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

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Rev. T. N. IVEY, D. D., EDITOR.
Rev. N. M. WATSON, BUSINESS MANAGER.

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RALEIGH CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

EDITORIAL.

SOME OBJECTIVE POINTS.

Another Conference has come and gone, and we stand on the threshold of another Conference year. It is useless for us to exult over past success, or brood over past failure. What we have derived from each should help us in the strength of God to prepare to meet the demands of the future.

There are many things to be done during the Conference year which has just begun. We can enumerate only a few. Of course it is seen that the mailing of the "Old Raleigh" must be increased to contain the names of five thousand subscribers. Preachers and people were never so united before on the Conference organ. Young and old are working for it. It is necessary to have a strong, well-equipped paper, in order that they may perform the functions in a way that will bring blessings to the Conference. February is "ADVOCATE Month." We are expecting to receive from the files of the preachers during that month enough to round out the fiftieth number of the subscription list.

A great work is to be done in furthering the Twentieth Century Fund. This is a good movement. It seems greater and grander to us as it progresses. The other great columns of Methodism are falling into line. The North Carolina Conference must not be in the rear. Every one should feel that it is a great privilege to give to this cause. Our preachers should strive to secure from each man, woman, and child a subscription to the fund. All have a duty here, and no man can perform the duty of another. The preacher should remember that he can present from the pulpit and around the fireside, no interest which will bring in larger returns than that of the Twentieth Century Fund.

Our Orphanage must be established. Beginning has already been made. The funds are rapidly increasing, and it is expected that in a few weeks the sound of hammer and trowel will be heard on the new building. We must have a plant commensurate with the strength and vigor of Methodism. Rev. J. W. Jenness, who inaugurated the enterprise, and has been so active in furthering its interests, has been appointed Agent for the orphanage. He will travel the length and breadth of the Conference in behalf of the orphans, and we bespeak for him only the success, but the material advancement of all the preachers and laymen. We trust that so much will be done this year, that the orphanage report of Newbern will be a glowing one.

Home missions in our midst must be carefully and prayerfully considered. We are constantly hearing of sections which are being lost to the Methodist Church, simply because nothing is done by Meth-

odists to cultivate them. Other churches are occupying the territory. We are glad that these sections are cultivated by some Christian church. Yet we are sorry that the Methodist church seems to be abandoning or ignoring them. The matter should receive special attention at our District Conferences.

Last, but not least, we must turn the tide in the way of members. The tide seems to be ebbing instead of flowing; a net decrease in membership was reported at Washington. It startled us. Can we afford to make a similar report at Newbern? Men and brethren, there should be this year prayer—mighty prayer—that the whole church in the North Carolina Conference may receive such a baptism of the Holy Ghost that the last year of the century will be known as the pentecostal year. Prayer, consecration, intelligent activity, complete dependence upon God will work wonders.

THE CHRISTIAN'S CHRISTMAS.

Another week, and Christmas will have come and gone. It is the celebration of the birth of Him whose mission it was to bring peace to man. Only Christian's can properly observe and fully enjoy this blessed celebration. Not until one enjoys the life which Christ came to bring can he so appreciate the blessing as to make Christmas day the outward expression of an inward reality. Christless ones observe the day, but they make it a day of selfish enjoyment. They dishonor that name which stands for the highest unselfishness.

We observe the day properly only when they honor Him whose day it is. We should have the Christ-life within. It should be a time for the white banner of peace to wave from every rampart of the soul, for love, not seeking its own, to pour its richest treasures into the chambers of want and suffering, and for faith to sing its most triumphant songs into the ear of humanity.

The Christian observes Christmas not by receiving, but by sending gifts; not by pampering the body, but by feeding the soul; not in hilarious revelry, but by giving true expression to a Christ-possessed and Christ-possessing life.

Christ's Christmas present to the world was a life given for the world. Our richest Christmas present to God will be a heart which hungers and thirsts for that life which is had with Christ in God. If we have this life, our thoughts, words and deeds will drop as pearls into the outstretched hands of the world's great brotherhood.

It is a good time, when we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, to make an inventory of our spiritual effects, and prepare for a more successful experience in the business of the Lord. It is a good day on which to receive a fresh baptism of the Spirit, and to reach the summit of the mount of consecration. It is a day for the making of new purposes, and the mapping out of new journeys into the kingdom of grace.

Beloved, the Christ in the heart will make Christmas a blessing to you and others. May you enjoy the occasion, which we trust will be a beautiful milestone on the journey of life.

OLD AND STERN, BUT TRUE.

We are glad that the fact is becoming more widely recognized that the decrease of spiritual vitality in many sections in our country is due to the softening, if not the elimination, of the doctrine of future punishment. Imagine, if you please, the state of society should the idea prevail that men and women can break the laws of the country and not suffer. Black heathenism would reign. The image of God would be erased from the tablet of humanity. Sin, and nothing but sin, would cover the earth from pole to pole. Let the idea prevail that men and women can break the laws of God and not suffer in

the other life, and the same state of affairs will prevail. Future punishment of the wicked is not only a sequence wrought out in spiritual life, but a regulative necessity bound up in eternal principles. There is no doctrine more emphatically taught in the Bible. There is no doctrine whose wisdom is more clearly demonstrated in the working of human experience. We trust that no preacher in the North Carolina Conference will be negligent in preaching the personality of Satan and the reality of future punishment. We regret that there has been in some quarters, a relegation of the sterner doctrines of the Bible. Their promulgation is as sorely needed now as in the older days, and we must faithfully preach them.

TO THE BOYS AND GIRLS.

It is suggested that the ADVOCATE has a large army of young readers. The letters published during the year show that the little ones receive the ADVOCATE as a welcome guest. We are proud of the fact that our Conference organ has enlisted the affections of the children. We pray that it may be a great blessing to them not only now but in years to come.

We want the army of little ADVOCATE readers to furnish or build a room at the Methodist Orphanage. Dear little friend will you not, when you write to the ADVOCATE, enclose a small amount for the little boys and girls in North Carolina who have no father and mother? Let us see how much the boy and girl correspondents of the ADVOCATE can raise during the year.

Then there is something else we want to say to you. For a year you have been studying the Bible by asking and answering questions. Suppose you tell us now in your letters what story in the Bible you like best, and why. Then after awhile, we will have you to answer some other questions. We trust to make the ADVOCATE better and better for you. Don't forget the orphans.

A FAITHFUL WATCHMAN.

That rationalism in its worst form is creeping into Methodism, which has always been considered as the "Old Guard" of orthodoxy, is only too evident. In preachers' meetings, in addresses at conferences and conventions, the followers of John Wesley are treated to doctrinal dissertations which would open the eyes of Wesley Asbury, and other Methodist pioneers, if they were living.

We are not surprised to know that the Boston University School of Theology is harboring one who teaches our forthcoming preachers that Jesus Christ is no authority on the Old Testament, and that the miraculous conception of Christ is only a myth.

We are glad that Rev. W. W. Schenck has had the courage to come forth and rebuke this peculiar sin in high places. We need men to stand as vigilant watchmen on the towers of Zion. As long as we have such as Mr. Schenck, we cannot be utterly hopeless over the situation.

Course of Events.

I.

THE President in his annual message makes a most gratifying report of the material condition of the country. The finances are all one could wish, it seems. There is a cash balance of \$279,000,000 in the Treasury, and most of this is in gold. The President urges necessary modifications in the National Banking Act. Our exports for 1899 were a billion dollars over the exports and imports combined in 1870. It is clearly evident that our export trade is very rapidly growing, and that it has been quickened by the events transpiring in the East.

II.

IT WAS a great surprise when the President in his message expressed himself so

openly on the subject of Trusts. During the campaign of '96, he avoided any mention of the subject. He now expresses himself as opposed to those trusts which raise prices and destroy competition. He thinks that the State governments have failed to abate the evil, because of the great variety of laws enacted. Uniformity of legislation, in his opinion, would be very salutary. The President said enough on this question to convince the public that in the next election, no one party will monopolize the political war cry, "Down with the Trusts!"

III.

THE Nicaragua Canal is a subject which lies very near the President's heart. He also adverts to the commercial situation in the East, and advises the formation of a Trade Committee to take in hand the questions affecting our trade in China and Japan. He commends the Paris Exposition, and speaks of the friendly relations of this government with England and Germany. He advises strict neutrality in the South African war, but intimates that the United States would have been willing to interpose as an arbitrator, had either side expressed its desire in this direction.

IV.

THE President places his greatest emphasis perhaps on his statements regarding the Philippine question. He is opposed to any measures which would look like a compromise with the rebels. He is for carrying on the war until peace has been established in Luzon. He is in favor of the retention of the Philippines, though no specific form of government is suggested. He is very much opposed to the establishment of a protectorate by the United States. He gives his reasons in these forcible words: It would involve a cruel breach of faith. It would place the peaceable and loyal majority, who ask nothing better than to accept our authority, at the mercy of the minority of armed insurgents. It would make us responsible for the acts of the insurgent leaders, and give us no power to control them. It would charge us with the task of protecting them against each other, and defending them against any foreign power with which they choose to quarrel. The President affirms the arrangement made by General Bates with the Sultan of Jolo with the distinct understanding that no privilege granted the latter shall be construed as favoring slavery in the islands.

HEEDING HOW WE HEAR.

(Sunday School Times.)

Emerson said truly that we wonder, not at the unusual, but at the usual. Most of us find something very wonderful in the new wireless telegraphy, by which messages have been sent across the British channel without the use of any connecting wire between the two instruments employed. But we do not stop to think that from our earliest experience of life we have been using a system of wireless telegraphy far more delicate and wonderful. The human ear is the most perfect instrument within human knowledge for dealing with sound. It has a range as high as the highest and as low as the lowest of the instruments devised by man for musical purposes, and within this range it has some twenty-four hundred notes, being about twenty within the compass of each note on a grand piano. It detects the faults and failures of all other instruments, and it is the test by which we adjust them all. It discriminates in some wonderful way the tones which indicate sex, nationality, age, and mental mood, in every speaker or singer. It hears a whole group of sounds at the same instant, and discriminates among them to which it shall give attention. And, as it is not directly played upon, this instrument is itself a wireless telegraph, responding to the work of other sound-making instruments within its range.

This wonderful instrument, with its delicacy of adaptation, instead of requiring a cathedral to give space to its ex-

quisite machinery, is all shut up within the size of a closed hand, inside the human head, and approached through two narrow orifices, whose size would seem insufficient for almost any purpose. And those who admire the wonderful patience of the inventors who have developed the wireless telegraph might well spend a little of their wonder on the workmanship of this older instrument, and find, as Galen did, the theme of a hymn of praise in the structure of the human body.

Naturally an instrument of such wonderful value and adaptability suggests that it is intended for high uses. It is, indeed, the most wonderful of the gateways between the mind and the world of nature and of humanity. It tells us more about both than even sight does. The blind man suffers from a smaller calamity than does the utterly deaf. The former has the wonder of the human voice to lighten up his darkness. He lives on terms of equality with his fellows in the matter of free communication of feeling and thought. He is a member of any society he enters, and that on terms of practical equality, because he can hear what they are saying, and in what tones and with what emphasis of emotion. In contact with nature he misses more, but even there he gets far more than the thoughtless observation of his condition would lead us to suppose. As Cowper says:

"Not rural sights alone, but rural sounds,
Exhilarate the spirit, and restore
The tone of languid nature. Mighty winds
That sweep the skirt of some far-reaching
wood
Of ancient growth, make music not unlike
The dash of the ocean on his winding shore,
And lull the spirit while they fill the mind."

And Wordsworth, who makes more of sound than does any other English poet, in his ode on "The Power of Sound" expands this thought to the whole range of human and social life. It is through the ear that the noblest passions of the heart are stirred, from the mother's response to her child's cry to the answer of a great people to the cry for justice and right made by the voice of a great orator.

The best literature is addressed to the ear, and is never taken at its true value until it is read aloud, and better still, read in society. The "mighty mouthed inventor of harmonies, God-gifted organ-voice of England," John Milton, had the blind man's delicate perception of sound when he showed, in "Paradise Lost", of what the English speech was capable in the adjustment of sound to sense; and no one need think of mastering that great poem who does not read it aloud. Professor Corson, of Cornell University, who stands among our academic critics for pure literature, insists that poetry cannot be appreciated until read aloud and with just emphasis.

The highest use of hearing is as the means to faith: "Belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ." Paul says that from his own experience. It was the spoken word of a Master which arrested him on his way to Damascus. It was the tone and living power of the living speech of a living Christ which altered the tenor of his whole life. It was the fervent conviction acquired in that moment of personal contact which made him a preacher of the gospel. And it has been the fervent conviction acquired in such moments of living contact that has fitted men to preach the word in all latter ages. The Spirit of God has used the speech of men who believed with all the energy of their natures to reach and arouse other men from their natural torpidity. The word taught and preached by men who have become alive to God through the word, is the spiritual agency by which the kingdom of Christ is advanced.

There are instances in which the mere printed page has been used to convey the earnest conviction of the man who wrote it. But the natural and normal way is by the contact of man with man in uttered and emphatic speech, whether addressed to the great assembly, or under four eyes, or in the little group of the class gathered around the teacher. The notion that the printing press is likely to supersede the spoken word can be entertained only by those who have never given thought to the experiences of their own lives, or whose experiences have been unusually barren.

Hence the importance of our Lord's warning, recorded by one evangelist as "Take heed how ye hear," and by another as "Take heed what ye hear."