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THANKSGIVING is one of the duties which belongs to every child of God. The Psalms are full of songs of thanksgiving. David calls upon his soul and all that is within him to praise and thank God for his goodness to him. David had much to be thankful for. God had given him many blessings, both temporal and spiritual. But God has been even more bountiful in the bestowal of His blessings upon His people of this day. There are many people today in what are considered very moderate circumstances that have more temporal blessing than a king could have in David's day. Many of the modern inventions which add to our comfort in a thousand ways were entirely undreamed of then. And when it comes to spiritual blessings there can scarcely be any comparison. It is true that David had salvation through faith in a Saviour, but He was only a promised Saviour. We have a Saviour who has already come and has paid the debt of our sins, and His resurrection shows that His payment has been accepted by the Father. David had only a small part of the Scriptures. He had no other books treating the subjects of the soul, there were no periodicals to bring the news of the work done in establishing the kingdom of God, and there was practically no work of the kind done by the people of God. They knew nothing of the opportunities of such service as we have today for serving God and our fellow-men. When we think of the blessing that God has given to us, both temporal and spiritual, and the glorious opportunities of service, we ought indeed to be thankful to Him. Some one has well said that instead of having only one thanksgiving day in a year, we ought to have one day into which we should crowd all our complaints and make all the others thanksgiving days.

FOREIGN MISSIONS had a wonderful and striking presentation at the Synod of Virginia last week. The chairman of the Synod's Committee on this subject, a Petersburg ruling elder, arranged to have all of the volunteers for the foreign field in Union Theological Seminary and in the Assembly's Training School in Richmond to attend the session of Synod on Thursday night. They, with a number of missionaries on furlough and some other invited guests, were given a delightful supper, served by the ladies of the churches. They then went to the church where the Synod was in session. The missionaries were given seats in the pulpits and the volunteers occupied specially prepared seats in front of the pulpit facing the congregation. It was an impressive sight to see those sixty young men and women occupying these seats, thereby saying that they had offered their lives to God and were preparing themselves for His service in carrying the gospel to heathen lands. It was such a sight as was never before seen in the Southern Presbyterian Church, and it made an impression upon the members of Synod which will not soon be forgotten. Five missionaries made brief addresses on the country in which they have worked, and the volunteers arose, one by one, giving their names, their home addresses and the countries in which they expect to work. This part of the program was interspersed by the singing of hymns, by voluntaries by the choir

and by prayers. This all came in connection with the report of the Committee on Foreign Mission, which in itself, had some admirable features. But the sight of those five veterans of the cross and those sixty young soldiers, who have enlisted under the banner of the cross for service out on the far-flung battle line, was an inspiration and a challenge to the Church to make a full consecration of its influence, its prayers, its efforts and its money to support the great work of winning the heathen world for our Saviour.

THE Washington Conference differs from that of Versailles in one vital respect. It was opened with prayer, while that one was not. We are not in a position to say whether the Christian men in the Versailles Conference could have asked that it be opened with prayer or not, nor do we know whether they made any effort to have this done. But we rejoice that the Conference held in the Capital of this Christian country was opened with an appeal to God for guidance. We believe in prayer and that God will answer prayer in

THE SYNOD OF VIRGINIA AND DISARMAMENT.

The Synod of Virginia, at its meeting last week in Petersburg, adopted the following telegram and sent it to Secretary Hughes, the chairman of the Council on the Limitation of Armament.

"Whereas representatives of this and several other nations are assembled in Washington for the consideration of the limitation of armaments, in order to arrange for permanent peace in the world, and whereas, all citizens, and especially Christian citizens, are deeply interested and concerned in the same,

"Resolved, That the Synod does now engage in prayer to Almighty God—the God of nations—that He would so dispose the minds and hearts of the aforesaid council, as that the will of God may be accomplished in the establishment of peace and the advancement of the kingdom of God."

guiding statesmen in handling the great problems of the nations as readily as He will answer our prayers for personal guidance. Therefore let all Christians unite in daily prayer that each member of this Conference may each day be guided to do that which will bring about peace in the world and so advance the coming of the Prince of Peace.

ATTENDANCE upon a church court and attention to its business ought to be considered one of the most important duties which a minister or an elder can perform. Most ministers and many elders are deeply concerned about the work of their own individual congregations, but many seem not to realize that a matter which has to do with the whole Church or a Synod or a Presbytery is of still greater importance. It not infrequently happens that pastors are late in reaching a meeting of a church court, and oftener they rush away before the court adjourns. They give as their excuse that they have pastoral duties to attend to at home. They are thereby making the work of a congregation of more importance than that of the Church at large. Sometimes they say that they must hurry home to prepare their

sermons for Sunday. By a little extra effort they might have been prepared before they left home. This practice of hurrying away is even more common among the ruling elders. They generally say that their business calls them home. Are they faithful, are they wise in putting their business ahead of God's business? Have they ever really gained by it? This rushing away often leaves the most important part of the work to be done after they are gone by those faithful ones who are left. Many times the most important business of the Synod or Presbytery is completed by a small part of the body, and that without due consideration, for the going home fever is very contagious. The great and vital questions concerning the work of the Church need the united and carefully given counsel of all those who are called to consider them. It will be a great cause of advancement in the work of God's kingdom, when those who are appointed to rule in the Church will take their work and their responsibilities seriously enough to give them the time they need.

THE Bible is to have a place at the Washington Disarmament Conference. The Bible Society of the city of New York has prepared a very handsome copy of the Scriptures and has secured the permission of President Harding to present it to the Conference. The idea is that it shall at least lie on the table around which the representatives of the nations shall sit, in order that it may bear at least its silent testimony to the fact that this is a Christian country. At this writing we have seen no account of its presentation, but understand that it is to be presented during the early days of the Conference.

STRANGERS are often given a wrong impression of this country, not so much by what its citizens do as by what they leave undone. It is said that the great Chinese statesman, Li Hung Chang, stated, after his return to his native land, that during the ten years that he lived in Washington as ambassador of his country, he was often invited to clubs, theatres and social gatherings, but was never invited to go to a Christian church of any kind. It is to be hoped that this is not the usual experience of the diplomatic representatives in our Capital city. And it is sincerely hoped that no Sunday may pass, during their stay in Washington, without each member of the Disarmament Conference receiving a cordial and personal invitation to attend worship at some church in Washington.

ARMISTICE DAY was the date fixed for beginning the conference of representatives of many nations to consider the question of the reduction of armaments by the nations of the world. It is predicted that great good will be accomplished if some plan of disarmament or the limitation of armaments can be agreed upon, but, in case of failure, that great harm will be done the cause of world peace. The Christian people of the country are called upon to pray for God's guidance of the conference, that it be led to wise decisions, which will insure the peace of the world for all coming time.

an interesting and fruitful meeting at Laurens. The Rev. C. T. Squires, the much esteemed pastor, is doing a most vigorous and aggressive work in this old church. The work is moving forward in all departments, and it is fine to see the splendid ties binding him and the people together.

TEXAS.

Fort Worth Presbytery: At a called meeting, November 3d, in the First Presbyterian church, Federated, of Fort Worth, Rev. J. D. Leslie, D. D., was released, with the very reluctant consent of the Cisco church, of which he has been pastor for the past ten years, from the pastorate, that he might take up the work to which the Synod of Texas elected him at its last meeting. Dr. Leslie will be treasurer of all the committees of Synod, and will be in charge of an office which will be the headquarters of all Synodical activities. Dr. Leslie will reside in Dallas.

The commission appointed to install Rev. J. M. Sedgwick pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Itasca met in that church at 7:30 P. M. on November 6th. Rev. C. L. Altfather, D. D., preached the sermon; Rev. Gaines B. Hall charged the pastor; Rev. J. D. McLean, D. D., charged the congregation in the absence of Ruling Elder Emmett Brown, who could not be present, and Rev. S. A. McElroy, D. D., the last pastor of the church, who was unexpectedly present, led the congregation in the installation prayer. The benediction was pronounced by Rev. J. D. Stormont, of the Southwestern Home and School for Orphans.

C. L. Altfather, Stated Clerk.

SYNOD OF VIRGINIA.

This Synod met last week in the Second church, Petersburg. Rev. P. C. Clark preached the opening sermon, and Rev. H. Lacy, D. D., was elected Moderator.

Education was the prominent feature of this meeting. Four offers of educational institutions were made to the Synod. The first was that of Stonewall Jackson College at Abingdon. The Synod was offered the joint ownership with the Synod of Appalachia of this college. This property is said to be worth over \$300,000, and it is offered to the two Synods without any conditions, except that they run the institution as a college.

The second offer was that of Mary Baldwin Seminary, which has property worth about \$600,000. This was offered to the Synod upon condition that the Synod would raise \$500,000 to develop and equip it as a standard college.

The third offer was of the Military Institute at Danville. This school is in operation on a self-sustaining basis in property worth \$125,000. This was offered upon the sole condition that it be continued as a preparatory boys' school. It is said that \$25,000 will be needed to pay off some debts on the property and add a few improvements.

The fourth offer was made by Hampden-Sidney College of a tract of forty-seven acres of land and valuable buildings, said to be worth \$125,000, near Harrisonburg. The only condition being that it be used for school purposes.

All of these propositions were referred to a general committee composed of two representatives from each Presbytery.

The Home Mission work of the Synod was reported in good condition, under the continued efficient leadership of Rev. Dr. J. E. Booker.

The Synod took a radical action in

regard to future meetings. They will be held on the third Tuesday of September, and Union Seminary is selected as the permanent place of meeting, with provision for accepting invitations to go elsewhere on alternate years.

Each of the departments of the Church's work received due consideration and much was done towards advancing this work.

The ladies of the three churches in Petersburg served delightful lunches in Tabb Street church each day.

MR. BRYAN AT UNION SEMINARY.

By Rev. W. W. Moore, D. D.

Most of the men who in former years have given the special lectures on the James Sprunt Foundation have of course been ministers, as the institution is a training school for the ministry. In two instances, however, the lecturers have been eminent laymen, viz., Sir William M. Ramsay, the famous archaeologist of Edinburgh, whose lectures, recently published, dealt with "The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament," and Professor C. Alphonso Smith, head of the Department of English in the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, whose lectures on "Keynote Studies in Keynote Books of the Bible" have proved to be one of the most popular of the nine volumes published on this foundation.

This year the Seminary has been fortunate in having as its lecturer the distinguished publicist who is recognized everywhere as the greatest of living orators. The faculty invited him some months ago to give a series of nine lectures, dealing with some of the fundamentals of our Christian faith, not at all in a technical or theological way, but in a way to appeal to the masses of our thoughtful people. They informed him that the lecturers were free to handle their subjects in their own way, it being fully understood that they were expressing their own views and not necessarily those of the institution in matters of detail, but that their hope was that, with his long experience as a student and teacher of the Bible, his unsurpassed power of effective popular statement, and his unique command of the world's attention, he might be able to present an argument for Christianity which would appeal strongly to those who in our time have been disturbed and confused by current scepticism and who are sometimes none too ready to listen to professional teachers of religion. He answered at once that he would accept the invitation with pleasure, and would endeavor to present an argument in support of the Christian religion that would appeal to the average man, adding, "I have had this in mind for several years, and your invitation gives me an opportunity to present it under auspices that will give the book the maximum of value." While at the Seminary he said repeatedly that he considered these lectures the most important work of his life.

The field is not a new one to Mr. Bryan. No other public man of presidential calibre in modern times has ever spoken and written more constantly on religious themes than he, not even Mr. Gladstone. At his home in Miami he teaches every Sunday in the park in front of the Presbyterian church a tourists' Bible class which numbers at times 3,000 and 4,000 people. He is perfectly at home in handling the subject of religion. A British writer and editor of a secular paper says of him, "His appeal is al-

ways to the moral conscience. The name of the Almighty is as familiar on his lips as it was on the lips of Gladstone. And it is the highest tribute to his sincerity that in employing it he never gives you the sense of canting. The truth is that he lives in an atmosphere out of which our politics have passed. No one to-day in the House of Commons ever touches the spiritual note. When we say that oratory is dead, we mean that faith, which is the soul of oratory, is dead. Oratory fell to earth when Gladstone and Bright ceased to wing it with spiritual passion, and to associate the thunders of Sinai with the ideals of politics."

It is not so in America. Not to mention others, Mr. Bryan is a man whose religion is the controlling factor of his life. He is, of course, a man of brilliant and varied natural gifts, but the determining element is his Christian faith.

The writer above quoted says: "There is about him the primal energy and directness of nature. He is a Niagara of a man, a resistless torrent of inexhaustible force, thundering along in a sort of ebullient joy, mind and body in perfect equipoise. It is not the hurry and frenzy of the city that possesses him; but the free, untrammelled spirit of the West, with its spacious skies and primeval forests and illimitable prairies. He has the simplicity of a son of the plains. His mind moves in large curves and sweeps along in royal unconsciousness of academic restraints and niceties. He comes right down to the bed-rock of things, and his hammer rings out blows that seem to have the universe for a sounding-board. Together with this appearance of elemental power there is a sense of elemental gentleness, a natural chivalry, a frank and human kindness. He has the unaffected courtesy not of one who stoops to conquer, but of one who is unconscious of social or intellectual fences. He lives, as it were, on the broad, free plain of a common humanity. His intellect is bold rather than subtle, masculine rather than meticulous. His eye ranges over great horizons and sees the landscape in the large. His weapon is not the rapier, but the hammer of Thor." He is like John Bright, who said, "I sail from headland to headland while Gladstone navigates every creek and inlet." And "it is this breadth of appeal, this large sculpture of his thought—the result of that moral purpose which gives it simple unity and coherence—that has made him one of the most powerful popular orators in the English-speaking world."

The subjects of his nine Sprunt lectures were as follows:

1. The Larger Life.
2. In the Beginning God.
3. The Bible.
4. What Think Ye of Christ?
5. The Spoken Word.
6. Brother or Brute.
7. Three Priceless Blessings.
8. The Origin of Man.
9. The Price of a Soul.

The first and last were delivered in the City Auditorium to the largest audiences that have gathered in Richmond for years. The others were given in Schauffler Hall on the Seminary campus, except the fifth, which, being more specially intended for the students, was given in the Watts chapel—all to full houses.

Dining one day with the students by special invitation at the Refectory, he made one of his most impressive addresses there on the word "All," in the New Testament.

Besides all this, he was speaking

almost daily elsewhere to packed houses—the Methodist Conference, the Vanguard Bible class at Dr. Cecil's church, the celebration of the centennial of Sir George Williams, the Kiwanis Club, the Young Men's Christian Association and the various schools and colleges of the city—attending between times all manner of social functions and dinners at the Governor's Mansion and the homes of numerous private citizens. Day and night, moreover, the telephone was busy with long-distance calls and telegrams from every part of the country, and day after day he handled a voluminous correspondence—on one occasion posting fifty letters in a single mail. No man with a less happy temperament and a less powerful physique could have gone through it all—yet he spoke of his eight days here as a sort of "rest"—and on leaving he gratified the Seminary and the community by declaring that his visit here had been "perfect." It is now superfluous to say that he has a prodigious capacity for work. One further proof of it is that he has already placed the manuscript of his James Sprunt Lectures in the hands of his publishers, Fleming H. Revell Company. The volume will appear shortly under the title of "In His Image." It will undoubtedly have a very wide circulation and will serve a useful purpose in helping to stem the present tide of scepticism.

Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.

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