

# THE ALABAMA BAPTIST.

JOHN G. HARRIS, Proprietor.

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## Spiritual Sagacity.

Convention Sermons Preached at the Annual Meeting of the Alabama Baptist Convention, at Selma, Ala., on Friday Evening, July 17th, 1885.

BY S. HENDERSON.

2 Chronicles 12:3. . . . The children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.

Perhaps at no period of the history of this world has there been displayed so much sagacity in prosecuting various business enterprises, and in the management of money as in this age. The multitude of these enterprises and methods of gain have stimulated this sagacity, this business tact, to an unprecedented extent. Millionaires are created by the score, and America is a land of fabulous riches. The fact is the people have come to own governments instead of governments owning the people. There is scarcely a government in the Old or New World but what is shingled with mortgages in the shape of bonds to its citizens for borrowed money to meet its current expenses. In the matter of gain, the money of the world is mostly found in the private coffers of individuals, and governments now have to dance attendance upon bankers for the means of prosecuting their schemes of ambition. This has greatly mitigated the despotism of these potentates, as it not only inspires respect for, but confidence in the citizenry of those governments on the part of their rulers. Never within two thousand years has there been such a premium upon skilled labor, upon business capacity, upon talent, combination of qualities that we call common sense, as now. The productive and mechanical industries of nations have, within the memory of some of our oldest people, multiplied the commercial wealth of the world more than ten fold. Within the first half of this century, Mr. Gladstone, the late English Premier, estimates that England alone has received more gold and silver into her permanent wealth than had been received there through all the centuries from the days that Julius Caesar invaded that island until 1800. And then by way of intensifying the statement, he added, yes, that within twenty years dating from 1850, there had been more of these precious metals received into England than during the first fifty years of this century. This may indicate what must have been the influx of wealth into other nations alike active in commercial pursuits.

Looking over this vast aggregation of agencies in the production and management of the uncounted millions of wealth now employed in the commercial world—agencies that operate as if they were one grand machine controlled by one master spirit—and O, is it not even so? is not Mammon the presiding demon that holds this whole combination within his desperate grasp? one cannot but ask, Why, O, why is it that the children of the kingdom of Christ are so far behind the children of this world in the sagacity that perceives the opportune occasions, and the judgment and energy that improve such occasions, to promote the prosperity of a cause that is as far above all earthly interests as the heavens are above the earth, as eternity is above time—a cause which is to give to the history of this world all the immortality it can achieve that will be worth recording in the annals of heaven? Why is it that we who profess to have placed some approximate estimate upon "the unsearchable riches of Christ," those "true riches" which bear the very superscription of the Triune God, are so far behind this world in the wisdom that projects, and the zeal and energy that pursue, the work committed to us by our glorified Intercessor?

Brethren, we need as we have never needed before some of the wisdom of "the children of Issachar," who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do. I only wish that I could so present this topic as to arrest your attention so intently as that when we leave this house we should all, speaker and hearer, be impelled to go to our closets and implore the Giver of all good to endow us with such measures of the "wisdom that cometh from above, that is pure, and peaceable, and easy to be entreated, and full of mercy and good fruits," the wisdom, the precious, grand opportunities, accompanied with the zeal that will leave nothing undone that mortal agency can do, to promote a cause that is to give to heaven all that this world will ever be worth to its divine Redeemer.

I can conceive of no endowment to equip us for the mission of life, whether that mission relates to the life that now is, or that which is to come, so great as a clear, discriminating apprehension of truth and duty,

combined with a conscience that will demand the prompt execution of our convictions; that spirit that lives, and moves, and acts as in the very shadow of the judgment throne; that spirit that accounts it the highest honor that God has ever conferred upon man that he has concentrated his agency even in the humblest manner in executing his philanthropic purposes among our fallen race. To be thoroughly fitted for this service, and to enter with alacrity into it, will evoke from the lips of our final Judge a commendation, compared with which the crowns of empires would be but sordid dust.

The sagacity to detect grand opportunities is an endowment as rare as the wisdom to use them. The talent falls to the lot of a godly man it becomes a great blessing to the world. The sixteenth century abounded in such men. Luther and his co-laborers gave to that century a grandeur which, instead of diminishing, expands with the roll of centuries. They did a work which even yet has not been comprehended in its vast amplitude. They sprang a mine of thought that stirred both the religious and political world from centre to circumference. The seeds of that civil and religious liberty that are now our glorious heritage were sown in that stormy period. One of the princes of Germany, Maximilian, I believe it was, a firm friend of Luther, when pressed to use his authority to suppress what was then called heresy, uttered a sentiment that embraces in a nutshell our whole theory of religious liberty. It is this: "Where the dominion of the conscience begins the dominion of kings ends." The revival of religion and the revival of learning were contemporaneous, and have marched hand in hand ever since, in every movement that has involved the highest and most enduring interests of the world for time and eternity; and palsied be the hand that would divorce them.

I. Your men of sagacity are men whose minds and hearts are always in such relations to facts, duties, truths, &c., whether suggested by the word or the providence of God, as to receive just that impression which the importance or emergency of the case demands. Judgment and conscience are, to all such things, what a healthy eye is to the body. A healthy eye takes in objects just as they are, without any bias one way or another. Objects whether pleasing or painful, whether attractive or revolting, affect them just as they are, not as they would have them to be. And so when any thing that falls within the jurisdiction of a man's moral consciousness, or the sober dictates of his judgment, appeals to such men, it affects them just according to its intrinsic importance. This moral sense and judgment are "the eyes of their understanding," and they seek to educate them to that high sensibility that will "approve things that are excellent," or "try things that differ," as the margin has it, just as the eye receives the light. Color the glass through which light is transmitted, or jaundice the eye that receives it, and you color or distort everything on which that light falls. Whatever affects the eye modifies every object it reveals. Hence our Lord says, "If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil thy whole body shall be full of darkness." And as all colors are alike to the blind, so all actions, moral or immoral, are alike to those whose eyes have been "blinded by the god of this world;" whose moral consciousness is utterly oblivious alike to right and wrong.

I make no question, brethren, that you all can recall persons whom you have known, mostly of the gentler sex, who have educated their moral sensibilities so nicely, and have accustomed themselves to obey their generous impulses so promptly, as that you know in advance just what they will do whenever they encounter a question that falls within the jurisdiction of the moral sense. No prophet is needed to tell you that the right thing will be done at the right time and place just as surely as the occasion offers. These cases may be rare, (and alas, that it should be so!) but they are sufficient to indicate the possibilities of every one professing godliness. Now just think what would be the grand result if every member of our churches had this quick eye to see great opportunities, this quick conscience to receive, and this willing hand to execute all the behests of the Word and providence of God, would it take a generation to put this world in possession of the glorious gospel of the blessed God?

II. A wise man, a true son of Issachar, will always exercise a prudent discrimination on all questions that

appeal to him, assigning to each its relative importance. There is profound wisdom in the remark of John Milton, where he says, "There is a certain scale of duties, a certain hierarchy of upper and lower commands, which for want of understanding in right order, all the world is in confusion." The Bible is our universal directory in all the relationships and legitimate enterprises of life. It is like a grand dispensary containing appropriate remedies for all our diseases. And as it would be absurd for an invalid to take all the remedies for all the diseases laid down in the dispensary, so it would be absurd for any one Christian to accept all the teachings of God's Word for all his needs. There is one grand moral code running through the Scripture that does apply to all. But then there are specific duties laid down for all classes and conditions; for instance, for ministers, deacons and laymen; for fathers, mothers and children. But this is not the application of the thought I aim to bring out. I desire to emphasize that particular phase of it that relates to those higher and lower commands which are most appropriate to this occasion. Our Lord himself makes a distinction between the less and the greater commands, reproving the Pharisees, not so much for tithing "mint, anise and cummin," but for "neglecting the weightier matters of the law." It is much easier to be a partisan than a Christian; but little grace is required for this. But it does require great grace to lift the partisan up to the Christian. There always have been, and perhaps always will be, until the millennium dawns, a per cent of our people who are more concerned about exterminating supposed errors from other denominations than the conversion of sinners. Now, I profoundly believe that there are times when integrity to truth demands that we shall hang out our banners on the outer wall, inscribed with our distinctive principles in letters of living light. They are dear to all our hearts; for they are not only the doctrines taught, as we believe, in the inspired Volume, but they have come down to us through flames, baptized in the blood of our martyrs. And may my right hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, when I cease to give to them, as occasion demands, all the support of a loyal heart.

In reading the New Testament, one is impressed with one great central fact that appears on almost every page—a fact that represents the very spirit of the whole redemptive plan—a fact exemplified in the character and conduct of every apostle of our Lord—a fact on which every doctrine, duty, prophecy, promise and warning throws its full emphasis—and a fact intensified by all that an eternity of bliss or woe can impart. That the friends of Christ are bound by their fidelity to him, and their love for souls, to pray and work for the conversion of sinners, and their training for the bliss of heaven. To this highest service ever committed to human agency, we are bound by all the behests that Almighty God can impose, by the holiest impulses that Calvary can inspire, by the kindest sympathies that can bind us to our brethren of a fallen race, and by all the exalted motives that can stir the Christian heart. As the human soul constitutes all that is truly noble and great in man, so to accomplish the very best condition of that soul is the grandest work to which we can devote our Christian activities. I often think of the response old Richard Baxter made to the arrogant pretensions of the pretence of the English church who were denouncing him and all the Nonconformists of England as "unauthorized exponents of God's Word," as out of "the holy apostolic succession," as "schismatics from the holy church," &c., the old Puritan turned on them with the withering question, whether it were better for "sinners to be systematically damned than to be irregularly saved." In a few words, I would apply to this subject what the old father of two hundred years ago understood by "the analogy of faith," give to every doctrine and duty taught in the Word of God the importance which God himself has assigned to it. If the grand emphasis of New Testament teaching, command and example centres on the conversion of sinners to Christ, and their subsequent development in piety and Christian activity, then should not our ministry embody this spirit? It takes but little piety, as we have seen, to make a partisan; but great grace is required to make an earnest, consecrated Christian.

III. The man I am attempting to describe is no less anxious to select noble ends than he is in the choice of proper methods and agencies to compass these ends. Nothing can inspire so sublime a courage as a worthy purpose, and nothing can give to the prosecution of that purpose such persistent energy as a sagacious selection of the best means to accomplish it. There is a certain quality of the mind that adapts it to the character of the subject it is accustomed to entertain. It has a kind of indefinite flexibility. Thus you will go into some communities and find that all the social commerce is made up of neighborhood gossip, the state of crops, trade, &c., and the like. There you find the minds of that people inveterately set to the littleness of these infinitesimal questions. As old John Foster expresses it, "they seem to live under an opium sky that rains soporifics." They never have risen above the mere intellectual childhood. Then you have been in other communities of culture and refinement, where the people are accustomed to grapple with great questions, whether secular or religious, where the social and intellectual attrition is of that high order which expands the mind and heart to something approximating the true dignity of man; where you never encounter the slime of the scandal monger, nor those pigmy questions that settled either way amount to nothing. It is really refreshing for one to mingle even for a time in one such community. We feel the impulses of a new life, the inspirations of a new hope as to the possibilities of our race. And it is even more so when passing from a dead to a living church. It is like passing from some buried Babylon into a living, active, rejoicing Jerusalem, whose inhabitants are prosecuting philanthropic enterprises all embracing as the wants and woes of the world.

Brethren, if you want your mind to expand to its last powers, put big thoughts into it—propose to yourselves the highest and noblest enterprises—let it grapple with questions that will develop all its latent energies—yes, undertake things "impossible with men," and check on material compass them. If Paul and Silas could not unlock the prison doors of the Philippian jail, they could "pray and sing praises to God," and that brought the high Bailiff of heaven to their rescue, and before the morning sun arose there was a church at Philippi. If Moses cannot fight Amalek, he can send Joshua, and ascend the mountain, and hold up the word-working rod of the Lord, while Aaron and Hur steady his arm, and Joshua "discomfits Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword." The least saint may spring a mine of moral forces that will reach the very ends of the earth. The tears of a little child in the city of London, as she asked for a Bible for her dear sick mother, inspired in the mind of the good man who procured one for her, the idea of forming the British and Foreign Bible Society; that in turn suggested the organization of the "American Bible Society," and the Protestant world caught the conception from these two, and entered into the work, and you know the result.

Nothing can so ennoble, dignify and unify our efforts to promote the cause of our Master as the choice of high aims, and the selection of proper methods and means to attain them. And can mortal man conceive of a higher purpose than to execute the last commission of our glorified Emmanuel, "Go ye," &c.? And can we choose better methods and means than consecrated men and money to carry out this grand commission? Napoleon Bonaparte was about beginning one of his great battles in Egypt, he pointed to those grand pyramids, and said to his soldiers, "Soldiers! remember that the eyes of forty generations are looking down on you!" Soldiers of Christ! remember that the eyes of more than twice forty generations of heaven's nobility are looking down upon you—that "great cloud of witnesses," reaching from Abel until now, the Apostle represents, as compassing us while we were engaged in the thick of the fight. For, really, your true "children of Issachar" are as prompt in acting as they are wise in deliberating. With them, as Foster would say, the moment in which a conviction of duty is reached in thinking is the moment in which it begins in acting. For as well not think through a question at all that appeals to our Christian activity, if it is never to be followed by the corresponding action. What is the action but the maturity of thought? Butler, the great author of the "Analogy," in one of his sermons, says: "If conscience had might as it has right,

it would absolutely rule the world. The work of Christianity, in a great measure, to educate this conscience, and invest it with this might. There was a tribe of men in the days of old, of whom he says, "They say, and they do." They have their consciences in our day. Take our members, large and more than one-third, belong to this tribe, at least, as the active, vigorous, aggressive aspects of Christianity are concerned. Nay, perhaps, one-third do all in this respect that is worthy of the cause. I ask you, could you regard them as ready for our camps of instruction, for our future effective service? Why is it that our spiritual power does not keep pace with our growing numbers? Why is it that our churches are doomed to carry a weight of pauperage which if transferred to the State would exhaust all its resources? Let our pastors and evangelists ponder this question, and ask themselves how far they are responsible for the present state of our churches in this respect.

Your true "children of Issachar" are as wise to estimate the power and resources of an adversary as to measure the resources on which they can safely rely. Our great Teachers caution those who propose entering into service to "sit down and count the cost." He never practiced a decision to win a disciple. He always placed the cross before the crown—the Gethsemane and Calvary before the exaltation. It is our wisdom to realize that between our acceptance of his service and the final goal we have to encounter that triple alliance, "the world, the flesh and the devil," that, like a Macedonian phalanx, stands ready to dispute every step we take. This is true in our individual history, and it is no less true in the work to which our Lord has called us in subduing this revolted world to the obedience of Christ. "The whole world lieth in wickedness," or "in the wicked one." And we follow with what a deadly grasp he holds on to his usurped dominion! To underestimate the resources of an

adversary, and thus always be conscious of reserved forces for all emergencies. The "Old Guard" of Bonaparte were seldom brought into action, but always stood ready to strike the final blow that secured the victory. Let us do our duty, ye soldiers of Christ, realizing that when the crisis comes in the good fight of faith, the Captain of our salvation will appear on the field at the head of his conquering legions to deal the final blow that shall sweep our enemies from the field, and send the glorious news to heaven, that "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

We are to understand, brethren, that we are called to no holiday amusement when we enlist in this war. We are in a real fight as ever decided the fate of an empire; a fight the fame of which reaches to heaven, and brings upon the scene the shining battalions of angels as eager spectators of the contest. So that when we rescue one soul from the ranks of the Devil, the news is borne to heaven, and awakens a thrill of delighted sensibility through all the ranks of the heavenly host. Never was such an issue staked upon any contest as that for which we contend; the winning or losing of immortal souls. Indeed all of the history of this world that shall be accounted worthy of being transferred to the annals of heaven will be that which records the beginning, the progress, and the consummation of this holy

Christian sagacity is displayed. A selection of the proper times to put forth its energies. Indeed, there is as much in the time as in the agency to be employed. Happy conjunctures of circumstances and events—conjunctures in which we can secure the most effective co-operative agencies—will abate a vast amount of labor and means to compass worthy objects. Thus, when our revolutionaries struck for civil liberty, our Baptist fathers, like the true "children of Issachar," saw their opportunity, and incorporating into that movement their cherished ideas of religious liberty, joined as one man in that memorable movement, and secured for the first time in modern history a complete divorce of church and State, and made this country religiously what it is to-day. Indeed, this is the grand idea of the text, "understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do." The ability to perceive great opportunities, and the zeal to improve them, constitute, in a great part, the essence of practical wisdom. Our mission to

Mexico seems to have been projected at the fortunate time—a time when the shackles of Catholic despotism have been shattered, and the people are anxious for just that plan of religious liberty which is embodied in our denominational organization.

Those worthy pioneers who planted our principles in Alabama, such men as Holcombe, Travis, Crow, Ryan, and their fellow laborers, did a work for the Master in the formative period of our history that can scarcely be exaggerated. With no Boards to back them, except only those godly women whom God gave them, as their wives, they went forth into the wilderness, constrained by the love of Christ, and with rugged eloquence, not unlike that of the first Baptist preacher in the wilderness of Judea, they did a work which made our denomination the leading religious power in our commonwealth. They had the sagacity to perceive the happy time to do a work for the Master, and for their country as well, which in its remote consequences could never have been done but once, and we should be unworthy of such an ancestry if we failed to perceive and make the most of the grand opportunity which their labors, and those of their immediate successors, have brought to us. And are not we in turn living in a kind of formative period of what is not inaptly called the "New South"? Are not we called to do a work which is to give to our successors limitless possibilities?

VI. The wisdom I seek to impress will always invoke the highest and purest motives. Nothing gives to a moral action so transcendent a lustre as the motives that inspire it. And nothing so painfully marks a degenerate Christianity as the fact that we have to turn from the higher and appeal to the lower motives to inspire any activity among professing Christians. How exalted, how pure, how animating are the motives which inspiration arrays before us to stimulate our zeal! After calling over that grand muster roll of ancient worthies, from Abel down through the centuries, and ranging them before us in their heavenly attire, as if they were admonishing us: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and finisher of our faith." O brethren, if motives like these fail to stir our souls to their deepest depths, they were useless to appeal to anyone! Look at them! It is as if the collected voices of the saints of all ages, joined with the melting tones of Calvary and the inspiring command of a risen and ascended Savior, were all throwing their full emphasis into the admonition, "Whatever thy hands find to do, do it with thy might!"

VII. But the crowning excellency of that wisdom possessed by "the children of Issachar," and which we so much need, is God-inspired wisdom—that God is with us, impelling, directing all our activities. It is this that gives dignity and efficiency to every thing we do. It is this that reconciles and commands all those divine resources which the Triune God has pledged to the final success of his own cause. And if we deliberately place ourselves under the dominion of these lower, these earthly motives and influences in the performance of our best work, we not only doom ourselves to the most mortifying failures, but we place ourselves outside of those awards which are the passports of the redeemed into the joy of the Lord, since no man can claim the benefit of principles that fail to actuate him. Take an illustration or two: Elijah before Ahab; Paul before Felix; Luther before the Diet of Worms. Must not every one see that these men gathered all their importance, their moral grandeur, from the fact that behind their utterances Almighty God stood to make good what he had commissioned them to say? Must it not have been this that awed, and awayed, and confounded the partisans before whom they stood?

On the whole, have I presented an ideal picture? Have I said one thing which is impractical? Have I urged one thing which piety cannot reach? Is there anything in this portraiture beyond the reach of Christian attainment? Let me beseech you to aim at the highest endowment as an equipment for the greatest work ever committed to Christian agency. Surely it is possible for good men to see truth and duty just as the Word and providence of God reveal them; to exercise a prudent discrimination on all questions that appeal to them, assigning to each its relative import-

ance; to propose to themselves noble ends and proper methods and agencies to compass them; to make a fair estimate of the power and resources of the adversary, as well as to measure those on which they can rely; to see appropriate times and seasons to put forth their agencies so as to compass the broadest results; to place themselves under the animating power of the highest and purest motives, and to invoke with prevalent earnestness the impelling and directing power of Almighty God in the very work for the prosecution of which all the resources of Godhead are pledged.

## Bible Association.

The time for the annual meeting of this body is near at hand, and it is so important that we be ready for work. It will meet with Concord church, Choctaw county, Ala., Sept. 11, 1885, and it should be the prayer of every member, especially of this body, that the meeting may be one in which much good will be accomplished for the Master. It is highly necessary that each church be fully represented, if possible, with authority to carry forward and execute plans best adapted to the promotion of the cause of Christ. It would not be amiss for each church to instruct her delegates before leaving, and on their return endorse their action. It is also very necessary that each church send up her pro rata of the money necessary to advance the cause of Christ in supporting the different interests fostered by the great Baptist brotherhood. During the session, the following order, adopted by the association, will be observed, with the request that the brethren whose names stand connected with the reports of standing committees prepare themselves and open the discussion of each subject with an address of thirty minutes.

## PROGRAMME.

1. Reading letters and enrolling names of delegates.
2. Election of officers.
3. Appointment of committees on religious exercises.
4. Admission of new churches.
5. Ask for correspondence from other bodies.
6. Report of standing committees, viz: (1.) Inter-associational Correspondence.—J. G. Harris.
- (2.) Aged and Infirm Ministers.—J. G. Harris.
- (3.) Sabbath-schools.—Eld. A. R. Scarborough.
- (4.) Temperance.—Eld. J. R. Larkin.
- (5.) State Missions.—Eld. J. E. White.
- (6.) Home Missions.—Eld. C. C. Vaughn.
- (7.) Foreign Missions.—Eld. T. B. Woodward.
- (8.) Bible and Colportage Work.—Eld. J. D. Cook.
- (9.) Woman's Work.—Eld. F. A. Freeman.
- (10.) Ministerial Education.—Eld. L. L. Belcher.
- (11.) General Education.—Eld. B. F. Riley.
8. Appointment of standing committees.
9. Report of committees of present session.
10. Motions and resolutions.
11. Miscellaneous business.
12. Appointment of time and place for next session.

Brethren whose names stand opposite each standing appointment will please follow the report read by the committee appointed last session in an address of thirty minutes, in order to open the investigation and place the subject properly before the body.

For the benefit of delegates and correspondents, permit me to say, that this church is situated in the interior, fifteen miles from Cuba, the nearest station on the railroad, and for their own convenience it would be best, if possible, for them to come by private conveyance, but if preferred all who intend coming by railroad to Cuba will please notify, in time, S. J. Phillips, or D. W. Brock, Yantley Creek, Ala., and conveyances will be sent to Cuba for them. We invite a full attendance. Let every delegate bring his wife and oldest daughter; we will entertain them during the session and send them home after it shall have closed. We specially invite Drs. T. M. Bailey, A. C. Davidson and J. T. Marley; also, Prof. Frazer, of the Judson. The Professors will probably make it to their interest to meet with us and form the acquaintance of our families. Let it be the determination of each member of this body to do something for the Master, be it much or little; do something, and in the aggregate it will amount to a great deal.

We live in a progressive age, and each successive period makes new and important demands upon us. We invite special attention to the importance of woman's work. Woman stands to-day in the front ranks of Christian workers; and while she thus kindly tenders her services, can we disregard her calls, and underestimate her worth? Will we not render to her all the assistance in our power, and bid her God speed in the glorious work in which she is engaged? Let the response come from the heart of each one of us: Yes, woman, the noblest work of God, shall receive our unselfish efforts for good, in the glorious cause of Christ. J. K. RYAN, Mod.

## Notes and Clippings.

Here is a clipping from Bro. Gambrel, of the Baptist Record, reporting the Louisiana Baptist Convention: "An hour was occupied in getting ready for work. President Everett, from the State Mission Board, is reading the report of the Board. Many brethren thought the work could go on without a collector and the salary saved to pay missionaries. The plan was tried and the Board declare it a failure. Very little has been done. Only about \$1,250 collected, old debts paid, and one missionary supported. This is but another confirmation of the fact that when there is no one to do a thing it will not be done. This is a universal experience. Shall we lay the lesson to heart, or shall we go on in the way of failures?" The following is taken from a correspondent of the Religious Herald. The college question divided the Baptists of Texas; then the paper question helped to make the breach wider, so they have two Baptist organizations in the same State. May the good Lord save Alabama Baptists from such a calamity.

"Since the death of Dr. Crane the question: Shall Baylor University be moved? has been agitated. Others have suggested that it be consolidated with Waco University. The folly of division and strife has been demonstrated. By consolidation and cooperation in twenty-five years a grand million dollars. The possibilities before the Baptists of Texas are immense. Is there no great Baptist Ecumenical Council, wise, discreet, infallible, who can appoint a day of fasting and prayer, and compel the pastors and churches of the United States to meet and pray for the peace and unity of the Baptists of Texas? If there is, let the edict go forth and be observed." W. B. C.

## Prohibition in Texas.

Ed. Ala. Baptist: I am glad to be able to say, that the sentiment of prohibition is rapidly gaining ground in Texas, especially in the northern portion of the State. Our national workers, in the great moral reform, are there organizing W. C. T. Unions, and doing much noble work for the cause. I doubt not they will continue their work until it is extended over the entire State, which is as large as several of our States together, east of the Mississippi. I was told while there, by reliable persons, that they have one county in Texas as large as all Alabama. It certainly is to the interest of the cause for this great State to become thoroughly enlisted in prohibition.

On my return home I learn that prohibition is gaining ground rapidly in this portion of Alabama.

Mrs. M. J. TURNLEY, Gadsden, July 20.

It is not best to undertake to reason upon the propriety of a plain command of God. First obey, both in spirit and letter, and then in due time the reason for it will appear. In this world or the next it will all be made plain. The Christian life is a life of faith—a life of trust. If we could see the end from the beginning, there would be no room for ground for faith. In worldly matters we make investments of various kinds and await results. So in regard to our religion, believe and obey and await the result, both as to this and to the next world.—St. Louis Christian Advocate.

Cultivate forbearance till your heart yields a fine crop of it. Pray for a short memory as to all unkindnesses.—[Spurgeon.]

He who is truly in peace never suspects others. But he who is ill at ease and discontented is disturbed by various suspicions.—[Thos. a Kempis.]

He who comes up to his own idea of greatness must always have had a very low standard of it in his mind.—[Ruskin.]











