

The PRESBYTERIAN

OF THE SOUTH
COMBINING
THE SOUTHWESTERN PRESBYTERIAN
THE CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN
THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN

VOL. LXXXIV.

RICHMOND, NEW ORLEANS, ATLANTA, JUNE 16, 1915.

No. 23



Editorial Notes and Comment



OUR readers, we are sure, will regret to know that Dr. E. B. McCluer and Dr. T. S. Wilson have severed their connection with the Presbyterian of the South. For many years they have labored hard and at great sacrifice to give the Church a paper that has stood for the best ideals of the Southern Presbyterian Church. That they have succeeded in doing this our readers well know, and many of them have by word and pen expressed their appreciation of their efforts. They have stood for the fundamentals of the faith and have endeavored to advance every good cause. The present management feels that, due to their good work, it has a firm foundation on which to build for the future. Feeling assured that these brethren will continue to serve the Master in whatever field of labor he may call them to work in, we pray God's richest blessing upon them now and always.

HAVING disposed of our interest in The Presbyterian of the South we take pleasure in announcing as our successor in the editorial department, Rev. Dr. Robert P. Kerr, who is well and favorably known to the Church at large. We bespeak for him the cordial and loyal support that has been extended to the paper hitherto and a liberal increase of patronage such as is justified by the Church's numerical strength and growth. It may not be fully realized that a sound religious press is a chief bulwark against the incursions of prevailing doubt, corrupt doctrine, and destructive criticism. As we conceive stalwart faith and sterling character to be a priceless heritage of our youth, so should we estimate sound religious literature as essential to the intelligence, refinement and spiritual health of all our homes and churches. Our people will welcome the assurance that The Presbyterian of the South will continue to stand for those essential, changeless articles of faith for which it has stood in the past and will continue steadfastly to maintain the distinctive principles of the great, beloved Church which it represents. Dr. Kerr is widely known as preacher, pastor and author. His return to the fellowship and service of his native Church, after a prosperous and fruitful pastorate in the Northminster church of Baltimore will be gratifying to a host of friends. In their name and in the name of the readers of The Presbyterian of the South we bid him welcome.

Very cordially,

T. S. WILSON,
E. B. McCLUER.

HAVE you a key to the garden? There are beautiful flowers there. This is the most beautiful spring that ever was; the last spring is always the most beautiful, for the roses increase in size every year, and in capacity for blooming. But have you a key to the garden?

Can you unlock the secret of the roses' sweet life? What is the secret of the rose? It is God. The rose says to those who understand her beauty, "God made me. I am His beautiful rose, and God loves me, for He loves beautiful things." Go out into your garden, and be sure to take with you the key that unlocks all the sweet mystery of the flowers.

Have you a key to the sky? Is there nothing at night overhead but glittering specks of light and the silver disk of the moon? Can you get anything out of the sky? anything divine, infinite and everlasting? Surely you can, if you have a key to the starry heavens. Listen, the stars are all singing, and what do they say? They say, "The hand that made us is divine." Is it not a glorious soul?

Probably the most magnificent thing on earth is a sunset. Can you unlock the sunset? God makes the sunset, and He never made two sunsets alike. Each thing that God makes is a new creation, for He is an infinite originality. The sunset sings a great oratorio, don't you hear it? Listen, and let your soul rise on the wings of inspiration to the majestic anthem of the sunset's glorious hymn of praise.

READER, hast thou prayed to-day? No? Well be ashamed of yourself. You ought to thank God that you are alive this fine spring weather. Look up into the blue sky; look upon the green fields and woods; look upon the lovely spring flowers; take a long breath and then thank God for life and health, and food and raiment; thank Him for home and loved ones, and thank Him above all for Jesus Christ our Saviour and the Saviour of the world.

Get down upon your knees and confess your many sins. You have a plenty of sins; your soul is discolored with guilt. Confess them to God, and seek pardon from His great mercy. God will surely forgive you if you seek His pardon and favor. Then you shall be whiter than snow, and stand forth caparisoned in Christ's royal robes of righteousness, better dressed than a king.

THE "field" has been awake to the preaching of the glorious gospel, the truth as it is in Jesus all along. Two kinds of preaching dishearten and alienate hearers. One kind is the listless preaching of commonplace musings, pious indeed, but devoid of the fire and force of deep conviction. The other consists of speculations in science, dreams in the realm of sentiment, excursions in the domain of sociology and similar perversion of the sacred office. Pertinent to the insistent importance of this subject Mr. George Wharton Pepper, a well-known Philadelphia leader, said some very wise and awakening things in his recent Yale Lectures. In view of the recognized demand that every preacher, as well as every divinely appointed agency for the salvation of men

should now be dedicated to the utmost effectiveness, the following from one of Mr. Pepper's lectures is most timely: "The way to God is through the climax of all revelation—the person of Jesus Christ, God's man and man's God. The duty of the preacher is to make men stop, look and listen for God. But he must first have the vision before he can declare it. Like the apostles he must declare what he himself has seen and heard. Compassion and conviction must be his watchwords. Compassion is not condescension, and the sermon must be for the edification of the pew and not of the preacher. Compassion is impotent without conviction. The preacher must first be convinced if he would convince others. The message of religion always comes to the man in the pew tinged with the preacher's personality. He should be free from self-consciousness and put his whole soul into the message. The man in the pew is ready to foreclose any mortgage which the minister has placed on his independence. Therefore he should stand on his own feet always. Back of the sermon stands all the preacher's preceding life. He should remember he has a body to be mastered, a mind to be stored, a spirit to be enriched. Honest thinking must be cultivated at all hazards. The revealer of God must reveal him personally. That is what Jesus did. So must the preacher. In doing so Jesus showed that this is possible to humanity. No man can live close to God without being brought close to man, if he sees God through Christ and views his brother through the same medium. Contemplation of God must be accompanied by communion with Jesus, and through him, with his brethren. Contact with the written word is not enough. It should lead to the Living Word, of which it speaks."

"NEVER remember a favor you have shown; never forget one you have received." This is an excellent proverb. The first part of it is of just as much importance as the latter part. Nothing so completely takes away the beauty of an act of kindness as the benefactor's reminding one of it. It robs the act of the generosity. It puts the giver in a sordid light. It becomes galling to even the most grateful beneficiary.

God blesses the home where the family altar is maintained; and if the altar has never been set up or has been neglected for a season, it is not too late to get into the path of blessing.

One hundred years ago there was not a mission hospital or a trained missionary physician in the non-Christian world; today there are nearly seven hundred hospitals and dispensaries under missionary auspices, with eight million treatments annually.

INTRODUCTORY.

To the Subscribers and Readers of the Presbyterian of the South:

As a new editor of this paper I beg to make my bow and to congratulate myself upon the honor of having the privilege of writing for the good people of the South.

I am glad to be associated with the Rev. Wm. S. Campbell, a dear friend of many years, and beg to say that the Presbyterian of the South shall be the best paper that he and I can make it.

You will have some curiosity to know what the policy of the paper will be in relation to the current questions of the day. The paper will be strictly orthodox. I believe in the absolute inerrancy of the word of God. Having studied it carefully for many years I have not found a mistake in it.

There are no errors in the old book. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and the adorable third Person of the Holy Trinity is the real author of this ancient volume. Heaven and earth shall pass away, says Christ, but my words shall not pass away. While making my confession of faith in this editorial I beg to say that I believe with all my heart in the virgin birth of Christ, in his divine character, his miracles, his atoning sacrifice for sinners, in his death, and in his triumphant resurrection from the dead, and that he hath ascended up on high to sit at the right hand of the Father, King of kings and Lord of lords. Furthermore, that he rules the universe, and nothing can come to pass in this world or any other world without his permission. For these great old doctrines of the Church the Presbyterian of the South will stand and for them it will contend, no matter who opposes, for they are the foundation of the Church, the hopes of the Christian, and on them the whole structure of civilization rests.

Nor have I any quarrel with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Church. I believe every doctrinal statement contained in these standards.

Furthermore, I believe in the historical position of the Southern Presbyterian Church, which stands and has ever stood for the entire separation of Church and State. The Church has nothing to do with the civil government, but to pray for rulers, and in cases extraordinary to humbly petition the State. We cannot imagine St. Paul in Rome mixing himself up with governmental affairs or trying to get Caesar and the Senate to pass laws for the reformation of Rome. Paul carried with him that which is able to reform men, and lift them out of sin, into the light and liberty of the Sons of God. It was and is the glorious gospel of the blessed God which can lift men into virtue and righteousness.

I do not believe in the Church allying itself to the State even though the State is purposing to pass laws looking to the moral reform of society. Let the Church stick to her message which Christ gave her to preach to the world, and never be ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

The Presbyterian of the South stands where the fathers stood, and contends for no new doctrine. If a man discovers a new doctrine it is not true, because it is new. Revelation closed when John wrote amen at the end of the last book of the Bible. Now, there may be new ways of propagating old truth, but candidly I do not believe in most of the new methods of modern times.

This paper will stand for the Southern Presbyterian Church, for its life, its history, its future, for its extension on the home and foreign field and will endeavor to keep its readers posted as to the great movements in the progress of the Holy Catholic Church, the king-

dom of God, which we hold consists of all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in the world.

And so to all Christians we say: "All hail! dearly beloved in the Lord. All Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Lutherans and Disciples we are one in Christ Jesus." And so while we rejoice in the unity of the Church of God still we do contend that the Presbyterian Church is second to none other in doctrine, in character, in life.

Robert P. Kerr.

A LOOK AT THE ASSEMBLY.

The General Assembly of 1915 has gone down into history. The record of its deeds will soon appear in official form.

The personnel of the Assembly was high. A number of the leading men of our Presbyteries were sent. At the same time quite a number of our new and promising younger men were in evidence.

An optimistic note was heard from the very first. The evangelistic sermon and services added much to the power of the gathering. In spite of much time given to addresses along this line and an unusual number of trips, the Assembly diligently considered and concluded its business unusually early. It adjourned Thursday morning.

The speeches were short and to the point. There were only one or two of twenty minutes made during the whole Assembly. "The burning question" did not burn, and hence much eloquence was quenched.

The man who must make his reputation before the Church was happily left at home, and hence his obnoxious presence did not impede the orderly flow of affairs.

Much was due to the Moderator, whose voice could drown any who would get out of order. Happily he did not have to use it for this purpose. From the very first he took the Assembly into his confidence and with a word of occasional humor side-tracked any dangerous tendency.

We think the Assembly, as a whole, will satisfy the Church. Of course, some will object to some deliverance—but the questions settled were settled by such overwhelming majorities, except in one case, that the Church is apt to remain satisfied.

There were a number of surprises.

The Ad Interim Committee on the Wine Question did not report, but were continued for another year. It must be a more difficult question than some of us thought.

The protest of the Synod of Virginia against the semi-political action of the Kansas City Assembly was answered in our usual way of pointing to past deliverances, and was misunderstood by the secular press, as usual. The emphasis we put on the spiritual nature of the Church has never entered the head of our excellent Associated Press people. We vote a course of Church history under a Seminary professor for their reporters for Church courts.

Our attitude on Temperance was clearly defined by a paper presented by Dr. D. H. Ogden, though there was an uneasy feeling through the Assembly that somebody was going to carry us bodily over into the National Prohibition party.

The question of Special Appeals for the causes aroused a stirring debate. The attempt of the Church to ride two horses—the Every Member Canvass and Budget System and the rousing appeal at the end of the year—has given us somewhat of a strain, as the horses seem to be going in opposite directions. The committees, however, were confined in their special appeals, to their own months.

The Executive Committees all showed up well in the final outcome, and this was one of the gratifying surprises of the day. They are

all conducted on strictly business principles and deserve the unlimited confidence and liberality of the Church.

The Systematic Benevolence Committee did not come in for any criticism, and demonstrated its unusual fitness and usefulness. Sixteen picked men—one from each Synod—sit together twice a year and study the questions of our Executive Committee and correlated subjects. They homologate their demands and fix up the whole business as one, and the Assembly has all its business from one point, instead of four competing ones.

We have a plan of Church work that is unexcelled by any Church, and all we need to do is to work it to its best. It can be worked anywhere. The usual flood of overtures assailed the Assembly on all conceivable subjects. One wanted to revise the whole Book of Church Order, which would not be a bad thing if all amendments for the next fifty years could be forbidden.

It would be a wise thing if all individual overtures could be refused. If a man cannot get his Presbytery to endorse his overture, it seems foolish to send it to an Assembly. Also, it is respectfully suggested that overtures that have been answered again and again in the negative ought not to be resurrected so often. Let them sleep a while. They are tired and tiresome.

We sympathize with the men who want to show Dr. Law and Mr. Magill how to make up the blanks and edit the Minutes, but private overtures to them would perhaps accomplish as much and save the time of the Assembly.

The rights and nature of a commission was under fire, and we need to have a clearer statement in our Book. We fear the man wise enough to clear up the difficulties has not been born. However, let some man of elegant leisure and versatile mind undertake to write on the subject. A painful judicial case was up and was tried in Commission, yet it did not seem to please the whole Assembly. A respectful protest was admitted to record.

The hospitality of the people of Newport News was of the lavish Virginia variety. We are glad we went and would like to go again. The land of the flowers claims us next year, and happy will be the man who will go. The Assembly of 1915 goes down in history as a calm, wise, deliberative body that will not leave anything for the local or general Church to regret.

A. A. L.

ROCHESTER ASSEMBLY NOTES.

Having the opportunity to attend, for most of its sessions, the General Assembly of our Northern brethren, in Rochester, New York, we have certain decided impressions concerning it.

And first, it is a most courteous body. Its attention to the stranger and visitor, even to one who is charged with a message which is, in some respects, not altogether happy, is marked. Greater kindness could not have been shown. All who are visitors or special representatives concur most heartily in this testimony.

It is a huge body. About nine hundred and fifty commissioners, besides secretaries, agents, chairmen, members of boards and committees, editors, fraternal delegates, missionaries, correspondents galore, make a huge gathering of perhaps twelve hundred, besides the women, wives of commissioners, delegates to various women's meetings and the like.

It is not a deliberative body. The commissioners sit patiently and closely through all the sessions, remarkable in the faithfulness of their attention and the keenness of their interest. But the deliberations seem to be confined almost entirely to the committees. The latter