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PORTIONS OF THE ANNUAL ADDRESSES OF  
BISHOPS ATKINSON AND LYMAN

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PORTIONS

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ANNUAL ADDRESSES

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Bishops Atkinson and Lyman

—TO THE—

DIOCESAN CONVENTION OF NORTH CAROLINA,

MAY 18TH, 1876.

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*Printed by resolution of the Convention, under the direction  
of the Bishops, to be read by the Clergy to their con-  
gregations and to be distributed.*

From the Address of Bishop Atkinson.

"I intimated in the beginning of this Address that I considered the condition of things in the Diocese as encouraging, and it certainly is so. Our Parishes and our Clergy are increasing in number, and where we have towns of any size, very much increasing. When I first went to Raleigh, I found two Clergymen there ; now there are, including Bishop Lyman, six, all actively and usefully employed. When I first came to Wilmington, I found but one Clergyman ; there are now seven, including myself, of whom six give their whole time to the work of the Church, and one, very much of his, although maintaining himself by his labors as a teacher. And I may say, with confidence and with pleasure, that the con-

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gregations throughout the Diocese, generally, are enlarged and strengthened. There are better Church-buildings—are far more rectories, than there were some years ago.

We, on the other hand, have but sixty Clergymen in an area where the Church of England has about twenty thousand. And even sparse as the population of the State is, on that area we still have within its limits a million of souls for the benefit of which we contribute the labors only of those sixty Clergymen, and these, in many instances, have to live on incomes so small as not only to expose them to great inconvenience and anxiety, but to divert to secular cares and objects, time and thought which should be appropriated to their holy work. It is easier to see the evil than the remedy, but suggestions can be offered, which, if carried out, would tend, at least, to mitigate that evil.

In the first place, each of us should do what he can towards increasing the supply of the Clergy, for the rules of political economy do not hold good in the region of the soul and of our spiritual Life. There, it is not the demand which produces the supply, but it is the supply which causes the demand. Our Saviour says to His disciples, “*go!*” He does not say, “wait until the people ask you to *come*” If a Minister establish himself in a town or in a country neighborhood, the people after a time feel that they are benefited by him, and they desire his services. But if one be withdrawn from a congregation and the vacancy be not supplied, the religious life of the people declines and a sort of paralysis of the soul comes over them, so that they do not feel their own spiritual wants. The work of the Church, therefore, is to send out men who shall call their fellow-men to repentance and to salvation. Each follower of Christ has this obligation resting upon him, and must answer to God for what he does or what he leaves undone in carrying to his fellow-men the life-giving Gospel of Christ. And we shall very certainly all find, sooner or later, that we might have done much more than we are actually doing. Impoverished as we are, there are individual members of the Church in

this Diocese, who could, singly, sustain a Candidate for Orders, and yet have none of their domestic comforts abridged. More, much more, might be contributed to the feeble, struggling Ravenscroft Mission and School at Asheville. A High School, and in due time, a College, might well be established on the grounds we have secured at Morganton. And the Clergy already in the field, might, without any real sacrifice or even serious self-denial on the part of their congregations, be placed in a condition of greater comfort and consequently of greater usefulness and stability in their pastoral relations.

Do you ask how all this is to be done? I answer, by our resolving, as Christians, at least to come up to the level of the Jews, and by faithfully carrying that resolution into our practical life. Let us lay by, month by month, and if we can, week by week, according as God has prospered us, returning to Him not less than a tenth of what He bestows on us. And if to this we would add a religious horror and avoidance of debt, we would find that we should thereby open fountains which would soon refresh and build up the waste places of our Zion. Nor need we fear that the stream would be too large. There are very many objects to be provided for, for which we are doing very little. There are missions to many neglected portions of our own widely extended and now very populous country. There are missions to the Indians and missions to colored people. There are missions to Africa and to China. There is a feeble Evangelical Church, in alliance with our own, struggling into existence in Mexico. There is another in a similar condition in Hayti. Asylums are needed for destitute orphan children and for infirm and friendless old men and women. Indeed, in whatever direction we look, we see that very much needs to be done by Christian people. We cannot certainly do everything ourselves, but let us at least attempt to do what we may, asking, always, God's help and God's blessing and God's forgiveness for past omissions of duty, ever remembering that what we do we must do quickly, for that the time is short.

THOMAS ATKINSON.

## From the Address of Bishop Lyman.

"Few, even in our own Diocese, are able to realize how very large is our strictly missionary field, and how few the laborers, in comparison with our pressing necessities. The observation and experience of the past year have convinced me that in no part of our land, are the openings more promising and encouraging; for in every quarter our services are warmly welcomed, while old and unfounded prejudices are rapidly wearing away. The ears and the hearts of the people seem alike open to us. \* \*

Under date of August 2d, the Bishop says: "Left with Mr. Barber for Ore Knob, Ashe county, and on Tuesday, August 3d, preached in the school house at that place. Thursday, August 4th, in the Methodist House of Worship, Jefferson, Ashe county, Rev. R. W. Barber read morning prayer, and I preached. Thursday, August 5th, at a private house between Jefferson and Boone, I baptized two children. Friday, August 6th, in the Masonic Hall, Boone, Watauga county, I read the service and preached. Saturday, August 7th, in the Church of St. John the Baptist, near Valle Crucis, in the same county, I read morning prayer, preached and administered the Holy Communion. This neat little Church has been for a long time without a service, and I was sorry to find that its windows and doors had suffered from the wanton abuse of mischievous persons.

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity, August 8th, in the Methodist building, at "Valle Crucis," I conducted the service and preached. In all this extensive district, we are now without any missionary, although there are many who are attached to the Church and anxious for its services. Especially in the neighborhood of "Valle Crucis," there is an urgent cry for a Clergyman, and no doubt great good could be accomplished for the Church, in that beautiful, salubrious and fruitful region, if one could be found to do there the work of an efficient pioneer. I was touched by the affectionate mention made by so many in that neighborhood, of the faithful labors of the Rev. W. W. Skiles, whose death some years since has deprived these



simple-hearted people of a Shepherd, whom they deeply loved and honored. \* \* \* \*

Under date of August 23d, he says: I left on horseback for a visitation in Yancey and Mitchell counties. The Rev. Dr. Buxton joined me in the evening, at a farm house, where we had appointed to meet, and continued with me through the week.

Wednesday, August 25th, I had an appointment in the Court House, at Burnsville, Yancey county, where I found a large and very attentive congregation. Rev. Dr. Buxton read morning prayer, and I preached. In the afternoon we rode seven miles to the residence of a family much attached to the Church, but who had been wholly deprived of its services for more than a year. Here we passed the night, and the next morning I administered the Holy Communion to them. In the afternoon we proceeded on to Bakersville, Mitchell county, where I had an appointment for the next day.

Friday, August 27th, in the Methodist building, at that place, Dr. Buxton conducted the service, and I preached. This was the first Episcopal visitation ever made in that county. The service was attended by a large congregation, and a great desire was expressed, on the part of many, that they might enjoy regular and stated services. A missionary in Yancey and Mitchell counties would find a very inviting and encouraging field. I was much impressed by the extreme beauty and attractiveness of this Mountain district. The people too, seemed to be more intelligent than is generally the case in these remote regions, while the wonderful salubrity of the climate, and the richness of the soil, make it a specially desirable home.

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Friday, Jan. 21st, he says: "I presided at the Raleigh Convocation, in the Church of the Good Shepherd. The services were continued throughout Saturday and Sunday, and proved of a very highly interesting character. Several of the papers read, on these occasions, were of marked ability, and well worthy a much wider publicity. The congregations steadily increased from day to day.

On Sunday morning, I preached the Convocation Sermon and administered the Holy Communion. At night a missionary meeting was held and several interesting addresses delivered. I cannot doubt that these meetings of Convocation will always awaken great interest in any Parish, where they are held, if only some special pains be taken in arranging in advance the subjects for essays and addresses, and a like care, in preparation, be shown on the part of those to whom such duties are assigned. One great reason why Convocations have so often proved failures, may be found in the fact that they are looked upon rather as social re-unions, while the sermons preached are frequently without freshness or appropriateness, having been prepared for quite other occasions. Where every effort is made to throw life and interest into these meetings, they will be sure to leave behind them a salutary and encouraging influence.

Friday, Jan. 28th, at the Chapel of Trinity College, Randolph county, I read the morning service and litany, made an address and afterwards preached. The large new Chapel had been very kindly tendered me by the President of the College, who with the other members of the Faculty, their families and the students attended in a body. I very highly appreciated the kind courtesy of the President, which enabled me to give the benefit of our services to several members of our Church, living in the immediate neighborhood, and who are quite remote from any of our places of worship. I was glad, too, of this opportunity for manifesting to our Methodist brethren how friendly are our feelings toward them, and that while ecclesiastically separated from them, we entertain no other sentiments than those of Christian kindness and cordiality. I can never be brought into contact with them without deeply lamenting that we cannot all "speak the same thing, and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment." May He "who maketh men to be of one mind in a house," in His own good time remove all grounds of misapprehension and alienation, that so we may be drawn together in "the unity of the Spirit, and in the bond of peace." \* \* \*



The Bishop remarks about lay services: "Wherever one can be found, competent and willing to act as a Lay Reader, it is always desirable that this provision should be made, where the constant services of a Clergyman cannot be secured. It serves to keep up a continued interest in the Church, and a love for its edifying services, while it helps also to overcome the dangerous habit of neglecting the proper worship of the Lord's Day."

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And again he says: "A zeal which does not confine itself to the Parochial centre, but reaches out into the adjacent districts, which alike claim our sympathy, such zeal will always re-act to the advantage of the central point. There is no policy so short-sighted, so unwise, and I may say so unchristian, as that which would confine a Rector to toilsome labors in the Parish Church, to the neglect of these outlying districts. It is a policy intensely narrow and selfish, and which wholly ignores the Apostolic command, 'Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.'"

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Again he remarks: "There is no more certain proof of spiritual indifference and deadness, than when Church buildings are left in a neglected and dilapidated condition. It argues a lack of reverence for the Divine Majesty; and where this is the case, no spiritual blessing can be looked for, in any Parish. The outward and the inward are very closely united, and indifference to the one, will surely bring evil to the other."

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Under date of May 2d, the Bishop remarks: "I returned to Raleigh, after a continuous absence of just seven weeks. During this whole period, not a single service was hindered by inclement weather, but everywhere, large congregations were gathered, and a steadily increasing interest was manifested."

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"The extended visitation of the Diocese thus made, during the past year, has shown most clearly not only how

very great is the work which here lies before us, but how many are the encouragements to enter upon it with earnestness and zeal. But on the other hand there are serious hindrances growing out of our lack of sufficient Clergy, and the extreme difficulty of securing them. And one chief cause of that difficulty is found in the insufficient means at our disposal to provide for their adequate support. No doubt it will be urged by many in extenuation of this state of things that the times are very much out of joint, and all departments of business are greatly paralyzed. Now, while thoroughly appreciating all these hindrances, and feeling their full force in connection with many parts of the State, still, in other sections, I think that the true explanation lies still deeper, and may be found in the fact that the maintenance of the institutions of Religion, is looked upon rather as a luxury than as a necessity. Men are too apt to persuade themselves that they can get on without the Church, the Ministry or the Sacraments, and that other interests must first be cared for, before these can be attended to. And again there is, with many, the feeling that the support of the Church belongs to those who are in prosperous circumstances. If there was only a realization of the important truth, that a certain portion of *every man's* income belongs not to himself, but to the Almighty, and which He exacts of all, in order that His worship may be duly maintained, there would then be no difficulty in supplying this great need.

Of one thing I feel certain, that so long as men refuse to recognize this claim of the Almighty; so long as they persist in applying to their own uses those fruits of their labors, which God claims as His own, just so long may they look for trouble and disaster, and the varied judgments of God.

The principles of the Divine government are the same in every age. None of us are, after all, the proprietors of what we simply hold in our hands. We are, at best, only the Stewards of God, and he exacts a rental for His land, and a tax on all the products of our industry. It is by this means that He would provide for the proper maintenance of His worship, and for the support of His

authorized ambassadors. And to withhold this from Him, is to rob Him of what He claims as His own. Now, whether this disposition be found with those of very moderate means, or those who are more richly blessed, the sin is the same, and the punishment is just as sure to ensue. "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase." This Divine command is directed alike to all sorts and conditions of men, and if that command be wisely heeded, then and not till then, may we look for the fulfilment of the accompanying promise, "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Certain it is, brethren, that we in this Diocese are not coming up to the measure of our obligations; are not recognizing the fulness and extent of God's claims upon us. Too many of our Clergy are left sadly crippled and straitened, when surrounded by those who, though they may be poor themselves, still have it in their power, if they felt and realized the obligation, to do far more for them than they are now doing, and to relieve many of their pressing necessities. Remember the injunction of the Apostle, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Oh that all might be led to see and know and do their duty, and then we may look with confidence for the bestowal upon us of the richest spiritual blessings.

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"Before closing my address I beg to say a word in regard to an important matter, about which you would naturally expect to hear something from me. I refer to our proposed Diocesan School for Boys at Morganton.

The management of this enterprise has been left by the Senior Bishop more directly in my hands, and it has occasioned me great anxiety, that so little progress has been made. But I have had to encounter two serious hindrances. In the first place, I have not been able to secure as yet a suitable person to place at the head of the institution. Everything depends upon this, for unless a thoroughly competent, energetic and efficient man can be obtained for this position, we can never look for any great measure of success.



And then, again, I have been met by the extreme difficulty, at the present time, of raising the funds so absolutely necessary for the equipment and inauguration of such a work. I know too well how many noble enterprises for Christian education have come to an inglorious end, by starting them prematurely, and without first providing the means so essential to success.

I was not willing to begin in a weak way, and crippled at every turn, and now I am anxious to learn from this Convention what steps will be judged wisest and most desirable, under the circumstances. I feel very deeply how much such an institution is needed, and what singular benefits the Diocese might hope to secure from its successful establishment. It is, to-day, the great want of the Diocese. If once commenced in the right way, the future admits of no possible question. There is no such School anywhere in the South-eastern portion of our country, and it is bound, therefore, to secure a wide and generous patronage. The work is too important—too closely identified with the best interests of the Diocese, to permit of a much longer delay. I ask, then, for your counsel and advice in the premises.

Finally, brethren, let our united supplications arise that God in His infinite mercy may guide, direct and bless us in all our deliberations and exertions for the upbuilding of His Church and the extension of His kingdom. May He enable us all to see and realize our several duties and responsibilities, while ever seeking to discharge them “as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

THEODORE B. LYMAN.







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