

SOUTH WESTERN BAPTIST.

S. HENDERSON, EDITOR.]

Whether it be right to the sight of God to harken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

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The S. W. Baptist
TUSKEGEE, ALA.
Thursday, June 2, 1864.
Rags! Rags!!

We will pay the highest market price for rags at this office. It is now our only chance to get paper. Will our patrons and friends who desire the continuance of our paper, save their rags, and send them in at their earliest convenience?

Notice the Red (X) Mark.

Those whose terms of subscription are about to expire, will find on the margin of the paper a red cross mark. We adopt this plan to save the expense of writing and forwarding accounts. We will give some two or three weeks notice in this way, so that subscriptions can be renewed. Look out for the Red Cross mark.

The Duty of the Hour.

We have a few words to address, not to the soldiers of the Confederate States for they need no stimulant to their patriotism or courage, but to those who profess to be the soldiers of Jesus Christ. The part they are to act in this terrible crisis of the country affects far more vitally the final issue, than the part which the Confederate army is to act. If there be truth in God's word, there is but one power in the Universe that can stop this war, and give us a place among the nations of the earth. That power is the Lord God omnipotent that reigneth. He has prescribed the conditions on which his interference is to be expected. They are written as with the finger of a sunbeam. "Give us help from trouble; for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly. For he it is that shall tread down our enemies." "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." For more than three long years, we have been scourged with one of the most desolating wars that ever afflicted any people. Every act of barbarism that can intensify the horrors of war, has been perpetrated by a people whom we have never injured. They have laid waste whole States with fire and sword. No rights of our people, civil or religious, are respected; for the house of God is burned or desecrated with the same impartial vindictiveness as the dwellings of the most prominent rebels. Nothing within the broad territory of the Confederate States is too sacred for their sacrilegious hands, reeking with innocent blood.

The question then arises, why is this desolating war protracted? Why is it permitted to drag its slow length through more than three years, with increased violence? Is it because our soldiers have been wanting in courage and patient endurance? To indulge such a thought is like to short of treason. Is it because God cannot arrest these evils and calm the tumult of the people? This were downright atheism. Why, then, are we still doomed to walk this bloody path of tribulation? The answer to this question must be sought for, not in our armies, not in our God, but in our people at home. We have tried to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. We have fasted and prayed. "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up his bowels of compassion?" Nay, verily! but our iniquities have separated between us and our God; our sins have hid his face from us! Our selfishness—our greed of gain—our profanity—our drunkenness—our violations of his holy Sabbath—these, and kindred vices, have lowered the standard of piety in our churches, and stifled the voice of prayer. We have not met the conditions of successful prayer. "Devils" mingle in "our pots of ointment." O, when will our people learn, that faith and works are joined in eternal wedlock! That profession and practice must go hand in hand! That prayer and almsgiving stand side by side in the teachings of Him who spake as never man spake! Our "ways" do not "please the Lord," and hence we are not at peace with our enemies. Let the miser, the swearer, the drunkard, the Sabbath breaker, realize that it is his sin in part at least that causes the land to mourn; that it is his iniquity in some degree, that swells the crimson tide which now laves our ragging nation. Let the work of solemn intercession commence, and let it begin at the sanctuary. Let professing Christians begin to ask the question, why their prayers are unanswered. We cannot cheat the divine Being with name sacrifices. We cannot impose the mere forms of devotion upon him, when the power, the spirit, is not there. Can we expect God to answer our prayers, when our hearts and lives contradict them? Which is the most influential with God, the chattering of a thoughtless tongue, or the constant, unceasing conduct of our lives? O, let us not forget, that the most powerful prayers we can offer to God are, the silent yet effectual pleadings of a holy, godly life. To live such a life is to pray without ceasing, for it is a life of constant prayer—a living embodied prayer.

Modification of Policy, Preparatory to the Last Great Struggle.

The battle of Chancellorsville inaugurated a manifest change in the manner of conducting the war both on the part of the North and the South. The policy of maintaining long lines of defence, occupying extensive sections of the country, and garrisoning comparatively unimportant places, has been abandoned. "Concentration" is now the word of both parties. So signal have been the failures of our armies to hold the territory they have overrun by small bodies of soldiers; that they have now stake all upon a single cast of the die. Fort Pillow, Plymouth, Union city, and many other places, have proved to them, how groundless their expectations are, that to overrun the territory is to conquer it. The two nations have concentrated their entire available strength at three points; one in the West, another in North Georgia, the other in Virginia. The contest is already decided in the West, and the destruction of perhaps one half of the Federal army in that department, and the utter demoralization of the other half, tell the sad tale of disaster there. In Virginia, after eight days of the most obstinate fighting of modern days, General Lee's invincible army of veterans has hurled back every onset of the enemy with unparalleled slaughter. Every account we have seen, from both parties, concur in the statement, that the carnage of no battle in this war can compare with that of the enemy from the 6th to the 12th of May on the Rapidan and at Spotsylvania Court House. Yankee journals admit a loss of sixty thousand, and some set it down at seventy five thousand. Our own loss has been heavy, ranging from fifteen to twenty thousand. Some suppose it may reach beyond this; but the most reliable accounts place it at twenty thousand. Thus, the enemy's loss is at least three to our one. Nor less disastrous have been the operations of the enemy on the South side of James river. General Beauregard has driven Beatt Butler, to his gunboats, and has effectually checked the demonstration upon Richmond from that quarter. Altogether, affairs in Virginia have assumed a most hopeful aspect.

In North Georgia, we have the most abiding confidence that when the time comes, a blow will be struck that will send Sherman reeling towards the Ohio, with a shattered and ruined army. He has ventured so far into the interior following what he supposes to be a conquered and demoralized army, that with ordinary prudence and courage on the part of our Generals and soldiers, his destruction is inevitable. Johnson has men enough, if properly handled, to strike the most effectual blow of the war. That he will do it when the time arrives, we have no more doubt than if the result were now announced. Nor is this a vain confidence in an arm of flesh. All that patriotism and Christianity can do to make an army invincible, has been done for these soldiers. He who has heard their songs, and their prayers, and witnessed their devotion in their camps, may be pardoned for expressing his confidence in their courage in terms that to others may seem like extravagance. Of course, God can disappoint our most sanguine and well-grounded hopes; but it is because God is there as we have never seen him present among any people before, in the converting and sanctifying power of his truth, that we thus speak. A few days will decide whether this confidence is well or ill founded.

Refugees from North Georgia.

We publish in another column an appeal from the executive committee of the Confederate Aid Association of the city of Atlanta, in behalf of the refugees from North Georgia. We cannot too earnestly present the condition of these people, mostly women and children, to the benevolent regards of our readers. The falling back of our army from Dalton to the vicinity of Marietta, has thrown multitudes of these families upon the charities of our people. A merciless fog, to whom the cries of helpless women, old men and children, are the sweetest music, are now devastating the fairest regions of the State of Georgia. The cruelties they practice upon the people, and the wanton destruction of property which mark every step of their progress, leave no alternative to those who can fly before them but to escape as best they can. History has never recorded a blacker series of crimes than those which follow in the wake of these vandals. The falling back of our army was unquestionably a most imperative necessity. General Johnson would not have abandoned so rich a country to the ravages of the foe, had he been able to hold it. Indeed, we can well afford to yield this territory and much more too, should it become necessary to the temporary possession of this horde of murderers and thieves, for the sake of crushing so formidable an army. Let us do our duty by these distressed refugees, and then we can look up to a just and holy God for assistance in driving them from our country. To those of us who have never yet been subjected to these trials, the appeal comes with irresistible power. Let the pastors of our churches take up collections in our churches—let every Christian and patriot contribute to this cause to the extent of his ability—and forward without delay as directed in the "Appeal" we publish. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus where he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Revival in Montgomery.

A gracious revival of religion is now progressing in the city of Montgomery in the 1st and 2d Baptist Churches and also in the Methodist Church. Brother Wheeler, of the 1st and Bro. Williams, of the 2d Church, have both baptized quite a number within the last few days, and the work seems to be increasing.

The Sabbath School scholars are sharing most extensively the benefits of this revival. God prosper the good work until all our churches shall experience a refreshing from the presence of the Lord!

Generals E. Kirby Smith, of the Trans-Mississippi department, and R. E. Lee, of the Virginia Army, have each issued congratulatory addresses to their soldiers, which breathe the right spirit. They are model papers of the kind, and we transfer them to our columns. Genl Smith notices the striking fact, that our successes commenced in his department on the very day of our national fast. Both of these great men impute their successes to the favor of Almighty God. To his name be all the praise! and let all the people say, Amen!

Wheat Crop.—From the best information we can gather, the wheat crop is quite promising. The stand is quite thin, owing to the severity of the winter; but the breadth of land sown is so much greater than ever before, that it is thought the yield will be much heavier than last year. We trust it will be so.

Summary of War News.

Since our last, Lee has again repulsed an attack of Grant with heavy slaughter. Beauregard has driven Butler from his outer lines of entrenchments, and he is now cooped up in a narrow neck of land between the Appomattox and the James rivers. Johnson has achieved important successes in North Georgia, having repulsed the enemy with heavy loss at every point of attack. On Friday last Cleburne's Division ambushed Howard's corps, and repulsed it with a loss of 5000 or 6000, sustaining a loss of 600. So say the telegrams. Stevenson's Division has repulsed the enemy four times with signal slaughter. Wheeler has captured some two or three hundred wagons, sixty of which he brought off, the balance were destroyed. Banks has made his escape from Alexandria, with a mere wreck of his army, and it is said pursued by Taylor. Price and Kirby Smith are after Steele in Arkansas. Altogether the light largely predominates over the shade of our prospects. Meantime, let no Christian restrain prayer.

For the South Western Baptist.

SPOTSYLVANIA C. H., May 15, 1864.

DEAR BRO. HENDERSON: I have now been with my Regiment about 20 days. I found it in winter quarters near Orange C. H. and was at once hopeful for a few weeks of quiet, for the Brigade was happily situated to attend religious services. Some young men in this Brigade, had erected a spacious building for theatrical purposes, and now, as these performances had "played out," the building was open to religious services. Bro. Andrew Broadus had been preaching here a few days; he left the day that I arrived, and therefore I began at once to preach day and night. Congregations were very large, in fact the house was filled to its utmost capacity. I had preached only three days when Dr Jeter of Richmond visited me, and accepted an invitation to preach for us a week or ten days. I regarded this as specially fortunate. I have never seen prospects more promising. The interest was deep, earnest and manifest, and Christians were all delighted, anxious and prayerful. Souls were being converted and asking to be baptized. But alas! Dr. Jeter had preached us but two of his able, appropriate sermons, when the stirring order came, "cook up two days rations, and be ready to move at a moments warning." Soon we were off to take our part in the awful and bloody campaign of the last ten days. This was a matter of painful regret to all, and Dr. J. seemed to be greatly disappointed. About 75 of the brave young men who heard the gospel there, will hear it no more on earth. Some dozen have been baptized since my return, and others will be soon. The revival which prevailed in this army last summer and fall, has never subsided entirely, and with the opening spring it increased in power and extent, and was prevailing and spreading at a joyous rate when this campaign began. No army ever went into battle under more of the influence of pure religion. At the close of Dr. Jeter's last sermon, he expressed a desire to know, what proportion of the large concourse present were Christians, and asked all who were such to rise to their feet. About two thirds of the congregation arose, Dr. J. exclaimed, "Bless God! I am amazed; it is an army of Christians!"

This Brigade kept up their Brigade prayer meetings, their Regimental prayer meetings, their private social prayer meetings, and their Bible classes, through the entire winter. While I deeply regret the loss of any good soldier who has fallen in

the late great battles, I have specially to mourn over several of my dear brethren who were of great assistance to me in the work of the Lord—some killed, some wounded, some prisoners. Several of the good soldiers whom I baptized last year have fallen. They had hope in their death. With few exceptions the young Christians of my Regiment are maintaining their profession with becoming faithfulness. Thanks be to God for this.

I have had brother Dickinson with me several days on the campaign. He has made himself useful at our hospital. This Brigade loves no man better than it does brother D. Cant brother Henderson visit us this year and preach a week or ten days? Your bro. Thomas is safe thus far.

J. J. D. RENFROE.

For the South Western Baptist.

DEMOPOLIS, ALA., May 19, 1864.

DEAR BRO. HENDERSON: I have been, for several weeks, intending to write you, but have been deferring it for more leisure. Before Gen. Polk's army left this place for Ga., much religious interest had been aroused among some of the troops. This was largely attributable to a system of Bible classes introduced by Rev. J. S. Cooper, missionary of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, to Gen. Forgings Division. He secured the approbation and co-operation of the Brigadier Genl's. In the Division, then he organized a Bible class in each company, and then at the Headquarters of each Regiment; the Colonels and other field officers taking part, and becoming members, and then one at Headquarters of each Brigade. The various classes in the Regts. would examine and discuss the same passage of scripture and then meet at regimental H'd Qrs. and interchange views, and receive instructions, and then all would gather once a week at Brigade H'd Qrs., and there again discuss the doctrines and truths involved; and decide upon the passage for the next lesson. Each company class chose its superintendent, each regimental class, its chaplain as superintendent, and at Brigade H'd Qrs. the different chaplains and the missionaries, acted as superintendents. All the books of reference, Bible dictionaries, biblical antiquities, and commentaries that could be obtained, were brought into requisition, for a full understanding of the word of truth. In addition to the study of the scriptures, the distribution of religious tracts, furnished by the missionary or chaplains, was introduced to the consideration of the classes, and adopted, so that the superintendent of each company, drew from the general supply whatever number was needed, and distributed in his class. By this method, every man in the whole Division could be presented with a religious tract, and nearly every man—every church member, and most of the unconverted became interested in the great work. The great advantage of this system is, that men who had not studied the Bible before, or perhaps did not even read it often, became curious to be informed upon its truths and doctrines, and many of them became deeply interested in its promises and hopes. Gen. Featherstone, who was not a church member, became so much interested in the practical results of the system that he offered his co-operation with the missionary to obtain useful helps to the study of the scriptures, and promised, that whenever the Brigade had to march, he would attend to the transportation of the books himself, saying that "if he could not find room in a Brigade wagon for them, he would carry them in his private ambulance." Bro. Cooper and the chaplains of the Division, secured the voluntary enrollment of 2,000 men in the Division, into Bible classes, at the very outset. The Division left this place in two or three weeks after this plan was adopted, I believe—and I have not heard of the final results. But it is evident to the thoughtful, that such a system adopted and carried on for even a week by officers and men together, for mutual improvement and good, by 2,000 out of 4,000, would necessarily develop all the scriptural knowledge and the energies, and talents of church members,

and awaken new zeal among them to do good, and at the same time, would preoccupy their minds, divert them often from sources of employment and amusement of a doubtful moral character, and would be the means of the conviction of many a sinner, who, without it, might have lived and died "having no hope, and without God."

It is a system that will call into requisition all the gifts and talents of converted men, and open fields of immediate, personal effort and usefulness to them. It will correct the great error among professing Christian soldiers, that the minister or chaplain is appointed and expected to perform all the spiritual labor, do all the preaching, praying, and working for the souls of the unconverted. It will cause every man to feel that Christ has given "to every man his work" (Mark 12: 34) and that he has something to do, as well as much to suffer and endure. It will convince all of the fallacy of the doctrine that religion cannot flourish in war, that it is impracticable to lead a devout Christian life in camp—that a man cannot be a useful prayerful follower of Christ, and a Confederate soldier at the same time. May the efforts of all engaged in the glorious work be blessed in the increase of the piety of Christians, and the salvation of every sinner in the army.

There is a great contrast still to be seen between the spirit and the morale of the citizens of many sections, and the soldiers in parts of our army. While soldiers are employing their time studying "the things that make for their peace," in some sections citizens are still spending their time in "rioting and feasting." I see, too, that some of our soldiers are grieved at this state of things, and that the "Christian Association of the 1st Virginia Artillery" have issued a Saviour throughout the Confederacy. I enclose it to you. In one section of this State, I rejoice to know, a higher standard has been raised by at least one faithful "mother in Israel." Not long since a widowed mother in Green Co., "gave a party" in honor of her son's recent marriage. The beauty and the gaiety of her acquaintance were present, and as usual on such occasions, the young people wanted to dance, as young people have an idea that any "party" is dull and stale, and very common without a dance. They plead with the venerable Christian mother to give her consent to the doubtful indulgence, but all to no purpose, she did not think this a time for dancing, besides, she is a member of a church that regards dancing as having an "evil appearance" and influence, and then she did not feel willing, in the midst of the rejoicings occasioned by the marriage of her son, to allow in her house, such a mockery of the sufferings and sorrows of the laid drenched in blood, such sporting over the bones and blood of martyred patriots, the wails and groans of whose soulless mothers, and brotherless sisters, and widows and orphans fill the air of the whole land, and tell of broken hearts, blighted hopes, and ruined prospects, and above all this, I rejoice to be able to inform you and the Christian community generally, that this mother is a Baptist. Baptists have always been the first, in the history of the progress of Christianity, to declare for liberty, to contend for implicit obedience to the scriptures, and adherence to the principles of religion, to inaugurate missionary enterprises. They ought today, to stand out boldly and above the false views and fashions of a nominal formal Christianity, discountenance every form and exhibition of corrupt public sentiment, bid defiance to the taunts of aristocratic conventionalities, and assert the Saviour's right to rule and control the habits and practices and fashions of the world. The salvation of the world, the permanency of our government, with its institutions and laws, depends upon the prevalence of the doctrines of the Baptists!

It ought to be considered a shame and reproach to any Baptist, to sanction or participate in such levities,

and frivolities as prevail in some parts of the Confederacy. The Baptist women of our country have a great responsibility: Let them frown down every species of error and vice; then dancing, frolicking, "stars and bars" "gold lace and brass buttons" will have to seek fun in lower society, or approach with dignity and respect the standard of elevated, purified public morals, and public opinion.

Yours in a better hope,
D. S. SNOODGRASS,
Post chaplain.

For the South Western Baptist.
Domestic Board.

DEAR BRO. HENDERSON: Your readers are always anxious to know every thing of interest connected with the great work in which the Board is engaged. The whole field seems ripe for the harvest, nearly every missionary reports more or less conversions and baptisms monthly.—

The news from the army is wonderful as your own experience will testify in regard to the army of Tennessee, which, I am glad you have recently had an opportunity to visit. God is displaying his power in the conversion of our brave defenders. One missionary reports 41 baptisms, another 25, another 25, and others 5 and 3 each, &c. The brethren are greatly encouraged and ask for continued interest in the prayers of God's people.

The Board is extending its aid to our feeble churches, to enable them to sustain the preached word among them. This we regard as a very important part of our operations. Another year of the Board has just closed. We have reason to be thankful for the favor it has met with from the friends throughout the Confederacy. We trust it will continue to share in their confidence and co-operation. The Annual Report is ready for the press but is not yet out. I will give you a brief abstract: Amount received during the year, \$137,609.65, amount paid out for Bibles and Testaments, \$4,961.95, for Tracts, \$9,939.57, for religious papers \$23,012.08, number missionaries employed in the army 77, in Domestic field 23, in the Indian department 23. Total 123. The salaries of 9 chaplains have been supplemented.

Who can estimate good accomplished through these agencies? The Bible, the Tract and the paper have been scattered with a liberal hand, carrying the knowledge of life to the camp of the wearied soldier, far away from the kind influence of home and the sanctuary. Many a mother's heart has been cheered as she reads the letters from her soldier boy, telling her who loves him, of what God is doing in the army for the defenders of her home, and dearest rights.

The brethren in Ala. did well for us last year; of the total amount received, Ala. gave \$45,417.11. We shall need not less than \$200,000 to meet the wants of the Board the coming year. May the Lord give us liberal views, and a comprehensive survey of the field before us.

Yours truly,
M. T. SUMNER, Cor. Sec.

For the South Western Baptist.
Rev. Wm. N. Reeves.

DEAR BRO. HENDERSON: Rev. Wm. N. Reeves of Esauka has consented to spend a few weeks in Mobile on behalf of our Orphan Asylum. In military language he was "pressed into service" while in a visit to his mother in Dallas.

The necessity of an early visit to that city, the magnitude and importance of the enterprise, and the great difficulty of obtaining one suitable to occupy that field were the chief arguments that prevailed on him to yield even a reluctant assent to the urgent call, as time would not allow an opportunity of a conference, with the people of his charge. No doubt the considerations that moved him to accept this work will influence his church to accord their hearty approval of his decision.

It is hoped he will be as cordially received, and his mission as liberally supported in Mobile as I was in Montgomery, and that their contributions will exceed those of Mont-

