„Danskeren"
Onsdag den 24. Juli, 1918.

Blair, Nebr.

I sidste Uge omtaltes det, at Bladets Redaktør og hans Hustru var rejst til Gayville, So. Dak., til vor ældste Søns Svigerfader, Jens Junkers Begravelse.

Det var Mandag i sidste Uge, jeg fik den uventede og overraskende telegrafiske Meddelelse, at Jens N. Junker var død, tillige med Anmodning om at komme derop til Begravelse næste Dag.

Meddelelsen overraskede af den Grund, at den afdøde egentlig ikke var nogen gammel Mand (64), og han gav Indtryk af at være rask og stærk. Men han var pludselig bleven angrebet af Hjerneblødning (Hemorrhage of the Brain); det var Lørdag, han blev syg, og den bedst mulige Lægehjælp blev tilkaldt, men alt forgæves. Næste Mandag døde han.

Næste Dags Morgen rejste min Hustru og jeg med Tog til Sioux City, hvor der saa var Automobil til at tage imod os og befordre os Resten af Vejen, da der ikke var Jernbane Forbindelse til Gayville i rette Tid.

Naar Begravelsen var bleven bestemt allerede til Tirsdag, var det sket af den Grund, at deres yngste Søn, Arthur, var hjemkaldt fra Camp Funston til Faderens Dødsleje, og man frygtede, at han ikke kunde være med til Begravelsen senere.

Begravelsen fandt da Sted Tirsdag Eftermiddag under megen stor Deltagelse; Jens Junker var vidt kendt og agtet og afholdt af dem, der havde kendt ham og haft Omgang med ham i en lang Række af Aar.

Hele Begravelses-Ceremonien foregaade i Hjemmet og i Kirken. Jeg og i Kirken. Et Sangkor fra den norsk-lutherske Kirke i Gayville viste os den Venlighed at lede Sangen bade i Hjemmet og i Kirken. Jeg holdt Ligprædiken i Kirken ud fra Pauli Ord: „At leve er, for mig Kristus, at dø en Vinding." De to maa følges ad; skal Døden blive en Vinding, saa maa Livet leves med Kristus.

Jens N. Junker var født i Slesvig 14. Jan. 1854. Han kom til Amerika da han var omkring 16 Aar. I April 1881 blev han gift med Miss Anna Logan, deres School Teacher; hun var Amerikaner, men lærte af Hensyn til Mandens Forældre, som var hos dem, snart at tale Dansk; hun gik stadig med til deres danske Gudstjeneste, og hun, (hvis Forældre var Baptister) blev døbt i vor lutherske Kirke, mens jeg var deres Præst.

Den afdøde blev stedt til Hvile paa den dansk-lutherske Kirkegaard Syd for Gayville. Han efterlader Hustru, 6 Børn (4 Døtre og 2 Sønner), 13 Børnebørn og en Broder og to Søstre. De fleste af disse bor i Nærheden af Gayville.

Hjemvejen faldt om ad Beresford, hvor vor ældste Datter, der er gift med G. N. Larsen, bor. En af vore gamle Venner ved Gayville, Mr. Henning Hansen, var nemlig saa god at tilbyde os en Automobiltur derover. Vi var fuldt Læs, foruden Henning Hansen, Hustru og Søn, vi to gamle og saa vor Søn Anders og 3 af deres Børn. Foruden vor Datter med Familie besøgte vi Bedstefar L. Larsen.

Næste Dag kørte vor Svigersøn os til Sioux City, hvor vi som snarest hilste paa vor Datter Emma. Samme Dag (Torsdag) var vi atter hjemme, velbeholdne efter at have besøgt mange gamle Venner og nære Slægtninge, oplevet ikke saa lidt, kørt ca. 150 Mil pr. Auto og ca. 180 Mil pr. Jernbane, alt i mindre end tre Dage.

— Til forrige Søndag var der tillyst Pic-Nic for Børnene i Søndagsskolen, men det forhindredes ved Regnvejr. Men sidste Søndag lykkedes det. Uagtet mangelfuld Tillysning var der mødt omkring et Hundrede Børn og en hel Del voksne Mennesker. Som sædvanlig ved Pic-Nic blev der talt og sunget, spist og drukket og leget. Foruden Prof. C. X. Hansen talte en Frøken Poulsen — en Søster til Mrs. Knud Larsen, der er i Dansk Missions Selskabs Tjeneste som Sygeplejerske i Indien og er her paa Gennemrejse til Danmark — til Børnene. Der blev sunget Sange af det lille Sanghefte, man har i Søndagsskolen. Sangen saa vel som hele Ledelsen var paa Engelsk, men Frøken Poulsen talte paa Dansk. — Vegen svarede til Tiden. Det var Krigsleg. Mr. Skov Nielsen var Generalen og havde arrangeret et helt Felttog med modsatte Krigshære. Der blev kæmpet, vundet og tabt Slag, taget Fanger o. s. v. Der var ogsaa Røde Kors Afdeling til at tage sig af de saarede. Der faldt ogsaa en Del, men de stod op igen. Der var saa galt Skyttegrave. Det var noget, Børnene rigtig kunde være med til. Sammenkomsten holdtes i det grønne under Træernes Skygge, paa Mr. J. L. Petersens Farm en god Mils Vej Vest for Byen.

— Søndag Eftermiddag holdtes et sjældent dansk Bryllup her i Byen. Det var Mr. Chr. Trandberg og Mrs. Sine Jacobsen, Enkemand og Enke, 85 Aar begge to, der ægteviedes. Den ene var hjemløs, og den anden turde ikke leve ene, saa de var blevet enige om at prøve at danne et Hjem sammen. Dsk. ønsker dem Lykke dertil og Herrens Velsignelse.

— I Mandags rejste der atter et stort Kontingent her fra Byen til Hæren, 55 til Camp Dodge og 3 til Camp Funston. Disse tre skulde fylde Vakanser, som var opstaaet ved, at tre var bleven kasseret. De fleste af dem, som rejste denne Gang, var fra Landet. En Masse Mennesker var kommen til Byen i Anledningen, Hovedgaderne var fulde af Automobiler. Interessen for Krigen og Hæren synes at have grebet alle.

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Møder og Gudstjenester i Blair:

Søndag den 28. Juli Søndagsskole Kl. 9,15, Gudstjeneste Kl. 10,30 om Formiddagen og Kl. 7,30 om Aftenen.

Torsdag den 1. August Kvindemøde hos Rosenbecks.

Torsdag Aften Tabithamøde.

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Dr. Baylis, two years on the French Front, Sergeant Wayman, who saw service in the trenches, Dorothy Frooks, doing special work for Uncle Sam, are a trio of war speakers that will give information and inspiration to our people.

At the Blair Chautauqua, Aug. 1—6.

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Support the Blair Chautauqua by buying a season ticket.

THE FIGHTING CHAPLAIN

(Continued from page 6.)

chaplain," he said, "if it will help you any in your work, you may tell the men from me that the best soldier is the soldier with a religion".

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Keever is "high churchly". He believes that everything that art can contribute to the worship of God should be utilized by the church. He deplores the tendency to look askance at such things because they "look Catholic". When it came to our Lutheran communion services at Camp Wadsworth, I always asked the "Fighting chaplain" to be with us. On such occasions he was never satisfied to wear his uniform of first lieutenant. Invariably he would don his clerical robe, and then he would adorn that with a stole, beautifully embroidered with the color appropriate to the season. We told him he looked like a cardinal, to which he would retort, "This is proper".

He also insisted on all the appointments being as correct as a military camp would permit. A portable altar of his own design was set up at our communion services. Decked with a white cloth and with a gold cross attached to the back, the altar always looked beautiful and churchly. He also invariably made the sign of the cross in dismissing the communicants.

An Episcopalian chaplain one Sunday watched our service from beginning to end. At the conclusion he did not attempt to conceal his admiration for the beauty of the service. He expressed special surprise over the fact that Keever made the sign of the cross.

"Why I didn't know that you Lutherans were high churchly" he exclaimed.

"You didn't?" rejoined Keever. "Well you fellows have a lot to learn!"

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The "Fighting Chaplain" was universally admired by the officers and men of his regiment because of what they termed his "Gameness". He was willing to attempt any feat, no matter how difficult.

Last winter Governor Whitman of New York came to Camp Wadsworth to review the New York National Guard. It was a big event, and the colonel of Keever's regiment ordered his entire staff to be on hand and mounted. The colonel was quite a horseman, and his stables contained some splendid thoroughbreds. Among these was "Crusader", a fine horse, but spirited and hard to control. A young lieutenant essayed to ride the animal but was quickly unhorsed. There was no other steed available, and the officer would not venture a second trial. Keever solved the dilemma by offering him his horse.

"But what will you ride?" asked the lieutenant.

"Oh, I'll get something," Keever replied.

A few moments later Keever joined the other officers, mounted on "Crusader!" All went well during the review, but when the officers started back to their quarters, "Crusader" as was his custom whenever the colonel rode him, took for granted that he ought to lead the procession. Now it is distinctly improper in military etiquette for an inferior officer to go ahead of a superior. But "Crusader" had decided to lead, and though Keever tugged at the reins as hard as he could, the strong-headed animal stretched out his neck and passed the colonel. Finally Keever got him under control and waited until the colonel rode up.

"I beg your pardon, colonel," puffed Keever, "but this horse is hard to manage".

"I know it," grinned the colonel, enjoying the situation hugely.

All went well for a few minutes until "Crusader" again came to the conclusion that his place was at the head of the procession. He had no sooner arrived at this conviction than he proceeded to carry out the idea. Keever gave a last deperate tug, but it was no use. The colonel and his whole staff was passed in a flash, and the spirited horse, bearing the "Fighting Chaplain" went tearing down the reod until the stables were reached. Of course Keever had to listen to many joke at hsi ownexpense during the days which followed, but secretly all the officers admired him for his attempt.

Keever is not an emotional preacher. Rather, he is of the forceful type that appeals to the intellect and the will. At times, however, his kindly sympathetic nature would not be denied, and a flood of emotion would come sweeping into his discourse, deeply moving all his hearers. I shall never forget the last service we held together not long before he left us.

Three soldiers were confirmed that morning and afterwards we celebrated the Lord's Supper. Keever invited "all Christian men" to come to the altar.

"You know," he said, "we will soon be going 'Over There'. We may be divided in our religious views, but 'Over There' we will have to fight together and even die together. But if God should require our souls of us, we know that some day we shall we shall meet again 'Over There'. There we shall no longer be divided, but all united in one blessed family with God as our Father and Jesus as our Brother."

In referring the second time to the words "Over There", he pointed heavenward and paused. There were few dry eyes in the audience that morning, and we were gratified to see every man come forward to communion—all but one. When the service was over we were startled to see that one soldier—a grizzled old sergeant—rise to his feet and with a loud voice begin to address his comrades.

"I suppose you noticed," he said, "that I was the only man who did not take communion. Let me tell you why I didn't come. I didn't come because I did not feel that I was fit. Forty years ago, I too, was confirmed. I made the same promises that you boys did today. But I did not keep them. During these forty years I have not once gone to the Lord's Supper, and today when I came here I did not feel worthy to receive it. Don't you boys do as I have done ——" His voice broke and he hurried out of the auditorium.

It was a scene never to be forgotten. I couldn't help but feel what a wonderful grip our Lutheran confirmation and communion has on the human heart, and how that memory of it may bring more than one prodigal back again to the foot of the cross. We were all deeply moved by the old sergeant's unexpected testimony, and as we left the building Keever remarked: "The boys may forget what I said today, but they'll never forget what the sergeant said."

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