Spain and is again at the Legation in Washington. This Celestial dignitary occupies the house built by Senator Stewart, of Nevada, known as "Stewart Castle," on Dupont Circle. Large as the house is, it is hardly large enough for the retinue of the Legation, which includes innumerable Secretaries and a troop of Chinese servants. One of the Minister's household attracts universal attention and is a great favorite and pet of the ladies of Washington. It is the ten year old nephew of the Minister, a bright-eyed intelligent boy, who dressed in native costume, looks like a miniature copy of his elders, quene pig-tail and all. He enjoys everything in America, specially talking and playing with the American boys and girls in the park opposite the Legation, and he has learned English with the usual facility of childhood. The Chinese gentlemen at the Legation are very social and mingle more in general society than any of the other members of the Diplomatic Corps. One meets them in private houses at tea or dinner, or finds a Secretary or two, enjoying a game of cards in some home, the home of a resident non-official. The Chinese secretaries are very fond of the American young ladies, and show a wonderful talent, considering that their taste for beauty is educated from an Oriental standard, in selecting the handsomest. The diplomats who represent the Celestial Empire, in the United States, will

undoubtedly carry back to their native country a better and more thorough knowledge of American character and habits than the representatives of any other foreign power at the Capital. Outside the Chinese, the diplomatic corps at Washington is a very narrow body. They do not mingle with citizens except on public and official occasions, but constitute themselves into a select but narrow-minded circle of foreigners, and a few Americans whose recommendation to this little clique is based upon an avowed admiration and declared preference for foreigners and things foreign.

A full blooded Omaha Indian is a clerk in the Interior Department. He has recently been promoted from a salary of \$1,000 a year to one at \$1,200 a year. His services have been efficient and he has merited the promotion. His name is Francois LaFlesche, and he often acts as interpreter for the Government.

For the Advocate.

The Preacher's Wives' Loan Fund for Parsonage Building.

At its last Annual Meeting the Board of Church Extension authorized the Woman's Department to raise a loan fund for parsonage building; and Rev. Henry E. Partridge of the Florida Conference Board suggests the plan of the "Preacher's Wives' Loan Fund"—\$5,000, making a preacher's wife a Life Patron. I wish before the Annual Conference to call to the attention, and urge each to send their pastor to Conference with the \$5.00 from them to make the pastor's, or presiding elder's wife, a life patron. This is a small sum for any congregation to raise and an easy way to show the interest felt in a cause that must commend itself to the wisdom and good feeling of every one who loves the Methodist Church with its peculiar, but power giving institutions. Any charge, or individual, that has desired to organize a parsonage Society in connection with this Department and, as yet unable to do so, can in this way contribute to the permanent success of the parsonage movement; for a loan fund once established will be a permanent, perpetual agency for building parsonages.

Sums of any size may be added to this fund. If Rev. David Morton is not in attendance upon the Conference the money should be handed to the Treasurer of the Conference Board of Church Extension, or if present, to the Secretary or Treasurer of the Woman's Department, to be sent with the names of life patrons to Dr. Morton. The amount and name, should also be published in the Conference organ. Do not delay.

ONE RESPONSE.

Montana, the only Conference to which our loan fund has been proposed sends a cheering response. Mrs. Stanley, our Conference Secretary there writes: "Montana Conference reports ten subscribers of \$5.00 each to the 'Preacher's Wives' Loan Fund, all paid." There are but five preachers' wives and about a dozen preachers altogether in the Conference. Let every Conference report such prompt and thorough work, and we will have a loan fund of at least \$10,000 by the close of the year.

LUCINDA B. HELM, Sec. Woman's Dept. Church Extension. *Eli, Wethdown, Ky., Aug. 28th.*

For the Advocate.

The Week of Prayer and Self-Denial.

The collections from the week of prayer have reached over \$14,301.60. This amount has been reported by six hundred and seventy-two pastors. As we have over four thousand preachers in the regular work, it is evident that only a small proportion, say about one-fifth, observed the week of prayer. Had each one earnestly and prayerfully presented the appeal before his people, and led them in this service, our indebtedness would have been removed, and men who are waiting to go in answer to their Master's call could be sent out into the mission-field.

After consultation with Bishops and members of the Board, we announce the call to observe a week of prayer and self-denial in behalf of Missions remains open. Absence of members, and other causes, hindered the efforts of many of the pastors. The opportunity is still offered each one to aid in removing this burden from the Board in order that we may enter and occupy the fields opened to us by the great Head of the Church. Will each Conference take the matter in hand? or in their absence, or in advance of Conference action, will the pastors appoint the time and provide for its observance? We will republish the programme and send it to all who will furnish their address. The week of prayer and self-denial has been a means of grace in the congregations where it has been observed. Let all unite in this effort to lift the burden from our missions!

Will our brethren of the Church press indorse and enforce this appeal?
I. G. JOHN,
D. C. KELLEY.

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