

# Raleigh Christian Advocate.

ORGAN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE, M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH.

ESTABLISHED IN 1855.

RALEIGH, N. C., AUGUST 16, 1899.

NEW SERIES, VOL. 1, NO. 26.

## RALEIGH CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

Organ of the North Carolina Conference.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT RALEIGH, N. C.

Entered as second-class matter in the post-office at Raleigh.

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REV. N. M. WATSON, BUSINESS MANAGER.

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RALEIGH CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

## EDITORIAL.

### THE FAILURE AND SUCCESS OF THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

The Peace Conference did not abolish wars, as many millennial dreamers expected. Its adjournment left the guns roaring and the flags flying as of old. It did not destroy the feeling of envy and distrust among the nations. It failed to take any decisive steps relative to the practical questions which affect not only our country but other countries.

It would be going too far, however, to say that the Peace Conference has not been successful in some points. It has placed itself on record as believing that armies and armaments should be decreased; that the question of guns on land and sea should be seriously studied; and that the rights and duties of neutrals should receive due consideration. The greatest work of the Conference, however, was in the way of preparing for that for which certain dreamers, led by Edward Everett Hale, labored so earnestly several years ago—a permanent International Court. The agreements reached by the Conference will be subject to ratification by a convention of each government. Within three months after ratification, each Power is to name four persons to act as arbitrators. The arbitrators will hold office for a term of six years. The Court of Arbitrators will be held at the Hague. Much will be done if this International Court be established.

### "IN THE FULL TRIUMPH OF THE GOSPEL FAITH."

St. Paul very appropriately referred to the Christian life as a warfare. There is a series of conflicts from the spiritual cradle to the grave of the body. The true Christian life is a succession of triumphs. The triumph in the hour of death is the final one. It is so easy and decisive to the soul that has been clothed with the whole armour of God. Satan has no power. The waters of death have no chill. Faith is strong. Eternal hope is bright. The spirit is exultant. The archway of Heaven bends down to earth, and Jesus seems so near and precious. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." How true and comforting are these words!

A few days ago there died in the western part of the State a good man. He had given his life to Christ. His was a familiar name all over our State. He was a friend to the friendless, and a loyal soldier of Jesus Christ. He knew that the end was approaching. He repeated the little prayer that he had learned in his boyhood: "Now I lay me down to sleep," etc., and his soul passed into the presence of the Father. His was a grand victory. It could not be otherwise. The name of Henry Clay Wall is added to that illustrious roll of Christ's followers who have died in the "full triumphs of a gospel faith."

### SAVED FROM WHAT?

The word "saved" is a common one in your vocabulary. You claim that you belong to the class thus characterized. You roll the word as a sweet morsel under your tongue. But did you ever stop to ask seriously and prayerfully the question, Saved from what? Matthew uses these words, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." It is good for us to remember that if we have a good title to salvation, we are saved from *sin*. It would be a good exercise for us occasionally to write down a list of sins that we have been "saved" from. We would be apt to find that there are some sins from which we have not been saved. Such a revelation would prove that we cannot "read our titles clear," and should bring us to our knees before the mercy seat.

### LIFE IN THE PAST AND FUTURE.

A Chinaman bought a tract of land in the New Jersey swamps. When he went to inspect the land, he was greatly disappointed. It was completely covered with water. The speculators tried to comfort him by telling him that there was a great future in the land, that right here the bargain lay. The disconsolate Celestial only shook his head and said, "Too muchee future." This anecdote is told by Dr. David Gregg in one of his books to illustrate the fact that we may have too little of the present and too much of the future, in our lives.

We may have too little of the present in our lives. But as long as we are true to the present, it will be impossible for us to have too much of the future. The man of the true type has in his life not only much of the future, but much of the past.

THE lodge was waiting for the "degree team" to get itself in readiness for the initiation of the twelve candidates that were in waiting; a distinguished member of the order took advantage of the pause to exhort his brethren that it was more important to the welfare of the order to care for and retain those already in, than it was to add new members, and this, he said, could be done by practicing the principle and precepts of the order. His words were wise and well chosen; and the same thing is true of the church. Methodism may not have paid too much attention to bringing in new members, but she has done too little in caring for them after they are in. "Feed my lambs" is a command which the preacher has no right to ignore, even in his anxiety to count new converts.

"HE is very profound," was the comment of a good sister on the sermons of her pastor in which she had been unable to discover very much intellectual or spiritual food.

We have heard that same comment a number of times, by some charitably disposed people who were unable to discover the difference between profundity of thought and obscurity of language. It is the old story of the rabbit, over and over, "You can't see him because he is not there."

Some men are scrupulously honest in all their dealings with their fellow men, who are woefully and deplorably dishonest when it comes to paying their obligations to Almighty God. Suppose you examine your own case honestly.

BISHOP CANDLER exhorts the brethren not to place the Twentieth Century Fund question before that of revivals. This is a wise exhortation. We cannot raise the funds until the spiritual life be stimulated and developed. Good collections always follow in the wake of true revivals of religion.

### SPURIOUS SPIRITUALITY.

In all that we have had to say concerning the Twentieth Century Fund it has been our constant care to insist that the appeal for contributions should not be put forward in any such way as to disconnect it from the general religious life of the church. Whatever sums are given at this time or at any time, either for strengthening our educational institutions or for any other purpose, should be given, not from secular motives, but as an expression of devout gratitude to Almighty God. In reviewing the hundred years that are now running so rapidly to a close, it is easy for the "people called Methodists" to find ten thousand causes for thanksgiving, and for such thanksgiving as will find its appropriate display in liberal material offerings.

What is wanted now is not mere emotional fervor, wasting itself in pious ejaculations, but full and unreserved consecration, issuing in a wide and genuine manifestation of practical benevolence. That a deeper spirituality is the supreme need of the church is so true that nobody will be found to deny it or call it in question; but it is also true that the kind of spirituality which puts on a wry face and shuts up its pocketbook at the mention of money is, if not wholly spurious, at least of an inferior quality.

To those ministers and laymen among us who insist that we are virtually profaning a great epoch by soliciting large and generous gifts for our struggling schools and colleges, and who maintain that we ought to lose sight of everything at the present time except a technical revival of religion, we have only to say there is a specific warrant in the Holy Scriptures for the policy that has been adopted. The last of the Old Testament prophets lived in a disordered and irreverent age. The chosen people, forgetful of their solemn obligations, were slow to restore the temple, and still slower to make adequate provision for sustaining its appointed services. There was grave danger that all the ordinances of religion would fall into public contempt, and perhaps cease to be administered in decent and orderly fashion. The priests who, by divine arrangement were a charge upon the whole nation, were denied their portion of the fruits of the field and the flock, and were left to shift for themselves as well as they could. It was a most lamentable state of affairs.

What did Malachi say to his fellow-countrymen in this grave emergency? "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that they may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." That the blessing thus promised was primarily great temporal prosperity, is readily admitted; but surely it was not intended to stop there. God's answer to the free and hearty offerings of his people is something more than full vineyards and waving fields of grain. He pours out the copious streams of His grace upon the minds and hearts of those who recognize His property rights in all their possessions.

We are moving on the right track. Let us preach the old truths as we have never done before, omitting nothing from preventing grace to perfect love. The opportunity that has come to us is one of signal sublimity, and cannot be attentively considered without feelings of the most exultant character. Why should not a boundless hopefulness take possession of our hearts? He who has led us thus far will not desert us hereafter. The future also is his—and ours, if we show ourselves worthy of it. It cannot be amiss in us to put a commanding emphasis upon the doctrine of stewardship, recalling ourselves and our flock to the fresh and fuller recognition of the fact that all our belongings are held in trust to be used for wise and good ends. Every pulpit in the denomination, while not forgetting nor ignoring other important themes, should expound this one with a definiteness that cannot be ignored, and an energy that cannot be disregarded.—*Nashville Advocate.*

The good qualities of a man are not sufficient to offset the bad, nor make atonement for the evil consequences of his doings, especially when the evil affects society, and undermines the common faith.

### DOCTRINAL PREACHING.

The preaching of the doctrines of Methodism was a habit with the fathers of the Church. They studied the Bible and the standards to this one great end, and no congregation where they ministered was left in doubt as to what Methodists believed and taught. They struck right at the root of the matter, and planted those great principles which are the staple of all Church life and enterprise. Repentance, justification, regeneration, the witness of the Spirit, adoption, sanctification, were the themes upon which they dwelt from the beginning to the close of the year. These truths were burned into the consciousness of the people until they repented and believed, and were powerfully converted. Wonderful meetings followed in the wake of those preachers. They indoctrinated the people. They taught them of the joys of heaven, of the certainty of the judgment, of the terrors of hell, as well as of the love and mercy of God. They cried aloud and spared not, and they looked for immediate results. They were not college-bred men as a rule, but were men consciously acquainted with God. They believed with all their hearts the letter of the scriptures, and they felt, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." Men heard them, and were often stricken down as though they were dead under the truth. Then, too, these old worthies preached the distinct doctrines of Methodism, such as the universality of the atonement, the possibility of apostasy, the importance of infant baptism, and the validity of baptism administered to adults by sprinkling, pouring, or affusion. In the presentation of these questions they did not mince matters, but declared the whole counsel of God as they understood it. Under such preaching people knew why they were Methodists, for they were given a reason for the hope that was within them. They were trained in the doctrines of Methodism.

In these latter days we have gone to the other extreme. For the most part we have ceased to preach the distinctive doctrines of the Church, and we dwell more largely upon the practical themes of the gospel. We are aware of the fact that the same necessity for constantly dwelling upon these doctrines does not exist to-day as it did then. The Church no longer has to fight for its existence as a legitimate branch of evangelical Christianity. We are in possession of the field, and no one disputes our right. However, this does not do away entirely with the necessity for the preaching of our doctrines. They are the great foundation and frame-work of our church life. Our people need to have them expounded to them. The fact is, our young people are growing up in ignorance of the real doctrinal status of Methodism. It is very rare in the centers of population that you hear a sermon preached upon these great themes. We simply take these things for granted, and the result is, our people are not indoctrinated. We are Methodists because our parents or our associates are Methodists, and not because we are instructed in the fundamental principles of Methodism. We need a revival right here, as sure as you live. And if the spiritual death obtains, which many of the students of Church statistics hold, the cause of it may in some measure be traced to a dearth of doctrinal preaching. We have a great deal of namby-pamby preaching nowadays. We are neglecting the substratum of Bible truth in our pulpits. We need to swing just a little back toward the habit of the fathers. Too much rapid pulpit performance will starve out the spiritual life of the people. They must be fed upon the doctrines of the Scriptures, or they will perish. Let us think upon these things.—*Texas Advocate.*

### THE CONSECRATION OF THE WILL.

Free will is a fact, an awful fact. The fact may be denied, but the fact is there. The mysteries that are connected with this doctrine obscure, but do not obliterate, the truth. God has endowed man with a wonderful power of choice. It is said to man: "Choose this or that." The whole dignity of human nature is involved in that "or." If all that could be said was, "Choose this and that," humanity would be dwarfed to the dimension of a mechanism rather than a manhood, it would be made up of automata, not living souls.—*New York Observer.*

### THE LENGTH OF SERMONS.

The length of sermons has varied greatly. Those recorded in the Bible are all very short, but they are probably given in condensed form. The sermons of the church fathers rarely occupied more than ten minutes in delivery. Long sermons came with the Reformation and flourished especially among the oldest English divines. In the works of John Howe are sermons containing upwards of 18,000 words that must have consumed several hours in delivery. Bishop Alcock preached at Cambridge 'a good and pleasant sermon', which was two and a half hours long, and Isaac Barrow's Spital sermon was three and a half hours long. In modern days Edward Irving preached a sermon three hours and a half in length for the London Missionary Society. A generation ago American sermons averaged about an hour in length. In country churches it was common to have two services in succession with an intermission. At the morning service 'the long sermon' was an hour and a half in length, and in the afternoon the 'short sermon' was an hour long. The constant tendency in recent times has been towards the shortening of the sermon. Sermons an hour long are still occasionally heard, but they are occasional, and are generally regarded as excessive in length. For a number of years half an hour has been considered the proper length for a sermon, and the present tendency seems to be towards shortening it still more. Some of our ablest preachers rarely exceed twenty-five minutes in the delivery of their sermons.

The sermon has grown shorter partly because other portions of the service have grown longer. The devotional part of the service has been extended in many churches by the introduction of responsive readings, and more time is also given to music. The prayers are briefer, but praise is more prominent in the service than formerly. The chief reason, however, for the shortening of the sermon is the changed condition of preaching in our day. In former days the pulpit was largely a means of instruction. The Scriptures were explained in long expository discourses. Books and papers were few, schools were scarce, and the minister being a man of education, was the chief teacher of the community. But the general diffusion of intelligence and the abundance of books and papers have brought the pulpit and pew more nearly to a level and have largely relieved the pulpit from the work of giving instruction. The chief office of the pulpit now is persuasion. The preacher assumes general knowledge of the subject on the part of his hearers, and it is his business to focus this knowledge and shoot it in a burning beam into their hearts and upon their wills. This work must be done rapidly and decisively, or emotion will evaporate and the effect will be lost. The short sermon is also of a piece with the short speech, the short editorial, and the condensed book. The age is practical and swift, and is impatient of tediousness and delay. If a man has anything to say, he must come to the point quick and say it.

No rigid rule can be imposed on the length of the sermon. Some subjects and occasions call for ampler time and treatment. But the short sermon is the better rule, and the efficiency of a sermon is generally inversely proportional to its length. A long sermon begins to weary and worry the congregation, and its last end is worse than at its first. Many a good sermon is killed by its last fifteen or twenty minutes. The long sermon can be shortened by striking out tedious introductions, detailed explanations, and superfluous sentences and words. Compression produces heat. The sun, when expanded to its original limits, was colder than an iceberg; compression has made it hot. This is what the sermon needs. Condense it out of its nebulous state into short, decisive sentences, and it will begin to burn. Let the sermon be cleared of padding and its thoughts be crowded together, let it move straight to its point and do its work quickly, and it will be more effective in attracting and moving men.—*Presbyterian Banner.*

Rev. Frederick O. McCarthy, the new Field Secretary of the International Peace Union, is a native of Wisconsin, where he was born thirty-five years ago. He is a graduate of Ohio College and the Andover Theological Seminary.