

Alabama Baptist.

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MARION, ALA.

Thursday, Sept. 20th, 1877.

Opening of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Lecture, opening the first term of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, was delivered by Rev. Dr. Boyce, Chairman of the Faculty, in the Public Library Hall, on Friday night, Aug. 31. A large audience, consisting not only of the students but of prominent citizens, attended. In breadth and clearness of view, in cogency of argument, and in discretion and modesty of statement, the lecture was equal to the eminent occasion.

Three topics were presented;—the awakening and growth of interest among our churches in the cause of theological education;—the selection of a central and accessible site for the institution;—and the adaptation of the theological course to the various degrees of culture possessed by our ministry.

The interest of our people in theological education led to the establishment of our earliest institutions of learning. The professors were religious men and to one or more of them was assigned the duty of preparing young ministers for the efficient discharge of the duties of their responsible office. But the conviction has gained strength that we needed an institution, where a full corps of professors could devote themselves to theological instruction in all its departments; and that, with the aid of such appliances, as could not be commanded by any existing college. Accordingly in April, 1858, the Seminary was established in Greenville, chiefly by the Baptists of the South and East. The larger part of the endowment having been swept away by the war, a new effort was put forth, in which the West and South also united, and which has kindled a flame of enthusiasm throughout the whole country. A considerable part of the second endowment has been secured, and the work is progressing rapidly toward its completion.

Many of us, the present writer among the number, have been apprehensive of the effect of its removal to Louisville upon the prosperity of the institution, and consented to this measure only as a financial necessity. Dr. Boyce, however, argues that the average travelling expenses of the students from the various States will not be more than \$30 each, an expense to each State less than the support of one theological professor in that State would be; that a great city like Louisville affords the best facilities for training the students in the work of the pastor and preacher, and that this railway centre is a suitable denominational metropolis for our Southern and Southwestern States, which embrace more than half the Baptist population of the world. We are happy to learn that the present attendance is unusually large and encourages the expectation of an increase of fifty per cent. above that of former years.

The most important topic, however, and that to which the larger part of the address was devoted—was the method of instruction. A theological institution, to meet the needs of the people, ought to be adapted to the various intellectual gifts and educational attainments, which are found in the ministry of a great popular denomination like ours. It ought to afford a thorough training at once to apt and to plodding minds, at once to college graduates and to English students. To effect this object two courses have been instituted—the collegiate and the English. The old form of classes, arranged by years, has been dropped; and each study is completed in the session in which it is undertaken. Another arrangement is to give a separate hour to each study, so that no two classes are reciting at the same time. It is found that most of the studies of any theological school come within the range of mere English scholarship; while those students who are pursuing Greek, Latin and Hebrew are advanced more rapidly, as classic and oriental linguists, than where less use is made of English appliances.

Dr. Boyce suggests that an important work may be accomplished by the Theological Institution in preparing hymns, who have no thought of the ministry, for their proper church work, as for well as a more intelligent and happy appreciation of the Word of God.

Lodging accommodations have been secured for one hundred students by renting the Elliott House and a portion of the National Hotel. The cost

of board and books will be uncommonly low. The Public Library Hall will afford these lecture rooms, a library and a reading room. The regular hours of recitation will be from 9 a. m. to 6 p. m.

This does the beloved Institution renew its youth, and enter upon a career of enlarged and enlarging prosperity. We congratulate its friends and patrons upon the happy auspices that now attend it, and especially the professors, with their indefatigable labors, who to attain this result have labored so patiently and sacrificed so much.

Pastoral Visitation.

The editor of the *Southern Presbyterian* has made a good suggestion upon this important subject. He insists that the people can give immense help to their pastors in this matter of visitation and intercourse, and thus promote mutual satisfaction. They should seek his visits for the help and spiritual aims for which this relation was created, and should open their hearts to his approach to their hearts to their religious guide and helper. One reason why many pastors make their visits infrequent and repeat them with reluctance, is, that in such cases they are kept at arm's length by those whom they would benefit; they are baffled in every attempt to reach the heart and often their efforts even to introduce the subject of personal religion. Some ministers have no facility in leading conversation, and are easily kept from any topic by the frequent tongue of those to whom that topic is unbecomingly. Some have so much timidity and reserve, that they can scarcely introduce topics on which their people desire conversation and are afraid to have the ice broken. Here is an occasion for their help. Open the way; ask his advice, or suggestion; tell him your wants, your troubles and perplexities; show him that you would welcome and prize his services. Nothing gives the pastor more pleasure than to be thus sought and thus used. He values more than the richest intellectual treat, more than compliments, especially more than any possible gossip. He would give any amount of time and thought your case would require, and give them most cheerfully. And we venture to add that if you use him thus, you will have far more visits from him. He will feel that he has a tangible object in coming, and that he is doing important service thereby.

But "pastoral visitation," as our contemporary claims, is a phrase that may also fitly describe what we regard as an important part of the duty involved and of the privilege too.

and that is visitation of the pastor by the people. Physicians and lawyers regard their office-work as a valuable part of their practice. It is even more valuable a part of pastoral practice. It may be abused to the thoughtless and criminal waste of his time, but this is not likely to be the case if these visits are truly made for the sake of instruction, counsel, or any form of spiritual treatment. The busiest pastor will welcome such visits, unless they come while he is in the glow of composition or thought in his preparations for the pulpit; but this can easily be avoided. The advantages of such intercourse are obvious. It saves the time of the pastor. It is more private and less liable to interruption. It has a definite object, which, being presented by the visitor, is promptly met. It occurs at the right time—the time when it is needed—and is therefore more likely to do good. The pastor may make his rounds very often and yet fail to strike the appropriate occasion. Then it makes up for all the lack of visits by the pastor which is so frequently complained of. If you need to see him, you can always go to his study. And the object is spiritual contact, irrespective of place, and not the mere showing you attention. Why should any object to this method? You have no objection to going to your lawyer and your doctor when you need their services; and if you need them at once and cannot go to them, you never hesitate to send for them. We see no reason why a similar course should not be adopted in the case of the pastor. He does not generally know when you need him most. Some ministers do not know you are sick, until the first he hears is the complaint that he has neglected you. Certainly in such cases it is better to secure him as apprised of your condition, before complaining. Better say, send for him; and we venture to say his will come as promptly and cheerfully as your family physician would. The capabilities of the pastoral relation are immense; and if only partially developed, the fault is not wholly with the pastor.

Queries.

J. M. T. asks for information as to the meaning of 2 John 10: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

Our correspondent asks:—What house is here alluded to?

2. What items of doctrine are here meant?

3. Does not the lack of regeneration in a preacher or a member constitute him an Anti-Christ and a deceiver? v. 7.

This text forbade that Christian hospitality should be extended to persons who claimed to be entertained as disciples, but who were engaged in dissemination of false doctrine, and thus abusing the hospitality they enjoyed. 2 John 2:2. The heretics whom the apostle had in view denied "the doctrine of Christ." 2 John 9—especially the doctrine, "that Jesus Christ had come into the flesh." 2 John 7. Such persons were not to be received into the house as guests, or even to be greeted with a friendly welcome.

Those not presented by our correspondents in the third question does not seem to have been present to the apostle's mind. He was writing against those ancient heretics who denied the fundamental doctrine of Him who was manifest in the flesh. He declared that, instead of being true disciples of Christ, these heretics were Anti-Christ; and that, instead of being welcomed as teachers of the gospel, they should be avoided as deceivers. The warning given by John in his Second Epistle is the same which he had already given in his First. Compare 1 John 4:1-3.

The same correspondent urges the following inquiries:

"How do you like the plan of some churches, making Divine Sovereignty nullify human responsibility? Can electing souls without the Gospel be grace save when the Word and the Spirit move together in creation? Even so, Gospel truth and the Holy Spirit be united in the work of salvation. The inquirer has answered his own questions. See 2 Thess. 2:13. We doubt the wisdom, however, of speaking dogmatically upon such subjects. The responsibility of those who have received the Gospel is clear enough, but Job was saved without any written word, and infants are believed to be saved without any knowledge of the Gospel. If it were essential to the welfare of his case, God could, out of Jordan stones, raise up children unto Abraham." But as we content in leaving "secret things" where they belong, and remind ourselves that our part is to embrace the salvation God graciously offers, and diligently to obey his revealed and sovereign will.

Dr. Horatio B. Hackett.

Our discourse with this illustrious man persuaded us that he was the greatest scholar that our Denomination has ever had. He was at home in the continental, the classic and the oriental languages. We remember with a certain sense of amazement and of pain how we laughed at him thirty years ago when he stated that he had spent six weeks in studying the difference between the Greek phrases *ei kai kai oi*, and had discovered that the one meant "if and" and the other "even if." Rev. J. R. Hartman has recently delivered an address, in which the following notices were given of the boyhood of this great scholar and humble Christian. Says Mr. Hartman:

"He was born in 1808, in a little unpicturesque house standing under the hill, but opposite the Post-office at the Point. Here he lived and grew. In some of the stately homes on Market street are men now grown a little gray, who were his intimate youthful associates at the Point. Boys together they played on the lawn, they climbed the hills back of the house, they picked berries in the woods, they went fishing and boating on the Towow and the beautiful Meigs; they learned to read and spell; at the knees of the same schoolmaster, they studied grammar and arithmetic together in the same cluttered school-house; and little did they then think that the boy, Horatio, would eventually surpass the world with his erudition and become the author of some works pronounced by German critics to be the most scholarly in the English language."

"What kind of a boy was Horatio?" inquired a friend who knew him most intimately. "A good boy, a good boy, gentle as a lamb, and industrious as a bee." "Ah," thought I, "that speaks well." "Was he fond of books?" "Very, very, always reading in his leisure moments; a great boy for books." "Well, was he fond of sports?" "A splendid playmate, quick and lively, and full of fun; a good swimmer, a good skater, and could run like a deer." "Ah! good, good," said I to myself, he has energy, the boy is father to the man. "Well, what kind of a student was he?" "Splendid, the best scholar in school, clear-headed, very industrious and quick to learn. He wasn't one of those heads that do not seem to wake up until life is half gone." "When did he spend his evenings?" "Generally at home reading books or in a play house we built on the hill side, where we would spend the evening reading or talking over our lessons." "Was he an obedient boy?" "Continued I. 'The best boy to his mother I ever saw.' He would do anything for her." "Noble boy," said I to myself, there we have a prophecy of his remarkable future."

We do not remember how Dr. Hackett impressed us at Newton, in the year 1843, when we were fresh from Brown University, and felt ourselves at home in Greek. He

gave our class, for their first lesson, two verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians, which we did not even take the trouble to study. In about five minutes however he had succeeded in "stealing" the whole class of college graduates, with the exception of Lyman Jewett, now our Missionary in Orissa, Hindostan, a doctor of Divinity and a great Puritan; we doubt not, America never produced a greater scholar or a nobler Christian than Dr. Horatio B. Hackett. Had he desired popular applause he could have secured it, for he wrote beautifully; he spoke eloquently; but he preferred to train others for the work of the ministry; and now there are thousands who feel, as we do, the inspiration of that gifted mind and that devoted heart.

Field Notes.

On Sept. 11th, the Theological Seminary at Louisville, had 69 students. The largest attendance at any previous session was 67. It is expected that there will be 100 or 100 during the present session. The old students are much better pleased with Louisville than they expected to be. There were, on the 11th, 13 students from Kentucky, 12 from Virginia, and 8 from Alabama. Those from Alabama are brethren Davis, Dill, Farrior, Mountain, Howard, Lyon, Thames and Hare. We are glad to learn that Bro. W. K. Patterson, of Greensboro, who has been dangerously ill of typhoid fever, is now recovering. The efficiency and discretion with which he has been conducting a first class school for colored pupils in that town, have won universal respect and commendation.

We have received the 'Friendship Catalogue of Meigs University. The lists of Alumni show how much has been done for Georgia by this denominational institution. During the last year there were 114 students. At Round Lake, the Methodist camp meeting ground, the *Standard* Editor found a "mineral" spring, the gas for which is manufactured near by, and by means of machinery forced into the spring. And thus does he moralize upon it: "Our grateful feelings toward the gentleman whose hospitality we enjoyed ought to have prevented the wicked thought how appropriately symbolical such a camp meeting adjunct as this is, but we are sorry and ashamed to say it did not."—Bro. W. S. Rogers, of Seale, sends the following notes, under date of Sept. 12th: "I have just closed a series of meetings at Pleasant Hill church, during which the church was greatly revived and seven were received by experience. I left several earnest inquirers. About 30 negro children have died in and around Greenville of diphtheria lately, also one white child."—Dear Bro. West, I am glad to see the *Alabama Baptist* improving so rapidly under your careful management. I wish you abundant success and a large share in the Divine Blessing. Affectionately, A. M. Hanks, Columbus, Miss. I must have made a mistake in writing you the month that our Enola Association meets. It is October instead of September. I am now engaged in a meeting at Enola, and have two baptisms tomorrow—perhaps three.—J. S. Padden, Enola, Sept. 10th, 1877.—Crops in West Alabama have been promising, corn crops made and very good. Cotton injured somewhat by the rust. A very large quantity of molasses made in this part of the State. Freedmen have worked well through the crop season, and are now having some fine revival meetings—Baptists largely in the ascendancy. The Steam Mill and all its appurtenances of the Messrs. Wills, Mt. Sterling, Alabama, was burnt on the night of the 20th ult. Accident! not carelessness. Loss considerable.—J. K. Ryan.

The Liberty Association (East) convenes with Mount Pleasant church, 18 miles from Opelika, 9-12 miles from S. M. R. R., on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in September. There will be conveyances at the different stopping places on the R. R. for the accommodation of all who may come. All are cordially invited.—N. E. Shealy.—The Cotton Worm has been before the National Science Association at Nashville. The variety of views was interesting. Prof. Marsh regards the pest as a native of the Tropics, which migrates to the Gulf States at the end of June or the middle of July, when the cotton is in bloom. Prof. Little suggested that it hibernates on the coast of Georgia. Prof. Forshey held that it first appears in the form of an egg which is spontaneously generated on the under side of the leaf at the junction of two of the nerves.—Rev. Dr. Smith, President of the Southern University, of Greensboro, Ala., has been on a visit to our town, where he preached two impressive discourses on last Sunday.—We learn from the *Western Recorder* that, on account of malerial fever, Dr. Warden has not been able for several Sundays to occupy his pulpit. His place has been supplied by the Professors and students in the Seminary. Dr. Troy preached on the first Sabbath.

Howard College will open on October 1st. We regret to learn that the prospects of this energetic and progressive institution were never better. The character of instruction given is being more and more appreciated by the public, as its merits are brought before them by its practical results, in the thorough education imparted to its students, and the high position they take in life.—The *Zion's Herald* found the Baptist doctors at Martha's Vineyard "a sight to see, and the best of company, except when they are smoking dirty tobacco." Beloved doctors! abstain the weed. We saw two eminent Baptist divines smoking their pipes as if upon a wager. It would be well if these pipes could be "buried with him in baptism," and the Jordan purify their mouths from the unclean thing. We ought to say that Methodist divines, also, who believe in a second blessing, still yield to this easy besetment; their baptism did not cleanse all filthiness of the flesh, if it has of the spirit? Such a misapprehension of text and ordinance is not to be commended. Does the editor violate his baptismal vows when he takes his daily perfume of codfish and onions?

We call attention to the advertisement of the Indiana Female Institute, which appears in this issue of our paper. When taking into consideration the superior organization of the Indiana, the distinguished qualifications of its teachers and the excellency of its Boarding Department, we believe it to be the cheapest institution of the same grade, among those that seek the patronage of our people, if indeed we have any institution of equal grade.—Rev. C. C. Brown, of Sumter, S. C., will assist Bro. Gregory in a protracted meeting at Enola, beginning on the 18th or 20th. We wish that some of our churches could induce this good preacher and efficient pastor to settle in Alabama.—After it was too late to correct them, we discovered two typographical errors in the letter of Bro. H. C. Taul, which appeared on the first page of our paper last week. There were 23 not 75 accessions to Union church. Bro. T. knows how to spell *lectate*.

Some Items.

We have just closed a very pleasant protracted meeting with the church at Harpersville; although we had no gathering we feel quite sure that it will prove to be very profitable to that church and congregation. The preaching was done by brethren Kiehl, Flocker, and Tenge. These dear brethren were able and efficient in their preaching. Bro. Kiehl is always a man of power with the Harpersville congregation. Bro. Flocker is a young brother from Georgia, of useful gifts; a graduate of Mercer University. He will, in all probability, locate in our State—and we wish it may be so. Bro. Tenge was even more than himself. He dwelt on some profound subjects, and with more than usual ability and clearness. These brethren preached in tears in a larger sense, than we have witnessed before for years. Some will join as a result.

Several of our pastors have had very fruitful meetings in this region. Bro. Smyth's meeting at Tallahassee, Bro. Wilkes' at Sylacauga, Bro. Tenge's at Fayetteville, Bro. Henderson's at Childersburg, and others about which we are not informed fully. Brethren Smyth and Wilkes had very encouraging gatherings. We believe brother Gwaltney preached in all these meetings. It is but proper to say that he won all hearts. We heard a good sister say the other day that "Dr. Gwaltney has no business doing anything but preach." Dr. Cleveland is now preaching at Oxford, and we hear encouraging reports.

"BAPTIST EXCLUSIVENESS." We notice in the *Biblical Recorder* that a writer in the North Carolina *Christian Advocate* gets him off a piece on "Baptist Exclusiveness," and quotes from us to prove it. We do not claim to be in a situation to speak for the Baptists in any sense that will bind them to endorse what we say, but we agree with the *Recorder* that the Baptists are exclusive, and we give it as our opinion that any man who denies it misrepresents the Baptists. We believe that the Baptists are right and that others are wrong where they differ from the Baptists, and that it is our duty to boldly dissent from and protest against their wrong. In this we claim no more than is assumed by all other denominations.

It is an interesting thing to see officers suing for recognition at the Baptist court. The time once was when everybody thought we were fit only to be persecuted; we were not recognized by the civil government, nor their infant and hereditary membership, nor their ordinations, nor their church order, nor their communion table, nor their table in our churches, and they are in a fret about it, and find frequent

occasions to write about "Baptist Exclusiveness," and "Baptist Bigotry," and "close communions." All this simply means a demand to be recognized. It is not because they love us so much, but our position condemns, to the extent of its influence, the church order and ordinances of others, and this influence is constantly increasing, and this is what's the matter. "What are you going to do about it?" R.

In Bad Taste.

A correspondent of the *Texas Baptist*, and we take it that he is an able and useful minister, says, "I had the pleasure of baptizing two Theodosias. They are sisters. * * * They were brought up in a family strictly Methodist, and I do reckon they were run through the Methodist machine no less than fifty times, and came out Baptists every time. * * * They joined the Baptist church with a voice of triumph over the world, the flesh and the devil." All such reports are in bad taste, so we think. We do not mean that it is bad taste to report that a Methodist or any other person has joined the Baptists, but to do it with such an air of triumph, and with such a severe fling at the denomination from which they come is in bad taste, and never did any good. Besides, such a report in a newspaper cannot fail to embarrass the family to which these "two Theodosias" belong, and it must also embarrass the Theodosias themselves. R.

Good Meeting at Bethesda.

W. C. O'Hara pastor, assisted by William Armstrong, J. H. R. Carden, E. B. Tenge, Sept. 9th-14th. Baptized 6, received by letter 1, restored 1. Many enquirers left. The church has a fine Sunday-school—the pastor being the efficient superintendent. Mrs. Mary Shank trains in singing. Fine congregation at this place; church members about 100.

Shelby Co., Ala. E. B. T. Association Meetings.

I have received letters from brethren in different portions of the State urging me to attend their Association meetings. It would afford me great pleasure to do so if it were possible. Our annual gatherings are so crowded together that it is utterly impossible for one man to attend more than seven or eight of them. The work as already sketched out by our State Mission Board will require my attendance at the Bigbee, Pine Barren, Bethlehem, Channah, Bethel, Tuskegee, Enola and Centennial. Other Associations will be visited by brethren appointed by the Board to represent it and explain its work.

A number of brethren have already been appointed to different fields of labor, and when matters connected with these fields have been arranged, I propose to visit other portions of the State and do all I can. It will cheer the hearts of the brethren to know that the plans inaugurated at Gadsden for the evangelization of our State are working well, and that the churches are responding with a laudable liberality to appeals for the support of the work. I would ask those who have made pledges for State Missions to redeem them at their earliest convenience. Communications in reference to the work and contributions for its support to be sent to me at this place.

T. M. BAILEY, Cor. Sec'y, S. M. B. Marion, Sept. 11th, 1877.

State Mission Work.

Twenty churches, compose the Bigbee Association. Sixteen of these churches have flourishing Sunday Schools made up largely of the members of the churches. The average attendance at these schools lacks but a little over one hundred of being equal to the membership of all the churches of the Association. Eighteen months ago, there were but three Sunday Schools and these made up entirely of children. This delightful change has been brought about by the blessing of God on the labors put forth by our State Mission Board. What Association in the State can beat this?

T. M. BAILEY, Cor. Sec'y, S. M. B.

Communications.

Letter from Hanceville.

[This should have appeared sooner, but we have had such a multiplicity of communications of late that it was overlooked. R.]

Dear Bro. Winkler.—The Sulphur Springs Association has two little wings by which she moves onward and upward. These are her First and Second Districts. The latter, having ten churches and ten ministers, has just closed a very harmonious session at Fegah church—Eld. B. F. Lovelless, Mod., and Eld. J. W. Heathcote, clerk. We have two evangelists in the field, E. Bell and C. Owens. The latter was present at the meeting and spoke with wisdom and power, enlightening his hearers and at the same time moving

them to tears. The cause of Missions, Sabbath Schools, Finances, Education and the claims of the ALABAMA BAPTIST were discussed and pressed upon the attention of the people. We did not neglect to take up a collection. We had one conversion. Thus closed a good meeting.

J. M. THOMAS, Hanceville, Ala., July 12th, 1877.

20 Common Sense Reasons Why Churches Should Pay their Pastors, Promptly and Regularly.

1. Because not doing so, they neglect a very solemn and important duty which God requires at their hands, for "so hath the Lord, ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."

2. Because not doing so shows that they have not a proper regard to a minister's usefulness and comfort; for if they had, they would make such an effort as would soon prove it to be practicable.

3. Because not doing so evidences that they have not a correct sense of justice, which requires that they should not seek to engage and benefit by the services of any one without a suitable remuneration.

4. Because not doing so, the minister cannot discharge his duties and observe the precepts of God's holy word.

5. Because not doing so proves that though they profess principles more pure and powerful than those of the world, they are not influenced by them; for many worldly men have too high a sense of honor to engage the services of any one and then neglect adequately to reward him.

6. Because not doing so leads the pastor to think that his services are undervalued, which depresses his spirits and weakens his energies.

7. Because not doing so, hinders him in the study of God's word, fills his mind with worldly things and often makes his sermons meagre.

8. Because not doing so, prevents his procuring proper materials to assist him in his work, as well as hinders and hardens his mind.

9. Because not doing so obliges him to contract debts and prevents him from discharging them at the proper time which is alike discredit to him and them.

10. Because not doing so makes parties in a church; one party sympathizing with the minister, who they consider to be injured, and the other with some selfish person who wishes to keep him poor.

11. Because not doing so leads ministers to listen to calls from other places, and often occasions very undesirable removals.

12. Because not doing so opens the mouth of worldlings, who have a keen eye to discern between right and wrong, and who naturally expect different things from professors of religion, whose conduct they are never backward to censure or condemn.

13. Because not doing so is a discredit to the voluntary principle and practically refutes some of its most powerful arguments.

14. Because not doing so is a species of dishonesty, as any attempt to obtain or retain the services of any man without a proper remuneration must be.

15. Because not doing so is treating the minister of Christ worse than a common servant or mechanic; whereas Christ has said, "The laborer is worthy of his hire," which hire (or reward) should be just and equal.

16. Because not doing so betrays a want of proper feelings and leads consistent persons to question whether such churches can be influenced by the grace of God and the truth of the gospel.

17. Because not doing so injures the pastor's usefulness and prevents his carrying out his various plans of benevolence for the spread of the gospel both at home and abroad.

18. Because not doing so the church loses its character, dishonors the Lord, grieves the spirit and must expect to wither and decay.

19. Because not doing so troubles a pastor's mind, reflects on the Gospel he preaches and violates a sacred principle.

20. Because not doing so discourages young men of talent from entering the ministry, and thus brings its own punishment with it.

R.

Dear Brother, "How much he needs?" But, on the first of each month at least, hand him all that is due, and you will both be happier and more useful.

JAMES SMITH.

Letter from North Alabama.

Dear Baptist:—During my attendance at the Baptist State Convention at Gadsden—the first time, I like many others, had ever met with that body, I was induced to subscribe for the ALABAMA BAPTIST. I am well pleased with our paper. It is a power for good among our people. It will unify South Alabama and us of the mountain region. We, living among these beautiful valleys and verdant covered hills, away from lines of transportation and centers of trade, without educational advantages, living a quiet and peaceable life, thought, our brethren south of us intellectual giants, who had but little use for us and looked down upon us as of but little moment in the great work in our Master's cause. But when we heard the loving words of our leading Southern Brethren, our hearts warmed towards them, and we rejoiced that we were all one in Christ, and felt that a brighter and better day had dawned upon us.

I would say to the evangelists: Come and see us. The Baptists are numerous in this section, and you will find them a good, and true and hospitable people, willing and anxious to sit at your feet and learn. The Spirit of God seems to be moving upon their hearts—this cause, the cause of truth, is moving onward to the salvation of souls. Besides a number of revivals I hear of, I have just closed a meeting of days at Liberty church, situated in this beautiful Murphree's Valley, resulting in many conversions and twenty three accessions. God speed the day when Mountain and Prairie shall shake hands, and our people be united in heart and purpose and effort.

G. B. WADE, Sept. 2nd, 1877.

Hints on Church Constitution.

BY J. M. T.

Read before the Ministers' and Deacons' Institute at Hopewell church, July 28th, 1877.

I. The New Testament reveals the following primary departments in Church Constitution:

1st. The Legislative department is vested in Christ Jesus and his apostles.—is all divine.

2nd. The Executive department is administered by the whole body and obeyed by the same.

3rd. The Judicial court, or council, is vested in the church, touching all laws of order and fixed principles.

4th. The Financial department rests on every member, in the duty of sacrifices and free-will offerings—a little from each—a little from all.

5th. The Educational department is binding on all, to read and study—obtain knowledge and impart it to others.

II. This Constitution enforces five other solemn obligations, to-wit: 1st. Sound doctrine must be maintained; 2nd. Sound principles vindicated; 3rd. Good order observed; 4th. Good government administered; 5th. Good discipline taught, received and obeyed.

III. Our Great Head, in his Book of Order, requires each church to be supplied with officers.

1st. A faithful pastor, to be as a watchman for God and minister in holy things.

2nd. Deacons, one or more, to serve tables—the Lord's table, the pastor's table, and the tables of the poor.

3rd. A clerk, to keep the records of the church.

4th. A treasurer, to hold and disburse the funds which the church may contribute or collect.

These officers are chosen by the church and for the church. The organization is not complete without them.

IV. Two ordinances, and only two, are mentioned in the Constitution, viz: Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, both binding and both emblematic.

Our Lord has beautified this constitution and order of things. Every attribute of Deity is allied to it. Hence, it is a body of Divinity. There is nothing like it among men. It is the "bride of Christ," "the church of the first born" and the glory of God on earth. It is not of this world; its origin is from Heaven. It will stand forever. Its ruling power is "truth and love." May every Baptist keep this Heavenly order sacred and pure.

During the fiscal year ending March 25, the English Government received the sum of \$864,870 from the sale of stamps for patent medicines. During the same period the tax on apocryphal bearings yielded \$412,390, and that on game \$2,001,510.

