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## COMMUNICATIONS.

## Vindication of the Communion of Baptist Churches.

A Review of the Present Views of Rev. J. H. Graves, D. D., of Memphis, Tennessee, as Found in His Book Entitled "Intercommunion Inconsistent, Unscriptural and Prejudicial to the Cause of Christ."

Inter-Communion Consistent with the Lord's Supper as a Church Ordinance—The Subject Alleged.

BY J. D. RENFROE.

No. IV.

"Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? or what comparison shall I compare it to?"—Christ.

"I speak concerning Christ and the church."

The allegories which I may use in this article are not of my own choosing; they are some of the similes introduced by Dr. Graves, and used by him to controvert the propriety of inter-Communion among Baptists. I have reference to his use of the kingdom, the republic, the state, the nation, the family, the denomination, voting, courtesy, and comity. Some brief notice of these will occupy all the space that can be given to this communication.

1. And first, let me call attention to the fact that while I agree with Dr. Graves, that "the kingdom of Christ is constituted of the sum total of all his true visible churches as constituents, which churches are the sole judges and executives of the laws and ordinances of the kingdom;" (Inter-Comm. p. 160.) yet the Bible nowhere says so, and it is a position purely dependent for its support on an argumentum deductio, as is true of nearly every axiom and fact in his book; that is, it is a result drawn from reasons based on inferences. And though "the kingdom of God on earth is constituted of churches," still a visible church is a local society, which, as our author tells us, "must meet in one place," and therefore it is unreasonable to suppose that the individuals who compose these churches, have no privileges growing out of their connection with the kingdom of Christ. There is no such kingdom on this globe as Dr. Graves has constructed in imagination, whether civil or religious. While the subject of any one of the countries that constitute the united kingdom of Great Britain, has peculiar rights in his own particular section, yet he also has certain well-defined rights resulting from the fact that he is a subject of the Queen's dominions, and these rights they can never forfeit by any change of place or habitation. (Blackstone.) If such subjects go from Scotland to Wales, or from Canada to England, they may travel or sojourn in full possession of their rights as British subjects without the absolute necessity of changing their local citizenship. The same is true of all governments. And yet the subject possesses these general rights as a citizen of some particular state or province of the royal dominions, and as a citizen of such particular state, he is entitled to many of the benefits of a subject in any other state, where he may go, throughout the territory of his general government. And surely he would be allowed to participate in any ceremony which was established by law for every state and province in the kingdom, and which does not interfere with the local government of any one of the states or provinces, and which is ordained by the Head of the kingdom to celebrate the glorious deeds of "their one king," or to commemorate the death of a Prince who had saved the whole nation! And in this particular the kingdom of Christ is more specific, more unique, and more of a unification than any civil kingdom, because the *lex loci* of any one of its churches is the local law of every church in the kingdom, the rites, ceremonies, and ordinances established by law in any church of Christ must exist in every church of Christ, and therefore the *lex loci contractus* and *actus*—the law of the place making the contract, the law of the local church which contracted to give the man membership with all the general privileges of membership, should be recognized by every church in the whole kingdom. There can be no "conflict of laws" as in civil governments, for they are all under law to Christ; therefore under law to one of his churches, according to a New Testament, and the same local law of one church is the *universitas rerum* in all similar churches, "not that they are mechanically united, but taken together under the universal laws of the kingdom they are regarded as one whole." (Bouvier.)

2. The same reasoning will apply to the allegory of the American Republic—the United States. Dr. Graves has, for many years, been fond of alluding to the States and the Republic as illustrations of the kingdom and churches of Christ. And thus he says "that, by baptism, we become citizens of the kingdom of Christ, only because it introduces us into one of its constituents—a local church, just as we become a citizen of this Republic only by becoming a citizen of some one of its constituents—a State." (Inter-Comm. pp. 115, 161.) This beautiful allegory, however often used, fails in kingdom of Christ is an absolute; Jesus is King. And each church in its relation to him is under an absolute Master. But in its relation to itself it is a pure democracy. And a man does not become a citizen of the United States by first becoming a citizen of one of the States of the Union. He gains his right to be a citizen of a State by living a citizen of the United States. The laws of naturalization seem to have direct reference to the general government. "Natural allegiance is that which results from the birth of a person with-

in the territory and under the obedience of the government." (Bouvier.)

"Natives are all persons born within the jurisdiction and allegiance of the United States." (Kent.) And the Constitution of Alabama says: "All persons resident in this State, born in the United States, or naturalized, or who shall have legally declared their intention to become citizens of the United States, are hereby declared citizens of the State of Alabama." And Kent further says (p. 71) that, according to the Constitution of the United States, "citizens of each State are entitled to all the privileges and immunities of the several States,"—of course with constitutional guards and limitations. And the Constitution of the United States provides for the naturalization of foreigners who wish to become citizens of this country. I have before me an account of the administration of the preliminary oath of allegiance to Leo Hartmann, the Russian Nihilist, by the proper officer in New York, last August; declining to "swear," he said: "I, Leo Hartmann, do solemnly affirm that it is *bona fide* my intention to become a citizen of the United States, and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty whatever, and particularly to the Emperor of Russia, of whom I am a subject." This was only the declaration preparatory to full naturalization, but it shows where citizenship begins in this country. And any man who will read the "Statutes at Large" of the United States (pp. 380-382), cannot evade the conviction that citizenship in any state or territory in this country is consequent on allegiance to the United States. The Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of the land. It is master in every state and territory. And we all know that the laws of any state are null when they are incongruous with the constitution and laws of the United States. And the fundamental and statutory laws of the general government are secure to every properly citizen certain rights in any and every State in the Union. After his naturalization is completed, he domiciles in whatever state he may wish, but he still owes allegiance to the United States and owes fealty to his State. And if such citizen of Tennessee travels through Alabama, in the full enjoyment of every right of a free American citizen, except that of voting, holding office and paying taxes—surely such enjoyment does not interfere with the "sovereignty" of Alabama, nor jeopardize the liberties of her people. And so the true disciple of Christ owes allegiance to the King of Kings, and to the church of which he is a member; and as a visitor to any other church under the same King and controlled by the same laws, he may accept of such privileges as do not violate the local authority of that church.

3. And here is the proper place to speak of the simile of voting. Dr. Graves makes frequent attempts to put the right of suffrage in the church and the Lord's Supper on the same basis. (pp. 170, 288.) It would be impossible to imagine a more unfaithful representation of the two "franchises." In a democratic or republican form of government, whether civil or ecclesiastical, the right of suffrage is the seat of power;—the ballot—the lifting up of the hand in voting is the sovereign edict of the body-politic and of the body-ecclesiastical. And therefore only citizens of Alabama can vote in the State, and none but the members of a particular church can vote in that church. If it were otherwise, it would sometimes be easy to float in enough voters from other States to carry an election over the will of Alabama; and so enough voters could be gathered from other churches to supplant the will and overturn the independence of any local church. But not so with the Lord's Supper: the communicant exercises no power, exerts no authority, and as a visitor takes no part in the administration of government and discipline. Being a member of a similar church, he is among his equals, and accepts of an ecclesiastical hospitality, and eats and drinks at a table precisely such as is spread in his own church and under the same laws, and retires without having enjoyed the shade of the shadow of power over the government of the church where he communicates.

4. But then Dr. Graves will object to the term *hospitality* which I have used, as he does to "courtesy" and "comity" in connection with the Supper. (p. 183.) But I ask, if the church is "the house of God" and "the family of Christ," as he says it (pp. 216, 222), is it to be like no other house and no other family in the civilized world, void of hospitality and void of courtesy? Is it to be like no other state or nation in all civilization, void of comity with its equals? We must go beyond the borders of civilization to find a house or a family which is, under law or custom, against courtesy and hospitality. Peter was addressing all true churches for all ages when he said, "Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." (1 Pet. 3: 8.)

5. And the use which Bro. Graves makes of the allegory of the Masonic fraternity is equally a failure. A mason is a mason anywhere on the earth. If thousands of miles from home, he can enter a Lodge of "Free and Accepted Masons," though he may be a perfect stranger to every member of that Lodge, and he can partake of every privilege except to vote and hold office. Masonry has certain established festivals, and every visiting brother can participate in them as much as freedom as if he were a member of the lodge furnishing the feast. 6. But then Dr. Graves objects earnestly to the social idea as connect-

ed with the observance of the Lord's Supper. (p. 233.) This is absurd. What is a church of Jesus Christ but a society? Every part of the public worship is social; from the meeting where "two or three are met together" in Christ's name, up to the congregation of ten thousand like Spurgeon's, it is all social. And there never was a true communion at the Lord's table that was not social. Let any man read the accounts of it in the New Testament, from its institution to the final mention of it in the Epistles, and let him try his wits and see if he can divest it of the social feature. (See Matt. 26: 17-30; Acts 2: 42; 1 Cor. 10 and 11 chapters.) And then tell me, was there ever a social feast held by any order or society, to which others, their perfect equals, might not be invited?

7. However, Dr. Graves insists that intercommunion, wherever observed, makes it a *denominational* feast; that it cannot be a church ordinance, and that it is not the Lord's Supper at all, when any others participate except the members of the one local church! (pp. 141, 165, 182.) A denominational communion! This is a mere play on words, seeming to be something whatsoever it is. I ask, was there ever a communion which was not denominational, except such as that spread by the Evangelical Alliance? And suppose every Baptist church on earth should adopt Dr. Graves' practice, would it not be pre-eminently denominational? No other people would practice it. It would be especially and only known among Baptists, and therefore distinctly denominational, and not at all objectionable on that account.

And what is the kingdom of Christ except a denomination? "If a local church is an *integer* of the kingdom of Christ, then churches alone compose it, since its integral parts must be all of the same denomination." So says Dr. Graves. (p. 141.) This I accept, and I accept him further, (p. 147,) "that churches are the constituents of that community of believers peculiar to the New Testament." This "community" is a kingdom, a denomination, and as a community they may communicate by courtesy.

But then this courtesy, and comity and denominationalism in communion, we are told, violates the feast, and is not the Lord's Supper! I reply, no mason ever thought that the participation of a visiting brother violated the "communication" of his lodge. No head of a family ever thought that his household dinner or supper was vitiated on account of the presence of a stranger.

Queen Victoria was the royal dinner viated? Was it not still the Queen's dinner? And did not the dignity of the occasion consist in the very fact that it was the Queen's dinner? And although the honor was extended to a most distinguished citizen of this country, yet from a royal standpoint it was a *condescending courtesy*. The truth is, view our subject from whatever point of observation, and use any allegory that has yet been mentioned, and courtesy is entirely an appropriate word and an appropriate idea, for the practice and defense of intercommunion among Baptist churches.

8. And it has only been a little while since Bro. Graves was an advocate of this doctrine of courtesy in the Lord's Supper. In his long standing column of "Baptist Doctrines," he says, "only those churches can participate in this ordinance that agree in faith and practice. The members of one church (though of the same faith and order) can come to the communion table of another only by act of courtesy, and not by right." He said in substance the same in the debate with Ditzler.

I shall have more to say of courtesy and the relation the family has been made to sustain to the subject, when I come to speak of the Passover, in a future article; but wish here to state particularly that, if the doctrine of courtesy were true when Bro. Graves wrote the above article of "Baptist Doctrine" and when he debated with Ditzler, it is true yet; and if it were legitimate to state it then as a "Baptist Doctrine," it is entirely so yet; and the fact that he has changed does not change the force of courtesy among Baptists. And though a Baptist may claim no rights in any other church than the one of which he is a member, as Bro. Graves insists, yet when courtesy invites him to the communion table it is then his right, just as I have no rights in any other man's house, or at any other man's table, until he invites me; then I am entitled to those privileges to which his hospitality has invited me—and upon his courtesy I am entitled to them as a matter of right. And this right of courtesy on the one hand, and of accepting on the other, holds good in all organizations of men, except in a non-intercommunion Baptist church. There is no comparison whereunto we can compare such an institution. It is not like nations nor States, for they have well established intercourse, based on a recognition of independent equality. It is not like families, for they receive to bed and board their equals. It is not like lodges of any order, for they hold communication with each other. A non-intercommunion Baptist church cannot be allegorized by anything yet introduced. Let us next try the Passover.

## Compatibility of Mercy and Justice.

A Sermon.

BY E. B. TEAGUE, D. D.

"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."—Gen. 9: 6.

The thirteenth chapter of Romans enjoins obedience to the "powers that be," "not only for wrath, but also for conscience's sake." "For this cause pay ye tribute also; for they (the pow-

ers that be) are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very duty; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." That is, obedience to the government *de facto*, as a subordinate government of God.

1. This original law, affixing God's penalty to murder, has never been repealed. It remains, therefore, in full force and authority, just as that part of the ceremonial law requiring abstention "from things strangled, and from blood," or as the law of marriage, monogamy. "Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away." "For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female."—Gen. 1: 27, Sept. A severe precept was probably impracticable. When Solon drew up a code for the Athenians, he was asked if it was the best he could compile. He answered, "No; but the best the Athenians will accept."

They err, therefore, who substitute any other penalty for the death penalty in the case of murder, especially if they do so at the supposed behest of absolute justice. The consequences of such substitution have often appeared in painful forms. And where the penalty existing in the code is not executed the same painful consequences have followed. The law has not been executed in this Commonwealth in many cases. A white man has not, I believe, been executed for murder, in Alabama, since 1835. Men have, therefore, grown fearless in the commission of homicide, driving people to the desperate alternative of lynch law. But where human law does not hold the murderer to justice God himself interposes. Justice John Belton O'Neil, in pronouncing sentence on Motley and Blackledge, said: "A long experience as a lawyer and a judge, makes it my duty to say to you and to the people all around you, *never have known the guilty murderer to go free*. If judgment does not overtake him in the hall of justice, still the avenger of blood is in his pursuit. Still the eye which never slumbers nor sleeps is upon him, until in some unexpected moment the command goes forth, 'cut him down,' and the place 'whither he knew him, shall know him no more forever.' Since your trial, one of the witnesses, much censured for participation, in some sort, in your guilty deeds, has been suddenly cut off from life."

In David, driving charges to Solomon, he said, "O God, thou knowest what Joab the son of Zeruah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner; and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace." "And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimai, the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day I went to Mahanaim; but he came to me at Jordan, and I swore to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death by the sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless; for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do to him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood."

Voltaire affects to sneer in his "holy and philosophic derision" at the man after God's own heart, "breathing out his malice and revenge, as the infidel would have us believe, with his expiring breath!" But what is clearer, than that we have before us a most impressive example of long-suffering forbearance? Long since these wretched men had forfeited their lives by the highest crimes known to the law. In consideration, however, of distinguished services, and perhaps for reasons of State policy, they had long been respited. It was meet that at length the law should overtake them. Divine sanctions alone constitute the ultimate basis of all law. Here is sure ground; all else may be a foundation of sand.

If retribution come not in time, it must in eternity. We may be sure our sin will find us out. If, I have a much higher object in view, than an argument for the execution of condign punishment for earthly good. I wish to show the necessity of appropriate penalty affixed to the violation of Divine law, as commonly distinguished from human; that mercy is impossible at the expense of justice; that such mercy is altogether spurious; and thus to bring out the conception that God, who is declared to be love, cannot be such unless he be just; that real mercy leans on justice; that all the moral attributes of God harmonize in the concept, "God is love."

If the death penalty, as we have seen, is necessary to the completeness of human government; if it is necessary to the protection of the lives and property of law-abiding citizens; if, as we do, we intuitively feel when a great crime is committed, it ought to be punished, adequately punished, it were cruel to connive at it. That would be putting a premium on crime, and discouragement on well-doing. It would leave the innocent exposed to injustice and suffering, and outrage that intuitive feeling of justice innate in the moral constitution of the race.

The same thing is true when partiality in family government prevails and favors a vicious child. It is cruelty to the well-ordered members of the family. Such an indulgent government may be, often is ascribed to parental tenderness; but it is a false

tenderness. The indulgent father is unjust and unmerciful to his obedient children.

The same great principle holds in the Divine government, with this distinguishing difference, the penalty affixed to human law, in either supposed case, may be out of proportion to the crime committed. The law may be wrong, the penalty wrong; like the laws of Codrus, "written in blood," in the French revolution; or the laws of tyrants in general. In the Divine government this cannot be so; the law is always right, the penalty always right; both necessary to the protection of liege subjects devoted to the throne; both necessary to the intuitive feeling, let justice be done in the bosom of every right mind of intelligence.

Towards the same end I am merely reasoning, at most, drawing inferences from general principles found, or supposed to be found, in the Word of God? I will adduce explicit words from that book. We have a character of God; "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." This last thing is necessary to the former things. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Not now at first, nor at the cross of Calvary. The fact now first fully appears; it existed forever.

"Was not to make Jehovah's love Towards the sinner flame, That Jesus from his throne above, A suffering man became, 'Twas not the death which he endured, Nor all the pains he bore, That God's eternal love procured, For God was love before."

"Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face." "Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." This the effect of law and order. When Jesus confronted all our responsibilities before the law, "bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" "took our iniquities and bare our sicknesses," "God spared not his own Son," "poured his vengeance on the head" of the "holy, harmless and undefiled," that mercy might reach us. See how that mercy might reach us, in that respect, and that one of his main purposes in leaving Georgia and settling in the new portion of Alabama was to dissipate these impressions, thinking that to settle among strangers, it would never be known that he had ever tried to preach. On coming to the neighborhood in which he proposed to settle, he stopped the wagons near the residence of a family, and called at the gate to get some fire for his camp. The lady of the house, after supplying him, came to the gate and struck up a conversation with him about the great destitution of the neighborhood and country in regard to preaching. She talked with her a few moments, she gave him a searching look, and asked him, "Are you not a preacher?" "No," said he rather curtly, and turned off to go to his camp. That night he did not sleep on account of the deception he had practiced on the lady, who was a Baptist. In his own blunt way, he called it a lie. He, however, soon removed the false impression, and commenced in earnest to preach with untiring zeal the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was soon after ordained, and in connection with some other ministers, established churches all over the territory now occupied by the Liberty Association. Multitudes of people flocked to hear him and were added to his churches, for he preached "in the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit."

Mr. Culbertson, though uncultured, had by nature a massive intellect. His powers of analysis and condensation were remarkable. I have often heard him dissect a subject, and press upon its salient points, and express them with a clearness and power that could not have been surpassed by any of our ablest and best educated ministers. He never wore an audience "beat around the bush," as we express it, in search of something to press. What he said was to the point, and, if the reader will excuse the quaintness, if he had nothing to say, he said it, and quit. I have sometimes been struck with the ability, the clearness, the power with which he could develop a great truth, and hold it before a congregation until it burnt its way deep down into their hearts. In the pinch of a sermon, I mean its application, I have seldom known him equalled. Somehow he had the happy art of making the people to whom he was preaching believe that he meant them. There was no pulp in city, town or country, where he was not always welcomed.

Mr. C. being a rather well to do farmer, owning a mill, and being himself a blacksmith, his churches never did anything worthy of the name, in the way of a salary. Sometimes they would place a few dollars in his hand, or make him some little present to indicate their appreciation of his services. He used to tell, in great good humor, the following story on himself: One of the members of a church that he had been serving for some years, and that had never paid him anything, took it into his head to give him a goat, and asked him if he would take it home. "O yes," said Mr. C., "it up its feet, and put it in my buggy, and I'll carry it." Now, Mr. Culbertson, his wife was a woman of excellent sense, and a keeper at

home, and withal a godly woman. Like most other goats, it proved to be very mischievous about the house, putting its nose in every thing in kitchen, house, yard, and what not, until the good lady's patience became threadbare. Whereupon she said to her husband one day, "Old man, you preached this goat here, and if you don't preach him away pretty soon, I'll cut his throat!" I mention this to bring out one side of his character that made him so popular with everybody—his humorous temperament. In this respect, I cannot say that I knew his equal. We often see the richest sensibility combined with the richest humor.

Another incident in the ministerial life of Mr. Culbertson deserves mention. He took the pastoral charge of a church which, I think, he assisted to organize, when it was quite weak both in numbers and wealth, and preached to it many years. His ministry was greatly blessed, and it grew to be one of the largest churches in all the country, numbering, as I remember, over two hundred. Many of its members were esteemed wealthy. They, however, paid a very meagre salary, about seventy-five dollars a year. Quite unexpectedly to all parties he tendered his resignation, giving his reasons publicly. He informed them that they only paid him seventy-five dollars a year, and no doubt it was all that he was worth; that the cause at that place demanded a minister worth more than that, and that he could not think of standing in the way of the church in securing a pastor to whom the church could consistently pay something like an adequate salary.

About the year 1858, he moved to Texas, and settled in Jefferson, and established a business house there. Soon after, his house took fire, and in his efforts to save his goods, he overheated himself, and died. He was a gifted son who is now, I believe, a member of Congress from the "Lone Star" State. His friends all thought that he made a mistake in leaving Alabama. The Lord knows. He left the best legacy to his children that any Christian can leave—an unsullied character.

## Our Worthy Dead. No. 4.

BY SAMUEL HENDERSON.

Rev. David Culbertson.

I had casually met this excellent man a time or two before I formed anything like an intimate acquaintance with him about the year 1846. He was then living in Tallapoosa county, near where Chambers and Macon corner with that county, and continued to reside there until his removal to Texas. He commenced preaching rather late in life. I suppose about ten years before I made his acquaintance. A story is told of him, that before he left his native State, Georgia, he became seriously impressed that it was his duty to preach the Gospel, and, at the request of his brethren, had exercised his gifts somewhat in that respect, and that one of his main purposes in leaving Georgia and settling in the new portion of Alabama was to dissipate these impressions, thinking that to settle among strangers, it would never be known that he had ever tried to preach. On coming to the neighborhood in which he proposed to settle, he stopped the wagons near the residence of a family, and called at the gate to get some fire for his camp. The lady of the house, after supplying him, came to the gate and struck up a conversation with him about the great destitution of the neighborhood and country in regard to preaching. She talked with her a few moments, she gave him a searching look, and asked him, "Are you not a preacher?" "No," said he rather curtly, and turned off to go to his camp. That night he did not sleep on account of the deception he had practiced on the lady, who was a Baptist. In his own blunt way, he called it a lie. He, however, soon removed the false impression, and commenced in earnest to preach with untiring zeal the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was soon after ordained, and in connection with some other ministers, established churches all over the territory now occupied by the Liberty Association. Multitudes of people flocked to hear him and were added to his churches, for he preached "in the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit."

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## Trusting God In the Dark.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

Sometimes we have an experience in life that seems like walking through a long, dark tunnel. The chilling air and the thick darkness make it hard walking, and the constant wonder is why we are compelled to tread so long a way in the dark. We can only fix our eyes on the bright light at the end of the tunnel, and we comfort ourselves with the thought that every step we take brings us nearer to the joy and the rest that lies at the end of the way. Extinguished the light of Heaven that gleams in the distance, and this tunnel of trial would become a horrible tomb! Some of us are passing through just such an experience now. We can adopt the plaintive language of the Psalmist, and cry out: "Thy hand pretheth us sore; as for the light of our eyes, it also is gone from us; we are ready to halt, and our sorrow is continually before us."

One of the most trying features of our trial is that we cannot discover the "why" or the "wherefore" of our special afflictions. Our Heavenly Father did not consult us before the trial came, and he does not explain to us why he sent it. His ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts; nay, they are the very opposite. The mystery of the providence perplexes and staggers us. For example, I open my daily journal, and read that the Bishop of Jerusalem, whom I left a few months ago in the prime of vigorous health and wide usefulness, is cut off in the midst of his days. All his preparatory training for his office by eighteen years of missionary life comes to naught. This very day I am called for the sixth time in a few years to bury the dead from a certain Christian household. This time it is the head of the house that is taken and the children are left to orphanage. Beside me now sits a mourning mother, whose aching heart cannot understand why a beloved child is snatched away, when she seemed the most indispensable to the happiness of the home. Every week a pastor has to confront these mysteries in the dealings of a God of love. To the torturing question, "Why does God lead me into this valley of the shadow of darkness?" we can only reply: "Even so, Father, for so it seems good in thy sight." We are brought into the tunnel, however we shrink back. There is no retreat; we have nothing left to us but to grasp the very hand that brought us there and push forward. Like Bunyan's Pilgrim, we can only say: "I see not but that my road to heaven lieth through this very valley."

Just in such trying hours it is that the Adversary assaults us most fiercely. He stirs up in our hearts bitter thoughts against God. He points us to the actual and realized loss, and tells us that Heaven is utterly unseen, and no one comes back to assure us of its reality. And so he endeavors, with devilish suggestions, to blow out such lamps of divine promise as we have, to shatter every staff that we carry, and to make the pathway of trial the more dark and desperate than before. This is not poetry; it is the actual trial to which the faith of thousands of God's people is at this moment subjected. Under these severe experiences, more than one Christian has been sorely tempted to turn infidel and to "choose death rather than life."

To my own mind there is only one solution for these mysteries and only one support for these days of terrible affliction. The only relief I can find is in the certainty that this life is not the end, but simply and only the preparatory school for the real and the endless life that is beyond. The moment that I accept this truth fully and hold it firmly, I find solid ground for my feet and light for my sorrowing soul. Then I discover that the whole journey of the believer is "portioned out" to him, and that the dark tunnel on the road is just as surely appointed wisely as is the most flowery and the happiest walk, over the "Delectable Mountains." Nay, more. When we reach Heaven, we may discover that the richest and deepest and most profitable experiences we had in this world were those which were gained in the very roads, from which we shrunk back with dread. The bitter cups we tried to push away contained the medicines we most needed. The hardest lessons that we learn are those which teach us the most and best fit us for service here and glory hereafter. It is the easiest thing in the world to obey God; we like and command us to do what he will, and to trust him when the path is all unsound. The real victory of faith is to trust God in the dark and through the dark. Let us be assured of this, that, if the lesson and the rod are of his appointing and that his all-wise love has engineered the deep tunnels of trial on the heavenly road, he will never desert us during the discipline. The vital thing for us is not to deny and desert him.

Let us also keep in mind that the chief object of the discipline is to develop character and to improve the graces of his children. Whom he loveth he chastises, and correcteth every son whom he receiveth. Every branch that beareth no fruit he pruneth in, that it may bring forth more fruit. "Why do you cut that pomegranate bush so cruelly?" said a gentleman to his gardener. The answer was, "Because it is all running to useless leaves, and I want to make it bear." Ah! it is a keen knife that our Divine Gardener often employs, and he often severs the very heart-strings by his discipline; but *afterward* it yields its peaceable fruit unto them, that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness. God has a great many crucibles for his gold, where he may refine it. There is so much alloy of pride and self-will, or covetousness, or sinful idleness in genuine Christians that they require the "finishing pot" and the furnace. Sometimes prosperity is ten-fold more damaging to us than sharp adversity. A fit of sickness may do more for soul-health than years of bodily strength and contentment.

To all my fellow-sufferers who are threading their way through the tunnels of trial, I would say: Tighten your loins with the promises and keep the strong staff of faith well in hand. Trust God in the dark. We are safer with him in the dark, than without him in the sunshine. He will not suffer thy foot to stumble. His rod and his staff shall never leave thee. Worry brought us here we know not how, but shall know hereafter. At the end of the gloomy passage beams the heavenly light. Then comes the exceeding and eternal weight of glory!—Independent.

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## AN EARNEST, ANXIOUS DESIRE FOR THE SALVATION OF SOULS.

An anxious desire for the salvation of souls, a desire so strong that it burdens the heart and makes us prayerful, ought to be the state of every mature Christian. The Apostle Paul was so burdened that he could say, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren." On one occasion when the Israelites had sinned most grievously, Moses prayed that they might be forgiven, and said, "If not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written." When Absalom was dead, David exclaimed, "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom my son, my son!" The heart of our blessed Savior was so burdened that he wept bitter tears of grief over a wicked city that would not receive him.

We are Christians. Our hearts ought to be burdened with intense agony for the salvation of men. When we think of the value of an immortal soul, its capacity for suffering and for enjoyment; when we think of eternity, of the wrath of God, and of the mercy of God, we know that we ought to be profoundly concerned; and sometimes we pray that we may be anxious. But very often we are not. This want of concern about the salvation of souls is at the bottom of our Christian indifference, and is in great measure the cause of our failures in Christian life. Our prayers for sinners do not come warm and earnest from hearts burdened and anxious on their account. Our efforts are not those of souls deeply in earnest.

Our hearts ought to be so burdened that we will agonize in prayer for the salvation of men. Our concern for them ought to be so deep as to make us do all in our power to bring them to Christ, that they may be saved. We ought to realize the worth of immortal souls and feel the necessity of their salvation so deeply that our desire will be pure, unselfish, exalted.

The motives that prompt Christians to pray and work for the salvation of men are not always unselfish. Sometimes they become so much concerned about the progress of their church, or their party, they labor diligently and earnestly that they may surpass some other organization. They become anxious to secure the influential, the wealthy, the cultivated, in order that they may become strong and prosperous. They are anxious that their congregation should be larger than others, their Sunday-school more interesting, and their church more prosperous.

In seasons of religious excitement, Christians often have a zeal not according to knowledge. They become earnest, zealous, excited in their endeavors to bring men to Christ; but this zeal, born of excitement, dies when the occasion is past and sinks into indifference.

The natural affections of the heart for members of our families frequently control us, in large measure, in our prayers and efforts for the salvation of those around us. The parent prays most earnestly for the salvation of the child, and the child for the parent; the sister for the brother and the brother for the sister; the wife for her husband. This is natural, and our Master does not condemn it. He sympathized with the weeping sisters of Lazarus, with the bereaved widow of Nain, with the poor Syrophenician woman. A large number of the miracles of Jesus were performed in answer to prayers prompted by the natural affections of the hearts of the suppliants. He would have us begin with our own families, with those to whom we are attached by strong ties of nature and affection. The deep, tender affections for friends and family, with which we are blessed, give tone and fervor and earnestness to our prayers. They make us pray as Jacob did when he said, "I will not let thee go until thou bless me." We agonize with God in prayer for those who are dear to us. The tender wife is burdened with the fact that her husband is a wicked man. She cannot cease to pray for him. The devoted husband loves his wife and grieves because she is a worldly woman. The Christian parent spends

hours in agonizing prayer for the wayward, wicked boy; they will never cease to pray as long as he lives. The heart of the affectionate sister is constantly engaged in earnest supplication for her brother who is wandering away from God. The faithful friend prays and labors for the salvation of his friend with deepest earnestness and anxiety. This is not offensive to our Master; he approves it. Yet, this does not reach the exalted height to which the Apostle attained. His abiding desire and prayer to God was, that men might be saved. There was nothing selfish or ambitious in his motives. He felt a deep, agonizing concern for the salvation of immortal beings.

Ordinarily, Christians do not make this attainment early in Christian life. Like other graces, it grows as we grow in grace and in knowledge. It grows as we become matured in the service of our Master, as we become more like him, as we know more of the value of immortal spirits and of the worth of salvation.

It is a test of our own conversion. Are we becoming more and more concerned about the salvation of our families and neighbors and friends? Are our desires enlarging and growing out into the world? Are we praying and laboring for the salvation of men everywhere with a deepening earnestness and a growing fervor? Is it our heart's desire and prayer to God for men that they may be saved? In our supplications, do we go out into lanes and highways, among the poor and forgotten, and, as well, among the better classes? If so, it is evidence to us that we are disciples of Jesus, that we are becoming more like him.

## AMERICAN AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

Rev. F. A. Douglass, Corresponding Secretary, spent several days in Selma in the interest of the Society. While here he addressed large congregations, who were deeply interested. Dr. Douglass is a most affable, intelligent Christian gentleman. The Society is fortunate in securing the services of such a representative. We are not fully informed as to the history of the Society, or as to its difficulties in later years. With the lights before us, we are inclined to give it our support and to ask for it the careful consideration of all who want to serve God in the distribution of His Word faithfully translated. For the information of our readers we reproduce the following which appeared some time since in the *Biblical Recorder*:

**My Dear Brother:** A mutual friend of ours requests me to send you for publication a brief statement setting forth the origin, principles and present plans and purposes of the American and Foreign Bible Society, whose rooms are at 116 Nassau street, New York.

The Society held its 44th anniversary in New York, May 5th, 1881. Since the birth of the Society, an entire generation has passed away. A few men still live, some of whom are on its present Board, who were present when the Society was organized, one of whom made the prayer of consecration. But most of the fathers have fallen asleep and have been gathered with the great company beyond.

The immediate occasion for organizing separate Bible Societies among Baptists and all the friends of faithful translations of the Holy Scriptures, both in this country and England, was the formal passing of the following resolutions by the British and Foreign Bible Society about the year 1836, viz:

Resolved, 1st, That in appropriating money for the translating, printing or distributing of the sacred Scriptures in foreign languages, the managers feel at liberty to encourage only such versions as conform in the principle of their translation to the common English version; at least so far that all the religious denominations represented in this Society can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities.

Resolved and, That a copy of the above preamble (we omit the preamble for brevity's sake) and resolution be sent to each of the Missionary Boards accustomed to receive pecuniary grants from the Society, with a request that the same may be transmitted to their respective mission stations where the Scriptures are in process of translation; and also that the said several Mission Boards be informed that their application for aid must be accompanied with a declaration that the versions which they propose to circulate are executed in accordance with the above resolution.

It was well understood by all Baptists in England and America, and boldly asserted by those who resolved and supported the above resolutions, that they were intended solely for, and in opposition to, any further circulation (so far as possible) of translations made by Drs. Cary, Pierce and Yates of the Serampore Mission, India, and the Burman translation of the Bible by Adoniram Judson; these brethren having committed the special offense of translating the Greek word for baptism, by exact native words equivalent to the Greek word, which meant to bury, to whelm, or to immerse. Then these brethren had been earnestly besought by the Boards

of these Bible Societies before the passing of these resolutions, to take out the native words for *baptism* and with letters corresponding to the Roman or English alphabet spell into their versions with native letters, or *transfer* and not translate the word for the ordinance. The brethren replied, "Show us any error in our translations when tried by the original Hebrew or Greek and we will make the correction at once; but we refuse to be tried by the English Bible, which, at best, is but an imperfect translation." These facts being widely known, our missionaries and fathers arose in their might and struck hands across the seas, declaring their loyalty to a pure Bible and faithful translations of the Holy Scriptures in all languages. Simultaneously there sprung into existence the Translation Bible Society of England and the American and Foreign Bible Society, commonly spoken of in Asia as the Carey and Judson Bible Societies. The first has issued over 250,000 copies of the Scriptures in many tongues during its 40 odd years of existence. The latter not less than 3,000,000 copies of the Scriptures in the same time; and during its entire existence it has received from all sources more than \$3,000,000. The principles governing the British and Foreign and American Bible Societies named above, and all their auxiliaries to this hour are set forth in the first resolution we have quoted; which we, as did Spencer J. Cone, Wm. Colgate, and a great number, must declare to be opposed to the *Spirit* and contrary to all sound biblical scholarship. We will state the principles of the American and Foreign Bible Society by quoting from the preamble to its constitution, and the second article as follows:

"The following is its fundamental basis:

"The American and Foreign Bible Society is founded upon the principle that the originals in the Hebrew and Greek are the only authentic standards of the Sacred Scriptures; and that aid for the translating, printing or distributing of them in foreign languages should be afforded to such versions only as are conformed as nearly as possible to the original text, it being understood that no words are to be transferred which are susceptible of being literally translated.

## CONSTITUTION.

"ART. II. It shall be the object of the Society to procure and circulate the most faithful versions of the Holy Scriptures in all languages throughout the world. In carrying into effect this article of the constitution, the Society will expect the most sedulous care in patronizing such versions only as have been, or may be, faithfully made, and are approved by competent examiners.

No one can fail to see that those who drew up that preamble and the constitution had in mind the resolutions which from the date of their passage constituted the British and American Bible Societies' sectarian organizations, and that too discriminating only against Baptists and any others who believed in giving God's word in all languages as given by inspiration of the Spirit; as was most clearly shown and cogently argued in a series of articles a few years since in the *New York Independent*, by Joshua Leavett, a prominent Presbyterian clergyman.

As to the present and hoped-for future of the American and Foreign Bible Society, its friends are many and constantly multiplying—especially in our own land and on all Baptist mission fields.

It has no debts and means to continue solvent. It has money in its treasury sufficient to meet any reasonable call for aid in Bible work. The "Bible Union" Library—5,000 vols.—and other valuable assets of that society, are its to use and soon to be increased largely its facilities for the work of translation and revision of the Scriptures, especially in English.

The work of Dr. T. J. Conant on the Revision of the Old Testament Scriptures is progressing at the rate of 1,700 pages, seven historical books in electrotyping plates in several forms, with and without notes, as a single year's work. A competent committee of revisers, of whom Dr. Conant is one, will soon commence for the Society, the revision of the English New Testament. These things, and others, cheer the Board and stimulate to prayer and faith.

Truly yours,  
F. A. DOUGLASS,  
Cor. Sec. A. & F. Bib. Soc.

## FIELD NOTES.

In the vicinity of Saville, Crenshaw county, the ALABAMA BAPTIST was scarcely known two or three years ago, when our good brother W. H. Kilpatrick, of Greenville, moved into that community. After he had read his papers he took them all to church and distributed them, and has secured for us a good list of subscribers. We will take pleasure in mailing same copies from our office to those who can use them to advantage in securing subscribers. "I am greatly rejoiced that the hour of prosperity has at last dawned upon the ALABAMA BAPTIST; and I see no good reason why its patrons should not be doubled at no distant day. I am sure its merits, its claims, and the vast number of Baptists in Alabama justify the conclusion."—*Ira R. Foster, Warren, Ala.* Bro. N. B. Williams has removed from Livingston to Gainesville, Sumter county, in order to be more convenient to his work. He requests correspondents to take note of the change in his address. "I am on the wing again, after a stay of days at home on account of rain and high waters. I failed to fill my appointment at Pierceville on Sunday, on account of 'bad weather.' The insects have commenced on the wheat. One man told me to-day that his wheat was ruined by them. There is not so much sickness as has been, my people need books very much."—*J. E. Cox, Warrior Station, Feb. 7.* "I feel and realize that no agency in all the land is doing more than the ALABAMA BAPTIST towards uniting Alabama Baptists in our mission work,

in instructing and cheering God's ministers, teaching the churches the dangers of formality, and the necessity of earnest, energetic work in the Master's vineyard. May the Lord direct and bless you in your work."—*J. A. White, Brooklyn, N. Y.* "Rev. Mr. Thomason, well known in Hayneville, will preach to the Baptists of Clayton, Ala., this year."—*Hayneville Examiner.* "Our meeting here commenced yesterday. There is as fine interest as I ever saw. Some have already professed the Savior, and others are seeking to know the way of life. We have large and attentive congregations. We are expecting a gracious revival in this town, for it is very much needed."—*J. C. Porter, Perryville, Ky., Feb. 6th.* "I am on a missionary tour. I find the waters high and the roads, in some places, almost impassable. I am in very good health."—*J. E. Cox, Hamby's Mills, Feb. 6th.* "I have been of late more than usually pleased with the ALABAMA BAPTIST. I like a paper that I can heartily commend to the people, and am willing to work for such."—*G. D. Benton, Seale, Ala.* Bro. J. H. Ray, of Deatsville, has our thanks for a large list of cash subscribers; and we appreciate the favor and hope to hear from him often."—*W. E. Tinsley, Tenn.* "The work of our own hands. We appreciate this token of remembrance from our young friend, and while complimenting her upon the taste and skill displayed in the work, return our thanks for the favor shown us." The State Mission Board of the Alabama Baptist Convention spent \$9,344 during 1881 in State Missions. Rev. Z. A. Owens, of Mobile, has received and accepted a call as pastor of our church in Pensacola. "The Greenville Baptist church has at last unanimously decided to take up a collection every Sabbath for missionary purposes. We started off on the 1st Sabbath in this month for State Missions and the collection was very encouraging. Bro. Bailey may hereafter expect to hear from us often. Our church met with a heavy loss on the 2nd inst. in the death of Sister Augustus Womack—one of its most devoted members. For many months she had been a great sufferer, but seemed perfectly submissive and resigned to her Heavenly Father's will. Her summons, although unexpected, found her watching and waiting, and she fell asleep in Jesus as calmly and peacefully as a little child upon its mother's breast. To the heart-broken husband and children we offer our tenderest sympathy."—*T. W. H., Greenville.* Rev. B. R. Womack, at the request of the Ark. Printing and Publ. Co. assumes entire control of the *Arkansas Evangelist* for five years. Bro. Womack has our best wishes for success in the responsible position he occupies. "Every denomination has its own forms, usages and orders; and it casts no reflection on others for each to adhere to its own."—*Watch-Tower.* That is a very reasonable statement of a very important matter. "We do not find any personal pleasure in religious observances, but we find it in the question, What ought we to do? In doing, does it not cease to be a question? Is it not a foregone conclusion? Does not the grateful heart respond, 'As God has blessed me with a knowledge of Jesus, I will communicate that knowledge to others, as I have the means and the opportunity? The soul in its transport of delight in the Savior, sings—

"Had I ten thousand thousand tongues,  
Not one should I be silent;  
Had I ten thousand thousand hearts,  
I'd give them all to thee."

But what of the thousand dollars in your pocket-book? How many of them keep time with the music of the song? How many go with the heart so lovingly given?

Opportunities neglected, duties unperformed, are attended by

## DANGERS.

which, just now to the cause of Christ in the department of Christian effort to which this article refers, are imminent. In our zeal in a part of the work in which we feel a deep interest, because it is near us, we are in danger of losing sight of that which is a little further off. State Boards are doing a work in part similar to that of the Home Mission Board, and some may think that in supporting State Missions they are doing all that is required, forgetful of the destitution outside of the State, which is as great, often greater, than in the State, and which appeals as pitifully for relief, and for which no help is provided, but through the Home Mission Board. I do not complain of what is done for State Boards. I only point the intelligent and pious reader to the danger.

Another danger is that others will occupy the fields that we neglect, and I pray God that they may. If we will let the Gospel to the perishing within our reach, God speed those who will carry it to them. But how shall we cover our shame when our neglect surrenders to other hands the fields blooming all around us? This has already been done to some extent in Texas and Arkansas, and has been proposed, but declined, in Florida. I do not believe that the constituents of the Southern Baptist Convention are prepared to have this work of disintegration go on, and I earnestly entreat them to avert the dangers that threaten the perpetuity of their organizations, by fervent prayer and a more liberal support.

## DUTIES.

With such possibilities before us, there can be but one answer to the question, What ought we to do? In doing, does it not cease to be a question? Is it not a foregone conclusion? Does not the grateful heart respond, 'As God has blessed me with a knowledge of Jesus, I will communicate that knowledge to others, as I have the means and the opportunity? The soul in its transport of delight in the Savior, sings—

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church experienced a great revival. Not only were the members aroused, but scattered Baptists were gathered, and young converts added to the company of saints.

I arrived there the day before the meeting closed, and preached one sermon to a crowded house, and witnessed the baptism of several happy converts. The weather was exceedingly cold, but they obeyed their Divine Master notwithstanding the cold. The meeting could have continued with profit for two weeks more, but neither of us could stay longer, with convenience, and it closed with a very happy impression on all minds. Bro. Owens will resume the meeting very soon.

The church called Bro. Owens with great unanimity, and offered him more than it has been able to raise before. He resigned his pastorate in Mobile, which was accepted with great reluctance, on last Sabbath. He begins his work in his new field on third Sabbath in this month.

Breth. James Sims and Thos. Vinson, from Georgia, have both moved there recently, besides some other good members from other places, and they will be quite an accession to the growing city and church.

I surveyed the field as best I could, and have judged that "the right man is in the right place." I prophesy great prosperity for the church, and a happy pastorate for Bro. Owens. Let us pray for and contribute to the cause in that place.

I shall not close without saying that Mr. Owens is known to some of our brethren, not a member of the church, (but his wife is one of the very best, gives \$200.00, and boards the pastor.

B. H. CRUMPTON.

Greenville, Feb. 8.

## Paul's Thorn in the Flesh.

Men will never cease to inquire what this thorn was. It is impossible to determine with certainty. The Scriptures seem to throw some light upon the subject, however.

This thorn seems to have been some vexatious bodily infirmity. The Apostle tells us that he gloried in his infirmities. He could have felt no satisfaction in spiritual weaknesses, and hence the infirmities of which he speaks must have been physical. His own expressions favor this view. To the Galatians (4: 13, 14), he said: "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in the flesh ye despised not." Moreover, the "thorn" was visible. It was a hindrance and a mortification to the Apostle, and was calculated to be an offence to others. The words to the Galatians, properly rendered, are, "And that which was a temptation to you in my flesh." Some among the Christians said of him, "His bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible." (2 Cor. 10: 10-11.)

It is probable that he presented some infirmity which tempted others to reject him, and which was not only painful, but discouraging to himself.

There have been various conjectures.

"An unfounded Jewish tradition declares that it was periodic convulsions. Some have explained it as distemper of the eyes, and hence Paul's employment of an amanuensis. Others tell us that Paul was of diminutive stature, and that his body was disfigured by some lameness or distortion. And so on and on. This variety of opinion only shows the impossibility of fixing upon any one definite interpretation. We cannot go beyond the revelation of the Holy Spirit. A thousand times I have wished that I might know the special character of the Apostle's affliction. The fact that this knowledge is concealed from me is in itself an evidence of divine wisdom.

To us Paul's thorn in the flesh is representative, and as such affords more of comfort and instruction than if we could designate exactly his trouble. I think we may say any trial which causes continuous or oft recurring pain of body, or of mind, or of both, and the tendency of which is to hinder or distress, may be called a "thorn in the flesh." There are few if any hearts in which a thorn does not rankle. Beneath a calm exterior and a smiling face the festering wound may be found. It is wonderful to think from how many sources these thorns arise. They spring from bodily maladies, chronic sickness, ill-success, poverty, daily associations, and, indeed, from a thousand other things.

The Apostle also speaks of this thorn as the "messenger of Satan to buffet me." It has been thought that these words describe the source of Paul's trouble, as in the case of Job (Job 2: 6-8), or the inward temptation that accompanied his infirmity. The former idea may have some truth in it, but the latter is more natural and prominent. You know when you are sick and in trouble that the devil often assaults you with unwonted and cruel power. You are discouraged and despondent, you realize that you are weak and worthless, it seems useless to try to struggle on any longer, you are tempted to give up—"the messenger of Satan buffeting you."

Some other thoughts on this subject will follow in another paper.

WM. H. WILLIAMS.

Charlottesville, Va.

## A Sorely Bereaved Family.

For several months past the hand of affliction has been resting heavily upon the community of Forest Home. During its ravages a number of loved ones have closed their eyes in death. Among the afflicted and bereaved ones the family of Bro. B. T. Ausley stand prominent, they having lost four of the loved inmates of the household.

The first one called away was little Emma, aged nearly 3 years. She died on the 19th of November, in Atlanta, Ga., while she, in company with her mother, little sister and brother had gone to visit relatives. She now quietly rests by the side of sleeping relatives in the cemetery of the growing, busy "Gate City," awaiting the resurrection morn.

The next to follow was Bro. R. Eugene Ausley, who died on the 7th day of January, in the 27th year of his

age. He was a member of the Baptist church at Forest Home, and was at the post of duty when the Master called for him. Last summer he gave himself to God and his cause, and the residue of his days he spent in the active service of the same.

On the 16th day of January, little Clark, one year and two months old, closed his eyes in peaceful slumber in the arms of that Redeemer who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not."

The last was precious little Corine. She died on the 21st of January, in the 5th year of her age. Corine was a bright jewel of a child. She was endowed with unusual brilliancy of mind. So often and so sweetly has she repeated from memory in the presence of the writer the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want," etc. She, as one of his tender lambs, has gone to the arms of that Shepherd. She now realizes from her happy surroundings that she "shall not want." She is now in "the green pastures" of Heaven, and "beside the still waters" of the crystal river.

Bro. Ausley has been greatly afflicted and bereaved at different times in his family. His first companion, the daughter of Elder David Lee and mother of Bro. Eugene, he lost by death. Now his last companion, who is also the daughter of a staunch Baptist minister, the late Eld. John W. Wilson, of Ga., is called upon to give up all of her children. O, how heart-crushing to give up the last precious babe! O, how dreary and lonely to the bereaved mother is home without her prattling, darling children! God knows best. He gave them and he called them away.

"Go to thy rest, my children;  
Go to thy dreamless sleep;  
Gentle and meek and mild,  
With blessings on thy head,  
Ere sin might wound thy heart,  
Or sorrow wake the tear,  
Rise to thy home of rest  
In your celestial sphere."

A. T. SIMS.

## Objections to the Collections for Missions.

Appropos of the objections to mission boards, secretaries and such like, noticed in an editorial of this week, is the wonderful experience of an anti-missionary in the good old State of Georgia, as the story was related years ago. He said that the men who were collecting funds for foreign missions were swindlers, and he knew it, and could prove it. Now comes the crushing proof. He said he had "heard" that Mr. Judson was running a bank over in "Burmy" with the money these agents were collecting for missions, and he determined to find out for himself whether it was so or not, and so one day he saddled his "critter" and went there, and it was all true.

A READER.

## Dear Bro. West: I feel constrained

to drop you a few lines to let you know how I appreciate the improvement in reading matter contained in the ALABAMA BAPTIST. For twelve months I have been perusing its pages, and I feel that I have been benefited by it. I feel that every Baptist family in the State should have a copy weekly. Why is it that they don't patronize their own paper? Well, I suppose many are unable to do so, while there are many who are if they only could be induced to assist those who are not. I would like much to see a fund raised for this purpose, if some plan could be suggested by our leading financial brethren who have a zeal for the cause of our Blessed Master and our denomination. There are many who do not read the Bible who perhaps would read your noble sheet, especially when it is offered at so low a rate for those who are unable to subscribe for it.

I am much pleased with the idea that our Associations might be made more interesting if the proper steps were taken, which I know can be done if our leading brethren would go to work. It is time we should awake from our sleep, put on the whole armor of God and press forward His cause.

I see much said about pastors and preaching from different churches. Let me put in a word about our preacher—called, the biggest in the Tuskegee Association, and I would further add, I think the biggest in the State, for I think none can more honorably fill the pulpit for entertain/a congregation. Brother Loyd has been preaching for its now the third year, and has greatly endeared himself to our people who have attended his ministrations. A new field has been opened to him this year and I trust he will be both spiritually and financially blest.

We have but monthly preaching in our house but keep up a weekly prayer meeting which is well attended. Our Sabbath-school is increasing in numbers and interest, by officers, teachers and pupils. We are trying to do something for Jesus by instilling into the youth the necessity of an early attention to their own soul's salvation.

In passing this way give us a call.  
Fraternally E. W. SOLOMON,  
Salem, Ala., Feb. 6th, 1882.

## Seed Thoughts.

Ministerial Education.

An educated ministry is a necessity to meet the demands of the age and times. Whenever a good man or woman, or church, or association, or convention, discovers in a young man a disposition to preach the Gospel, with every ordinary promise of doing good, he is at once sent to school or college and educated. When his education is completed, an educated ministry being in demand, he is called to an important work where he can obtain a good salary. In this way the rural districts, small towns, and feeble churches, not being able to pay good salaries, are deprived of the blessings and benefits of an educated ministry, and are left to make the best arrangement they can, either with uneducated or superannuated preachers. There are large sections of country in Alabama that, owing to the above causes, or some other cause, have retrograded in their churches and preachers in the last quarter of a century, and although the churches are supplied with good men, yet they

are not equal to those who preached to them a quarter of a century ago.

Question No. 4. Will the interest of all our churches, and the entire country be promoted religiously by giving to all the preachers collegiate educations?

Question No. 5. If the preachers are all sent to college and educated, and then settle down at the strong points, what is to become of the weak points and feeble churches, or what is the remedy, and how are they to be supplied? E. T. SMYTH.

Oxford, Jan. 28.

## Church Statistics.

Special efforts are being made by the officers of the tenth census to secure full and trustworthy statistics of churches and other religious organizations. In the prosecution of this work inquiries have already been addressed to each individual church of the Baptist denomination from one to three times, and in the work of compiling the lists of churches of all denominations and communications, over 200,000 communications have been sent from the census office. The results in the main have been very satisfactory. A large number of denominations which were not before reported at all, or were reported conjointly with other denominations, will be separately reported, and the amount of information presented will be without precedent in the collection of church statistics. The securing of full and satisfactory information regarding the churches of various denominations, their membership, buildings and seating capacity of same, clergymen, receipts and expenditures for church purposes, and the value of their properties is a matter of great importance, as affording a basis upon which to estimate the progress which is being made in various directions, not only in each of the several denominations, but in the church at large. The completion of this work is greatly retarded by the failure of many church officers to respond to the inquiries addressed to them. We have been requested by Dr. Henry Randall Waite, the officer of the census in charge of this work, to call the attention of the leaders of this paper to whom schedules of inquiry have been sent, and who have thus far neglected to respond, to the importance of making prompt replies. We are also requested to ask that if there are any pastors or church officers among the readers of this paper who have not received schedules from the census office, they will communicate that fact to Dr. Waite. Any communication bearing upon the subject of church statistics, if addressed to him as special agent of the census, Washington, D. C., and marked "official business" on the upper right hand corner of the envelope, will require no postage.

## LITERARY NOTICES.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS' COMPLETE HAND-BOOK AND COMMENTARY for the International Series of Lessons, 1882. By Rev. J. M. pp. octavo. Price, 25 cts.

This is the 10th of the Sunday-school Annual by a Baptist. It consists of excellent topical and analytical expositions of the Word of God, forming a suggestive help to Pastors, Sunday-school Teachers and Bible Students. These are accompanied by valuable though brief critical and explanatory notes. The book is well printed, is bound in limp covers to suit the pocket and is wonderfully cheap. We cordially recommend it.

SOUTHERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY PAPERS for October, November, and December, 1881. Rev. J. Wm. Jones, D. D







