

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST.

J. G. HARRIS, Proprietor.

"SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE."

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NUMBER 2.

Forgetting the things Behind Us.

Substance of a New Year's sermon by G. A. Lofton, D.D., Talladega.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:13-14.

The apostle drew a splendid figure of himself from the Olympic Games. The racer pressing for the prize never looked behind to see how far he had run, nor how close his antagonist was upon him. He looked neither to the right, nor to the left, at the multitude that gazed upon the contest, and shouted the triumph of the victor. Relieved of every besetting obstacle, and every retarding weight, schooled in the regimen of the abstemious competitor for prizes, he ran with patience the race before him, ever keeping his eye on the goal and the crown ahead, and pressing every nerve and muscle and energy of his body, he stretched himself for the mastery and the reward.

Thus Paul represents himself. He had not "attained"—"apprehended"—as yet. He had not reached the proximate perfection of the best finished career, however perfect as compared with others. Contrary to the views of modern perfectionism, he felt that he could become wiser, purer and more useful—win a brighter and more starful crown. He was not satisfied with all his past attainments in grace, not with all his past achievements in work. He would forget, therefore, the things behind him, and reach forth into grander developments before him; still press on for the prize of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus. His course was unfinished; and he discovered that sanctification was a progressive growth in wisdom, holiness and effort, until we reach the fullness of the stature of a man in Christ Jesus; if, indeed, we can ever reach it here below, save by approximation.

Hence, Paul could not afford to sit down upon what he was, or had done, great as it was. His heavenly calling could not be fulfilled short of the end of life's course. The prize could not be expected, if, however close to the goal, he should cease to press. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith, "the faith," and who held the crown of righteousness in his hand, at the end of the stadium, the apostle determined not to flatter himself with the perfection of his race, so far and so well run. He resolved to hold on, hold fast, and hold out with patience to the glorious end. He kept his eye on Jesus, and upon his prize, like the needle to the pole. By and by, he exultingly shouted, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." The time of his departure had come, and he was ready to be delivered; and, at the end of his great and glorious conflict, he could look over to heaven and see Jesus, the righteous judge, holding his crown in his hand, ready for the great coronation day. The point of his just attainment—apprehension, perfection—had been reached, only at the end of glorious and beautiful life. "We done, good and faithful servant."

Herein we learn a few important lessons:

1. We are to forget the things behind us, no matter how lofty our spiritual attainments, no matter how sublime our achievements. We are never to be satisfied with what we are doing or have done for God. There is no furlough, much less a discharge in God's service. The older and the better we get, the more we have done, the harder we should press for the prize of our high calling. There is no stopping point on the race course, no time to look back, no time to pause and survey our surroundings. "The race course for the crown of glory knows no such conduct in the racer."
2. And yet, how many professed Christians are stopping to trouble with the things behind them! Thousands brood over the past, or else congratulate themselves with what they have accomplished. Some are nursing their sorrows, their misfortunes and failures, raking among the smoldering embers for lost hopes, and a multitude are opening forever the old wounds of grief and grievance to see them bleed afresh. Some are even penitent, and yet never repentant of sin; while others are ever revelling in the fleshpots of Egypt, as they call to remembrance their half renounced pleasures and treasures. This is even a thousand times worse than stopping to pause over, or to be satisfied with, past attainments and achievements. It is not thus that Paul teaches us. We are to lay aside every weight, and the besetting sin, in order to run with patience the race set before us; and then when the race is under full headway,

not to stop to trouble with anything, good or bad, which may be behind us. Jesus says, "Let the dead bury their dead." Put your hand to the plow and look not back, neither stop to look at the sun, in order to see the time of your short life's day. Sundown is the time to stop the plow, unhitch your horse, and go home to rest. We have no dinner time of day. We eat and drink as we go, but we plow on to the end of the row, nor look at the sun till our race is run.

2. The text presents us the sublime motive in the race, which arises from the hopes and prospects of futurity before us. Paul reached forth unto the things before him, stretched himself upon the race which still lay ahead of him. The glory of growth and work ahead of him was sufficient to arouse his zeal and energy; for infinitely more than he had ever attained, if possible. The love of future progressive development gives mighty impulse and inspiration to the true and enterprising—heroic—Christian. It is pursuit, not possession, the future, not the past, which inspires and animates to great endeavor. "No matter what we have been, or done, we can't afford to stop and sit down. We are soon forgotten, if we let the future go; and more than this, no man's character, or calling, is complete if his life work is left an unfinished job. It takes a whole life, characterized by a progressive development to the bitter end, to complete the purpose and aim of human existence. A grand work is often ruined, and had as well never been begun, by the unfortunate close of a man's career. Death may stop a work begun, but if zeal and purpose characterized its beginning up to the hour of its close, the work will, ordinarily, perpetuate itself in some other man, thus impressed by the work itself and the character of its originator. Not so with unfinished jobs picked up and laid down by the faltering, vacillating creature who starts well on life's course, but stops, or turns back.

Paul reached forth unto the things of the future, even forgetting the things behind him. Thank God for the future which even lies ahead of every man; and thank God for his promises to us, if that future is improved and utilized, however short. Let us pick up courage upon this point. The time may be short, the day far spent and the night at hand, but God will prosper and bless the work of even the "eleventh" hour man who will enter the vineyard. Yea, he will give him the "penny" of the whole day laborer, if he is only faithful to the end. Discouraged Christian! heretofore, sluggish, thou man about to stop, here is encouragement for you all. Reach forth unto the things of the future, and let the present and the past go. The future, however brief, is full of hope and work and growth. Let this be your mighty inspiration.

3. The last lesson of Paul's figure is the animating motive to the race of the glorious prize at the end of the course. It is not the prize of salvation, but of reward. The evidence of salvation is that we are on the race, and that we run it to the end. Salvation by grace put us on the race; and Jesus, the sinner's friend, will bring us to the end. There is no doubt about this, but the evidence of redemption by grace is that we get on the track and run out to the end. If we stop on the way permanently, or turn back, we are but ostensible racers. We climbed over the wall and got on the pilgrim's way without God's grace, and without the qualifications for successful running to the end. Every true child of God will run out to the end somehow, poorly and ploddingly, it may be, but he will get up, or get on, again, and at last run out to the end, whether he loses his reward or gains it. He may "suffer loss" and get out "by the skin of his teeth," be "saved so as by fire," but he will get there.

Salvation is not the question involved, except in evidence or development. God holds out a fadeless crown to the successful racer. This is the animating motive of reward to fidelity. It is perfectly right to strike for such a prize. It is not a matter of selfishness, nor of ambition, else God had not held out the motive to us. After all we look for "our starry crown; the crown of life and righteousness, at the hands of a righteous judge, not as a matter of merit, but of grace. We give God all the glory, both of salvation and of reward. We deserve nothing, and we owe all to God. We are but unprofitable servants, even when we have done our duty; done the best we could. God saves us by grace, puts us on the race course, gives us the power to run, prompts us to press with vigor on, keeps us faithful to the end, gives us

grace for every trial, and then gives us the crown of reward, as well as the salvation by grace. Yet, by God's grace we win the prize, nevertheless; and we shall be filled with its joy and be crowned with its glory when we are rewarded with it. It will be better than going to heaven empty-handed.

Brethren, the meaning of this text, to-day, is "Go forward!" Let us to-day simply bury the past, so far as it does not constitute a motive to future progress and a hope of our glorious reward. Remember your high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and let us determine to honor God by a fidelity we have never shown, and to wear a crown bright and full of the stars of spiritual conquest. Let 1887 be full of prayer and praise and work for Jesus. Some of you may finish your course this year. God may have already said of some of you, "This year shalt thou die." Let us, then, redeem this brief span with an abounding and fruitful labor in the Lord, knowing that no labor in the Lord is in vain. Thank God for the future yet before you. Reach forth unto it, as Paul did, stretching every nerve for its progress in development and achievement, and fixing your eye upon the goal of an everlasting prize, press, press, press for the final mark.

Some Letters to the Secretary.

A brother pastor sends \$11.35 from his church and Sunday-school, and adds: "We tried the envelope plan; it worked well." The striking part is, the Sunday-school collection is larger than that from the church. I think the following letter from another part of the State will explain this:

"This is from my piney woods church, \$2.85. I like to use the envelopes. I find out who contributes to our mission work by their use, and can't try to educate those who do not. I find that many of our older members do not like the envelope plan (in fact they do not like mission work). I am depending largely on my young members; they seem willing to do what they can. It is my aim, with God's help, to raise in my churches the amounts asked for by the association."

There is food for reflection here: 1. Its a "piney woods church." Some brethren tell me the envelopes will do for the city churches, but not for the country, but it is demonstrated that they will do as well in one place as another, if the people are willing to try and the pastor has any missionary zeal about him.

2. The old folks don't like the plan, but the young people do. I will not comment upon this. I got into trouble with some old folks last fall about certain remarks I made about this envelope business. But I am not responsible for all that the readers of this may think about a certain set of our readers who stand against all progress, who will not remember that "things ain't like they use to be." There are several other points in this brother's letter worthy of attention, but this is enough. I will say though, this brother is going to succeed with his churches because his heart is in his work, and he has a head full of common sense.

Another letter from a deacon in a country church: "I find it the best system I have ever seen. More members are reached by it. It reaches some who would otherwise contribute nothing. It gives a certain amount of work to some who would not know they were members did we not have the distribution and collection of envelopes. We like the plan very much." He wrote me to send him 1,000 envelopes. The money for all our Boards comes regularly from this church.

I have another word from Bro. Dill, of Tuscaloosa: "The church adopted the envelope system of the State Mission Board and is pleased with it. Our collection for Ministerial Education brought in nearly double our usual contribution for this purpose, and we hope to double our contributions to all objects. I think churches which adopt this system, and work it faithfully, will be surprised at the results."

A brother in a town church writes, after using it successfully in his Sunday-school: "All that is needed to make your envelope system a grand success, is a live man to introduce them." Yes, a "live man," or *anyman*, where the men will not give time and attention to it. They need, too, not a simple introduction, but a continued and persistent following up.

These are samples of the many letters I am constantly receiving, and I am publishing these extracts that churches and pastors may be encouraged to give them a fair trial.

W. B. CRUMPTON.

He that has no character is not a man; he is only a thing.—Chamfort.

Tidings from Our Foreign Fields.

From Foreign Mission Journal.

CHINA.
Miss Sallie Stien, Canton, writes of a fire consuming a number of houses around here, while hers was saved, although "the fire got within three yards of me, and I could see the flames as if they were peeping around the back corner of my house."

Dr. R. H. Graves, Canton, says: "I again have to face the question of going to the United States. I am very reluctant to go as long as I can do my work here, but if two years' rest will enable me to do efficient work again, my judgment tells me it is best to go. My eyes trouble me—the sight being quite dim—so that I can use them but little. They will probably not be better until I get strong. I hope we may soon have a young man here to help in the work."

Rev. E. Z. Simmons, Canton, speaking of the recent purchase of a chapel of their own, by the Shin Hing church, says: "Out of 47 members, 45 had subscribed, and all but two had paid in full the amounts promised. They have nearly one hundred dollars on hand with which to repair the chapel." He reports a drought during the fall months, which caused almost a complete failure of crops. The people will undoubtedly suffer for food during the winter and spring. Our church at Tsing Ue have recently bought a house and repaired it as a chapel, and have moved in. They are having good opportunities for preaching, and are happy. They have been without a chapel for three years. They have had two rented houses torn down by mobs. I hope their own house will fare better. We do rejoice to see our members in their poverty, abounding in liberality.

Rev. W. D. Powell writes Nov. 20th: We have now been twelve days in the mountains. More than twenty candidates have been received and five baptized. Others are pressing into the kingdom. We are now in Rayones, a town of three thousand inhabitants. No wagon, buggy, or wheeled conveyance, can come within thirty miles of the place. The outlook is fine. I have three Mexican brethren with me. The growth of the work is so marvellous that we must soon have more native helpers. Is there not some wealthy brother who would support a man until next July?

Fifth Sunday Meeting.

The Second meeting of the central district of the Canaan Association will convene with the Pratt Mines Baptist church on the fifth Sunday in January, 1887, commencing Saturday morning before at 10 o'clock. The following programme will be observed: 1st, Saturday morning at 10 o'clock, address of welcome by the pastor, Bro. J. C. Hudson; response by some brother to be appointed by the Chairman of the meeting.

2nd, subject: The effect of the condition of the church upon the preaching of the word. Rev. W. C. Cleveland, D. D., and G. T. Green. 3rd, subject: The best method of conducting first Sunday meetings. Revs. D. I. Purser and G. D. Staton. 4th, subject: Duties of members to their pastors. Revs. W. A. Hobson and James Hogan.

5th, subject: Duties of Christians in regard to the cause of temperance. (Saturday night). R. W. Beck and R. J. Waldrop. 6th, subject: What are the best methods of conducting Sunday-schools? (Sunday morning 9:30 o'clock). Rev. J. M. Huey and T. W. Long.

Preaching Sunday morning at 11 o'clock by Rev. W. A. Hobson.

Brethren will please take notice of the appointment of this meeting, and be sure to be on hand, and let us try to make the meeting interesting as well as profitable.

G. G. MILES, Chair. Com.

Antioch Association.

The meeting of the executive board of Antioch Association and district meeting for fifth Sunday in January will be held at Union church, Washington county. A full representation of the board is desired, as some important business is to come up before the Board. The introductory sermon will be preached by Eld. S. M. Tucker at 11 o'clock Saturday. The following subjects will be discussed during the meeting:

1. The part to be taken by each individually in sending the gospel into the world. Opening address by Joseph Gresham, Sr.
2. The best method of enlisting every member to contribute to the cause of Christ. Opened by Eld. T. E. Tucker.
3. To what extent is the church responsible for the efficiency of the ministry? Opened by Eld. W. H. De Witt.
4. To what extent is the ministry responsible for the development of the churches? Opened by T. W. Hall.
5. The duty of every Christian to exercise an influence, and to put forth every effort to win others to Christ. Opened by J. W. Granade.

All the brethren will be expected to take part in discussing these subjects. Preaching will be arranged by the deacons of Union church.

T. E. TUCKER.

It is the crushed olive that yields the oil; the pressed grape that gives forth the wine, and it was the smitten rock that gave the people water. So it is the broken, contrite heart that is most rich in holiness and most fragrant in grace.

for various purposes. The above figures apply to Bahia local church. The Bahia mission includes three churches, 5 ordained preachers, 3 licentiates, and 126 members. Behold, what God hath wrought! Three were baptized recently in Maccio. We have several hopeful cases here. An attempt to blow up the church with a bomb, during services, failed. Threats of violence are common.

ITALY.
Rev. J. H. Eager reports the death of Mrs. Basile, wife of the pastor at Naples. The evangelicals of Naples have been most kind and attentive to our dear old brother and his daughter. During this time of special affliction, two of our evangelists have been left widowers within a month's time. May the "God of comfort" comfort them in their affliction! October 18th Master Geo. Taylor Eager was born.

MEXICO.

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Fifth Sunday Meeting.

Programme for the meeting of the first district of the Canaan Association, to be held with Central church, beginning Friday before the fifth Sabbath in January, 1887.

Introductory Sermon, G. A. Chums.

1. What is it to be a Christian, J. L. Thurman, J. M. Pressley and J. L. Watson.
2. Saturday morning at 9 o'clock. The obligations resting on us as Baptists to educate young ministers, J. T. Herring, J. P. Pearson and S. K. C. Adams.

3. What is the best method of raising funds for the cause of Christ? G. T. Green, R. L. Watts and W. B. McCombs.
4. Wherein are we as Baptists different from other denominations? S. R. C. Adams, J. W. Dorman and R. W. Inzer.

Sunday-school mass meeting Sunday morning at 9 o'clock.

Come brethren and help us.

M. T. BRANHAM,
On part of Com.

Work of the Colored Baptists in Alabama.

Mr. Editor: Please allow me space in your paper to state the nature of our work. The colored Baptists of the State are supporting a university located at Selma, Ala., in which we are educating our ministers. We are also doing a State mission work, which includes the Sunday-school work. Our attention is also given to the importance of temperance. The education of the ministry is an important feature of our work, for it is impossible for us to succeed without an educated ministry. We have been trying for some time to carry on this work under the great difficulty of financial embarrassment. And as our school is supported by donations from individuals we ask our white brethren and friends to give us all the aid they can. We will be thankful for it, in whatever way it may suit them best to give it.

M. TYLER, Pres't.
Col. Bap. State Convention.

Letter from Texas.

The longer I remain in Texas, the better I like it, albeit the portion of the State in which I reside is very far above the average. Indeed, it is doubtful, I think, whether there is another portion of the western continent that contains as much good land in a body as we have here in eight or ten counties. This land is black, and very rich, the soil varying from one to ten or fifteen feet in depth. It is claimed that some of these lands have been in cultivation for thirty to forty years, and that, though no fertilizers have been used, it is quite as productive as it ever was. The value of these lands is becoming known, and they are rising in price very rapidly. Corn, cotton, wheat, oats, barley, &c., grow with great luxuriance, and the yield is enormous, when the seasons suit. The present year has been unusually dry, and yet the cotton crop in this portion of the State has been enormous, and though so much has been produced, the crop has well nigh all been gathered and sold. Everything seems to be plentiful here, and the people generally appear contented and happy.

The Baptist cause in this state is making very rapid progress. Bro. A. J. Holt, the financial secretary and superintendent of missions, is a man of great energy and efficiency, and through his efforts, well seconded by a large number of zealous and pious Baptists throughout the State, the Baptists are rapidly possessing the field. Bro. Jeff. Ray, State Superintendent of Baptist Sunday-schools, is doing a magnificent work in his line. Many thousands of Texas children are thus gathered into Baptist Sunday-schools, and many of them will, doubtless, be attached to our church, who else would drift into some other denomination.

The Texas Baptist and Herald has been much improved of late, both in appearance and matter. The proprietor, Dr. S. A. Hayden, seems resolved to bring his paper strictly to a cash basis at the beginning of 1887. This, it seems to me, is the only fair method of running a paper, and if a people will not support a paper on a cash basis, I think it is safe to assume that they will not support it at all.

Texas assumes the right of supplying her own Sunday-school literature. Brother Kit Williams, with the aid of pastors Hanks and Spalding, is publishing a good paper, with graded lessons, &c. It is announced that a large publishing house, under the direction of Dr. Hayden and others, will be opened up soon in Dallas, the Atlanta of Central Texas.

I often think of my many dear kin-

dred and friends in Alabama, with whom, had it been the will of God, I should have been delighted to live and die; but many of us will still live together in the New Jerusalem, "the city of the great King," the home of all the saved. I am sure that the time is very short until we shall meet again; and, while I cannot say that I am tired of life, I do not regret that my stay here will be brief. The future, so crowded with glories and bliss, is just a little way ahead; and, at times, I almost wish myself done with time. But for the opportunity which time affords me of glorifying God, I should be anxious to depart. Wishing all the readers of the ALABAMA BAPTIST a happy New Year, and a happy life succeeding it, I am

Very truly,
A. S. WORRELL.

Literary Notes.

Talmage Daily Calendar for 1887, published by the Brooklyn Magazine is worthy of a notice in our paper. The design of the board was made by Mr. George R. Halm, the portrait of Dr. Talmage by Sarony, of New York, specially for this Calendar. It contains a leaf for each day of the year with an extract from the sermons of Talmage. The price of the Calendar is 50 cents. It makes a very useful gift.

The Emerson Calendar for 1887, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, fifty cents. This Calendar is on a plan entirely new, the chief features of which are the additional information given, in regard to the day of the week upon which each day of the year will fall, the consecutive number of each day of the year, the days on which the moon is new and full, the anniversaries of noted events, and of the birth of famous men, ecclesiastical and civil days, information respecting rates of postage, and measures of length, weight, and capacity; also dates of the eclipses during the year 1887, and of the morning and evening stars.

The decorations include an excellent portrait, and the symbolic pine tree also appears in the design. A border of "conventionalized" panics runs across the top, and the coloring is as admirable as the sentences which the Calendar contains.

Chauteau Gem Calendar, with Sunday-school golden texts and daily Scripture promises, for 1887, compiled by Miss M. A. Barney, contains a leaf for every day in the year. Each leaf contains choice selections from the best of American and English poets and prose writers. This is the third year of the C. L. S. C. Calendar, and is a great improvement over former issues. The leading feature in the new calendar is that the scripture promise is given for each day of the week, and that the quotations are on the same line of thought. This is an entirely original and new arrangement, and one of great helpfulness. This Calendar is not only adapted to readers of the C. L. S. C. course of reading, but to members of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, also to Sunday-school teachers and Christian workers generally. Retail price, in box for mailing, 50 cents; Anderson & Krums, No. 7 Bond Street, New York City.

A BEAUTIFUL BAPTIST GIFT.

One of the very best and most popular Baptist books ever issued from the Baptist press of America, "Grace, Truth, or Love and Principle," by Mrs. Sallie Rochester Ford, 75,000 copies have been sold. It will be sent, with any name embossed with gold letters on the back, for \$1.50. "Ford's Christian Repository, and Home Circle," the Baptist Monthly, edited by Dr. and Mrs. Ford, \$2.50 per year. "Grace, Truth, or Love and Principle," for one year, for \$3.00. "Lydia, or the Power of Truth," an instructive serial by Mrs. Ford, commenced in the November number. The November and December numbers sent free to all new subscribers now. Address S. H. Ford, St. Louis, Mo.

A useful little pamphlet, and one printed in excellent style, is "Lessons and Golden Texts for 1887." It is a very useful compilation, embracing a list of the lessons and Golden Texts for each Sunday, a Calendar, Chronological Tables, and the Ten Commandments. A teacher could not do better than to put a copy into the hands of each scholar. It is neatly printed by the American Baptist Publication Society, 1420 Chestnut St., Philadelphia.

The true Christian is like the sun, which pursues his noiseless track, and everywhere leaves the effects of his beams in a blessing upon the world around him.—[Luther.

Goodwater. CART. SMITH.

Letter from Bro. Catt. Smith.

Bro. Renfro: Baptist churches are slow to learn that business shape should be given to all business transactions. For instance, a church calls a pastor, the matter is purely a church act. She also votes to raise a given sum to pay for pastoral work, this, like the other, is a church act, and the church should be held responsible for it, in the moral and religious world, equally as much so, as an individual is for his contracts, so that when the church fails to meet her obligations, she will naturally drop to her proper place in the public scale of estimation. It is all wrong that a person who professes to know the Lord should be held responsible for his debts, in the public mind, and before the courts of the land, except his church debts.

Now I assume that a person is morally bound to meet his religious obligations. But a great many decide because there is no law of the land by which their property can be made responsible for their church debts, they do not grow uneasy about the matter. Consequently to honor the Lord with the first fruits, is an exception rather than the rule the rule being to give the remains, if there be any, to the Lord's cause, and if there is no remainder, the matter is passed. The preacher is the only one that suffers. If the pastor resigns there is another preacher ready to take his place, whether the church has paid up or not. The retiring pastor is defeated in his collections, and can not meet his debts, because the church sits down on him. But he is the only one disgraced in the whole business.

Now, in order to get at the root of the matter, and let the disgrace rest where it should, I suggest,

- 1st. That no minister should accept the pastoral charge of any church, until she has arranged to meet her obligations to the former pastor.

- 2nd. That Baptist churches are the guardians of these interests, and should hold each member in her fellowship to account for his or her promises, just as surely as any court of the land does. Not to proceed against the property of the members, but to exercise her disciplinary functions, even to the exclusion of a member, who does not stand square to their obligations, and financial promises.

I think, sir, when the ministry refuses longer to co-operate with the churches in this neglect, the churches will feel the disgrace, and when they begin to hold their members to account they will feel it, and the evil will in a great measure be remedied; and many, yea, very many of our pastors would be relieved, and would vote a vote of thanks, that the churches had come to be, what they were intended by the Savior to be.

Another great end would be accomplished. At present we have through sympathy towards our old preachers, made some little effort to make amends for the careless management of churches in former days, by raising an Indigent Ministers' fund, but if these suggestions were adopted by our churches, there would not long exist the necessity for such a fund, for I dare say, that if all the pledges made by the churches to these brethren, in the prime of life were redeemed, they would have the comforts of life.

And further, the men of the world would have more confidence in the religion of Christ. We have a very small opinion of the man that does not pay his debts; and what may we expect the world to think of an institution that does not meet its obligations? If any set of men need encouragement on this earth, it is the ministers; and I know of nothing more discouraging to them than the present looseness among the churches, just on this point of failing to meet their obligations to the pastors. If the churches would stand by and sustain the gifts that God has blessed them with, that is the ministry, the warfare with the world and Satan would be much lighter. If the Devil can be put out and kept out of the church, his outside influence will be much easier met.

Just one other thought and then I am done. The calling and paying of a pastor is a church matter. Then why do members deaden the church by long explanations to the pastors, giving the reasons why their subscriptions are not paid? It is a matter about which the pastor has and wants nothing to do. You can not make a debt with one party and settle with another, unless the third party has purchased the debt. This the pastor has not done. So your settlements, brethren should be made with the church, and I will guarantee that if you settle with the church, she will settle with the pastor.

Alabama Baptist

MONTGOMERY, ALA., JAN. 15, 1887.

J. G. HARRIS, Proprietor and Editor.
J. J. D. RENFROE, D.D., Editor.
S. HENDERSON, D.D., Associate Editor.

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In the beginning of this new year
we ask you to please address all your
communications for this paper, whether
on business or for publication sim-
ply to THE ALABAMA BAPTIST,
Montgomery, Ala.

A STATEMENT.

Possibly, it is a matter of surprise to
the readers of the ALABAMA BAPTIST
to learn that I have accepted the call
of the Southside Baptist church in
Birmingham, and have already en-
tered on my work as pastor of said
church. For this change it is unne-
cessary to state more than two reasons.
1st. My connection with the ALABAMA
BAPTIST as my chief work was
not sufficiently remunerative to fur-
nish a support for my family. Four
months of toil and anxiety and meager
income convinced me of this.

2nd. Southside is a very important
field. It has seemed to me that it
was the will of God that I should enter
it. I have done so, looking to
him for the gracious presence and
help of his Holy Spirit, and will give
heart and energy to this work.

After the facts were all before us
Bro. Harris agreed with me as touch-
ing this step. My name will remain
with the writing force of the paper for
the present.

J. J. D. RENFROE.

We trust our readers will tolerate
the notes of our address on the dea-
con's office, which was prepared for
an ordination service at the Adam's
street church which was expected
there last Thursday evening. It is
in substance that which we have de-
livered on several occasions as a
charge to new deacons.

DR. TICHENOR's article in this issue
of our paper will close the controver-
sy on that subject in our columns.
We bespeak for both of the Boards of
the Southern Baptist Convention the
warmest and most hearty support of
the Baptists of Alabama. Whatever
may be the differences of opinion
touching the questions handled in
this discussion, there should be but
one opinion concerning the demands
of the great work which has been
committed to their charge, and an in-
creased and universal liberality should
come up from the churches for their
support, and at the earliest practica-
ble day and continuously.

ORDINATION OF DEACONS.

On Sunday, the 19th of December,
a presbytery, consisting of Rev. J. H.
Foster, D.D., Rev. W. S. Henderson,
and the pastor, S. Henderson,
met at the Northport Baptist church
to set apart the following brethren to
the deacon's office of said church: J.
W. Brown, W. R. Brown, John Har-
din, and John Beale. Having been
deprived of several deacons recently,
one by death, and others by removal,
and recent accessions to our member-
ship to the number of about forty in-
creasing the demands for proper at-
tentions both of pastor and deacons,
it was decided to call the above
named brethren to that service. The
sermon was preached by Rev. W. S.
Henderson, the scriptures were read
and expounded by Dr. Foster, the or-
daining prayer was offered by the
pastor, and the service was concluded
by the church extending the hand of
recognition, pledging its sympathy
and co-operation in the work to which
these brethren had been called and
solemnly set apart. The whole ser-
vice was impressive, and held a large
congregation in thoughtful atten-
tion to the close. It is hoped that the
accession of these worthy brethren to
the deaconship of the Northport
church will mark a fresh era in its
history, giving a new impetus to our
church work.

S. H.

THE DEACON'S OFFICE.

A CHARGE PREPARED FOR THE ORDI-
NATION OF SOME DEACONS.

Dear Brethren: Deacons are select-
ed by the popular voice of the church
to take the place of office bearers in
the house of God.

Men are called to the work of
the ministry by the Holy Spirit, but
to the deacon's office by the popular
favor of the church; and therefore it
is the greatest honor which a church
can bestow on one or more of her
members.

When we consider the fact that the
New Testament provides for but two
offices in the gospel church, and that
one of these is the deacon's office, it
at once rises to a position of very
great magnitude. It is an apostolic
office—I mean, it originated not with
Christ in person, but with the neces-
sities of the case under apostolic ap-
pointment. I say "with the neces-
sities of the case," for it was suggested
by the most significant circumstances,
and as an absolute necessity. A more
sublime point has never occurred in
the onward movement of the king-
dom of Christ than that which distin-
guished the infant church in the de-
cade which gave rise to this office.

I wish I could speak at some length
of those times when the "reign of
grace" began to overturn the effete
formalism of an antiquated system,
and when the law of the new king-
dom commenced its address to all the
world, and when the church began to
realize that it comprised a government,
and that, as that government dealt
with men, it must have its secular as
well as its spiritual departments of
service.

The church of Christ is God's poor
house—God's Lazarus. Among her
early converts there were many of the
poor; widowhood and orphanage be-
gan at once to cling to the promises
and seek the blessings of the church.
While the bounty which was gathered
in the Jerusalem church was not
meant to be a permanent policy, it
created the necessity for a permanent
office. "And in those days, when the
number of the disciples was multi-
plied, there arose a murmuring,"
"The Grecians murmured." It is
wonderful how the wisdom of God
has made so many good things grow
up out of the murmurings of oppressed
humanity. The distressed minority
cries out, and God leads to the selec-
tion of the agencies of relief.

I shall take it for granted, brethren,
that your church has placed you be-
fore us because of your near approach
to the character here described. "Men
of honest report, full of the Holy
Ghost and wisdom."

SERVE TABLES.

It is your business, it is the design
of your office to serve tables. And I
insist that there is more in this than
seems usually to be understood by
our Baptist churches and Baptist dea-
cons. The common inference is that
it means that the deacon is to serve
three tables: To look after the poor,
to look after the pastor's wants, to
look after the Lord's table. Very
well, all of this is good, and I have
something to say about it. But I as-
sume that the table service of the dea-
con's office goes deeper and compre-
hends much more than this. The ta-
bles of the money changers in the tem-
ple in our Lord's day are suggestive
of a money exchange, and the litera-
ture of the age indicates that table
was frequently used then in nearly the
same sense with which we now use
the word bank. With that view the
deacon's office is the exchequer of the
independent church of Christ. In
complete subordination to the church,
the board of deacons has charge of
the financial affairs of the church.
And therefore it is a position of dig-
nity and authority, for office without
authority is an absurdity. And one
of the first duties of the board of dea-
cons is to see that their church has a
wise financial system. And in the
practical application of the system
their first duty will be to serve the ta-
ble of the poor. This will appear in
great force when we remember that a
church keeps house for God; the whole
household of faith is a family,
a community of interests, and "the
poor ye have with you always, and
whenever ye will ye may do them
good." And it is an interesting fact
that Christ has constituted his churches
with but one salaried officer, the pas-
tor, and such other ministry as the
church may use and assist. It is a
government of wonderful economy.
The pastor's table will demand the
constant attention of the board of
deacons. There is no other one
thing so remunerative to your church
as that of keeping your pastor as free
as possible from the perplexing ques-
tion of an honorable support. And
the creation of the deacon's office
shows that it was intended as an as-
sistant to the pastor, to release him
from the whole burden of secular
church work. And as it originated
in the midst of a serious difficulty in
the church, and as demanded by that
difficulty, the board of deacons are
properly the pastor's cabinet, his ad-
visers, his aids.

The pastor and his cabinet are sub-
ordinate to the church, and the cabi-
net are subordinate to the pastor, and
they ought to obey him as such. And

as long as the pastor and deacons ad-
minister the offices of their offices in
harmony with the best interests of the
church, an appeal to church authority
is unnecessary. And thus very many
things rest in the hands of the consti-
tutional officers of the church.

We, however, should not forget that
the church has the right to call us to
a reckoning at will. And the officers
should claim the right to submit stated
reports to the popular assembly as a
vindication of themselves, and that
the church may see that the official
work is being done. It is especially
the work of deacons to assist the pas-
tor in the administration of ordinances.
For the administration of baptism they
should see that every preparation is
made, and every assistance rendered,
that this most beautiful rite may be
performed decently and in order.

Baptists are justly obnoxious to
much of the criticism which is pro-
nounced against them for their care-
less administration of this sublime or-
dinance. It is the duty of deacons
and pastors to see that there is no
room for this criticism.

And we are sometimes equally re-
sponsible for our carelessness in the
administration of the Lord's supper.
After all, I think we make less of this
ordinance than of other people. Why
is this? We suffer criticism to drive
us into embarrassment.

It is the duty of deacons to serve
this table with wise preparation, pru-
dent execution, and grave and digni-
fied bearing. It is their duty with
the pastor to see that the whole mem-
bership approach the Lord's table, or
render a satisfactory reason for de-
clining it.

You will observe that I have said
nothing of that graphic delineation of
the graphic character of the deacon in
one of the Epistles to Timothy. The
deacon should read that passage often
and make a personal application of it
to himself.

All that is said of the deacon in the
New Testament shows that he is to be
pre-eminently a religious man, a
Christian man, a man of faith, and a
man sound in the faith, above re-
proach, above suspicion, with a pure
life, a pure speech, a pure conscience;
one who will rule himself and will
rule his house. "And they which
have used the office of a deacon well,
purchase to themselves a good degree
and great boldness in the faith which
is in Christ Jesus."

LIVING TO CHRIST.

"For me to live in Christ." Of
how many professing Christians can
this be fairly said? Of how many can
it be truthfully affirmed that so long
as they live that Christ will have de-
voted, earnest representatives on
earth? Taking the entire professing
Christian world into the account,
what proportion of them will be
missed when they drop out of the
ranks? To be a Christian amounts
to something. A great poet has said
that
"A Christian is the highest type of man."
His whole after life is expected to vin-
dicate the sincerity of his first pro-
fession of that honored name, so that
when profession and conduct harmon-
ize he becomes an essential factor in
those moral forces which are to sub-
due this world to Christ. But failing
in this by contenting himself with the
form while destitute of the power of
godliness, he becomes a hindrance,
a stumbling stone to the very cause
which above all others he professes
to love. Our Lord puts this strongly
when he says, "If the light in thee
be darkness, how great is that dark-
ness!" The darkness is the more in-
tense from the moral position of the
party. If he were in the world we
should expect nothing but darkness;
but being in the church our disap-
pointment is all the more humiliating.
When we look for one thing and get
the very opposite, how it bewilders
us! Judas among the twelve was the
chosen instrument of Satan to intro-
duce that dreadful "hour, and the
power of darkness" that culminated in
the tragedy of Calvary.

But there are people whom we all
know of whom we can say that while
they live the cause of Christ will be
embodied in them. With a single-
ness of purpose and a consecration
that mark their every day life, their
character and conduct often provoke
the mere laggards in this cause. Pro-
posing and keeping prominent before
their minds the great objects that
brought Christ into this world, the
salvation of our race, their lives are
resplendent with every virtue that
can vindicate the divine origin of religion.
In mystic communion with "the pow-
ers of the world to come," they are
living and acting as in the very
shadow of the judgment scenes. Nay,
Christ lives in them and they in him,
as if they were but so many incar-
nations of his very spirit, for Peter says
of such that "they are partakers of
the divine nature." O, to be swayed
and thrilled by such a divine life, how
it lightens the burdens, sweetens the
afflictions, and reconciles us to the
disappointments of this life; by point-
ing to the awards of heaven! Reader,
can you say, "for me to live in Christ?"
For the very emphasis with which you
can say this is the emphasis with
which you can conclude the sentence
of the apostle, "to die is gain!"

S. H.

THE KNOTTY QUESTION.

While we have no sympathy for
lawlessness, yet there is a limit to the
forbearance of oppressed labor, and
it is not safe for capitalists to tamper
with that limit. It has already given
rise to those communistic and anar-
chistic combinations, and those labor
strikes that have already cost the
commerce of our country hundreds
of millions of dollars. Money is not
king when brains, and bone, and mus-
cle combine to contest its right to
rule. Power, in this country, whether
political or material, follows ma-
jorities in the long run. And once
dissolve the sympathy, the good will
and confidence between capital and
labor, and nothing can save our vast
monied monopolies from utter bank-
ruptcy. The only hope of these mo-
nopolies is to inspire the respect and
confidence of that labor that has made
them what they are, and on which
they are to depend for the future.

The whole interests of the country
are bound up in keeping labor and
capital in hearty sympathy. When
this respect and confidence turns to
hatred and revenge, it needs no
prophet to predict the on-coming ruin.
If the men who compose the vast syn-
dicates are wise, they will, on all
proper occasions, accord to their em-
ployes whatever is due to "men of
like passions with themselves."

S. H.

DEATH OF MRS. NANCY HAM.

Perhaps one of the most striking
things about death is its surprises.
There is scarcely one in a thousand
who is not surprised when the mes-
senger comes to him. So true is it that
"in such an hour as we think not,"
the summons comes. It comes to the
merchant in the midst of his unfin-
ished plans; it comes to the lawyer while
preparing his brief; it comes not in-
frequently to the farmer while pre-
paring his crop; it comes to the physi-
cian at times while prescribing for
his patient; it comes to the minister in
the round of his sacred duties. No
obligation, however imperative, can
stay the stealthy tread of the grim
monster one moment. His business
is with us, not with our professions
or relationships, and no plea, how-
ever sacred, no argument however po-
tent, can stay his hand an instant. He
answers all with the blow that sends
us dumb from the chamber made ter-
rible by his presence.

These reflections are suggested by
the death of Mrs. Nancy Ham, wife
of our brother, G. S. Ham, of Talla-
dega county, Ala., and youngest sister
of the associate editor of this paper.
She died quite suddenly and unex-
pectedly at her home on the 22nd day
of December, 1886, leaving a be-
traved husband and nine children to
deplorable a loss that none but God can
repair. In early life she gave her
heart and life to her Savior, and up
to the day of her death she ever ex-
emplified those gentle, modest traits
of piety which are woman's chief
adornment. Perhaps no mother suc-
ceeded better than she up to the time
of her decease in impressing those
youthful virtues and amiabilities on
her children that make a religious
family all that they ought to be. In
visiting this household, one would be
often reminded of that picture of do-
mestic contentment and happiness in
"which no one commanded, and yet
every one obeyed." And yet all this
was done so quietly, so gently that the
ear was never stunned by a loud, much
less an angry word. For thus it is
in the kingdom of grace. The very vir-
tues that constitute the ground of our
most poignant grief when such an one
dies, is the ground of our hope of a
glorious immortality. When the pro-
martyr Stephen fell under the shower
of stones, the church militant "took
his body up and made great lamenta-
tion over it," but we may well sup-
pose that the church triumphant cele-
brated his entrance into heaven with
exultation and joy.

Mrs. Ham, the daughter of John F.
and Nancy Henderson, was born in
Talladega Dec. 9th, 1847, and died
at her home, as we said, nearly 39
years, Talladega county, Ala., Dec.
22nd, 1886.

S. H.

From Bro. B. H. Crumpton.

I feel that it were but a just tribute
to the affection of the sisters of the
Evergreen Baptist church to publish
through the columns of our paper,
the reception of \$50.00 as a Christ-
mas present. Noble women these.
I would like to write more, but am
in bed sick.

I wish also to publish the ordina-
tion of Rev. Sidney J. Catts to the
full work of the ministry, I was wait-
ing for some information I wished be-
fore publishing, but have been too
unwell to conduct the necessary cor-
respondence. A more promising
young man has not been ordained in
Alabama. May God bless him and
his work.

Also, at the same time, Bro. P.
Hamilton was ordained deacon. I am
sure he will make a model one.
Brethren Riley and Fortune assisted
in the ordinations.

My health is wretched, I cover an
interest in the prayers and sympathies
of my friends and brethren.

B. H. CRUMPTON.

Dr. Tichenor's Response to Dr. Tupper.

Rev. H. A. Tupper, D.D.

DEAR BROTHER—I am in receipt of
an advance copy of your article en-
titled, "Respects to Dr. T. T. Tiche-
nor."

You and I, my brother, have been
placed by our brethren in positions
which render it impossible for us to
engage in a controversy with each
other without such injury to the cause
of Christ as would grieve the heart of
every true disciple of our Master.
Such controversy, could we see all its
sad consequences, would be enough
to bring us both with sorrow to the
grave.

Profoundly impressed with this
thought, I feel that fidelity to my Sav-
ior, and the welfare of dying men,
forbid me to make reply to the many
and grievous things contained in your
article.

I know that failure to correct mis-
takes you have made and misappre-
hensions under which you labor, may
prove a serious detriment to my rep-
utation among some of my brethren,
and may embarrass the work of the
Board with which I am connected.
But no consideration of self, no tem-
porary injury to my Board, can in-
duce me to do what I am sure, would
bring sorrow and shame to the great
Baptist brotherhood of the South.

I will endure, as patiently as I can,
whatever of wrong your utterances
have inflicted upon me until I shall
be the pleasure of the Master, in some
way, to vindicate me without imperil-
ing his cause.

If such vindication delay to come,
day by day, I shall look up to him
and say, "Master, I wait thy time."
If not here, then hereafter bring
forth my righteousness as the light
and my judgment as the noonday."

If I could see you face to face, and
you would allow me to do it, I would
take you by the hand and say, with-
out one harsh accent upon my tongue,
or one unkind feeling in my heart, my
brother, you have greatly misunder-
stood my words and actions and have
grossly misconstrued my motives.
As in the sight of my God, I say to
you, that I have never intended to
wrong you personally or officially and
a calm review of the things about
which you speak assures me that what
I have said is true, and what I have
done is right.

Your brother in Christ,
T. T. TICHENOR.
Atlanta, Ga., Jan. 5th.

Ordination of Rev. J. D. Hamner.

At the request of Chalcedony
church, Tuscaloosa county, Rev. J.
L. Ray and myself, met at their house
of worship, on the second Lord's day
in December last, for the purpose of
examining Bro. John D. Hamner,
with a view of ordaining him into the
full work of the ministry. He had
been a licensed preacher for several
years, but from some cause did not
enter fully into the work.

He shrank from the great responsi-
bility on account of a feeling of utter
unworthiness and incompetency. He
has recently, however, been made to
feel "woe is me if I preach not the
gospel." This church is very near
where he lives; has seen his Christian
walk; has enjoyed his services recent-
ly, which seemed to be blessed to their
good and to the conviction and con-
version of sinners. Having the ut-
most confidence in him as one called
of God to the work, they called him
to be their pastor, and then called him
to ordination.

Bro. Ray preached on the above
named day, the ordination sermon
from 2 Tim. 2:15. Bro. Hamner
having preached on the day previous,
from "Lord, what wilt thou have me
to do?" Acts 9:6.

I acted as chairman of the presby-
tery and Bro. Ray as secretary. Bro.
Marcum, in behalf of Chalcedony
church, presented Bro. Hamner, with
a view to his ordination to the minis-
try, as pastor of this church. I exam-
ined him on his religious experience,
call to the ministry, and doctrine.

All being satisfactory we proceeded
to his ordination, by prayer and im-
position of hands. Bro. Ray made
the ordaining prayer. I delivered the
charge to Bro. Hamner and the
church. The presbytery, church, and
other Christians present gave the band
of welcome into the full work of
the Gospel ministry. A hymn was then
sung, and Bro. Hamner pronounced
the benediction.

We trust the Lord will be with him
and make him a useful laborer in his
vineyard. With my best wishes for
the success of our ALABAMA BAPTIST
I am yours in Christian love.
JOHN C. FOSTER.

From Bro. Glenn.

Dear Bro. Renfro: The Executive
Committee of the Cahaba Valley As-
sociation held a meeting recently and
the writer and Bro. Montgomery were
invited to take counsel with them. It
was decided to try to hold meetings
every fifth Sabbath in this year with
some church in the association, for
the purpose of making an earnest ef-
fort to work up our association in re-
gard to the interests fostered by the
Denomination. The committee can
only make their meetings interesting

by the brethren taking part and inter-
esting themselves in the work.

My purpose is to make an earnest
appeal to the pastors, all of the pas-
tors, of our association, to come for-
ward and take part, talk up the meet-
ing, and have all the brethren to come
with you. It is proposed to hold the
meeting for the fifth Sabbath in Jan-
uary with the church at New Hope,
on the G. F. R. R., and I am, as
pastor of said church, instructed by
the church to extend an invitation to
all that will come. They will meet a
hearty welcome by the church and
community. Come, brethren, if the
meeting proves a failure it will be our
fault. If we could realize the interest
exercised by our devoted committee,
we surely would bestir ourselves.
Then think of the sacred interest in-
trusted to us by the Savior.

Brethren, study and pray over the
matter, and come to New Hope and
let us advise and work together.
There will be a programme published
in due time. We would be glad to
have some visiting brethren come over
and help us.
J. A. GLENN.
Ashville.

Texas Letter.

Having promised so many of the
dear brethren and sisters in Alabama
to write when I got home I have con-
cluded that, with your consent, I
would make one letter answer for all.
Please insert the following in your
valuable paper and do them and my
self a kindness. Beloved, you know
not how glad I am to write this love-
letter to you all.

I started home from Alexander City
on the first day of December with the
intention of stopping a day or two
with my Aunt Brooks, near Dudley-
ville, where I arrived the same even-
ing. When my time was up it com-
menced raining and freezing. It be-
ing seven miles back to the railroad,
I concluded I would wait a day longer,
and when it commenced snowing, and in-
stead of a day or two it was eight
days before I could get back to the
railroad, and still the whole country
was covered with frozen snow. I left
Opelika Thursday, the 9th of Decem-
ber, suffering myself to be persuaded
by a Mr. Ely and the ticket agent of
the Sandown route to come through
New Orleans, risking 75 miles of
road worn, of which let me caution
all who wish to come to Texas. I lay
over in New Orleans sixteen hours,
and at Rosenberg twenty-two hours,
losing time enough to have been home
and well of it. But I am here, sick
of cold, and I know not whether I
shall see a well day before spring, if
then. We changed cars four times,
missed connection twice, and were
kept in New Orleans till we were so
crowded as really to have no pleasure
in living. The route is not to be
compared with the Vicksburg route,
if it is a little crooked; then the run-
ning is nothing like so smooth as the
Vicksburg, or Memphis, either. I am
just able to write, though my mind
is not as I would have it, but best
some may be desponding I sit up
to write this, to thank you all for your
kindness to the old man, if a Christian
one of the least. Yet to God be all
praise. Many of you, brethren and
sisters, asked me if I would come
back next spring. I told you it was
dependent on home matters, how
spring may open, and how my health
may be. I cannot now say. My in-
tention now is to go to Louisville to
the Southern Baptist Convention, and
if it possibly can be done I will see
you all again in the summer and fall
of next year, if the Lord is willing.

Now, as Bro. Renfro's paper and
patience are precious, just let me say to
one and all, my old heart has been
made glad at every church and ap-
pointment to find the children of my
dear old brethren and sisters walking
in their footsteps as they follow Christ,
and more than once I made to
praise the Lord Jesus Christ by find-
ing my own dear children in the Lord
holding on their way, following hard
after Jesus. May God in his providence
spread his wings of love us to his
heavenly kingdom.

JAMES M. RUSSELL.

San Saba, Tex.

Ordination of Deacons.

Complying with a previous appoint-
ment, a presbytery consisting of Elds.
J. E. White, W. H. DeWitt and W. B.
Williams met the Nanafalia church,
to ordain to the deaconship Brethren
Jacob Williams and Charlie West-
brook. A sermon was preached by
the writer on "The Deacon's Office."
The examination, which was thorough,
was conducted by Bro. White, the
charge and prayer by Bro. DeWitt;
benediction by the writer. These
new deacons are promising brethren,
and will in all likelihood make ef-
ficient officers in their church. Bro.
Williams is an old member, and is
now where his zeal and piety can be
used for his church. Bro. Westbrook
is a younger member, but doubtless
loves his master's cause.

W. B. WILLIAMS.

Nicholsville.

How often do we look upon God as
our last and feeblest resource! We go
to him because we have nowhere else
to go. And, then, we learn that the
storms of life have driven us, not upon
the rocks, but unto the desired haven.

Fifth Sunday Meeting.

Will you allow us, through the col-
umns of the ALABAMA BAPTIST, to
call the attention of the brethren of
the Cahaba Valley Association to a
meeting that has been called by the
Executive Committee, to be held with
New Hope church, Eden, commencing
on Friday night before the fifth Sab-
bath in January, 1887. The object
of this meeting is strictly in the in-
terest of missions. This association is
composed mostly of churches in St.
Clair county, numbering about 2,300
members, in a rich and fertile coun-
try. Our valleys abound yearly in
rich harvests of the golden grain
and the fleecy staple. The hills and
mountains are laden with untold
quantities of mineral. The country
is being checked by railroads. New
towns are springing up all over the
country. People are rapidly settling
here from nearly every clime, and in
a few years St. Clair county will stand
second to none in point of population,
and these people must have the gos-
pel, and the Cahaba Valley Asso-
ciation is doing comparatively nothing
towards giving them the gospel.
Hence the need of action, and how
important is it that we act at once.
Consequently this meeting was called,
and we urge that every minister in
the association, and every minister
who has charge of churches in the as-
sociation, be present. In fact, ev-
erybody is invited. Brethren, come
one, come all, and let us have a grand
gathering in the interest of missions.
We also request that collections be
taken in all the churches, and as
much money brought up as can be
raised. Pledges that have been made
for brethren Ralls and Lovell that
have not been paid should be paid
then. Brethren, if any of you are
not inclined to come, go to God in
prayer and ask to be led by the spirit.

PROGRAM.

Preaching at 7 p.m. Friday by H.
B. Ralls; in the afternoon by H. E.
Harris.

At 9 a.m. Saturday the meeting
will be called to order by Hon. J. W.
Inzer, chairman of the executive
committee, and opened with an ad-
dress by Bro. Inzer, after which the
body will be organized by electing a
chairman and secretary. The pro-
gramme will then be ordered by the
body until 11 a.m. on Sabbath, at
which time Dr. Geo. A. Lofton, of
Talladega, will preach. Come, brethren,
with money, plans, &c., to sub-
mit for our future work.

N. A. Hoob,

for the Committee.

P. S.—Bro. Renfro's invited, and
we hope he will come.

Interesting Letter.

Nearly eleven months have swiftly
passed away since I came to Maren-
go, and to the South Bethel Associa-
tion. It is a vast, rich field, white
unto the harvest for earnest workers.
During the past summer and au-
tumn, with Bro. J. W. Dickinson,
who is sound in doctrine, intensely
practical, prompt, efficient, and a
"true yoke-fellow," I have been hon-
ored to work in protracted meetings
at Forest Springs, Dees Creek, West
Bend, Grove Hill, Steagrove, New
Hope, Nanafalia, and Lower Peach

