

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST.

HARRIS & DAVIS, Editors and Proprietors.

"SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE"

TERMS CASH: \$2.00 A YEAR.

VOLUME 13.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1886.

NUMBER 35.

The Watchman and his Report.

A Sermon by J. J. D. Rouse, Delivered in Talladega, Ala. on the Day he Tendered his Resignation, and at the Cedar Bluff Association.

"For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth."—Isaiah 21:6.

Babylon, when recognized as "the queen city of the nations," and as the richest and grandest power on the globe, was nevertheless the prison house of the captive people of God. In the 21st chapter of Isaiah, as in many other chapters, the fall of Babylon is predicted, and also the dawn of a new morning for the Lord's people. Isaiah frequently forecasts the downfall of a country or city under the simile of a "burden," and so it is that in this chapter we have "the burden of the desert of the sea," and "the burden of Dumah," and "the burden upon Arabia." The desert of the sea embraced the whole of the vast valley on either side of the Euphrates and the city of Babylon itself. And the overthrow of Babylon was to be worked out by the Medes and Persians, under the leadership of Cyrus, who thus showed himself to be God's "shepherd" and God's "anointed" in the deliverance of his people. And as these momentous events approached the Lord stirred the spirit of his prophet and ordered him to place himself in position to take observations of the coming conflict, and to report on the doom of Babylon and the liberation of Israel. "Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth."

In attempting to extract Christian lessons from this complicated part of Old Testament story, we must not be dogmatic; we can only take it as suggestive and illustrative.

I. We first invite attention to the watchman, his station, and the nature of his vigilance.

1. The watchman, who is he? He exists throughout the Bible, throughout the ages, and in all civilization, and among all tribes of men. President Jackson was right as a statesman and hero when he declared that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." It means that liberty can only be gained by watchfulness.

Without watchfulness it must be lost, and that this watchfulness is a wide-awake toil and a constant toil. And it is equally true in the moral world that God has provided for the existence of the watchman in his kingdom, under whose faithfulfulness the "certain sound" is given, and the armies of the living God are held in readiness for the day of battle. The soldier, after some experience, does not need to be informed that the guard or sentinel is essential. When the hour for rest and relaxation comes, an army sleeps profoundly and enjoys a sense of safety, though the enemy is near, because there is confidence in the picket force on duty between the two armies. It is related of Stonewall Jackson that after several days and nights of rapid marching and hard fighting in the valley of Virginia, he put his brave and weary army into as compact a body as practicable, gave orders that every man, officer and private, should sleep the entire night, and he in person mounted "Old Sorrel" and spent the night riding round and around the encampment of his slumbering men, watching for their safety while they slept. In that instance it is easy to understand who was the watchman and the importance of his services. And so it is easy to get a graphic idea of the magnitude of the position of the outpost, the advanced guards, and the sentinel lines of an army, which make it impossible to surprise the great body. The night watch of a city, so often alluded to in the Bible, holds a relation of incalculable interest to every inhabitant, as important to them individually as the night watch of a great mill or factory or public work to the property and business involved. Scientists, from their lofty towers, with great learning and suitable instruments, watch the weather currents over vast districts of the earth, and receiving their information at central points, and summing it up, they arrive at a proximate accuracy, so nearly correct that the sea captain about to leave port for the high seas, if warned by the weather bureau of an approaching storm, would be regarded as a madman if he refused to wait. And as the astronomer watches the heavenly bodies with constantly improving instruments, new planets come in view, new constellations are discovered, the "milky way" is analyzed, and the whole nebula region stands out with the glory of complete orbs. They were always there from the creation of the heavens until now, but more and more the achievements of science bring them into view and analyze their relations. Christian

science occupies an observatory which enables it to do the same for the immutable word of God. The word of the Lord is always the same, but from age to age its limitless glories and riches are more sublimely manifested, and thus the advancing church of God has its both old and new. Did you ever think of what a watchman is the engineer of a railroad train? A few nights since I talked for some time with an engineer at his post. He was drawing a long train after him. I asked many questions, and especially, "what do all these lights of different colors mean?" All were explained, and I was specially interested in the peculiar light at the rear end of the train. "That shows me that my train is unbroken—that I have left no cars behind; as long as I can see that light I know that my train is all coming along safely." After he had explained many of his duties, I said to him, "All this causes you to have to watch a great deal."

He replied, "Watch! every moment, sir, every moment, sir. What a grand position is that of the pilot of an ocean steamer, as his vessel passes through dangerous waters! And wonder in the lighthouse is another watchman whose manipulations of his lights are well understood by the steersman of the passing ship."

And thus our text has reference to an official watchman, "Go, set a watchman," one whose sole business it shall be to watch; one who is appointed for that purpose, and holds his position as an office of trust and of fearful responsibility. And so it appropriately characterizes the minister of religion. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night; they that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence." These watchmen are the apostles of Christ, and of them an apostle says, "they watch for your souls," "watching day and night," "laboring day and night," "praying night and day," "in watchings often, in hunger and thirsting, in weariness and painfulness," and so they cease not to watch and to warn with tears. They watch for their Lord, they watch for the church, they

for the world's good, and they watch against all evil, and therefore while they watch themselves they will rightly frequently seem to be watching at the heels of other men and looking into other men's matters.

2. And now what is the watchman's station?

We have already seen that there are many stations in the civil world, in the military world, in the scientific world, and in the religious world, which demand the watchman's services. Our chapter repeatedly speaks of the "watchtower" as the station of the watchman, and there seem to be three watchtowers referred to in the story. And we may mention first that of Idumea, towering up from Mt. Seir, as the safeguard of Edom's mountain pass, and which overlooked the vast lowlands of Babylon. In this lofty watchtower the sleepless watchman kept daily and nightly vigilance for the approach of the enemies of his country. "And he calleth unto me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night?" As this watchman saw the approach of the Medo-Persian army, which betokened the fall of Babylon, and the release of Israel, he replied to the above question, "The morning cometh, and so also the night; if ye will inquire, inquire ye."

The second watchtower was that in the heart of the great city, in the citadel, near the palace of the king, and which overlooked the city and the country around. Belshazzar's "night of pleasure" was at hand, when he ordered the preparation of his "table" with rich and exhaustless viands, and called upon his people and "a thousand of his lords" to eat and drink; and though he did command that his watchman should "watch in the watchtower," yet in that night of drunken revelry at court all vigilance was abandoned, and the city fell under the strategem of Cyrus, who entered with his army through the neglected river gates; and as he entered the mysterious handwriting appeared on the walls of the revelling palace: "Mene, God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it; *tebel*, ghaur art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting; *peris*, thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." "In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans slain; and Darius, the Median, took the kingdom." And thus his "night of pleasure" became his night of woe.

There seems to have been a third watchtower, where the Lord's prophet was stationed, and stationed by the Lord himself. "For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman; let him declare what he seeth."—Isaiah 21:6.

man; let him declare what he seeth." Go, set a watchman where he may observe the impending conflict, and witness the coming of Babylon's doom and the liberation of Israel.

And as this prophetic watchman saw in the distance the moving war chariots and horses, and asses, and camels; and men of the great army of Cyrus, he cried, "A lion! I stand continually upon the watchtower in the day time, and I am set in my ward whole nights; and behold," here cometh a great army. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen."

An important lesson here suggested is, that God's servants are to watch the conflicts of the world, and take advantage of them to lift forward the cause of Christ. The conflicting counsels of statescraft, and the conquests of armies upon the way to move up the outposts of the kingdom of our Lord; and scientific struggles and conflicts settle the inharmonious views of men concerning the doctrine of civilization, social order, human rights, and biblical doctrines, and confirm the churches of God in the immutable truth of the great principles of evangelical Christianity.

Great Christian truths underlie the present struggle in England and all Europe and all the old world, as well. Gladstone, to many a half observing reader, seems to be battling for Romanism, but once you get down to the true inwardness of the position of this great watchman you find that it is a contest to break the merciless spell of an effete and semi-protestantized popery, and thus lift onward the freedom of the human will and conscience. From one standpoint or another a kindred struggle holds the whole world in commotion. And the Christian minister who slumbers over these things is off his watchtower and the age moves on by him and leaves him in the lurch.

3. And so the nature of the vigilance expected of the Lord's watchman claims attention for a moment; and this has been anticipated from what has already been said.

(1.) But first of all it is such that he is to watch himself.

(2.) He is to watch the church.

(3.) He is to watch society.

(4.) He is to watch the world's conflicts and advancements, as seen in class commotions, in political changes, in religious movements, in the world's home life and church life, and civil life, in its retrogressions and reformations. And in all this he watches "for men's souls," for their improvement, for their happiness, for their salvation and usefulness, and for the glory of God in the betterment of man.

II. His report. And now what must be the nature of the watchman's report? The text answers, "Let him declare what he seeth." He is to watch, he is to see; and he is to declare what he sees.

1. The Idumean watchman in the tower of Mt. Seir reports, "The morning cometh and also the night"—the morning of Israel's liberty is dawning and the dark night of Babylon's ruin is drawing on.

2. The Babylonian watchman in the great tower of the palace, speaking to and for his king, reported, "A grievous vision is declared unto me, my loins are filled with pain; I was bowed down at the hearing of it, I was dismayed at the seeing of it. My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me; the night of my pleasure hath been turned into fear unto me."

3. And the Lord's prophet, with faithful ken, takes in the situation and proclaims his verdict. "That which I have heard of the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you." And what is it? Like the prophet Jeremiah, who spoke of that day, of the tide of desolation which should sweep over Babylon as "the coming up of a lion from the swelling of Jordan," so Isaiah thought of nothing that could better symbolize the coming of that terrible hour than the exclamation, "A lion! The lion, as lord of the forests, the master of all beasts, was a proper characterization of Cyrus at the head of the approaching Medo-Persian army. Hence the declaration, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen!' And her grave images are broken to the ground." And behold here come "the inhabitants of the land of Tema to bring water to him that is thirsty, and bread to them that are weary." "And the Lord will make the sighing of his people to cease." And therefore, "Arise, ye princes and anoint the shield." Not only the unwelcome princes of Babylon, who in this season of pleasure and sin have forgotten their shields, but here also are the captive princes of Israel, whose shields have grown rusty and cankered in the non-use of their long captivity. They sat by the

river of Babylon, which passed directly through the city, and hung their harps upon the willows in the midst thereof, where their enemies mocked them with a demand for the songs of Zion, and where they felt that they could not sing the Lord's song in a strange land, there also their shields had been laid aside; but the time had come to arise and lift these harps from the willows and re-anoint these shields, that they may march out beyond the walls of Babylon and strike new notes of praise to God, as under the proclamation of Cyrus they set their happy faces toward the loved Jerusalem, whose claims and promises they have never forgotten. This is the time for action! "Arise and anoint the shields," and press forward. "Return, come!" For the glorious light of a new day shines forth on thy pathway from the house of thy bondage to the land of thy fathers; and to the Zion of thy faith! "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."

God's watchman must make report and must not be hindered. "Let him declare what he seeth." He must "cry aloud and spare not." "For if the watchman give an uncertain sound, who shall be prepared against the day of battle?" If the intelligent Christian watchman is called upon to-day for a report, he may declare that bright signs of promise skirt the horizon of Christendom at large. They are thrilling and inspiring all along the line. The glorious light of Zion is spreading far and wide. Our Lord always gives the morning of rich opportunities before he sends the night of woe, but the night will come to all opposing forces.

1. Ever and anon the oppositions of science bring before us terrific conflicts, and the doubting and timid take great alarm. But these conflicts are helpful. Science itself confirms the truth of the book of God; and Christian teachers are constantly learning how to use the lessons of science as the voice of God in perfect harmony with his voice in his written word. God has never used human learning.

We have nothing to fear from that quarter, for the reason that Christianity has captured many of the great scientists on the globe. Christianity is at this hour furnishing the great majority of the presidents and professors of the great schools of learning, and the most powerful intellects in all departments of human greatness. Christ's friends are in the palace of Caesar throughout civilization; and many of his boldest foes would gladly wash their hands of responsibility for the innocent blood of King Immanuel.

2. This is preeminently an age of higher education and of more general education. No man worthy of his race, or conscious of his responsibility for his posterity, can afford to be indifferent to the intellectual demands of the hour for himself and for his children and for his country. Cultivated minds in every active department of life is the demand of the age. And while the public school system is taking deep root in governments, national and State, and in city and county municipalities, addressing itself to the wants of the poor and of the common people, the whole land is being supplied in centres of influence with high schools, colleges, and universities for the youth of the country who are capable of entering them. And thus the civilization which grows out of Christian agencies, is possessing the best order of mind in the current age and is lifting up the industrial aspirations of man.

3. One of the most far-reaching commotions of our times is that which is driven on by the cause of temperance and prohibition. Intemperance and the liquor traffic as legalized by government, are now conceded to be the matchless evils of our age. And the conscience of our times is in high rebellion against the power of this monster wrong. The present status of the conflict indicates the approach of a universal revelation. It has forced itself into the thought of the age in all the departments of intelligent thinking. It is reaching a position so commanding that great statesmen cannot ignore it, the secular press of all grades is forced to give it attention; and therefore of course the Christian pulpit—that grandest agency of moral power—cannot decline to participate in this struggle; cannot fail to warn men of the dangers involved and proclaim the signs of promise, without a virtual abandonment of the station in which God has placed his ministers. The watchman dare not close his eyes, and he must report what he sees. The dark night of doom is settling down on the distillery and the saloon, and the mor-

ning light of freedom for the poor and for the wife and for the widow and for the orphan is breaking forth over civilization, and already the thrilling liberty which it brings has carried happiness and peace into thousands of communities and into millions of homes.

4. And now to come still nearer to our own denominational interests in distinction, I claim the privilege of reporting that all is bright before our Baptist Zion in our State and in all the States of the South, and in the regions beyond. No careful man could have observed the workings of the last meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, and of our State Convention, without being inspired by the consecrated intellect of those grand men and the report which they were enabled to make from all sections where our people are making efforts. Our watchmen are giving no unmistakable sound. A sublime harmony is nearly reached. The exalted position which cannot be disturbed by the hobby, rider, or the Diotrefes, or the ecclesiastical crank, or the theological wisecracker, devotion to Christ, devotion to principle, devotion to church, to her doctrines and ordinances, with less of partisan spite and narrowness, are more general and more determined than at any time for years in the past; and prosperity is attending our ministrations as churches and pastors; our educational interests in the State, and in the South, are of the first order and unsurpassed, so that we are in condition to do the very best class of work for the generations of the future. The Baptists of the South, and of the United States, are now an organized force; and if we have done so much in the condition of the past, what may we not hope to accomplish in the future? Continually our missionary stations are taking deeper hold, and new fields are opening and being occupied, and the great work is being pushed onward and further by our boards, sustained by our churches, and the Holy Spirit has singularly and wonderfully owned and blessed these advancing movements.

5. And we cannot resist the opinion under current of Baptist sentiment which only awaits the quickening agency of a new reformation to lead out a vast train of confessors to embrace our position and to submit to our views of Christian ordinances and church order. The researches of ecclesiastical history, the decisions of the great linguists of all ages and of all sects; and the critical work of the most scientific bibliologists, have given uniform testimony to the general correctness of the plain old English Bible as exemplified in the distinctive principles of our Baptist churches, and this conviction has worked itself into the beliefs of multiplied thousands of men and women far beyond our denominational lines. And therefore the most earnest efforts are constantly made to create the opinion that these are trivial matters which must not be allowed to assert themselves. But after that spirit exhausts itself, as it certainly will, the conscience of God's children will reassert itself, and will attend to that voice, "Come out of her my people."

6. And now for this beloved church where I have lived and watched so long, let me admonish you with a report of good cheer. You have a fine history; you have done noble work. God has given you a godly heritage and an encouraging outlook. You have planted your watchtower in a grand old growing town. You are in a situation to keep house for God, and to keep up your spiritual and sacred campaign in the community against vice and in honor of virtue. You have an inspiring prospect. Your church is a vital force, and ever has been in this city. I boldly declare that you have been for a quarter of a century the van-guard of moral reform and aggression in this community. You will continue to lead souls to Christ, and you will continue to draw increase from the vast Baptist forces of the region around. Many of them will come here to supply your losses. The time is at hand for a new covenant, for a re-consecration to God. The long waiting watchman may need to be relieved—may need to come down from the tower, that newer and keener eyes may overlook the field, and that a quicker and more vigorous step may prosecute the work of laboring for your souls. I come before you to-day with the commandment of my Lord, "Go, set a watchman!" Go, set a faithful watchman. And do not hinder him, but constantly let the anxious wayfarer membership of this church look up to him with the inquiry, "Watchman, what of the night?" And as he faithfully makes report, let the whole body be prepared for ac-

tion. And a new morning will break in upon you and lead you out into a glorious noonday brightness. Your cause can never fail. It is God's cause as you represent God's truth.

"Go, set a watchman! Let him declare what he seeth!"

"Watchman! tell us of the night, What its signs of promise are, Traveler! of thy mountain height, See the glory-beaming star, Watchman! does its beauteous ray Aught of hope or joy foretell? Traveler! yes, it brings the day, Promised day of Israel."

"Watchman! tell us of the night, Higher yet than star ascends, Traveler! blessedness and light Peace and truth, thy course portends, Watchman! will its beams alone Gild the spot that gave them birth? Traveler! ages are its own; See, it burns o'er all the earth."

"Watchman! tell us of the night, For the morning seems to dawn, Traveler! let thy wand'ring cease, Hie thee to thy quiet home, Traveler! lo! the Prince of Peace, Lo! the Son of God is come."

A Word about Preachers.

There is a class of people, very large in a numerical sense, and very little in another sense, who clap their hands in delight at the bare mention of a preacher's connection with a scandal. They wag their heads and exclaim aha aha! They leap to the illogical conclusion at once that this preacher concerned in the scandal is the typical preacher of this and every other day; and the fact that he has been lecherous or faithless at once blots out, yes, glorifies the shortcomings and peccadilloes of every layman and non-church member who disgraces himself to any degree whatever. They regard a fallen minister of the gospel as a proper scapegoat for all the sins that were ever committed outside of the cloth. But they go further than this. Their slipshod logic at once compels the conclusion that every preacher who has not fallen is a *pastor criminis* with the one who has fallen, or at least is to be regarded with suspicion on that account. But they go still further. Having from the premise that one preacher is corrupt, drawn the conclusion that all preachers are in the same predicament, they form a sort of illegitimate

It is useless to tell these censors of the pulpit and the church that their conclusions are illogical and unjust. For, as a rule, these people are as innocent of logic as they are of decency, and the idea of doing justice to anybody merely on principle is an unthinkable conception to them.

Collating scandals and evil reports about ministers is a labor of love with such people. Wherever there is a moral wreck thither they fly. "Where the carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together."

The discovery of a very vile man under the cloak of a clergyman, proves no more against clergymen as a class, than the discovery of a wolf in a sheep's garb proves against sheep as a class. People forget that such men never were clergymen in the real sense of the word. They only profess to be. The appearance of counterfeit anywhere is a prima facie proof that the genuine of the same denomination is valuable. Hypocrisy is vice's tribute to virtue.

As long as men are human, as long as flesh is weak, men in high places in the church will be liable to err. But a moral defection in one minister need not and does not inculcate his brethren, any more than the skipping of one cashier to Canada renders every bank in the country unsafe. If our minds will revert to, and dwell upon the ministry; if we must have preachers to criticize and contemplate, let us turn away from the few isolated misnamed ministers who bring reproach upon the cause they never really espoused, and gaze upon the tens of thousands of preachers of every name who are working their finger nails to the quick in this world, and waiting to get paid in another.

Let us contemplate the itinerants and pioneers of protestantism in America, who watched and fought and suffered with all the early settlers, and inherited homes and lands with none; who starved and struggled and wore out preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified under the very muzzles of hostile Indian rifles, and who through all war facts that were all aglow with the light that never was seen on sea or shore."

Let us contemplate the spiritual descendants of these men who are among us now, and who are paid "about in proportion."

Who are our ministers of the gospel anyhow? They are the men whose influence on the world makes civil governments a possibility. They are the men who console the bereaved, comfort the sick, and advise the per-

plexed. They are the men whose influence and example and teaching are to so mold the generations as they rush in and on upon each other's heels, that the future of America shall be a millenium instead of a Babylon. They are the men whose nature and calibre would earn them three, four, five and ten thousand dollars a year in the professions, and who are preaching the gospel for five and ten hundred dollars per annum. They are the men who, as statistics prove, have a cleaner record as a class than any other organization of men that ever lived in any age or country. They are the thermometer of civilization, indicating by their position its fluctuations of height and depth.

Those people and those papers who are disposed to throw mud at the minister have come too late in the nineteenth century to create either an impression or a following. The world is better and brighter and wiser than it ever was before, and ministers of God are more respected, as a natural consequence.

In the future as in the past, here and there, now and then, a clergyman will fall from his high estate; and in the future as in the past, certain men will point at him and clap their hands in derision. But the strangest thing of all is that the degraded minister will only have become more like those who are gloating over his downfall.—*Columbus Enquirer*.

Credo and Declarations in Baptist Churches.

Have Baptist churches the right to adopt creeds, set forth declarations and pass resolutions expressive of their views of Christian doctrine and duty? This is no new question, and the answer is not new. To get at this answer, let these other questions be asked: What has been the Baptist usage in the matter? What is the reasonable view of the case? What is the teaching of Scripture?

1. Most religious denominations have creeds and rules which are of final authority to their members. Catholics and some others do not profess to appeal to the Scriptures except as authoritatively expounded by the church; and even among

Bible in any trial. The Westminster Confession decides everything with Presbyterians, and some Congregationalists; while the discipline and Watson's Theology with an occasional reference to Wesley's Sermons, are the final appeal with Methodists. On the other hand, the followers of Alexander Campbell claim to have no creed but the Bible. This claim absolutely understood is, of course, an absurdity; but Campbellite churches usually have no written creeds or declarations, and many of them keep no minutes of the doctrinal opinions which the church incidentally adopts in disciplining its members. Whether they would regard it as improper to pass a resolution defining their position as to a popular sin does not appear. Now the Baptist view differs from both of these, and contains elements of both.

First, it recognizes the right of a church to put forth a creed or to utter its views by resolution or declaration, on any subject whatever germane to its religious character. Hence, nearly all Baptist churches, when they are received into the fellowship of the denomination, adopt one of the Standard Baptist Confessions, as the Philadelphia Confession, the Charleston Confession, or the New Hampshire Confession, and a covenant and certain rules of decorum. Besides many Baptist churches adopt, from time to time, certain other rules for the guidance of their members. On many church books is a rule in regard to absentees from the business meetings of the church, or plans for raising money, or rules for giving letters or for disciplining members. Very often our churches passed resolutions defining their position as to current questions of great interest. Thus fifty years ago, in this State, many of them adopted declarations as to the question of missions and as to the theological views of Mr. A. Campbell. Before that time many churches in Virginia and Rhode Island had taken their stand on the question of soul liberty, and since that time many more have spoken out on slavery. At present it is quite common for them to declare what views they hold as to the liquor traffic. So nearly universal is the use of declarations by Baptist churches that the foremost Baptist preacher in the world says:

"The great arch-enemy of truth has invited us to level our wall and take away our fenced cities. He has cajoled some true-hearted but weakened believers to advocate their crafty policy, and from the best of motives, so foolish brethren are almost prepared to execute his cunning design. Central Baptist.

'Away with creeds.' * * * This is the cry of the day. Ostensibly, it is reverence for the Bible and attachment to charity which dictates the clamorous denunciation; but at the bottom it is hatred of definite truth." (Spurgeon, quoted Bapt. Cycl., p. 294.)

Secondly, Baptists hold that all creeds, confessions, declarations and resolutions are subordinate to the Scriptures. They try no man for failure to conform to a creed, but for failure to keep the law of God. The creed, or confession, or resolution, is the church's conception of the teaching of Scripture; but Baptists insist upon the duty of every member to appeal over the head of all creeds and confessions to the Scriptures themselves. Hence, such creeds or resolutions are not laws enacted by the church, but simply declarations of its views as to Christian doctrine and life.

II. Is this Baptist view reasonable? Is it reasonable for any man, say a preacher, to set forth what he believes to be the Scripture teaching on any subject? This is what our preachers are doing every Sunday. If two men agree in their views, is it reasonable for them to set forth these views together? If two may do so, why may not three, or a hundred? Nay, more, if a company of Christians wish to band themselves together for the service of God; they must do so upon some agreed basis. To say that they simply take the Bible as is wise for two physicians to form a partnership for the practice of medicine by agreeing to take simply the human body as a basis. One of them might turn out to be an Allopath and the other a Homoeopath, or a Thompsonian, and then how harmonious would be their practice. "How can two walk together except they be agreed." It is absolutely indispensable that the members of a church be agreed upon the main points of Christian doctrine and duty, and this agreement can only be reached by a setting forth of the views held in common among them. Moreover, there are a few questions of Christian life which have arisen since the days of the Apostles, and on these

pine-eating, and the like. To these, and like questions our churches must apply the principles of the New Testament, and this they can do only by formal resolution. The Baptist view is, therefore, the only reasonable view, for it recognizes at once the supremacy of Scripture, the necessity of agreement thereon, and the right and duty of declaring that agreement.

III. Is it scriptural? It certainly is for these reasons. First, the Scriptures declare that in them God speaks to us; but they nowhere intimate that we are not to interpret them for ourselves or that they contain particular rules for the guidance of the churches in all ages. There is no "church directory" in the New Testament, and no complete list of offences for which the fellowship of the church should be withdrawn. The truth is, the Christian Scriptures fill a much nobler place than that. They give greater principles and leave to the sanctified common-sense of the churches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to apply these heavenly principles to the lives of their members.

Secondly, the Lord Jesus Christ expressly said to his churches, "Whatsoever things ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," and, when following the Scriptures, the church has, therefore, his authority to determine everything necessary to the perfection of her doctrine and discipline. Finally, the church in Jerusalem, with the consent of the Apostles, in the notable meeting described in Acts 15, adopted a statement respecting their views as to the great question of the admission of the Gentile and sent it in writing to the Gentile churches, thus setting us an example.

This, then, is the summing up of the whole matter. Modern Baptist Churches have ever held that the Scriptures are supreme in all matters of faith and duty, but at the same time have insisted that it is the right of any Christian (or body of Christians) to declare what he understands the Scriptures to teach, and this understanding must constitute the basis on which they agree for the service of God. This view is reasonable and Scriptural. The other views lead straight to denying the right of appeal to the Scriptures or to the absurd position that a church must act in any given case without the right of saying beforehand what it regards as the Scripture teaching in that case; that it must adopt the Scriptures as a basis of fellowship, but cannot say what it thinks is contained in that basis.—*Central Baptist*.

Alabama Baptist

MONTGOMERY, ALA., SEPT. 2, 1896.

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SALUTATORY.

In appearing for the fifth time in the writing staff of the ALABAMA BAPTIST a few salutatory words from the undersigned seem proper. The past history and noble work of the paper are known to the Baptists of our State, and do not need to be recounted. From the first, as an agency of usefulness, it has been second in importance to no other general interest among our people, because it has been largely helpful of every other interest, and was brought into being for that express purpose. This has been its mission, and beyond this it has had neither purposes nor pretensions. In former connections with the paper I have had no other responsibility than the obligation to furnish a given amount of matter for its columns, having had nothing to do with its business or management. But now, as managing editor, I come before its readers in a very different relation, with much heavier work, and with far greater responsibility. In some parts of this work I am without experience, and must ask for the patience and charity of the friends of the enterprise, with the pledge on my part to do my best to give them a good paper. After so many years spent in pastoral relations, it is a great change in the life of a Christian minister, to retire from that and take the work of a Christian editor, on which to expend his remaining years and energy. It is a great change to withdraw from a beloved church, where more than a quarter of a century has been devoted to pastoral work, and undertake a new work, which must demand the whole time and strength of the incumbent. In this attitude the writer now comes before the Baptists of Alabama. He takes the position with timidity, and yet having decided, in the fear of God to do so, he undertakes it with will and determination to make a success of the venture—if the Lord permit.

What of the future work and character of the paper? It is not considered wise for an editor to make many promises or fix many iron rules, for he cannot know what will demand his attention. However, the ALABAMA BAPTIST has never had any hobbies, and it will have none under its present management. It believes in the great principles of evangelical Christianity, and is in harmony with the distinctive sentiments of the Baptist people. With the broadest charity for all men, it holds that men diverge from the New Testament at the precise point where they diverge from the settled faith of the Baptists, and that faithfulness to Christ and devotion to principle demand the statement of our faith as occasion may offer. With constant purpose to aid the churches and pastors of Alabama, this paper may be expected to stand firmly by our denominational institutions as fostered by our State Convention. Our schools, male and female, and the Theological Seminary, and our boards of the State and of the Southern Convention, the Publication Society at Philadelphia, our associations, with their enterprises, and the Christian interests of the colored people will receive such attention as their respective merits seem to demand. This indicates the field in which we desire to operate.

Looking to our adorable Lord for that assistance which is absolutely essential, we appeal to the brotherhood in all parts of Alabama for an interest in their prayers and for their co-operation. We feel greatly strengthened by the constant counsels of Maj. Harris and the assistance of Dr. Henderson.

In coming to Montgomery the writer

returns to his native county, and hopes to feel quite at home. His life has been and will be spent in Alabama, and he will always be delighted that Talladega is not far away and is of easy access. Ten thousand blessings on Talladega! Many a time my heart will retrace the steps of twenty-nine years among that beloved people.

And now, brethren and sisters everywhere, if your heart is as my heart we shall have a pleasant time together. J. J. D. RENFROE.

THE CEDAR BLUFF ASSOCIATION.

This body convened with the Mt. Bethel church in Broomtown Valley, Cherokee county, on Friday, the 13th of August, and it was our privilege to be present. The place is rather difficult of access. A buggy ride of nearly forty miles from Cave Spring, Ga., was necessary. Though we spent only a few minutes in Cave Spring, we met Dr. L. R. Gwaltney, of Shorter College, on the streets, and had some pleasant conversation with him and Bro. Pullen.

We left that place at 3 1/2 p. m. in a lively turnout with a first-rate driver, and at dark we were at the home of Bro. J. S. Watt, the clerk of the association, having travelled twenty-two miles and crossed Coosa River. Bro. Watt and his excellent wife we have known from their infancy. They and their parents before them and all their relatives, have for thirty-five years been esteemed as among our best friends. Their greeting could not have been more pleasant as they welcomed us to their delightful home.

Friday morning, seated in a buggy by the side of Bro. Watt, we set out for Mt. Bethel, about seventeen miles further. This drive carried us directly along the roads over which we constantly passed the first six years of our ministry, through Cedar Bluff and Gaylesville, and on to Broomtown. Bro. Watt is fine company, and we had no little chit-chat by the way, and saw many spots which were quite familiar long ago. Before 11 o'clock we were on the grounds and shaking hands with the friends of early days.

In 1842-3, we were the missionary of the Cherokee Association, and it was then that this church was organized by the Rev. James Fields and himself, and for two years we were its first pastor. It is now a strong country church, meeting on the same ground in a real good house, and first rate surroundings—a valley of fine land and good people. We had peculiar feelings as we had not seen the people for more than thirty years. Rev. J. A. Webb is pastor now.

The introductory sermon by Bro. Gresham was a strong and appropriate discourse. He was continued as moderator and Bro. Watt as clerk. They are good officers. We will not attempt to notice the meeting item by item. Those subjects usually considered at our best associational meetings all passed under review at Mt. Bethel. The discussion of the general report on missions was one of the best discussions we ever witnessed by an association, and in this remark we have no reference to what we did, but to what the members of the body did. They had the subject before them for more than a half day. We saw there what we had never before witnessed—every church except one sent up money for missions, and they appointed a committee to visit that one to see what was the matter; and in no unimpeachable language from some of the speakers, it was proclaimed that that association could not continue to hold fellowship with a church which will not take part in giving Christ's gospel to the destitute.

Dr. Bailey has visited that body every session for six years in the past. They believe that he knows all about what a Baptist association ought to do. Finding this to be their opinion, we attempted to perpetrate Bailey on them on almost every subject that came before them. They are exceedingly anxious to see Bro. Crumpton, the present Corresponding Secretary of our Board.

The discussion on education was nearly as good as that on missions. The Seminary, Howard College, and the female colleges, all received handsome allusions. The meeting was a good one in all respects.

We found that several Baptist papers are read in that country, and in August newspaper money is very scarce, but we obtained a very good list for the ALABAMA BAPTIST, and received great encouragement in expressions of what the brethren intend to do between this and the close of the year. There are a number of strong ministers in the body, and some laymen, who are fully up on all denominational enterprises.

We could not resist the pressing demand of brethren Miller—father and son—to return by Mill Creek church, another of our first pastoral charges. We preached for them Sabbath night and on Monday. They were beginning a protracted meeting, from which we hope to have a good account. Rev. J. M. Henderson is pastor. Here also we met many of our early friends.

Monday evening a pleasant ride with Bro. Miller to Cedar Bluff, where we resided when we worked in that section, and where we first found the

queen of our heart, brought us to the home of Dr. Lawrence. The doctor and his wife were young people when we belonged to that age. Sister L. met us at the gate with the salutation, "If I had a stick I'd bang you over the head with it. I've been looking for you all day and here you come poking in just at night." We got into the buggy with her and crossed the river to spend the night with her sister, wife of the Hon. John Lawrence, who has been beyond all question one of the best friends we ever had in life. The doctor also went, and though Mrs. John Lawrence had been quite sick and was still in bed, with these two brothers and sisters and the young people, we had a delightful reunion. Next morning the son, Mr. James Lawrence, took us in his buggy 20 miles to Amberson, on the railroad, and at 4 p. m. we were at home.

This association met nearly one hundred miles from Talladega, near where the State line strikes Lookout Mountain. In former times we have been pastor of churches over the whole distance, and though it was the hottest week of the present year, and the labor of travel, talking, speaking, and preaching was heavy, we enjoyed it very much.

We promise the reader to not be so lengthy in our future notices of associational meetings. In this case the circumstances were peculiar. There are many things we could wish to say which cannot be said. Everywhere we were assured of hearty co-operation in behalf of the paper. We intend to help the brethren and sisters just as far as they give us opportunity.

RITUALISM.

We have often wondered how those rigid forms of ritualistic worship could be adapted to the varying scenes of life, unforeseen emergencies, especially those deep calamities which befall so many in this life, calamities varying according to the multiplied pursuits of man, and of which the authors of "our incomparable ritual," as the English church and Episcopalians of this country are accustomed to call "the book of common prayer," could have had no conception. Any reader can call up many of those emergencies in which piety would betake itself to prayer not laid down in the ritual. It being a great sin in the estimation of the votaries of ritualism to use any other forms of prayer than those laid down in the book, what are they to do in such emergencies? When the great fire in Chicago occurred some years ago, it was proposed in an Episcopal church that prayer be offered for the sufferers. But then there was nothing in the "prayer book" that referred to such a case; what was to be done? They simply bowed down reverently and went through the ordinary forms of worship, in which not one word occurred that related to any such calamity as inspired the service. They recited those effete prayers which had no more reference to the Chicago sufferers than to the assassination of the Czar of Russia by the nihilists. The little six year old boy that knelt down to pray and recited the alphabet, A, B, C, &c., saying that God could put the letters together and make them mean what he desired, furnishes the best defence of so heartless a service. Indeed, it was well enough for a six year old boy, but for matured men and women, bishops and priests, to gravely go through such a ceremony and call it praying, well, it looks very like the "form of godliness" without the "power." We would suggest to our Episcopal brethren to amend their prayer book, and at least bring it up to date, so as to include some of those great objects of prayer which the progress of events has brought to the surface, and which were unknown to the compilers of "our incomparable ritual." This would at least give an air of variety for a time to the old forms, and stop the process of stagnation. Some years ago Henry Ward Beecher, in commenting on the worn out ritual of Episcopacy, said very wittily that he had as soon go courting with his father's old love letters as to worship God in the shreds of an old ritual. To our seeming, aside from the wit of the expression, it expresses a great truth, for, to those at least whose hearts are in the service of the sanctuary, nothing appears more absurd, more out of place, more partaking of mere lip service, than the use of a ritual hundreds of years old, composed by uninspired men, who could no more comprehend and put in form all the possible wants of coming generations than we can. We cannot stereotype the application of Bible doctrine and duty for all ages. The Bible is a perennial source of light and life, ever fresh, ever new, imparting its warmth and vigor to every true worshiper. For though these doctrines and duties are ever the same, yet they affect us as variously as are the different ages and wants of the world, or the temperaments of men. S. H.

The happy person will be the natural heart-singer, who has found delight in that sweet psalm, "Fret not thyself; rest in the Lord; wait patiently for him; and he shall give thee the desire of thine heart."—[Rev. H. H. Lowell.]

THE ASSOCIATIONAL CAMPAIGN.

The associations of Alabama are now at hand. It is our purpose to attend as many of them as we can. Bro. Harris and Dr. Henderson will do the same. Dr. Nunnally and Bro. Giles in behalf of Howard College will attend many of them. Bro. Crumpton, Secretary of the State Mission Board, may be expected at as many as he can reach. We will all represent the interests of each other, and will in the main try to divide out so that all will go to different bodies. But we beg that this will not prevent any brother's or sister's good purposes to represent the ALABAMA BAPTIST by any association or other meeting in the State. That this paper may reach the highest measure of usefulness its circulation needs to be largely increased, and the time is at hand when this work may be done, and many brethren can do it, as efficiently as any of those mentioned above.

FIELD NOTES.

The Baptists will open a High School at Ramer on Oct. 4th. J. J. Weldon and Rev. B. A. Jackson are the principals.

A series of protracted meetings have been conducted at Mt. Zion Baptist church by Rev. A. E. Burns. During the revival there were 57 accessions to the church.

A revival closed at the Baptist church at Pleasant Grove last Friday. There were about 15 accessions to the church. Rev. A. L. Martin conducted the services.—Abbeville Times.

The meeting at the Baptist church in Roanoke, closed last Monday, after being protracted ten days by Rev. J. P. Shaffer. There were 26 accessions, 17 by experience and 9 by letter.

According to report, Liberty Baptist church has just closed a very successful meeting—fifty two accessions to the church. If we can only have such work as this done in Cross everybody will feel benefited.—Post.

It is such a small sum for each church that there should never be any trouble about money for printing minutes. Send up a liberal sum for the purpose, so that the printed information may be generally circulated. Don't fail in this matter.

We have had a good meeting at Siloam church in which the pastor was aided by Brn. J. E. Kolb, B. Cooper and W. C. Avant. There were 16 baptized and 7 received by letter and restoration. The Lord has greatly blessed us.—T. E. Morgan, Honorville.

At a recent meeting with Ebenezer church, the pastor, J. F. White, was aided by Brn. J. M. White and J. W. Dickinson. Received 21 by baptism, 6 by restoration, 4 by letter. We have organized a young men's prayer meeting.—Joseph W. Cabanis, Morcin.

A new Baptist church was constituted near Night Station, in Lee Co., on the 3rd Sabbath in this month, consisting of twelve members. Since that time two others have joined. Brn. Davidson, Wood, and myself formed the advisory counsel. Bro. Davidson has been called to the charge of the new church.—G. D. Benton.

The following resolution will be discussed by the Moulton Baptist church at the meeting on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in September, and a full attendance of the membership is desired: "Resolved, That the Moulton Baptist church hereafter observe the Lord's Supper at our regular monthly meetings."—Advertiser.

We have just closed a meeting at Ramah. Bro. W. H. Patterson did most of the preaching. The Lord blessed his efforts and gave us eight by baptism, three by letter and two by restoration. The church is greatly revived, and its members are "rejoicing in the hope of the glory" to come. We give God the praise.—Z. T. Weaver.

I have just closed a deeply interesting meeting at Allenton. Eight accessions to the church, 2 by letter, 6 by baptism. The congregation were large and deeply impressed under the preaching of Brn. Hunter and McCollum. These young men are excellent preachers and promise large usefulness in the Baptist ministry.—W. G. Curry, Furman.

Rev. J. M. Gothard closed an interesting meeting of seven days and nights at Macedonia church, Chilton Co., on the 13th inst. Rev. R. M. Honeycutt preached on Sunday, and Rev. W. D. Hubbard on Sunday night. During the remainder of the meeting Bro. Gothard was assisted by Rev. S. D. Posey. Accessions to the church 4.—Z. J. Jones, Randolph.

I closed a very precious meeting with the church here last night. I have never seen a better feeling prevailing. Bro. B. H. Crumpton did most of the preaching. The church and community were delighted with his earnest and faithful efforts. Results, the church, thoroughly aroused, received by baptism 19, restoration 5, letter 1.—D. W. Ramsay, Pineapple.

I have just closed an interesting meeting at Friendship church, resulting in six accessions. We have had

a good meeting at Chestnut Creek church. Several members received, and I think the future is bright for both of those churches. Bro. Falkner was with us at Chestnut Creek, and did most of the preaching.—Hardy Jones.

Mr. T. B. Whatley, a worthy and highly respected citizen of this county, will be ordained as a Baptist minister of the gospel, at the Gilead Baptist church, on next Saturday. Rev. J. S. Dill, of this city, will participate in the ordination service. Mr. Whatley is a devoted Christian man, and he will do good service in this county.—Tuscaloosa Gazette.

There has just closed at Pleasant Grove church a nine days' meeting in which much good was effected; 19 received by baptism, 1 by letter. Large and attentive congregations attended during the meeting. The preaching was done by the pastor and Eld. E. B. Hannah. Eld. J. B. Wilbanks preached two sermons. To God be all the glory.—T. N. Appleton, Collinsville.

Notwithstanding we were so unfortunate as not to get any one to preach for us I have just closed a most interesting meeting at Hope-well church in Perry county. There were nine additions, three by letter and six by experience. Among the number are several of the staunchest citizens of the county. Hopewell is now one of the strongest county churches we know.—L. Orah Dawson, Scott's.

We have had good meetings at Providence, Liberty Hill, and Pleasant Grove churches, resulting in 4 baptisms at Providence, 7 at Liberty Hill, and 19 at Pleasant Grove (Collinsville). Others I think will follow soon. Congregations very large and attractive. Meeting began at Brandon yesterday. Among the baptized at Collinsville were two of my daughters. To God be all the glory.—Jno. B. Appleton, Collinsville.

Five miles east of Dixie, Chilton county, is Mt. Carmel church, where the brethren have recently erected a handsome church house. The recent meeting continued five days. Bro. W. J. Ruddick, the pastor, and myself did the preaching. The meeting closed last evening with 22 accessions, 16 by experience, 6 by letter. The congregations were extremely large and attentive. The church now numbers 58.—James M. Todd.

The annual protracted meeting was held with Ebenezer church, of Forest Home, Ala., August 7-12. The church was revived. There were five accessions to the church, one by letter and four by baptism. Among these my baptism was a young man crippled from his birth. He was carried into the water in a chair, in which he remained till conveyed out of the water. It was a solemn scene. "Baptism is its own witness."—J. S. A.

To-day three more young men confessed Christ and united with the church and will be baptized to-morrow. Our little church, now numbering over 100, is alive to the interest of the Master and moving rapidly ahead. There have been almost 20 additions to the church since January. The Sabbath-school is flourishing. A Young Ladies' Aid Society has recently been organized. Bro. B. M. Bear is our much loved pastor.—J. D. D., Pine Level.

We have had a meeting of much interest at the Baptist church of this place, lasting one week. We had two important accessions to our church, both heads of families, one by restoration and one by experience. Rev. W. A. Bishop, of Carthage, assisted our pastor, and a powerful man he is in the pulpit. Bro. Bassett, lately received at Snow Hill by Rev. W. G. Curry, added much to the interest of the meeting with his Sankey singing.—J. W. Edwards, Newbern.

We have had a good time at New Prospect church in Butler county, for which we feel very grateful to God. The meeting commenced the 21st and lasted six days. There were nine added to the church, one by letter, eight by baptism. Five of this little band are of our Sunday-school. God help the Sunday-school workers to be diligent. Rev. J. E. Halfey is our pastor, and was assisted in the meeting by Bro. A. T. Sims, who did some excellent preaching. These two ministers are noble workers for the Master's cause.—R. H. Gentry, Georgiana.

I closed a meeting of six days, embracing first Sabbath in August, at Central church, resulting in seven conversions; also at Sulphur Springs, four miles east of Trussville, second Sabbath, in which meeting 17 joined by baptism and five by letter, one a papist; also, on third Sabbath at Salem, in which six joined by baptism and two by letter. I was assisted at Central by Bro. Sloan, at Sulphur Spring by Bro. Inzer, at Salem I did most all the preaching. While I rejoiced in the outpouring of God's Spirit on the unregenerate, I especially rejoice in the manifestations of his power on the church itself. As one brother put it, "the church members themselves got religion." To God be the glory.—M. T. Brantman, Woodlawn.

The raising of funds to pay the publishing of the Associational Minutes, seems to be a small matter. A paltry amount only is needed from each church, and yet we have seen more "humming and hawing" and awkward pauses and disagreeable jars in connection with the effort to raise this little amount in some churches than would be necessary to raise ten times the same sum for almost any other object. We call attention to this little matter because within the next few weeks the majority of the associations in this State will convene. Let there be prompt attention to this duty in each of the churches. It will save trouble.—Es.

Have had delightful meeting of days at Goodwater, 19 accessions. Bro. G. E. Brewer preached seven sermons, which were well received and accomplished great good. Bro. Roby also came up and talked for me four times. He said that he intended to preach a sermon one day, but forgot it. Our little church was greatly encouraged, and my own heart was greatly strengthened. Among other good things that I had to enjoy, was the baptizing of two oldest daughters, 11 and 14 years old. The good work will not cease here. The entire community have felt the good of the meeting, and I look for others to join the church. I am now at Childersburg, and feel that the outlook is encouraging to have a precious meeting here.—Catt Smith.

Interesting and profitable religious services at Wilsonville, Shelby county, Aug. 14-21. Excellent preaching by C. W. O'Hara, G. T. Lee and Prof. B. E. Giles. Initial and closing services by pastor. Twelve were added to the church by baptism, one by letter, one restored. Several others claimed peace in believing. Impressions were deep and solemn, under the "old theology." The additions were from families of large influence in this rapidly improving and enterprising community. Our younger brethren, of whom are those named, in this up country, are strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. His name be praised for sending such laborers into the harvest! If our churches would all put on prayer meeting and Sunday-school energy we should do well. That day is at hand, as well as the day of enlarged benevolence.—E. B. T.

I have just returned from my appointment at Burnsville, the home church of that venerable brother, A. Andrews, who has been and still is doing so much for Baptist missions in Alabama and elsewhere. While at Burnsville I went out to his home, and was shown the mission cotton patch. He thinks he will make between three and four bales off the patch. Some places of it is as fine cotton as your correspondent ever saw. Bro. A. says our Secretary can come around soon and have his heart made glad. This cotton crop has been principally cultivated by this good brother, who is now about eighty years old. He showed this scribe ten large baskets that he had made with his own hands. It seems that he and brother and sister Stevens, old people who live with him, are ready and waiting for the message to come up higher. The Lord bless them in their declining years.—W. N. Hutchins, Planderville.

We have held a series of meetings here conducted by N. C. Underwood, our much beloved pastor. These meetings commenced the last day of July, and continued until Aug. 16th. The power of God's Spirit has been working in our midst, and we have never witnessed such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit since we have been a member of the church. Christians have been revived, sinners converted, excluded members who have been out of the church for years have been brought back, and old feuds have been settled. Fifty-six have joined the church; 43 by experience, 13 by restoration and by letter. Of the number who joined by experience, 23 came from the Sabbath-school. Several came in their tender years. Bro. Underwood has been untiring in his energy and zeal for the upholding of the cause of Christ here. Bro. Underwood gave some excellent advice to the new members, as to their duties as church members, after which a missionary collection was taken up in subscriptions and cash, which amounted to \$137.50. The subscriptions to be paid Oct. 1st. There will be even more than that.—W. H. Scarce, Brundidge.

To quench the Spirit, go on disobeying the calls of your own heart, to stifle the perpetually repeated warnings that recall you from sin and folly, to persist in sins which you know to be sins, to harden your heart when you feel it to be softening, to let pride uphold you in evil, is as great a sin now as when St. Paul warned his converts against it, and is as liable to the same condemnation.

Strive everywhere and in all things to be at peace. If trouble comes from within or without, treat it peacefully. If joy comes, receive it peacefully, without excitement. If we must needs flee from evil let us do it calmly, without agitation, or we may stumble and fall in our haste. Let us do good peacefully, or our hurry will lead us into endless faults. Even repentance is work which should be carried on peacefully.—[St. Francis de Sales.]

STATE MISSION COLUMN.

Our Hope This Year!

To Organize Our Churches for Work in Our Great Need.—A Quarterly Collection from Every Church and a Contribution from Every Member.

OUR PLAN.

To increase the contributions by increasing the number of regular contributors.

OUR FIGURES.

\$24,000 from 90,000 white Baptists in Alabama.

HOW DIVIDED.

\$12,000 for State Missions, \$5,000 for Home Mission Board, Atlanta, Ga., \$5,000 for Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va., \$1,000 for Aged and Infirm Ministers, \$500 for Bible Work of American Baptist Publication Society, \$250 for General Colportage Work, \$250 for Education of Colored Ministerial Students.

HOW WE EXPECT TO SUCCEED.

By the help of the Lord and the earnest co-operation of Pastors and Churches.

OTHER HELPERS.

The Christian women of our churches, in their societies, reporting through their churches, the Children's Mission Bands, and the Sabbath-schools making regular contributions.

A SILENT HELPER.

The little collection envelopes which every church or Sabbath-school, which will adopt them, can get free on application.

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION.

does not belong to the State Mission Board, but is one of its special pets.

Send contributions for any of the above objects to:

W. B. CRUMPTON, Cor. Sec., Marion, Ala.

THE WORK FOR 1896-7.

To the Missionary Baptist Churches and Associations of Alabama.

It is generally known that the State Mission Board has had committed to it nearly all the interests of the denomination in Alabama—State Missions, or Mission work in Alabama, Home Missions, or Mission work in the Southern States and the Island of Cuba, Foreign Missions, or Mission work in "the regions beyond" the territory of the State and Home Mission Boards; Indigent Ministers, Bible and Colportage work, Bible work of the American Baptist Publication Society, and evangelization of the colored people. The plan recommended by the Convention contemplates sending funds for all these objects to the Secretary of this Board.

SOME GOOD REASONS FOR THIS.

It will prevent confusion. It tends to systematize our work. It puts the churches in correspondence with the only agency in the State which is laboring for their highest development. We will know, and the world will know, what we are doing as a denomination. Since, therefore, it tends for any or all of these objects to W. B. Crumpton, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, Marion, Ala.

STATE MISSION WORK.

The Board has now forty employees. During the year sixty-five have labored for all or a part of their time. These report the following:

SUMMARY OF WORK.

Number employed, 65

Days of service, 2,600

Miles traveled, 35,000

Addresses delivered, 2,118

Sermons preached, 2,677

Churches constituted, 13

Baptized, 100

Baptized by others in connection with their labor, 396

Received by letter, 252

Received by restoration, 62

Sunday-schools organized, 100

Bibles sold, 2,243

Value of books sold, \$149.92

Woman's Miss. Soc. organized, 18

Bibles and Testaments donated, value of, \$60.35

Visits to families, 4,649

Visits to churches, 103

Preaching stations, 75

Subscriptions for Fin. Miss. Journal, 429

Prayer meetings commenced, 16

Meeting houses commenced, 49

Meeting houses finished, 8

Subscriptions to Alabama Baptist, 86

BIBLE AND COLPORTAGE WORK.

The American Baptist Publication Society has generously furnished us with Bibles and Testaments for free distribution among the destitute. A part of the collection for Bible work is turned over by the Society to our Foreign Board at Richmond to aid in the publication of translations of the Scriptures made by our missionaries in foreign fields. We ask this year for \$500 for this Society in its able work.

Our Colportage work needs a small contribution each year to pay necessary expenses and cover unavoidable losses. We ask for general colportage work \$250. The colporteurs have sold 2,243 books, valued at \$1,429.02. We hope soon to have this work so organized that it may be more efficient than ever.

PERMANENT FUNDS NOT YET COMPLETED.

Samuel Henderson, \$80.00

W. M. Wilson, 82.45

Joshua H. Foster, 77.00

W. Jacob Parker, 62.10

A. J. Waldrop, 43.75

Blatt Manly, Sr., 29.00

Wood and Weaver, 93.00

T. P. Holcomb, 60.00

John Hawthorn, 55.54

Oliver Welch, 67.95

Eola T. Davis, 5.00

Robert Carson, 50.00

J. D. Keuffe, 32.75

W. C. Myatt, 33.34

L. W. Suttle, 65.00

Bailey Bruce, 5.



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Alabama Baptist.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., SEPT. 3, 1886.

What Energy has Done.

Twenty-five years ago a few young men in London resolved to meet every evening to exchange ideas. The number gradually increased till it was necessary to hire a room. Growing ambitious they hired lecturers, and many people were brought together. Many of them were the best of their success to this effort of gaining knowledge.

Indefatigable industry coupled with the desire for knowledge produced great results. Walter Scott, when he was in a lawyer's office, spent his evenings in study. John Britton, the author of agricultural works, said, "I studied my books in bed on winter evenings, because too poor to have a fire." He used every opportunity to read; the books he picked up for a few moments at the book stalls helped him, he says, Napoleon had indomitable perseverance and energy. Dr. Livingstone at the age of ten years, working in a factory, bought with his first wages a Latin grammar, and studied it until twelve at night. He studied Virgil and Horace the same way, and finally entered college and was graduated.

Many will ask how they can advance themselves in knowledge. The first thing is determination; the next perseverance.

Walter Scott gave this advice to young men: "Do instantly whatever is to be done, and take hours of recreation after business; never before it." Business men often say, "Time is money." But it is more than that to the young man. If used right it is self-improvement, culture, strength, and growth of character. The habit of idleness is a hard one to get rid of. Time spent in reading anything and everything is weakening to the mind. Books chosen and read with care cultivate the mind and character. The books you read should raise your thoughts and aspirations, strengthen your energy and help you in your work.

Thackeray says, "Try to frequent the company of your betters. In books and in life frequent that which is the most wholesome society, learn to admire, and you will be improved. Note what great men have admired; they admire great things; narrow spirits admire basely, and worship meanly."

Brother and Sister.

Sometimes, somewhere, we came across an article giving advice to brothers concerning their sisters, which so struck us that we cut it out, and we give it entire, hoping that our young folks will read it and heed it.

"Young men seldom realize how happy they can make their sisters by small acts of courtesy. How many brothers offer to their sisters the little attentions which they instinctively give to other girls or women? Nay, how many are there who do not feel themselves justified in venturing upon their sisters the irritated feelings which they have felt obliged to conceal in their intercourse with the world? A brother who would not hurt his sister of the very least of her rights will yet inflict upon her the grave and almost irreparable wrong of rudeness—a wrong as irreparable as it is dastardly. For rudeness hurts—hurts grievously and lastingly; and what man is worthy of the name who hurts a woman? Brothers do not realize how far a want of courteous conduct at home may go to wreck their sisters' future lives. They wonder at the unaccountable liking of girls for men whom the brothers know to be unworthy—men whose very attentions they are to be almost an insult to a woman's goodness. Do they not see that it is the courtesy of these men—their 'company manners,' if you please—which makes them agreeable to women? Women so seldom have a high standard of manhood! They so seldom see the best of the men they know the best. How should they not be deceived, and mistake that outside veneer of courtesy which makes pleasant the present hour for that inward truth of character which shall be a benediction to all their future lives? Brothers, if you would have your sisters love worthily, let them at least be accustomed to gentle manners, that when they see them strangers they may not be so dazzled as to become incapable of distinguishing a true man from a sham."

Sorrow is not an accident, occurring now and then—it is the very wool which is woven into the warp of life, and he who has not discerned the divine sacredness of sorrow and the profound meaning which is concealed in a pain has yet to learn what life is. The cross, manifested as the necessity of the highest life, alone interprets it.—F. W. Robertson.

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Wedlock and Weddings.

BY REV. T. L. CUYLER, D.D.

"Friend H—, why have you never married?"

The prompt answer was: "I cannot afford to. The girls in my stratum of society now-a-days are not satisfied without diamonds, seal skins and opera tickets, and my small income can't stand that."

So a warm-hearted man travels the life journey alone, when for his own sake, and for some good woman's sake, he ought to be mated. What H— said, half in sport, had a serious side to it. There is no doubt that hundreds of young men deny themselves a wife (and often too drift into licentious alliances) because they cannot support a wife who has extravagant notions of living. All the worse for both sexes; celibacy is often as hazardous to the woman as to the man. God ordained marriage, because he knew that "it is not good" for either sex "to be alone."

Every young woman is not "clean daff" on the subject of stylish living; there are as sensible girls left in this world as there were when Solomon wrote the thirty-first chapter of the Book of Proverbs. A friend of mine, who had just learned his trade, said to the young lady whom he loved:

"You are having offers from young men in handsome circumstances. If you marry me I can promise you, for a while, nothing better than the upper story of a boarding house."

She admired his frankness, and had sense enough to know that the gentle love of a pure and noble young man was a greater prize than a parlor carpeted with Wilton and a wardrobe filled with satin and point lace. She married him and he fought his way up to become the prosperous head of a firm in Broadway. If she had sold her maiden heart for money (which is often a genteel form of prostitution) she would have cheated herself deplorably. There is but one single, valid motive for wedlock, and that is, pure, old-fashioned love—a love strong enough to stand any strain and bear any pressure.

The social *malaria* of these times is a false idea of matrimony; the consequence of the day is a divorce. Every strand that is cut in the sacred bond of wedlock loosens the fabric of both society and the church. Easy divorce breeds a practical polygamy as abominable as any in Utah. Occasionally divorces are justified by the criminal conduct of one party towards the other, and long-suffering innocence.

"Incompatibility" is no more a valid ground for divorce than bad digestion or a broken limb. I have watched the after history of the hundreds whom I have married, and have usually found that the "misfits" were the result of hasty or thoughtless engagements—sometimes in defiance of parental wisdom and wishes.

When young people go into an engagement for life as carelessly as they go to a picnic they must expect to pay for their folly with bitter experience. With thousands a marriage engagement is a matter of boyish or girlish caprice. Sometimes a wife is sought for the gross gratification of sensual appetite; sometimes a shrewd pecuniary speculation; sometimes to secure a support for shiftless laziness from a father-in-law. Such violations of the sacred core idea of wedlock often end in divorce court, or in some other form of permanent separation. If wise marriages are "made in heaven," then the hasty, loose, selfish, or libidinous sort are the handiwork of the devil. I would like to whisper in every young lady's ear—never be "too good" too cheaply; never say "yes" too hastily; never accept any man who cannot offer you a love without a rival and a character without a stain. Common sense, industrious habits, a warm heart, and a Bible conscience are the first requisites; when a young man can lay these at your feet be careful how you say "no" to him; you may be sorry for it, and by and by take up with a sorry stick from a silly fellow of being laughed at as an "old maid." But the easier that the divorce process is made, the more numerous will be the hasty, reckless and ill-assorted marriages.

Probably there never was a marital union that did not involve a single particle of friction; and simply because no man is a demi-god and no woman an angel. But even the few and inevitable frictions will not wear on the "rivets" if they are kept well oiled with unselfish love. When true hearts are wedded in the Lord, and wedded for heaven, they can bear an occasional disagreement of taste or judgment, or a few disappointments, and not love each other one whit the less. What cuts a wedding ring through the soonest is wilful neglect.—*Christian Secretary.*

A Lesson in Temperance.

Malcolm Hunter, a thoughtful lad of fifteen years, left his home one bright, sunny spring morning to hunt up his companions and with them make the most of the pleasant weather and the Saturday holiday. He had not proceeded far before he met Haywood Green, one of his school chums.

"Oh, Malcolm," exclaimed Haywood, eagerly, "I am so glad I have met you. The boys have a splendid scheme on hand!"

"What is that?" asked Malcolm, quietly.

"Why, we are going to raise old Kane!"

"Raise old Kane?" said Malcolm in astonishment. "What do you mean?"

"Well," replied the friend laughing, "you know old John Kane, the carpenter? He's lying over in Bradford's field drunk, and we're going over to raise him up with a rope, and haul him up and let the whisky drain out of him."

Malcolm did not reply for a few moments. He was a lad of very quiet ways, but cheerful in disposition, settled beyond his age, confident and unassuming in his manner, and these qualities made him a leader, and the popular one among his companions; for while he joined in their sports heartily, he controlled their impulsiveness and prevented them getting

into mischief. Haywood looked at him uneasily, fearing he would stop what they believed to be a good joke, but was relieved as Malcolm said after a pause:

"I will join you on one condition," "What is it?" asked Haywood, eagerly.

"That you will 'raise old Kane' my way."

"All right," answered Haywood; "I know the boys will all agree to that."

Haywood knew Malcolm was a lad of many expedients, and he was satisfied that any change he would suggest in their plan would be a good one, nor was he mistaken.

Malcolm and Haywood walked on down the road and met a half dozen of their companions awaiting Haywood's return, near Bradford's field.

As the two boys came up Malcolm looked across the field and saw John Kane lying under a tree as Haywood had described. Kane was sleeping off the effects of a carousal at the village tavern the night before, all unmindful of the conspiracy that had been arranged against him.

The carpenter was still a young man, and had, but a year or two before, been greatly respected for his sober and industrious habits; but had fallen into dissipated ways, neglected his family and trade, and become so degraded that it was a common sight to see him reeling home drunk from the tavern, or, as the boys had discovered him on this morning, lying on a stump paralyzed in body and brain from the effects of liquor.

A brief consultation among the boys followed the arrival of Malcolm and Haywood, at the close of which, Malcolm, taking one of his comrades with him, passed over to where the carpenter lay.

"Come, Mr. Kane, wake up!" shouted Malcolm, shaking the sleeper and endeavoring to arouse him.

It was a difficult task, but finally successful, and the carpenter was raised to his feet. He stared at the two boys in a stupid, idiotic sort of a way.

"What is the matter, boys?" he asked.

"Don't you know that Burn's window was broken in last night and some watches taken? If you would get away before the sheriff comes, you had better come with us."

"Is it possible that I did that when I was full?" gasped John Kane looking around with a frightened expression. "Oh what shall I do? what shall I do?"

"It is not as bad as you think," said Malcolm; "but you had better come with us and we will hide you until you are all right again."

John Kane made no objection, but went meekly with Malcolm, who, joined by the other boys, proceeded to his father's barn, where the trembling man was safely lodged. Then, making an excuse for leaving them, Malcolm went to the house where he got a cup of strong coffee and bread and meat which he took to the barn and gave to John Kane.

The carpenter ate and drank with an apparent relish and then, at Malcolm's suggestion, laid down in the haymow and was soon asleep. Meantime, the boys kept watch over him, and when he awoke late in the day, they had some more coffee and bread and meat, so that by daylight the nerves of the drunkard were strong, and except for the fear which possessed him he was fully restored in mind and body.

After dark the boys took him home, where they had taken a lot of provisions during the afternoon, and made him promise not to leave the house until they could assure him that "everything was all right."

Early the next morning Malcolm went over to John Kane's house, and taking an entertaining book with him spent the morning reading to the unfortunate man. In this pleasant task Haywood Green relieved him after dinner, and from that time on for two weeks, all the boys took turns about in visiting and reading to their charge, and their parents having been told of their peculiar missionary work, kept the Kane family supplied with food.

At the end of the two weeks Malcolm confessed to the carpenter the artifice that had been made use of to reform him, and far from getting angry John Kane felt truly grateful and went back to his old ways. He was kept busy at work all summer through the efforts of Malcolm and his friends, and gradually built up a paying business on the foundation which the boys supplied in this way.

This was Malcolm's "scheme" for "raising old Kane," and while he and his companions always regarded the carpenter as their protégé, John Kane's reformation was thorough and lasting, and dated from the day when he so narrowly escaped Haywood Green's draining-out process.—*Presbyterian Observer.*

Patient in Suffering.

The "Open Window," a magazine devoted to the interest of the Shut in Society, gives such a love picture of the heroism displayed in one sick-room that help and comfort must follow its reading.

In her shadowy sick room I found a patient suffering lying alone. It was an hour when her son could be away from his business and with her, and all the week she waited for this time of enjoyment of his society and for the comfort of his presence.

"But where is Henry?" I asked, looking about the chamber.

"I sent him away," said the mother with a smile.

"Sent him away, when you have waited all the week to have him with you?"

"Yes," she answered, gently. "Sunday is his only free day, you know, and he has so little sunshine and fresh air that I thought a walk would do him good."

"But I am almost surprised that he should be willing to go," I answered in a disappointed tone, for this sweet invalid had so many lonely hours that I coveted for her the delight she had so unhesitatingly put aside.

"He would have stayed," she answered, gently. "He is always willing to stay, but Mrs. Hunt sent me such

a delicious mold of jelly that I wanted old Hetty Grant to have some of it, so I persuaded Henry to take it to her."

"Yes, I understand, two birds with one stone. Old Hetty Grant and the boy must both be made happy, but how about yourself? I confess I wanted you to be happy to-day, and I touched the pale cheek playfully, surprised to see her eyes filling with tears.

"But you mustn't make me selfish, dear," she said in a voice that tried to be cheery. "The fact is, I know complaints are hard for any one who is young and strong, and I must not complain before him. I said that he does not feel for me, he feels too much. He feels helpless and perplexed, and of course, he does not know one thing to do to help, and sometimes he goes away half vexed and with a feeling that is anything but submissive to God. When this happens, I fear my illness is becoming a harm, instead of a blessing to him, as of course I want it to be."

"And so you send him away when you suffer?"

"Yes; and partly for that reason I sent him away to-day. My head was so full of pain that I could not bear the light, neither could I bear to shut him up here in the shadows. Then I want his recollection of me to be sweet after I am gone, not painful, and how can it be so if he sees all I have to bear?"

"And so the dear soul was bearing her own load of physical distress, and making at the same time the effort to conceal it, that the one dearest to her might not be saddened by her pain. As she looked at her, I could recall many another sufferer who were doing the same thing day after day, and week after week. And I wished some of the people who feel so sure that invalidism always makes people selfish could see this lovely mother quietly putting away the things she cares most for in life, knowing all the time that she is moving surely and swiftly beyond the sight of her boy's beloved face."

"We little know the heroism practiced in many a sick room. We count the tears, and the moans, and the complaints, but it must be God who keeps that sweeter record of the tears that are suppressed, the moans that are checked, the impatient words that are unspoken on the lips. His infinite tenderness must surely supply what human tenderness fails to give."

A Sensible Jurist.

Recently, at Philadelphia, the *News* sent a reporter to write up a low groggery that was the haunt of vice and crime, and was so described. The keeper of this dive thereupon brought a suit for malicious libel, laying his damages at \$50,000. When Judge Mitchell, before whom the case was tried, came to submit it to the jury, he delivered a charge in which he said: "The matters of public interest it is the right, and not only the right, but the duty, of public newspapers to call attention to evils which concern the public, and certainly such publication is the strongest remedy ever discovered in a free country to correct public evils. Now if there is anything which concerns the public, it is the habits and morals of the young men who are growing up, and who will at a future date be the citizens of the country. Therefore, the subject matter of this article is one of the greatest importance, and the publication is what is termed a privileged communication, and justified by the circumstances. It is not only justified, but meritorious as a public service."

His Condescending Love.

The love of Christ is condescending. We measure an act of condescension by the position, rank or power of the individual from whom it emanates. Forming our view of Christ's love upon this principle—sounding its depth and testing its greatness and intensity by this criterion, even our profoundest conception of the self-abasement and humiliation to which it descended will be at an infinite remove from the reality. The stoop of the Son of God to our humanity—the incarnation of Deity—was an event so unheard of, a fact so stupendous, and transcendent, that it stands in the history of the universe like an orb in its own solitary, unapproachable grandeur, and will be the wonder, the study and the song of all pure, holy intelligences through eternity. Such was the love of Christ. It drew him from heaven, brought him down to earth, to live and labor, suffer and die, robed in the humanity which he stooped so low to save.

Each human being does not solely bear its own sin, nor work out its own retribution. Upon others near and distant falls the debt, and it must be paid.—*Miss Mulock.*

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