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OUR CONTRIBUTORS:

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CINCINNATI AND ST. LOUIS, JUNE 6, 1917.

No. 23.

THE CHURCH'S SUPREME DUTY. Herald and Presbyter Of all institutions and organizations in the world the Church of Jesus Christ is transcendantly the greatest. There are many organizations of great interest and importance, fraternal, educational, benevolent and reformatory in their aims and purposes, excellent in their nature and salutary in their influence, but the Church Page of Jesus Christ towers above them all as a mountain above the plains. 3

> This is to be presumed from a consideration of its object. It was called into existence for the special purpose of promoting the spiritual and eternal welfare of the human race. Once admit the fact of spiritual life, and of future and eternal existence, and of the necessity of preparation for that future life, and we must admit that the Church of Jesus Christ has a supremely high and important mission in pressing upon men the truths that concern them in reference to salvation and eternity and God.

> It is only as people close their eyes to these infinitely important realities and go forward blind to the revelation of God, that they permit themselves to ignore the Church and its divine and majestic claims to their attention and regard. That there are many who do so ignore and disregard it is a fact, but this is no more an argument against it than the illiterate masses of this and other lands are against the intellectual culture provided for by the universities of the educated world. There are people who are starving, but this is no argument against good food. There are those who are destitute wanderers, but this is no argument against good homes.

> To the Church God has committed the revelation of his will. He inspired holy men to write his holy laws. He raised up holy men to proclaim his truth. He gave his own Son as his supreme revelation and his supreme gift, in order that men might have salvation. To make known the Gospel is the chief function of the Church. No other organization on earth has this privilege and duty. The Church must do this or be disobedient and unfaithful. The State and the public school, for instance, pass by this great theme, for fear of giving offense to some, and because there are no ways of safeguarding the message in their hands and making sure that they would give it correctly. The Church is divinely commissioned to execute this task and spread the heavenly tidings, and men expect it to be about the Father's business and to tell the eternal truth of God.

Let the Church never fail in the performance of this essential duty committed to it by the Lord. If it fails the world is left in silence and darkness as to God's light and truth. If the Church is not true and faithful in preaching and teaching the Gospel, there is no other authorized agency for doing this, and no assurance that it

will be done at all, except in a merely occasional, indifferent and uncertain way. Let the Church be true and steadfast.

Let not the Church be anxious and feverish, as it sometimes seems to be, to drop its real work and supreme responsibility, and take other and inferior forms of effort. The Church can not take up every form of social work, and still do its own work. It is to concern itself to get men. right with God. When they are thus right with God they will be right with their fellow men and will engage in the needed forms of social effort.

It is no discredit to the Church that it does not do all the good, benevolent, charitable, reformatory and social work that is called for in the world. It can not do it all. It is not expected to do it all. Its work is, primarily and supremely, to get men spiritually right with God, and when it does this the men, made right, will do all the things that need to be done. Christian people will do the Christian work. It is no discredit to the cobbler to stick to his last. It is a magnificent thing if the Church shall prepare men and women for holiness and usefulness here on earth and for holiness and glory in heaven.

THE WAR AND LEADERSHIP.

A great many important religious and educational organizations are dispensing with their conventions this summer on account of the trying conditions of the war times. The statement is made, however, in answer to this, that there was never a time in the history of the nation when such gatherings were so essential, the nation needing the development of religious and enlightened leadership as never before in all its experiences.

A great uncertainty is resting upon the colleges and universities and even the high schools of the land. The United States Commissioner of Education, Dr. P. P. Claxton, says that there are more than one and one-half millions of boys and girls in the high schools of the United States and that more than two hundred thousands of these will graduate this year. Out of this number about ninety thousands would normally enter the colleges, normal and technical schools next fall, but it is feared, by those in a position to know best, that the attendance at these schools next fall will be small. Intense desire to get into some sort of gainful pursuit or to enter the army will take many away from the ordinary lines of study.

The fact is that the attendance at all such higher institutions of learning should. be larger than usual. There was never a time in the history of our nation when. there has been such a demand for leadership as there will be during the next few years. There are men to do the unskilled labor of city and country if all are put at work, and there are men for the trenches and fighting in the army if they are all

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ne fort and a fortress is two or more orts. I came back to the Ninety-first salm with an entirely new light upon its neaning. I read in it what I had not een before, 'He is my fortress'-God the ather, God the son, and God the Holy pirit, a trinity of forts so placed at every ngle as to protect me from the enemy. od is a triune fortress.'

God is more than fortress. He is a livng and loving Father. In a great steamhip disaster a father was seen carrying a leeping six-year-old child in his arms to a feboat. The boy was awakened by the ommotion and fear about him: he opened is eyes to look up into his father's face, nd then he snuggled a bit more closely to his father's arms and closed his eyes gain in sleep. He was interested only to now that he was in the protecting emrace of his father. In the storms of life is not the sound of the waves that maters; it is the sense of the enfolding arms f God about us that makes for peace.

I have heard of a young soldier back om service in South Africa, whom a lady as endeavoring to persuade to tell of his periences. Tommy, who was Irish, tried get out of it by saying that nothing had ver happened to him; but the lady was ersistent. "Something must have hap-ened," she declared. "Now tell me, in l your experiences in South Africa, what "Well, as it that struck you most?" a'am," said Tommy, after some cogitaon, "th' thing that shtruck me most was ' number of bullets that missed me.") the observing believer is struck most the number of dangers that have threated him only to be diverted by the procting hand of God.

It must needs be that storms and sorws, trials and temptations, dangers and fficulties come. They do come to us all, d too many and too much for any unled, unprotected life to bear up under. it shall the storms discourage or destroy ? Not at all, for "he shall cover thee th his feathers, and under his wings alt thou trust." It is not upon our ads that the fury of the storm falls. e are covered with the divine feathers d sheltered under the divine wings.

God's wings are swift wings. A carrier con has been known to fly over ninety les in one hour; it has been estimated t in the ten years of a swallow's life flies far enough to have gone around world eighty-nine times, so great is velocity. But these are not half so ift as is our heavenly Father to give children aid. When a sinner seeks don, or a baffled soul needs help, swifter n eagle's wings are the wings of the nighty in giving deliverance.

od's wings are broad wings. There e been eagles captured with wings r seven feet, from tip to tip. When king of the air sits on the crag the gs are spread over all the eaglets in eyrie, and when he starts from the the shadow is like the spreading of orm cloud. So God's wings are broad gs, covering all our wants, all our sors, all our sufferings, giving protection nd meeting the necessities of all his t human family.

d's wings are strong wings. The ngth of a bird's wing we can guess the fact that not a few of them can or days without resting. There have condors in the Andes that could come an ox or a stag. There have

been eagles that have picked up children and swung them to the top of the cliffs. There are birds whose wings are packed with strength to fly, to lift, to destroy. So the wings of God are strong wings, "Mighty to save." What a blessed thing it is to be defended by the strong wings of the Almighty! "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almightv." "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust." Here is protection and safety. Oh, the blessing of knowing that "there's a refuge near"!

"Under his wings" there is comfort. The young birds find warmth under the mother bird's wings. They have the birdlife comfort. To the Christian the outside world may be cold, unfriendly, unkind. "The world will love its own," and only its own. But the Christian finds, under the shelter of God's wings, not alone protection, but through Christ the warmth of love, of friendliness, of great interest and the kindness of true unselfishness.

"In front of a window where I worked last summer," says a workman, "was a butternut tree. A humming-bird built her nest on a limb that grew near the window, and we had an opportunity to watch her closely, as we could look right into the nest from the window. One day there was a very heavy shower coming up, and we thought we would see if she covered her young during the storm; but when the first drops fell she came and took in her bill one of the three large leaves growing close to the nest, and laid this leaf over so it completely covered the nest. Then she flew away. On looking at the leaf, we found a hole in it; and in the side of the nest was a small stick that the leaf was fastened to or hooked on. After the storm was over, the old bird came back and unhooked the leaf, and the nest was perfectly dry." Under his wings we have God's paternal care.

The young birds find contentment under the mother bird's wings. How quiet they become. They nestle down in absolute content. So to the Christian, trusting under the broad, strong wings of the Almighty, there is a sense of sweet content. "In the shadow of his wings there is rest, sweet rest." "In the shadow of his wings there is peace, sweet peace." Blessed nest! Warm nest! Why will men stay out in the cold to be shot of temptation or to be chilled by the blast when there is divine shelter? Let us nestle down under the safe, strong and very gentle wings of the Almighty. "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust."

Rochester, N. Y.

AUBURN SEMINARY.

The Alumni Commencement Conference The Alumni commencement conference at Auburn, N. Y., preceding the commence-ment exercises of the seminary, drew the largest number of friends and alumni for many years. The theme discussed was "The War and the Work of the Church." "The War and the Work of the Church. The outstanding address on this occasion was given by Rev. Arthur J. Brown, D.D., Secretary of the Board of Foreign Mis-sions, on "The World Situation and Its Ef-fect on the World-Wide Work of the Church." President Stewart preached the commencement sermon. All the graduates commencement sermon. All the graduates have accepted local pastorates, with the exception of Mr. Edward W. Perry, who goes to China as a missionary, and George W. Walker, who was awarded the Joshua I. Maxwell Fellowship. The endowment of

the seminary was augmented by \$82,000. received in cash during the year.

TAKING NOTES IN TEXAS.

BY REV. S. J. FISHER, D.D.

Dallas is a city of 125,000 people, with fine pavements and the longest concrete structure in the world in the form of a viaduct carrying a beautiful boulevard across the railroad and the lower ground which separates the main city from its southern suburbs. The City Temple, or Central Presbyterian Church, in which the sessions of the Assembly were held. is a southern suburbs. The City Temple, or Central Presbyterian Church, in which the sessions of the Assembly were held, is a new, fireproof structure, white and ornate, three stories in height, besides the finely-finished basement. The first two stories are devoted to the auditorium, to the pas-tor's study and a ladies' room; and the third story contains a great room, on one side of a hall, across which are a number of good-sized rooms, the whole being reached by an elevator and stairs. The auditorium is plain but attractive, pan-neled in oak, and seated with individual chairs, and requires of a speaker some force and fullness in his words. The main streets indicate an active business condition, being broad, crowded and busy, and new and stately buildings are everywhere seen. I have never seen a city of so many jitney cars, running ceaselessly in every direction, and so pat-ronized as to suggest a serious competi-tion with the trolleys. The residences are very pleasing, though a large proportion are of one story, or a story and a half,

very pleasing, though a large proportion are of one story, or a story and a half, and the climbing roses were blooming over and the climbing roses were blooming over many a trellis and porch. Dallas is said to be in the center of the "black-waxy soil," as rich as that of the Nile, and within a hundred miles there are over eleven million acres under cultivation. Around the city the beautiful country stretches out, rolling very gently, with its groves and fields; and because of this prairie-like range the winds sween through prairie-like range the winds sweep through the streets, and the breezes at night temper the heat of the day. What a land this is; what a State! Though we have trav-eled so far we are still two hundred and fifty miles from Galveston, three hundred and fifty miles from Galveston, three hundred and fifty miles from San Antonio, and its army station, Fort Sam Houston, and up north it has mountain ranges and vast cattle ranches and busy cities, and every variety of soil and climate. If Texas were as thickly nonvloted as Comment it would variety of soil and climate. If Texas were as thickly populated as Germany it would have two hundred and twenty millions, more than twice what our country has to-day, and it needs no prophetic eye to picture or view the possibilities of such a region or the promise of such a State. More than most of the other Southern States, it has been subject to the influence and life of the North, and Great Britain, and it has learned to welcome every im-migrant, and open its doors to every stran-ger, high or low. high or low. gei

The welcome to the Assembly was all that could be asked, and more than was expected in warmth, kindness and cour-tesy, from Rev. Dr. Frank Smith, pastor of the City Temple, and his associates in the ministry and the laymon who stroye

of the City Temple, and his associates in the ministry, and the laymen who strove so successfully to fulfill every promise. Here Presbyterianism is striving with much hopefulness to do its part in mold-ing the life of this great and stirring city. in the midst of a population diversified and strenuous, with all the virtues of energy, ambition and great desires, and all the perils of success and growing wealth, in newness of associations, tempted by an unrestricted sale of liguor tempted by an unrestricted sale of liquor, and some elements of population which resent restraint; a population that can be of vast usefulness in the development of a State which is equal to vast empires in extent, and more than equal to some in

extent, and more than equal to some in its elements of wealth and growth. Out in the Fair Park they have a re-production of the Alamo, that place which is linked to Thermopylæ in its daring and sacrifice, and this whole State, but yesterday almost, was the scene of carnage and struggle with the people of Mexico, and the pathway of soldiers led by Scott, Worth, Lee, McClellan, Grant and others, some of whom later were to face each some of whom later were to face each other on the battlefields of the North, far from the Rio Grande

From the top of the Adolphus Hotel,

over sixteen stories in height, I looked out over the huge factories, and beyond, to the wooded and cultivated plains, and thought of how far off in that direction the Gulf of Mexico rolled in its mighty splendor and in another direction, across mountains and plains, one passed to the great Pacific; and in another the vision splendor, and in another direction, across Northland allured me to the coast and harbors where our leaders looked across the sea to the battlefields, where the future of this great land may be threatened, or made rich in every treasure of a true wealth, a civilization devoted to Christ and spreading to all the world.

Premising that I was present not as a commissioner, but as "a looker-on in Vienna," I did not hear all the good speeches, and therefore suggest no comparison in mentioning those I did hear. But the address by Rev. Dr. W. H. Roberts, commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of the General Synod was not only appropriate and interesting, but as an exposition of Presbyterianism and the remarkable effect of Calvin's principles of religion and state, delivered with all the force of Dr. Roberts' convictions, quickened one's admiration for that mighty intellect and the Church in whose formation he took such a remarkable part.

Then there was Dr. Schaff's paper on the four hundredth anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, reinforced and intensified by a number of addresses in several churches on the evening of the Sabbath following.

Then there was the forceful and intense address made by Secretary Dixon, of the Home Board, when the committee reported on that Board. As Dr. Dixon spoke of the low condition of the Board's treasury and the spending of nearly all of the Kennedy bequest, except the portion originally invested, and placed before the Assembly the alarming possibility of the withdrawal of the commissions of three hundred missionaries, one could not wonder that the Home Board had no desire for the added responsibility of the Freedmen's work, nor could one fail to infer that such a merger would bankrupt the Board or destroy the special work, for only as a special work could it attract so fully the attention of the Church.

It is not a reflection on Dallas and its environs to believe that the General Assembly by its high character, and the principles it represented and discussed, created a new and deeper impression of the value of Presbyterianism. These thoughtful citizens saw men and women gathered from Canada, the Pacific Coast, New England, Africa, India and the isles of the sea, to whom the Confession of Faith was a living creed, and of the sovereignty of God and divinity of Jesus Christ they could say, in Cæsar's words, they are "as dear to me as are the ruddy drops that visit this sad heart." This is not denominational pride, but a confidence in the truths underlying our ecclesiastical system, and a loyalty to the faith of our fathers derived wholly from the Word of God.

Incidentally, it was interesting to some of us to note an increased appreciation of the work which our Church is carrying on among the negroes. To a great degree this region has known nothing of Presbyterian negroes except those known as Colored Cumberland Presbyterians, a separate Church, which has cared little for the true education of a colored ministry. So the popular meeting for the Freedmen's Board on Monday evening drew a crowded audience and aroused a growing enthusiasm. With the exception of the chairman, Elder S. S. Marvin, of Bryn Mawr, only negroes participated. Besides the quintette of students from Biddle University, eight ministers took part. six making addresses, and better conceived or expressed in more satisfying language have rarely, if ever, been known. They were intelligently eloquent, sensible, earnest and interesting, and made their hearers delighted to realize that under God our Church has been educating and ordaining such ministers and teachers for this long-enslaved race. A true enthusiasm was aroused by these modest. yet earnest, ministers of the Gospel to their race, and at the close not only

was a generous collection taken up for the expenses of the Quintette, but men and women hastened to the platform to congratulate the speakers and express their deepened interest. It was noticeable that some of the speakers expressed with marked conviction the loyalty and patriotism of their race, and their deep affection for this their native land—expressions received with vigorous applause. The Quintette were delightful, and the

day following were borrowed by the ladies holding their foreign mission meeting in another church. There is a natural mel-ody and richness of sound in the negro voice. When we heard Dr. Uggams, of Charleston, S. C., precede his address on the work on the islands near that city by a solo, "My Jesus, I Love Thee," the rich, full voice, clear enunciation and tenderness of accent made applause almost in-congruous. These five lads from Biddle did not feel the occasion proper for the laughter-provoking songs, but there is a quaintness and simplicity, an almost childquantities and simplicity, an atmost child-like directness and freedom, which sug-gest the absolute naturalness and sincer-ity of the hearts from which these songs arose. Such songs as "O Lord, I want to be like Jesus; I don't want to be like Judas," and "Swing Low, Sweet Charlot," windre arela memory of that time of sad quicken one's memory of that time of sad darkness, and one's imagination of the upreach of the slave's heart to the unseen Christ, and the longing for the radiant chariot, and the land which is not very far off, and to which Paul desired to depart. The negroes of Africa have not evolved such pathetic music. Perhaps it is like the pressure which gives such sweetness to the leaf of the lemon verbena or sweet brier, this time of solitude and denial. I may be pardoned for recalling here a verse two of a poem which I wrote when musing upon the songs of slavery:

'Listen! the slaves in their darkness are singing;

Listen! the dark lips seem touched from above.

Solemn and sweet floats the slaves' wondrous chanting-

Chant of rapt hearts with their glimpse of God's love.

.

"No more the songs of slavery fill the evening air;

No more the weird, sad music floats across the field; And yet the old, old longings rise and call,

And still the same old truths their promise yield.

May those who sang such songs in a strange land

Give to the world a grander music still, And touch the world's dull lips with nobler song____

song— The song of those who trust, and do God's will."

I may interject here that, illustrative of this richness of voice and melodious power of this race, the quartette of girl pupils at our Barber Memorial Seminary, Anniston, Ala., under the presidency of Rev. Dr. Alter, is said to be one of the finest and most delightful set of singers in the Southland, showing that this gift belongs not alone to the stronger sex.

alone to the stronger sex. So, journeying homeward, I found Mr. A. R. Bartholomew, of Grove City, had been ordained as the assistant of Rev. C. P. Cheeseman at the Highland Avenue Church, in which exercises Revs. G. M. Duff and S. W. McKelvey took part. Mr. Robert S. Axtell, son of our Rev. Dr. J. S. Axtell, Lebanon Church, Home-

Mr. Robert S. Axtell, son of our Rev. Dr. J. S. Axtell, Lebanon Church, Homestead, Pa., was ordained to take up work as assistant pastor of Rev. Dr. Kirk in Baltimore, of the Southern Church.

This last remark recalls an interesting incident at the Assembly, that while the Southern Church at its Assembly at Birmingham, Ala., was considering its committee's report postponing action upon the invitation of the Northern Assembly to discuss the subject of union, at Dallas Mrs. George, a lady ninety-four years of age, appeared upon the platform and was introduced by Moderator Chapman to the deeply-moved Assembly with the statement that Mrs. George is a member of the Southern Church, and has one son a minister in our own Church, another son a minister and one a ruling elder in the Southern

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Church. Whatever may be the course or fortunes of formal union, such incidents indicate a spirit of fraternity, a unity of heart, which are full of promise, and will lead to the result which our Master desires.

THE SABBATH ALLIANCE.

That a prince of merchants like John Wanamaker should give a luncheon to the Board of Managers of the Lord's Day Alliance of the United States and spead three hours with them discussing the object, achievements and proposed enlargement of the work of the organization, at his private rooms in the New York store, should be sufficient to attract the attan tion of all churches and of every one who believes in the Lord's day and the superimportant claims of the Christian Sabbath. Twenty-three members of the Board and officers of the Alliance were present, and the genial and distinguished host, alian grace had been said by Dr. David J. Bur rell, told why he had given the lunden and in an effective address pointed out that the Sabbath is basal to the work of the Church, and that every church ought to be so alive on this issue that it would regularly and generously provide funds for the Lord's Day Alliance to carry on its work with increasing success against the powerful attacks of the enemies. can't understand why the Church falls to see the great need of this work and the absolute necessity of saving the Sablad and of supporting its chosen organization, and of supporting its chosen organization, which with its affiliated bodies is leading the movement for the defense of the Lord's day. I am connected with many Christian institutions, but I tell you an organization like this must be properly supported in order to do its work well supported in order to do its work wal and efficiently. I regard its work as more important than that of the Bible Society. we lose the Sabbath, what will become of the Church?"

Mr. James Yereance, President of the Alliance, set forth the recent achievements of the association, and told of the far reaching influence of the Alliance in the United States.

Dr. Carson showed how basic is the Sab bath, and urged that the splendid work of the Alliance be pushed to the utmost limits, and earnestly recommended that al such movements related to the Sabbah be led by the Alliance, and that other Sabbath and rest-day organizations should be closely identified with it. Amoug other things, Dr. Carson said: "I was recently talking with a prominent member of the New York State Legislature, and he told me the reason why the many Sabbath secularizing bills didn't get through was because of the up-State sentiment and the splendid work of the Lord's day Alli ance. I can not praise the officers an workare, of this secularize the officers."

ance. I can not praise the omcers an workers of this society too highly." Dr. David J. Burrell spoke particular about the excellent results of the wor done in New York State before and sim the Legislature began its session, an with a ringing emphasis urged steps of summating the proposed enlarged pla and extension work.

E. A. Eggers, a New York letter c rier, impressed the members of the Bos by telling of the great advantage that I come to upwards of a hundred thous letter carriers and postoffice de through the successful efforts of the *I* ance to close the first- and seconde

ance to close the first and second postoffices on the Sabbath. The general secretary, Rev. Dr. H Bowlby, presented a report covering principal features of the work that been done since the beginning of the and submitted a budget containing the proximate amount needed for the dev

ment of the plans proposed. A Finance Committee, composed of Wanamaker, Edwin F. Cragin, 100 H way, New York, and Dr. John F. G was appointed to aid the movemen enlarging the funds of the organiz and the greater extension of its Resolutions were also adopted while be sent to departments of the Feder State Governments, respecting the ing of all Sabbath work to the m of strict necessity and for the fu

JUNE 6, 1917.