

Alabama Baptist

E. T. WINKLER.—Editor.
J. J. D. RENFRO.—Associate.

MARION, ALA.

Thursday, May 3rd, 1877.

Practical Hints on Education.

We find a variety of educational suggestions, here and there, which appear to us worthy of reproduction.

One is in regard to location. Most persons, adults as well as children, read badly. And the main fault in bad reading is the uniformity of tone. The voice runs on a dead level, interrupted only by a sudden drop at the end of a sentence. Among us the tone is low inclining to the guttural; at the North it is high, inclining to the nasal. The *Journal of Education* suggests the following method of breaking the monotony of the youthful voice:

Infant Church Membership.

The Cincinnati presbytery admits the "ambiguity" of this expression, but claims that "the just and precious relation or connection established by the covenant is the Christian family as a divine institution and certified by baptism ought never to be ignored, or lightly regarded by the imitators of our church." Upon which the *Independent*, (Congregational) cautiously remarks that "the church membership of infants is a construction and not a real one—a membership by Pickwickian definition and not in fact." Nay, the Pedobaptist critic goes on to protest against the use of such a phrase at all. "There is such an ambiguity about the term 'membership,' as applied to infants." It does not mean membership at all in the sense in which the word is applied to adults; and it were well if it were dropped.

Nor does the ambiguity arise from a mere infelicity of phrase. The claim of infant church membership rests upon some thing quite imaginary. What is that "first and precious relation and connection" of children to the Christian church? he can tell! Suppose two infants to be in a family, one adopted child, the other their own, and the offspring of worldlings, the other of Christians; but both subject to the same religious training; has the one any conceivable claim to church membership that does not belong to the other? There is no connection with the church in either case except the anticipated by those that child who has been trained religiously will be likely, through the blessing of God, to become a Christian. And what forbids the indulgence of this hope in the one case we have supposed, any less than in the other?

Another suggestion relates to the prevention of cruelty to schoolchildren. In too many schools of high reputation the health of the body is sacrificed to the culture of the mind. This is a great mistake; for a sound mind requires a sound body. Upon this point the editor of the *Cottage Heart* remarks:

"It is clear to every thoughtful mind that correct physical training lies at the base of every worthy educational system, and of all true culture—since without a well-developed physical organization no large degree of usefulness or happiness in life is attainable. It is equally clear that the period of childhood is most susceptible to the reception of the seeds of disease and weakness, therefore childhood should forever be held sacred. No moral right exists anywhere for piling on its joyous shoulders the ripened sheaves of learning that belong to mature age alone. We believe in stuffing turkeys for thanksgivings, but we protest emphatically against stuffing children for exhibition. We recommend this suggestion to parents and teachers. It is one of very great importance. The children of our country are too rapidly pushed forward."

We add just one more suggestion. It relates to the prominence given to grammar in the study of language. This is a subject in regard to which the vast majority of classical teachers in our country make a grave mistake. They seem to forget that the object of the study of a language is the knowledge of the language itself, and that the substance of the language is its vocabulary. The grammar gives the philosophy of the language—but the thing itself should as far as possible come first, and should always be esteemed as of first importance. How little this principle is attended to in the study of the classics, and what the effect of the neglect is, Prof. D. McGregor Means of the John Hopkins University thus confesses and deplores in this April number of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*.

"To the vast majority of what we call our 'cultured' classes, the Greek and Roman classics are closed books. The study of Latin is usually so conducted that most scholars relinquish it with no feeling except weariness or disgust; while the writers that are usually studied, as they were but imitators of the Greeks, with scarcely a trace of originality, prejudice the mind of the scholar against all classical literature. And as the language is studied practically for the sake of the grammar, the very name of Latin suggests thoughts of etymology and syntax rather than literary enjoyment. The study of Greek following that of Latin, is approached with a mind prejudiced unfavorably, and laborers under the additional disadvantage of requiring a familiarity with a most copious system of inflection, that is really delightful to the philologist and burdensome to every one else. The amount of time spent in acquiring a painful and imperfect acquaintance with the agents alone,

such as he is not generally credited with, appears from an experiment, now presented in St. Augustine, where a number of Red Men who have been guilty of atrocities at the West and have been captured by the Government are now immured in the Old Fort. The women of the town have taken pity upon these fierce and gloomy savages, and have undertaken to give them instruction in letters and civility. And the result is already most satisfactory, in both respects. A lady who recently visited their school says: 'The bell rang for school hours, and hurrying from all quarters came dark men in United States uniform, neat, compact, trim, with well-brushed boots and nicely kept clothing and books in their hands. Large spelling cards adorned one side of the wall, containing various pictures and object lessons adapted to the earliest stages of learning. The Indian is naturally stern and hard; but as they gathered round their teacher and returned her morning greeting the smiles on those faces made them seem even handsome—When they read in concert, when they mastered perfectly the pronunciation of a difficult word, when they gave the right answer to a question, they were evidently delighted.' The visitor was convinced that the worst of Indians may be civilized. That they readily learn commercial ways is argued from the fact that this St. Augustine party has made and sold trinkets amounting to \$3,000.

The testimony is of value to us, who are now considering the project of establishing a school in the Creek Nation for the education of Indian boys and girls. The National Council offer to our Southern Baptist Convention an annual subsidy of six thousand dollars on the condition that suitable buildings are erected at a convenient place (where the land will be donated) and that provision be made for the education of one hundred youths, fifty of either sex. A portion of the money required for the buildings is already in hand. The outlay demanded of the Denomination will be slight in comparison with the magnitude of the results to be expected from it.

Preaching Power.

The power of the preacher is not dependent on the accidental which are associated with his public exercises. The church may be Gothic or Grecian; the pulpit may be a table on a platform or a raised enclosure surrounded by its venerable red cushion; the voice of the speaker may be weak or feeble; the room which distributed them may be taxed. The dealer who sold them was taxed. The income which bought them was taxed. And after all this to pursue the same articles year by year with new taxation, to meet a citizen for his home comforts, as if they were misnices to be abated by public authority—this policy appears to us to be a grave social wrong.

A recent writer who has discussed the subject of church taxation claims that Whitefield starved the livelong interest and ministry. How did he attain it? A modern reviewer answers, that Whitefield starved at the throne of grace till he was divinely endowed: "He came from closest closer communion with God; and like Moses issuing from the canopy of cloud, he came with a face shining with reflected glory, a soul overflowing with holy emotion, so that a simple look at his audience would sometimes open the fountains of his tears, and, for a time, close the gates of speech. Then, overcoming his emotion, he would hurl his heart at his hearers in hot words; all aglow with love and grace, until, under this sagged bombardment, the citadel of infidelity bawled down its hostile flag, and ran up the blessed banner of the cross."

An illustration of this great orator's method of preparation deserves to be added. He read through the voluminous and pious commentaries of Matthew Henry three several times, and he read them through upon his knees. Is it wonderful that a spirit so devoted had acceptance with the people, and power with God?

Mr. Gladstone, the learned ex-Premier of England, who has won into every department of human knowledge, and is prompt to take a leading part in the discussion of every subject of contemporaneous interest, has lately addressed himself to this. In a discussion held at the church of Rev. Dr. Parker, of London, (the City Temple) he strongly advocated the extempore method of delivery, but deprecated any style of culture that would affect injuriously the individuality of the minister. And the religious press of England compare the eminent speaker to the author of Ecclesiastes, who combined in his own person the functions of statesman and preacher, and who gave his heart to seek and search out wisdom concerning all things that are done under the sun. But evidently Mr. Gladstone is dealing only with the externals of the great subject which he handles. He has not reached the core. Dr. Harris was eloquent with the manuscript. Sparrow is eloquent without it. Yet the source of their power as preachers was the same. Both these popular orators of England drew it from communion with God.

Whatever the adult and wild Indian has attitudes for knowledge,

Taxation.

and Sultan could be forced to settle the matter by their own musketry rather than by the worthiness and blood of their subjects. That so simple and facile a case must be subjected to the arbitration of war is a discredit to the statesmanship of Europe. The poems are well executed translations from Home, by Theodore Martin.

Truth's Little Act for April 21. This number contains two notable articles. The first from the *Contemporary Review*, on the great thinker Spinoza, who was so little understood by his contemporaries as to be classed among the apostles. The other is by Mr. Gladstone, on the subject of authority. The writer insists that the determination of any Catholic to accept the decision of the Pope as final, is as much in act of individual private judgment, as a determination to follow Wesley, or Luther. Mr. Gladstone is right; if a man burns his talent in a napkin, does it matter whose name is on the cloth? There is a very pleasant article on the *Gossip of History*.

Wise Awake for May. Ella Farman, editor. D. Lthrop & Co., Boston, 12 a year.

Finely illustrated. The stories are such as will interest the children; in the little guests stand in their night gowns; in another a child gets the Pope's blessing for her doll and Bridget's brooch. There is an account of the *Lace Kingdom* which turns out to be a Parisian Convent where blue boses are made. R. H. Stoddard contributes some pleasing confidences in regard to the past and traveler, Bayard Taylor. Taylor's portrait and views of his home are given. Those fine parse pastimes, tangled knots, music, &c. *Wide Awake* is the best child's magazine we are acquainted with.

IS THE BIBLE TRUE? Seven Addresses by James H. Brooks, St. Louis, Mo., Chas. K. Cox, Publisher, 212 North Fifth St.

The author of this compendious discussion undertakes to reply to the objections urged by Strauss, the German Pantheist, against the credibility of the Scripture records. The heretics are fervid, eloquent and convincing—unless we should except the last, where the endeavor to cover so much ground, the explanation of difficulties becomes at times enigmatic and perplexing. The chapter on the character of Jesus, as well as that on the *Evidences* of his Resurrection, is specially rich in thought and sentiment. In regard to the latter it appears to us defective in failing to emphasize the sanctity of the Ordinance wherein the believer in it owns his soul which distributed them were taxed. The dealer who sold them was taxed. The income which bought them was taxed. And after all this to pursue the same articles year by year with new taxation, to meet a citizen for his home comforts, as if they were misnices to be abated by public authority—this policy appears to us to be a grave social wrong.

X plus Y—Z, or the Sleeping Preacher of North Alabama, by Rev. G. W. Mitchell. Printed for the author. New York: W. C. Smith, 65 John street.

This curious little book gives an authentic account of Rev. Mr. Constantine B. Sanders, a minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian church, who is subject to attacks of catalepsy. While in a trance-state, he developed powers of clairvoyance, an acquaintance with languages previously unknown, and wonderful gifts of eloquence. Upon these last points, however, the testimony is not so satisfactory as it might be. He reads blind-fold, and writes profusely. He displays also a strange intuition into diseases and remedies. The present sketch is for the most part made up of affidavits from reputable citizens of North Alabama testifying to the display of these occult powers, especially in trivial feats of clairvoyance. The case claims the attention of scientists. It is abnormal, but by no means unprecedented—as Mr. Sanders' present biographer supposes. Its most important characteristics are yet to be investigated.

Porcupine Monthly. D. Appleton & Co., N. Y.

The frontispiece is a portrait of President Barnard, of whom a sketch is also given. There are besides this three illustrated articles:—Car Pikes old and young, by Prof. Burt G. Wilson; Aqueducts, by Wm. E. Lemos; the New Star in the Constellation of Jupiter's Cloud Masses. Dr. Carpenter regards the magnetic sleep as corresponding precisely in character with what is known as "hysteria comic," and as arising from a reduction of the supply of blood to the brain by a spasmodic contraction of the blood vessels. The present lecture is the first of a series which will awaken lively interest.

Field Notes.

I have just accepted the care of another church and on my first visit laid the claims of our paper before the brethren and obtained the above \$10.—J. S. Yarbrough.—W. E. Penn, of Texas, who has been holding revival meetings throughout that

State, contemplates visiting Alabama during the summer—probably Tuscaloosa and Mobile.—Bro. A. D. Fortune, a member of the church at Livingston, is superintendent of the Sunday school at Hopewell church, Brewster'sville. It has a membership of between forty and fifty and is doing well. This is one of those organized by Bro. Bailey last year.

Wants of Alabama Baptists.

NUMBER FIFTEEN.

SEVERAL THINGS.

With this letter we bring our series on the Wants of Alabama Baptists to a close. In doing this we will make brief allusions to several things which have not yet been discussed; and 1st among these, we assume that there is still room for great improvements in our Sabbath-school and Sabbath-school system. We have never been of the number who believe that the Sabbath-school work is superior, or equal, to the more public worship of God and the preaching of the word by a living ministry. Nor do we believe more than half of what we see in the papers stated as results of Sunday school work. Still correct statistics and facts show that the Sunday school is a power wonderfully influential for good; and we suppose that its existence in union with the other efforts of the church of Christ, will be perpetuated to the end of time; and therefore its utility will be brought to a still higher state of perfection, and its power still more and more for. In a former article we have urged the importance of striv ing to put the whole church into the Sabbath school. We believe that sooner or later this will become the *Herald* of the *New Testament*. The *N. Y. Herald* lectures the Baptists for regarding ministers who come to us from other denominations. Unfortunately the *Herald* is poor ecclesiastic authority.—

D. H. Plumptre Professor of New Testament Exegesis in King's College, London, and a distinguished member of the Church of England, in his article on the word "Bishop," contributes to Soul's "Dictionary of the Bible," admits that elders and Bishops of the early Church were identical. *Presbyter* and *Elder* are used as convertible terms in the New Testament. In noticing this unfortunate admission of Dr. Plumptre, the *Chaveau* is so agitated as to misspell his name.—A prominent Baptist minister of Pittsburgh, Pa., has been expelled from the fellowship of his ministering brethren. He is an Englishman, Rev. R. W. Pearson, and he is the most popular Baptist in this country.—

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And finally, the word of God is too much neglected among our people. We fear that very many of our members gather no knowledge of divine truth except from the pulpit. After all that we have urged as wants of Alabama Baptists, we imagine that nothing is more needed than that our brethren and sisters and children, shall search the Scriptures daily to see whether these things are true.

Our whole religion has reference to the salvation of souls. The system of saving men is to be found in the Bible. If we will save ourselves and those who hear us, we must know the Scriptures well enough to make us wise unto salvation."

We have not written these articles as a pastime, but have earnestly trusted in the fear of God that they would be blessed to the good of Alabama Baptists.

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The *British Quarterly Review*, Belfast, gives an account of the views of the famous orator Thomas Munzer, who has been sold into the Papacy. The following was Munzer's position on the vexed question: "The *baptism* wherein the believer in it owns his soul which distributed them were taxed. The dealer who sold them was taxed. The income which bought them was taxed. And after all this to pursue the same articles year by year with new taxation, to meet a citizen for his home comforts, as if they were misnices to be abated by public authority—this policy appears to us to be a grave social wrong.

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Our Texas Correspondence.

Dear Bro. Editor: I will find two dollars for which you will continue the BAPTIST. I am well pleased with the BAPTIST and could not feel contented without it.

Bro. Penn's meeting is still going on with good results. The 1st and 2nd church have united again—Since the meeting commenced, which has been twenty-five conversions up to date. The congregations have been very large and attentive. The largest congregations I have ever seen attend protracted meetings here. Oh may it continue and increase interest until there are none here to advance the cause of Satan.

Bro. Hart is in fine health and his spirits. He scarcely ever tires singing and we never get tired listening. The more we see of him the better we like him. He has become much attached to this great State. I think Alabama will have to give up her claim on him, for we already claim him as a regular TUXAN.

J. H. ROWELL,
Jefferson, Texas, April 21, 1877.

A Spring Suit.

Bro. Editor: Pastors have been telling in grateful strains of presents from their flocks in way of overcoats and winter suits; and I have had to take it out in thinking I didn't tell anybody so, but I thought I just wouldn't care one whit should

I be remembered in that way.

But my time has come at last. Last Saturday I received by express a beautiful spring suit as a present from the ladies of my Friendship congregation. Now if you were a little village preacher, living on a little salary, you could the better appreciate just how proud I felt. Past said he knew both how to be abased and how to abound. The former lesson I have been instructed in ever since I entered the ministry; but if such good treatment at the hands of the ladies continues long I will have to "right about" and learn how to "abound". Lately prouned so handsonly—and now "dressed up" so splendidly—why it's enough. Then how can a broadcloth coat fellow stand so much without being spoilt?

To be so kindly remembered and cared for makes me feel that notwithstanding my weakness as a minister my congregations care something for me. Such fruit will surely abound to the account of those dear ones who care for their pastor.

W. S. ROGERS,
Seal Alz., April 22, 1877.

