

CONSOLIDATE

The North And East Ohio Conferences

North Ohio Votes To Wipe Out Boundary Line

Thus Creating Largest Conference In World

General Conference Must Give Its Approval

Important Resolution Regarding Salaries Of Ministers

(Manassas News.)

The North Ohio conference in session at the First Methodist church, voted Thursday morning to consolidate the North and East Ohio conferences, making it the largest conference in Methodism and having a membership of 500 ministers. The resolution was offered Wednesday and was brought up Thursday for discussion. Several representatives from the East Ohio conference, mostly from Cleveland, were present. Among these were Dr. J. C. Goodrich, Dr. Frank Luce, Dr. C. W. Orcutt, Dr. J. I. Wilson and Frank Arter; all of them to champion the union of the two conferences. It was objected by those opposed to the resolution that this would make such a large conference that it would be unwieldy, as only a few cities could entertain this large body of visitors and pastors. The subject was discussed over an hour, then put to a vote in which it carried by a good majority. This action by the North Ohio conference of course does not settle the question. It will be voted on next week by the East Ohio conference and there is little doubt of its carrying there as that conference has been most in favor of the union as it would give the ministers of that conference more chance. The East Ohio conference has more large churches, but fewer of the average churches. If the action is sanctioned by the East Ohio conference, then it must be taken before the general conference of the Methodist church which meets next May. If that body votes to wipe out the boundary line, then Ohio will have the largest conference in Methodism, to be known as the Northeast Ohio conference, bounded on the north by Lake Erie, on the east by the state line, on the south by the Ohio river as far as Bellaire and on the west by a line running through Columbus to the Ohio river.

The next resolution to be acted upon was the one authorizing Bishop Bristol not to send a pastor to any charge that pays less than \$700, exclusive of house rent or a parsonage. Bishop Bristol told the ministers that under the rules of the church he is bound to give each minister a work and to supply each charge with a pastor. If the charge is too weak to pay \$700, he asked the question, what he was to do. He finally referred the question back to the committee to be reworded. This resolution will come back Friday. The plan of those who are championing it is to consolidate the weak charges. The conference also adopted a resolution condemning Secretary Wilson for accepting the presidency of the Brewers' convention.

THIEVES

Get In Their Work At Fair Grounds

Several thefts of money were reported at the Knox county fair grounds on Thursday afternoon, but in no case was the thief apprehended in his work. At some time during the races considerable excitement was created on one portion of the grounds when a man excitedly exclaimed that he had been robbed of about \$500. He declared that the money was in his belt and that somebody had picked his pocket. Another man declared that about \$15 was missing from his pocket and still a third said that he had lost \$7.50. The police on the grounds were notified of the thefts, but as there was no identity of the thieves at hand, no arrests could be made.

Mr. Dudley Horner was a visitor in the city over Friday.

OUTLINE

Of Plans For Telephone Companies Merger

Stronger Company To Take Over Weaker

(Columbus Dispatch)

The Ohio public service commission have been given its first intimation of the prospective method of procedure of the telephone interests in effecting mergers under the public utilities law. Tentative plans for mergers were given the commission Wednesday by N. C. Kingsbury of New York, representing the American Telephone & Telegraph Co.

There are three different kinds of combinations contemplated. Only one of these would involve a real merger. It was shown that the telephone interests are planning combinations in the smaller cities first.

In the smaller places where the Bell companies have no local switchboards but only toll stations, contracts are to be made with the independent companies giving the Bell the right to connect up its lines with the independents in return for paying the local company a percentage of the long-distance business originating with the local company. Van Wert and Mt. Sterling are samples of this idea and representatives of these places appeared before the commission to give their assent to the carrying out of the plan.

In Delaware, Ashtabula and other cities where the local companies have a stronger footing than the Bell, it is planned to have the Bell sell out to the independents and enter into contracts covering the long-distance business.

Real mergers are being negotiated in Norwalk and Coshocton. In these cities and other larger places where the real mergers are to take place, it was intimated by Mr. Kingsbury that an advance in rates might be necessary later. The commission questioned the mention of this and the telephone people declared they would submit eloquent arguments to show the need thereof.

COUNTY

Can Collect Damages For Injury To Bridges

The usual order of things was distinctly reversed Tuesday, when Prosecutor C. F. Ribble of Zanesville rendered a decision to the Muskingum county commissioners that Ira Wine, of Adamsville was liable to the county for damages to a bridge through which his traction engine fell, instead of having a valid claim against the county for damages.

The accident happened several weeks ago. Wine was driving his threshing machine across the bridge when the floor broke under the heavy weight, and the machine was dashed into the creek. It was damaged to the extent of \$55, Wine says, and he handed in a bill for this amount to the commissioners. They put the matter up to the prosecutor and received his verbal answer yesterday.

The prosecutor set a new precedent by his opinion, as in the past county commissioners have always allowed these damage claims, taking the stand that bridges are supposed to be good enough to bear up-to-date heavy loads.

Threshers and farmers throughout the county when they hear of the new ruling, will be delighted.

BIG GAS WELL

Drilled In The Territory East Of Utica

The gas territory over east of Utica continues to show up in good shape, the Columbus Gas and Fuel company drilling in a well Thursday that is the biggest producer that it had struck anywhere this season. It was shut in at four millions. This well is located on the Myers farm, a short distance south of Purity, adjoining the Bebout lease of the Logan company.

The Clark company drilled in a dry hole last Friday on the George Hancock lease four miles southeast of Martinsburg.—Utica Herald.

Mr. A. P. Carey returned to Mt. Vernon Friday morning after spending several days in Chicago, Ill., where he was called by the serious illness of Mrs. Carey.

LIGHT SHED ON A GREAT MYSTERY

Why God Permitted Sin and Death to Reign.

LORD'S PURPOSE EXPLAINED.

Pastor Russell Interprets Question of the Ages—Divine Plan For the Salvation of Mankind Premeditated From the Beginning—Footsteps of Jesus Lead the Way to Divine Favor.



PASTOR RUSSELL

Springfield, Mass., Sept. 17th.—

Pastor Russell delivered two addresses here today under the auspices of the International Bible Students Association, Local Branch. We report the one in which he discussed the permission of evil by the Almighty. He took no particular text although, as usual, he quoted from the Bible freely throughout his discourse. He said in part:—

The question of the Ages is, Why did the Almighty, originally, permit Evil—Sin? And why has an Omnipotent Ruler such as He, for more than sixty centuries, permitted Satan to continue his reign of sin and death? Leaving out entirely the unscriptural theory so prevalent, respecting a purgatory of centuries, or a torment everlasting, and considering merely the trials, suffering, sorrow and pain of humanity during the present life, how shall we account for their permission by an All-Powerful Creator, who knew the end from the beginning?

Why does He permit injustice, unrighteousness, headaches, heartaches, etc.? Why does He not deal with humanity graciously, kindly, lovingly, as a Father—as He deals with the angelic sons of God? Is it just or loving on the part of our Creator to bring forth millions of his creatures under these admittedly unfavorable conditions—beset by weaknesses and sinwardness from their birth and surrounded by others similarly weak, and beset by Satan and his minions—wicked spirits? Is it just that we should thus be in an unequal fight subjected to weaknesses and dying and imperfect conditions on account of the sin of our first parents and then, on the same account, be in danger of an eternity of torture with nine hundred and ninety-nine chances out of a thousand against us?

Our question is surely too deep for any human philosophy, and those who reject the Bible as of Divine inspiration may as well abandon all hope of an answer. God Himself, and none other, could tell us of His own secrets—why He did as He did. Truly we read, "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him; and He will show them His covenant" (Ps. xiv. 4).

The light now shining upon the Word of God shows us that the Divine purpose in connection with mankind is a progressive one, embracing Ages and Dispensations. If we ignore these, we are thereby blinded to the true answer to our question. Accepting these, it is the privilege of Bible students today to see the light in God's Word—to see matters from the Divine standpoint, to understand the "Mystery of God, hidden from Ages and from generations, and now made known unto His saints," namely, that in the Ages to come, all the trials and difficulties, all the sorrows and tears of the past, will be more than compensated for, and proved to be a part of the great Divine Program which will work out to the glory of God and the enlightenment and blessing of angels and men.

Man's Primary Lesson

First of all, God chooses to have children possessed of a quality like His own—freedom of will. He therefore not only created man perfect in mind and body, but He gave to him a will, the power of choice—liberty to choose one course or another. God foresaw that giving man this liberty of will would lead to the seduction of Mother Eve, and to the disobedience of Father Adam, through his love for his wife. Adam's preference was to die with her rather than to live in harmony with God without her; for if he should disobey he would come under the sentence of death. Although Adam and the angels were perfect, they had not a perfect knowledge of their Creator, of His Love, His Wisdom, His Justice, His Power.

God, therefore, without interfering with Adam's liberty, permitted the great calamity of death to come upon him and his race. From the very beginning God premeditated the entire Plan of Salvation, as He has since been working it out; and He will completely accomplish the same ultimately through Messiah's Kingdom. The great lesson which will eventually come both to angels and men will show forth Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power, fully co-ordinated. In no other way that we can imagine could this great Revelation of the Divine character be so well made. However, in order to comprehend this great Program, it is necessary that we follow strictly the Scriptural teachings, and avoid wholly the nonsense of our creeds, manufactured during the Dark Ages. We must see that "the wages of sin" is not eternal torment, nor purgatory, but death.

God allowed this reign of sin and death from Adam until Moses without so much as making an offer of terms of reconciliation and peace. Then an offer was made to the nation of Israel, and to no other nation. The offer of Israel's Law Covenant was, "He that doeth these things shall live." God, of course, knew that Israel could not keep perfectly the condition of that great and wonderful Law; and the same lesson comes to us of this Gospel Dispensation. We see that what the Jew could not do we cannot do; where he failed we would fail.

Thus through the Law Covenant God taught a great lesson to Israel and to the Church; and He will ultimately teach the same lesson to the world and to angels—proving that by the deeds of the Law no fallen flesh could be recovered and re-instated in Divine favor. Four thousand years passed from man's creation, and death reigned from Moses to Christ as thoroughly as it had previously reigned from Adam to Moses. The Law Covenant did not stop the reign of sin and death. Something more than a Law is necessary. The Divine Program demands recovery from sin and death, and the Divine Program purposes this recovery.

Nearly nineteen centuries have passed since the first advent of our Lord, and still the reign of sin and death is in progress more than ever. The increase of knowledge has brought increase of sin; increase of population has brought increase of death; until today the world is in a terrible condition of mental, moral and physical dilapidation, and ninety thousand go into the tomb every twenty-four hours.

But a Remedy is in sight. It was foretold through the Prophets, but it began to operate in Jesus. His miraculous birth, His faithfulness and consecration unto death, His reward of resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of the Majesty on High, are all essential to man's recovery—essential to the overthrow of this reign of sin and death over our race.

We see still further developments and preparations. The Scriptures inform us that it is the Divine purpose to have a multitudinous Messiah, of which the glorious Jesus is the Head and the Church the Body.

We perceive that God for nearly nineteen centuries has been calling and drawing a special class of mankind to constitute His Elect, the Bride Class, to be joint-heirs with His Son in the Kingdom of Glory which will finally vanquish sin and Satan and deliver the willing and obedient of mankind into the full liberty of the children of God—freedom from sin and death, and into the enjoyment of life everlasting and Divine favor.

The Dark and Narrow Path

This special class is required to walk by faith and not by sight—to walk in the "narrow way" of self-denial and opposition to the world, the flesh and the Adversary, in the footsteps of Jesus. Ignorance, selfishness, sin, death, all go to make up the deplorable conditions in the world and to constitute the way a narrow one in which this Elect class is required to walk, in order to demonstrate their full loyalty and obedience to the will of God—even unto death. Evidently, no such narrow way could have existed had God not permitted evil—sin. Evidently, therefore, this Elect class could not be developed and tested except by the Divine permission of sin. The very essence of their character-development is associated with the Divine promise that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to His purpose."

It seemed wise to our Heavenly Father that our Lord Jesus should learn obedience through sufferings and be tested in respect to His willingness to endure suffering for righteousness' sake. How appropriate it is that the same Father should make similar arrangements for all of the Church, whom He will receive from amongst the race of Adam to be members of the Royal Priesthood under Jesus, the High Priest of our order.

We see a necessity for this, not only as respects our own testings and a thorough proof of our own heart-loyalty to the Lord, but additionally we see a wisdom on God's part in thus preparing a priesthood of the future. A priest, as recognized amongst the Jews, was not merely one who offered sacrifices, although every priest was necessarily a sacrificer. The special mission of the priestly tribe amongst the other tribes was that of instructing, helping, healing, teaching. And so God is preparing a Royal Priesthood for the Messianic Age to bless, to heal, to teach, to uplift all the willing and obedient.

The royalty of the priesthood signifies that it will no longer be a sacrificing class, for all sacrificing will be at an end. It will be a glorious class, royal, of the divine nature, and representatives with our Lord Jesus of the Divine power. As priests who will have to do with judging and chastening, healing and helping humanity, how much sympathy do we suppose that these Royal Priests should have? Are they not to be on the Divine plane of glory, "members of the Body" of Messiah?

Sin's Lesson to Humanity

Humanity is learning a great lesson through the permission of sin. Present experiences teach the lesson that "the way of the transgressor is hard;" "The wages of sin is death;" "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The exceeding sinfulness of sin is thus being demonstrated to humanity. Few profit by the lesson in the present life, and these are chiefly such as are called to the heavenly calling. The great majority of mankind learn to know sin, evil, only. Even God's provision for

the future of mankind is obscured from the masses. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of God's goodness should shine into their hearts."

But with the dawning of the New Dispensation of Messiah's Kingdom, the true light of the knowledge of the glory of God's character will shine everywhere. "All the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped." Messiah's gracious sign, the manifestation of Divine mercy, will be for the very purpose of uplifting these poor, fallen members of our race—the masses. During the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom, the whole world will have full opportunity for learning the great desirability of righteousness, as now, for a few years, they have the opportunity of learning the undesirability of sin.

By the close of the Mediatorial reign what wonderful lessons respecting God and evil mankind will have learned. Then will come their final testing. After full knowledge of both good and evil. Which will they choose? God urges all to choose the right and its reward of life eternal. Nevertheless, He will not coerce; He will allow each individual to take his choice, to mark out his own course, whether in harmony with or contrary to the Divine arrangements. Such, however, as come to the point of loving righteousness and hating iniquity, shall be accounted worthy of a place in the glorious Kingdom of Messiah.

The Lesson to the Angels

God's dealings with humanity constitute a great object lesson to the angels. They perceive the inflexibility of Divine Justice—the decree of God. "Dying thou shalt die" has been unflinchingly executed against Adam and his race for six thousand years. They perceived, further, the Love of God, which passeth all understanding. They perceive the Divine provision that the Son of God should die, the Just for the unjust, to bring mankind back to full harmony with the Creator. They see the breadth of the Divine character exemplified in the great reward given to our Lord Jesus Christ for His obedience to the Father's will, even unto death—an exaltation to the divine nature, honor and immortality.

They perceive, too, a still greater manifestation of Divine goodness, in God's invitation to the Church to become joint-heirs with Christ in His glory, honor and immortality, on conditions of obedience and walking in the Master's footsteps to the extent of their ability. Who could have dreamed of such "Love Divine, all love excelling," which stooped down, not only to redeem the race, but also to invite some of the members thereof to these exceeding great and precious things which "God hath in reservation for them that love Him."

Next in order the world will receive Divine mercy, extended through Jesus, by the Father's arrangement, to Adam and every member of his race, no matter how degraded, no matter how fallen, no matter how mean. The redeeming blood has been shed, "The Just for the unjust," for the sins of the whole world.

Divine Power and Wisdom

While Divine power is manifested in all the realms of nature and creation, a still greater Divine Power was manifested in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead, after He had been deceased three days. But even the power manifested in our Lord's resurrection seems small in comparison to the further works of resurrection which the Scriptures assure us our dear Lord's death insures. It will be a still more miraculous work to resurrect the Church to glory, honor and immortality, after many of them have been in the power of death for centuries.

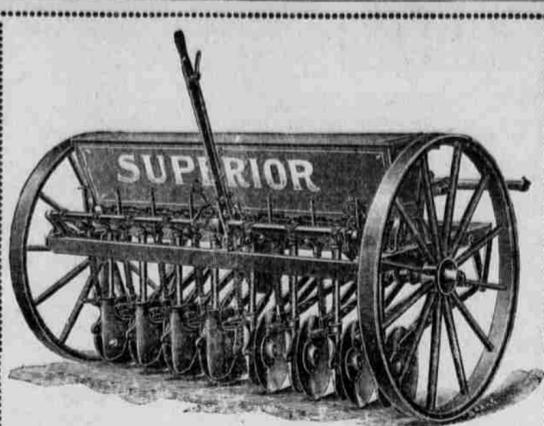
And still more stupendous is the resurrection work which God proposes for the world of mankind—thousands of millions to be awakened, and restored to the same conditions they formerly enjoyed—conditions, however, of imperfection, from which they will be gradually released and uplifted by Messiah.

This resurrection work for the world, which will be gradually carried forward during that thousand years, will all be accomplished by the Father's power, through the Messiah, the Mediator of the New Covenant. It will be a continuous miracle of awakening and uplifting the race.

Divine Wisdom Yet to Be Seen

Not until the close of the reign of Messiah and the complete uplift from sin and death of all of Adam's race willing to return to Divine favor, will the Wisdom of God be manifested in its full, clear light. Already some may see, partially, obscurely, some of God's Wisdom, but the majority are still inquiring, Why was evil permitted? These have not yet seen the Divine Wisdom in connection with the permission of evil. Ultimately this shall be clearly seen—by the saints, by the angels and by the world of mankind. Well does the Revelator exclaim:—

"Who shall not glorify Thee, O Lord! when Thy righteous dealings are made manifest?" "All nations which Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee" (Revelation xv. 4). As now, "Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge, and there is no place where the voice is not heard"—the voice of Nature, acclaiming her God—so, eventually, "Every creature in heaven and earth and under the earth shall be heard saying: 'Praise, glory, honor, dominion and might be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb forever.'" All this will be the result of God's permission of sin—of His permission of the reign of evil, sin, death. The key is found in the Plan of the Ages—showing the work which each Age is to accomplish, and the grand climax, eventually, of evil.



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The Democratic Banner

BIRTHS Danville. Mayor and Mrs. Thomas Scholes of Buckeye City, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Rice, Mr. and Mrs. B. L. Rice and Mrs. Earl Dick and daughter, Catherine, of Danville were guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Hess of Mt. Vernon Thursday. A son was born Thursday evening to Mr. and Mrs. Charles DeWald of