

The Christian Advocate.

GALVESTON, TEXAS. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8.

The article of "Come" on the Presiding Eldership will do good, if it convinces us of the necessity of elevating to that plain method of dealing with each other in Conference, which distinguished the solemn and searching time, more so than it is, perhaps, at present. We do not think, however, that the effects of departure, if any there be, from the old method blotted it, is any more observable in the Presiding Eldership than it is in the ministry generally. And yet none will join more heartily than the Elders themselves in the wish that they were all more like "some of the simple great ones," who used to magnify that office. Let us all, in every department of our work, make fresh inquiry for the old paths; and as we get light on the subject, let us walk toward them until we get fully into them once more. We look at a periodical issued by our Church, when she was much younger than she is now. How she shames, by its weighty sense and strong spirit, the present issues of our periodicals. While we look at it and endeavor to imitate its spirit, let Elders and preachers and laity do the same in regard of the good old example left them by the early Methodists in each of those departments. We must not be imitators of the past, in the details of our action, but we cannot do better than to return to that early simple-mindedness and manly zeal, and hearty personal consecration by which the first years of the Methodist revival were distinguished.

ATROPHIA BOREALIS.—Our telegraphic news from the North is an unusually brilliant display of the Northern Light on the night of the 28th ult. The phenomenon was seen by a wide range of people in this latitude, and is described with enthusiasm in some of the papers. Its appearance from the island was very fine, but did not create much excitement. A few people thought for a time that the "day of judgment" was at hand, but are much gratified, we learn, to find that they were mistaken.

DEFEATING HIS OWN PLANS.—It is said that a brave East India General, while trying to capture a British camp in a surrender, for three days fired nothing from his guns but a lot of hermetically sealed provisions in tin cans, taken from the English, which he mistook for cannon-shot, thus supplying his army with a shower of the freshest of English provisions.

INDOLOGY IN THE UNITED STATES.—The Chinese in San Francisco have a heathen temple which cost \$20,000, and at a cost of \$30,000 have imported an idol from China, representing a great statesman and warrior who lived three hundred years ago. The number of Chinamen in California is 60,000, and is rapidly increasing, the law prohibiting them from coming to the State having been pronounced unconstitutional.

THE CHOLERA IN ENGLAND.—The London Medical Times sounds on the unswerving note, that the cholera has again made its appearance in England. It has been transmitted, as usual, from Hamburg. The quarantine surgeon has been empowered to board Hamburg vessels at Gravesend, and to remove all suspicious cases to the dreadnought. Similar instructions have been sent to other ports.

OPPOSITION TO THE GOSPEL.—A clergyman in Madras says that a meeting of ten thousand nuns was held there, to adopt a memorial to the Secretary of State for India, praying that hindrances may be put in the way of propagating the gospel in that country. He says: "There has not, for many years, been such a violent opposition to the gospel as there is at present. We have great reason to believe that it is the success of the gospel which has stirred up the present antipathy of the heathen."

The degree of A. M., has been conferred upon Rev. C. C. Gillespie, Editor of the New Orleans Advocate, by Centenary College of Louisiana. A correspondent of the Picayune has the following paragraph in a notice of the commencement: "The exercises began on Sunday, July 24, by the 'commencement sermon,' delivered by Rev. C. C. Gillespie, of the New Orleans Christian Advocate. It was an elaborate and able effort. The audience almost unanimously classed Mr. Gillespie among the great preachers of our state and day. At night, Rev. J. B. Walker, also of New Orleans, edited a large and attentive audience with one of his best efforts. New Orleans is certainly fortunate in having two such preachers."

AN ADMONITION.—We are happy to inform our readers that there are indications of the return of a better spirit to the political religionists of North. One of the Northern religious journals which has hitherto, as we think, been too far gone to mingle the Church with the State, makes just now the important admission, that "Jesus Christ was not a politician." We note that as a good sign.

DEATH OF MINISTERS.—Rev. J. W. Kasey, a supernumerary of the Louisville Conference, is dead. He was a young man, but was forced by failing health to quit the active work two or three years ago.

Rev. A. R. Erwin writes that Rev. T. W. Randle, of the Tennessee Conference, died recently at Huntsville, Tenn.

CHURCH'S HEART OF THE ANDER.—A description of this celebrated American picture will be found on our first page. The painting has been exhibited recently in London with great success.

A correspondent of a St. Louis paper says, Horace Greeley has greatly exaggerated the intimacies of the Kansas gold region, and intimates that Iroquois is not a disintegrated victim in the case.

SOMETHING IN A NAME.—A well-executed counterfeit \$5 bill on the Citizen's Bank of New Orleans, may be detected by an error in the Cashier's name, which is written E. Rousseau, instead of E. Rousseau.

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.

Rev. D. Morse, of Chappell Hill, advertises a lot of 1224 "healthy well-selected sheep" for sale. We are informed by good authority that they will fully equal or surpass the advertised description.

Port Sullivan Female Institute advertises to open on the first Monday in October, under charge of Rev. J. E. Carner, A. M. We notice that Prof. Carner is spoken of in a hearty style of commendation by the Advertiser at Bastrop, where he has been in charge of a school. We congratulate the Institute at Port Sullivan on the acquisition of his services as its President.

HEALTH.—The latest New Orleans papers report the city healthy. The Advocate says: "Not a case of yellow fever up to this date." The health of Galveston remains excellent.

THE RHYTHMICAL PREACHER.

Keats assures us that the music of the name which he gave to his longest poem, had passed into him and become a part of his being. There is often a singular music in words, which, according to Jeffrey, must be attributed to the power of association. But that, like most other explanations of our mental mysteries, needs explaining. It simply seems to postpone, for a moment, the final conclusion, the thing is so because it is so. We are ourselves differently philosophical, but there are some things, and very mysterious things they are, which we do not think a metaphysician for nothing. All we can say about those Eolian responses of our being, struck by certain words and phrases, is that we feel the vibration. And, we repeat, that the sense of enjoyment which attaches to this familiar experience is all the better as it is one of those ultimate, itself inexplicable, by which other things are made known or suggested.

Leigh Hunt says that Shakespeare proves himself to be right by the wording of a passage which one of his characters uses in asking another to hand him his hat. If, in his high-sounding passages, the greatest dramatist rises above all height, in his less pretentious verse he shows an inimitable facility of sinking deeper than others, to touch some "homely truth" the expression the hidden springs of our harmony. Waking from a short sleep, just before her death, the good Queen Katharine was aware that she had seen angels. There, many a poet would have strained and tired the mind with a rhapsody of description; but the true poet makes the dying woman simply say— "They promised me eternal happiness."

Eternal happiness is very great; angels excel in strength; but the idea of *promising*, as employed in the passage, makes us feel that the mysterious messengers had drawn near, like friends, and whispered that almost overpowering music, so touching it with human gentleness and love. This humanity of speech, wrought to a most subtle music is everywhere Shakespeare's distinguishing excellence. His lovers do not lavish the wealth of their affection upon anybody, but plainly say "I love you;" his sick men do not tell the doctor that they are ill, but simply, "I am sick;" his hungry people will not partake of some refreshment, but "will to dinner presently." Yet every thing is told so musically, that it almost seems as if the poet wanted to prove himself a man to be trusted, by his own text—a passion for the concord of sweet sounds.

Occasionally we meet with a writer or speaker who has some good portion of this power of word-music. Accordingly, he numbers his readers or hearers by thousands. The few read or hear the thinker; the many follow the spell of the master of music. Think of the sale which the books of Washington Irving have had, and of the sale which they yet have, and all for their wonderful sweetness of style. Let us look into the matter.

Perfect music of style generally arises when the subject is emotional. It is that language of the heart. In which the swarming heart would speak thoughts, words that beat the warm ear start, or the soul might die.

Also it abhors the metaphysical. We see this exemplified in the fact that to the poet, the most emotional and least visibly metaphysical of writers, the music of the language is essential, while, in the case of the philosopher, the "harsh Teutonic jar" is that which he can attain unto, even if it be not made necessary, as we incline to think it, by the nature of his subject itself. If we pick up the nearest newspaper, we find the first thing in it to be a sermon by Rev. G. H. Sprague, "delivered to an audience of ten thousand;" the next thing of importance a sermon by Rev. John McClintock, D. D., pastor of a Methodist church, in New York. There is a point of view in which Mr. McClintock's sermon is much superior to the other; but it is the philosophical, and we presume, therefore, that he had fewer hundreds to hear him than the eloquent Baptist preacher had thousands. Mr. McClintock opens with a discrimination of the wants of human nature from the wants of the human mind; and though he discards "nice metaphysical distinctions," yet, as he proceeds, he tries to get us to "study our own inner life," and calls our attention to classes of people by their mental differences; speaks to us about "culture and development," and about the mysteries of "our being." We are not complaining of the sermon. It has a magnificent thought in it, the thought of "the soul that lives in him, because he first loved us;" "in Christ crucified, and in him alone, can we seek the true theology or knowledge of God." The thought is strongly and eloquently elaborated. But the structure of the discourse, the style of thought, and, consequently, of speech, are not of the most popular kind. It is a fine specimen of the most popularized form of the intellectual discourse.

Mr. Sprague shows his best in the very first sentence: "Friendship is the only thing in the world concerning the usefulness of which mankind are agreed," is the remark of an ancient heathen writer." The point at which all men are agreed, "the touch of nature" that makes us kin, is always aimed at instinctively by Mr. Sprague. Of the philosophic intellect, he has none at all; he has, instead, strong practical sense, a good deal of constructive ability, but cold and bare and dry. Well, in one of Sprague's sermons, the tree was put out of its leaves, the wind rattle among them, and occasionally from the midst a bird sends forth its song.

Let us see, now, by scrutinizing two of his sermons, what looks Mr. Sprague has read. First, it is evident that he has imbibed himself with what Samuel Rogers calls "the exquisite English" of the common version of the Scriptures, so superior to any other English, that it made the old banker-poet "sometimes think that the translators, as well as the original authors, must have been inspired." Mr. Sprague drinks at this the only well of English undefiled. Then we find that he has read Shakespeare, Spenser, Joanna Baillie, Savage, Lavater, Krumpholtz, "quaint old Master Fuller," Luther; besides Watts, Charles Wesley and other writers of song for the service of the sanctuary. We dictate no man's reading; in this, if in anything, "there's a divinity" that shapes and directs. We are saying, simply, what is true in

one case, not what ought to be in others. Undoubtedly, much of Mr. Sprague's popularity results from his combination of Calvinism and Arminianism, as was the case with Whitefield. A good deal of his power comes from his earnestness about orthodoxy; more still, we hope, from his piety; leaving but little for the element we are noticing, yet still enough to be appreciable. We have heard preachers introduce popular quotations from the "immortal Young," and the "distinguished Watts." But Sprague tells us that "Spenser sung in fine old verse," or, "Poor Savage spoke from sad experience when he said"—which is quite as true as that Young is immortal, (with a jerk on the second syllable) is as easily spoken, awakens less critical dissent, and has a certain charm for the ear. We give some of the propositions of the discourse before us. See how they are worded:

"Friendship which lasts does not take its rise in the chambers of mirth, nor is it fed and fattened there.

"A friend who is acquired by folly is never a lasting friend.

"Friendship and love, to be real, must not be in words, but in deeds."

Quoting Savage on the falsity of the world's friendships, the preacher echoes the sentiment, but echoes it rhythmically:

"Let us throw some of the prose of Mr. Spurgeon into lines:

He humbled you, He made you penitent, He brought you to his feet, And He forgave all your sins. Sure then He'll not desert you, You have often left Him; has He ever left you? You have had many trials and troubles; has He ever deserted you? Has He ever turned away his heart, And shut up his bowels of compassion? Could you dare to say to Him, 'Sure then He'll not desert you, You will not turn your back on me.' (form '7)

"Not our good thing has failed, Of all which we are proud; And do you fear He yet will forsake you? Ask them the bright ones, nearest the throne:

Ye glorified spirits! Did Christ forsake you? Ye have passed through Jordan's stream, Did He leave you there? Ye have been baptized in the black flood of death; Did He there forsake you? Ye have stood before the Throne of God; Did He then desert you?

And they answered, "No: 'Through all the troubles of our life, 'In all the bitterness of death, 'In all the terrors of God's judgment, 'He hath been with us— 'A friend that sticks closer than a brother."

Out of all the millions of God's redeemed, There's not one He hath forsaken. Poor they have been, Mean and distressed; Never turned aside from doing them good.

We have made one transposition and changed one word. One who is better acquainted with a certain theory of verse than ourself, could have made a better arrangement. But ours will show that the music is in the style of the preacher; it must certainly have its effect on the hearer.

Now, we do not get through from Mr. Sprague. His sermons are not brittle of the intellect, but constructions of the understanding. Mr. Sprague is not, in any high sense, a teacher; but he has a very precious and useful gift of communion with one of the most powerfully plastic faculties of our nature; and as "a man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven," we are glad that he is using the gift in the best service of the Giver.

THE BRITISH CONFERENCE.

This body met in the latter part of July at Manchester. It consists of a hundred ministers. Vacancies are filled by seniority and election.—There is, indeed, an election in all cases; but the choice of a certain proportion of those necessary to fill vacancies is limited to the senior preachers. This year there were seven vacancies; five were filled by seniority, two by election. The latter were W. M. Pambon and George Scott. Mr. Pambon is the youngest man chosen except Jabez Bunting, and yet he has been in the ministry about fourteen years, and is about 35 years old.

The presidency of the Conference, the highest office of the English Wesleyans, was conferred by an almost unanimous vote upon Rev. S. D. Waddy. His majority, 311, was the largest ever known. It would have been smaller if Dr. Hannah had not declined being a candidate.

But how can there be a majority of 311 in a hundred? Representatives from various departments of the work, sit with the hundred, engage in the business, and vote. This year the Conference was composed of about 500 preachers.

THE MANAGER OF DOING BUSINESS.—The following from the correspondence of the Pittsburg Advocate interests us:

Nearly the whole of the fiscal business of the connection is virtually settled by mixed committees, in some of which the business is non-forensic, and in others it is forensic. These preparatory committees occupy nearly a fortnight; all of which, except two consist of an equal number of ministers and laymen; in some of which the business is non-forensic, and in others it is forensic. These preparatory committees occupy nearly a fortnight; all of which, except two consist of an equal number of ministers and laymen; in some of which the business is non-forensic, and in others it is forensic.

The first of these committees is the one for stationing the preachers, which closed its five days' session on Tuesday week. This committee consists wholly of ministers, chosen by the district meetings, and presided over by one among the senior and more influential members of the body. He is most frequently chairman of the district. He is to acquaint himself with the general wants and capabilities of the circuits within his district, so as to be able to secure the appointment of suitable ministers for each field of labor. He is open to the instructions of both ministers and stewards, and must use his best judgment and ability in trying to meet every case.

The nature of the functions of the stationing committee shows that it must be one of confidence, involving great delicacy; and it therefore sits with closed doors, and maintains great secrecy. The result is published but not the process, in what is called the "First draft of the Stations of the Ministers." This goes forth to the constituents. Some are satisfied and thankful, and others seek changes, and urge reasons and claims preparatory to another sitting in an advanced stage of the Conference proceedings, when the whole scheme is revised, and submitted to the judgment of the supreme body.

Before the full Conference, at this final stage, appointments are discussed, and particular claims are urged with moderation and firmness; and the astonishing result is reached, that although with the stroke of a pen a minister is removed, he is, in fact, bound to continue his duty, until he is able to secure a replacement during the discussion, when final he submits to it with a good grace, in the belief that his brethren, under divine guidance, will not be less than just to him, and that, although it may be painful, they seldom, find it needful to take his name out of their proceedings, one submitting to another, and especially yielding to what appears to be a general judgment.

AN IMPORTANT TASK.—A correspondent of the Advocate and Journal notes the following:—Something similar might be adopted in our own Methodism. In appointing preachers to the charge of schools, they should not be thrown out of the pastoral work, but held to its duties and responsibilities in some such way as this:

"It has been decided, on the motion of the Rev. Mr. Biggs, that it is fitting and expedient for a report to be rendered to the respective district meetings and the conference, as to the spiritual condition of the two preparatory colleges at Sheffield and at Tamworth, which are held under the pastoral charge of ministers appointed by this conference." You will be surprised such a thing should not have been done long ago. Sheffield College has been in existence twenty years. By this decision our president is brought, as a pastor, into connection with our general disciplinary arrangements and action. As a pastor, since he went to Sheffield, he has had no reason to be ashamed to report to offer up to this time. We have been afraid of coming too near to these institutions, and of being too strictly identified with them. But, in fact, we could not evade or diminish our responsibility as to institutions, to the care of which we have dedicated our ministers."

We cannot. We are held responsible for the character of schools to which we dedicate our ministers. Let us, therefore, come more closely to them, and make them a part of "the regular work."

MEMBERS.—British Conference, 277,091 members, 1,092 preachers; Ireland, 19,406 members, 109 ministers, 31 missionaries; Foreign Missions, 64,848 members, 1,327 missionaries; French Conference, 1,440 members, 18 ministers; Australian Conference, 24,461 members, 107 ministers; Canada, 40,200 members, 290 ministers; Eastern British American Conference, 15,111 members, 80 preachers. Total—441,600 members of the Church, 2,054 ministers and supernumeraries. Seven conferences have been held in France, four in Australia, four in Eastern British America, and 115 in England.

We learn that Mr. Alfred Tennyson contemplates a tour in the United States the coming autumn.

FROM THE INTERIOR.

DEAR BRO. CARNE.—Being at home again, after riding some 600 miles over this beautiful country, the fairest and richest I verily believe the sun ever shone upon, attending six camp-meetings, witnessing signal displays of the Divine Grace in the conversion of souls, and blessing the Church; camping out with wife and younger son at the different camps, and by the wayside, for six weeks, (having slept in a house only four times during that period,) it might be expected I should have much to say of incidents by the way, and at the camps—of the stirring scenes witnessed in the tent and at the altar—the glorious exhibition of grace in the conviction and conversion of sinners—of overflowing love—of the joy unutterable, and full of glory—of the faith of loved brethren—and of all the untold and wondrous goodness of our covenant-keeping God; and so indeed I have. But there is no time now; it is Saturday night, and I must prepare for Sabbath duties, after an absence of seven weeks from my congregation; and duties connected with the opening of our Institute press heavenly upon me, and leave but little time for thought. But to the trip: Our little company consisted of Rev. W. Williams, of the Virginia Cong.; Rev. J. W. Whipple, our beloved Presiding Elder, and his model wife, with our little family, and so we were off for Lampasas Springs, stake ropes, water casks, and all—camping at noon or night, wherever grass and water might invite. I have traveled a good deal on both coasts of our broad continent, and really believe that many scenes in Texas far exceed in beauty anything I have yet seen. The lover of the picturesque would have been enchanted; and if he also loved the Creator as well, would have shouted aloud his praise, as it was when our little company came upon the crest of the high ridge, a few miles this side of the Lampasas valley, and the whole broad landscape burst upon our view, with the Sugar Loaf a few miles on the right, and the valley with the rolling hills beyond—in front, and beyond all, the elevated peaks, and prolonged ridges closing the view; faintly overclouded by the glorious scene, I rose in front of my bag, and swinging my hat over my head, shouted, "Hallelujah!"

But I set out to tell you something about the Camp meeting, and find myself loitering along the road. The meeting at Lampasas was in many respects the best I have seen my good fortune to attend; it is due the tenters resident there, to say thus much: we had the most orderly and attentive congregations—noting to repress either during the interim of service, or when the congregation was assembled—there was present from first to last a most sacred and hallowed influence—a season long to be remembered for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

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light, springing from the horizon and converging toward a point about 20° South and 5° West of the zenith, where was a corona of dark purple, the bands from a half to two degrees wide at their base, and gradually narrowing toward their point of convergence, and terminating without running into this purple mass. The base of the glorious arch occupied the entire horizon, from the East by the North to the West; at the North the bands of light did not descend to the horizon, but terminated at about 20° of elevation; the space below being occupied by a strong light similar to the dawn of day after a dark but clear, cloudless night.

These bands of light were of various and ever-varying color, from dull, yellowish white, through every shade of pink to the deepest purple; streaming up suddenly with great brilliancy they would die away for a few moments and then flash out again as suddenly, causing all visible objects to reflect a reddish hue and giving to the movements of the face of my watch and the movements of the hands; the moon had set at 9 o'clock, so that this unusual light was due to the Aurora alone.

It was, altogether, a glorious sight—those magic bands of light, streaming, flashing up with gorgeous hues, steadily for a few minutes, from the horizon to zenith, then changing—moving as the waving of a vast curtain of light, and then retreating toward the horizon to flash up again—the mass of bright purple hanging over the Eastern and Western horizon, with the dawn-like light of the North—the faintest stars the while, distinctly visible through the whole. I have seen nothing of magnificence equal to it since the meteor shower of 1853.

I should add that there was an aurora visible on the Sunday night previous, (I did not see it) and that for many days the weather has been unusually low and calm, a summer that seems the very culmination of the long drought season of the past five years; the ground dry and unusually bare, with an almost entire absence for the week preceding of the South winds that make this climate so delightful. This atmospheric condition may have caused the display. But how is it? and what? The light of the sun flashing from Northern ice on earth or in air, says one; but here we have the sun almost directly in the nadir, while the crown of this phenomenon is nearly in the zenith; besides this was evidently unaffected by the movement of the sun toward his rising—was atmospheric, steadily near the zenith, while the stars moved beyond.

It is electrical, says another; yes, that is probably true—but how? what? who can tell? The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work"—that's it, and that's about all we know about it. Let us adore; let us fall down; let us worship before the Lord our Maker.

And now allow me to say in closing, that I am here at the helm of the Baptist Military Institute, determined to stand by the ship whether in storm or calm, for the next 40 weeks; if labor and energy with what ability I possess can avail, she shall not founder.

Our prospects have never been better. We opened on the 1st Monday of September. Please say to the friends at home that the students should be on the ground early in the first week.

Truly and affectionately, R. T. P. ALLEN.

DEPARTURE OF MISSIONARIES.

We learn, says the North Carolina Christian Advocate, from an authentic source that the following arrangement is proposed, for the departure of several missionaries from the Southern Methodist Church, to China and Japan.

Rev. M. L. W. Yates, selected to the N. C. Conference, for the China mission, not being an elder, can only be elected and ordained at an annual conference. The session of the N. C. Conference will not be until December. The Presiding Bishop will therefore transfer Brother Yates to the Tennessee Conference, which is to meet at Columbia on the 12th of October. So soon as he is elected and ordained, he will again be transferred to the N. C. Conference.—It is also understood that the two missionaries from the Memphis Conference, whose names are not given, will be retained at the same time and be ready to go to Japan. Rev. Messrs. Allen of the Georgia Conference, and Stewart of the Tennessee Conference, are likewise in readiness to go as missionaries to China. And it is proposed that these five missionaries shall sail for their destination in China and Japan, early in November. It is expected that they will all be in the city of Shanghai.

Such an arrangement is in every way judicious. The long voyage will be in the most favorable season for the missionaries. The missionaries will have the benefit of the society of the Rev. M. L. Yates and his family, and will thus be enabled to make good progress in preparation for their respective fields.

Let the Churches contemplate this spectacle; the departure of five devoted men to live and labor and die as missionaries to the heathen; and the fact that they will be ready to go, and will thus be enabled to make good progress in preparation for their respective fields.

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