

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST.

HARE & SHACKELFORD, Publishers.

"SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE."

TERMS CASH: \$2.00 A YEAR.

VOLUME 14.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1887.

NUMBER 51.

THE SENIOR'S TRAVELS.

We are glad to know that Bro. J. M. Thoms, the pastor of the church at Tusculum and Sheffield, is giving great satisfaction to the brethren and sisters of those churches. He preaches every Sabbath at both places. At Tusculum at 11 a. m., and at night and in Sheffield at 3 p. m. This is too much work for one man to do, and with the visiting. We ought to have a man at Sheffield and Florence. We have no church at Florence, but we understand that there are from 25 to 30 Baptists living in that town. Tusculum is rapidly improving. Its population has increased within the last year, and we suppose that there is now a population of 2,000 or more.

HUNTSVILLE.

We had the pleasure of visiting Huntsville a few weeks ago, and preached for people there. It was their regular prayer meeting night and we had a good audience. We were told the Baptist church had the best attended prayer meeting in the city. Bro. John Irwin, a deacon of the church, and a good one, too, informed us that the church was out of debt and had money on hand. Bro. Smith, the new pastor, has been well received, and has given satisfaction to the church and congregation, so far as we could learn. From what we were able to see, we think our cause in Huntsville is in a healthy condition. The church has been doing more for missions and ministerial education than ever before. We were the guest of Deacon Irwin and his excellent wife, who treated us with true Christian hospitality. We were sorry to learn that sister Irwin had been in a precarious state of health for a long time. She was somewhat improved, however, when we saw her; we pray the Lord that she may be completely restored. We had the pleasure of seeing brother and sister Steele, who have long been faithful supporters of the church; also, Bros. Foster, Nall and Pettus. Bro. Pettus, who is the editor of the *Independent*, had just recovered from a very protracted spell of illness.

His impaired health was forced to discontinue the publication of the *Daily Independent*. He still continues the publication of the weekly, which is one of our best weeklies. We secured a few subscribers in Huntsville; was glad to find that it was taken by a number of the members. Huntsville ought to give us at least 25 subscribers; will not Bro. Smith make an effort to put the ALABAMA BAPTIST in every Baptist family in his church? We think he will be largely the gainer by it.

STEVENS.

This town is located at the junction of the Memphis & Charleston railroad. We suppose it has from 400 to 500 population; we have a small Baptist church organized here. The Baptists have no house of worship of their own; all denominations use one house, which is very comfortable and well seated. We preached there one night to a small congregation; was informed that the people did not attend preaching very well; found only two Baptist families in the place; got one of them to take the BAPTIST. They have no pastor. The Tennessee River Association ought to see to it that the Baptists occupy their day at Stevenson.

SCOTTSBORO.

This is the county seat of Jackson county. It has a population of about 1,200. It does a very good business, as it is surrounded by a rich and fertile soil. There are many churches here, each of whom has a church house. The Baptists, Episcopalians, Campbellites, Methodists, and Cumberland Presbyterians. The Baptist church is rather weak, and has had preaching only once a month. Bro. J. J. Beeson is its pastor. The Baptists have let their Sunday school go down; do not keep up a prayer meeting. Their pastor lives at some distance from the town. Elds. H. H. Horton and L. C. Coulson live in Scottsboro. Bro. H. is engaged in merchandising, but preaches to several churches. Bro. Coulson is a lawyer, and writes in the clerk's office. Whether he has charge of any church we do not know. We preached twice at Scottsboro—on Saturday night and on the Sabbath at 11 a. m., the fourth in November. We had but a small congregation at night, but a moderate one on Sunday. We were told by the brethren that it was a very good one for Scottsboro, as the people were not remarkable for attending church. There were services at the Presbyterian church at the same hour. We obtained two subscribers for the BAPTIST, with a promise of some more after a while. We preached on Saturday at 11 a. m. at Center point, a church twelve

miles from Scottsboro. We had but a small turn out. We suppose the brethren had too much business on hand. We hope they will do better when the association meets, and that they will help Bro. Walsh make up his club for the BAPTIST.

RUSSELLVILLE.

We visited this place on the 3rd inst., and filled the appointment of Rev. R. T. Wear, the pastor of the Baptist church. We were met by Bro. Wm. East, and found a home with him and his most estimable lady. We preached at 11 a. m. Sunday and on Sunday and Sunday night. We secured eleven new subscribers for the paper, and found quite a number who were taking it. It rained on Sunday, and this kept many from the country from coming in, or we should have secured many more subscribers. The church at Russellville is a live church. It has a few pastor and live members. They have preaching two Sundays in the month, but they want preaching every Sabbath. They are now preparing to build them a new church house, which will cost about \$1,800. On Sunday it was raining hard about Sunday school time. Bro. East said to me, "we go," (that is, he and his wife), "to Sunday-school rain or shine." They went, and although it had been raining all the morning, and was raining then, there were about twenty at the church. We had a very respectable congregation at preaching, both in the day and at night. The streets were muddy and there were but few sidewalks. This is the way to keep up a Sunday school and congregations. Let the officers and teachers and principal members faithfully attend, in all sorts of weather, and your Sunday-school will be evergreen and your preachers will not want for congregations on a rainy day. We were struck with a remark of a good sister. When we spoke of her about her going out to Sunday-school and church through such bad weather. She said, in substance, "when I was younger I went to parties through all kinds of weather to gratify my desire for pleasure."

greater hardship for me to go to church and Sunday-school to work for my master now, if I love him." Would that we had more such workers for Christ in our churches. There is a railroad now from Sheffield to Russellville. The trains run daily between the two places. The road will soon be finished to Jasper, where it will connect with the Kansas City and Birmingham railroad. This road has been of great advantage to Russellville, and it has improved very much. Many new buildings have been erected within the last twelve months. While we were at Russellville parties commenced opening the iron mines in the vicinity. If these mines prove to be rich in ore it will be a banana to Russellville. We were shown specimens of coal that was found within twelve miles of Russellville, near the line of the railroad, and the hills south-west of the town are rich in iron ore. We look for Russellville to become a town of six or eight thousand people within five years. They need a good high school here and a good teacher. It will pay a good man to build up such a school.

Branch House of the A. B. P. Society.

This grand institution, the American Baptist Publication Society, which has done so much during the past sixty years to advance the kingdom of Christ and promote the interests of the Christian people, has recently opened a Branch House in Atlanta. It is a step wisely taken, and one long desired by thousands who felt that Philadelphia was a great way off. We do not regard it as an antagonist in any means, but as an ally in the conquest of the world, not for sectional supremacy, but for Christ. If the planting of new batteries will hasten the victory, let the prayer go up, "May God guard the garison and may his Spirit guide each heaven sent missile." By locating this Branch House in Atlanta we have a new centre from which the influences of the truth, as held by Baptists, may radiate, and thus reach communities hitherto ignorant, but willing to be instructed in our views. Much of the best thought of Southern Baptists, as well as nearly all the denominational deliverances of our Northern brethren find their way to the public through this Society, and now they are brought to our very doors in the quickest time and at the lowest prices. All correspondence intended for this Branch House should be directed to American Baptist Publication Society, 66½ Whitehall St., Atlanta, Ga. G. A. GUNNALLY, Anniston, Ala.

The History and Celebration of Christmas.

There exists a strong tendency to celebrate great events. Whether it be in the private life of the individual, or in the public history of his country, it becomes pleasant and profitable to recall at stated periods such events of the past as are fraught with the greatest good or contain the greatest interest. How precious the home scene when the family gathers to recall some sacred memory of the past! Then, too, there are events in the history of each nation, the recurring celebration of which, inspire the loftiest patriotism. We love to dwell upon the great events in our own national life. But there in the world, here and there, events of even more than national importance. They belong to no special nation, or country, or continent. There are events that rise into such conspicuous grandeur that upon them the whole world fixes its admiring gaze. Such an event, shining conspicuously above all others in the annals of time, was the birth into the world of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We do not wonder that an event of such importance is marked as a red letter day in the calendar of Christian nations. It is the purpose of this article to give some historic account of the day and its celebration, which may afford interest to some readers of the ALABAMA BAPTIST at this time.

The first celebration of Christmas is attributed by tradition to Pope Telerus, who died A. D. 138. At least it dates from about that time, and has ever since been observed as one of the most noted of Christian festivals. For several years there was much disagreement as to when the celebration should occur, there being no means of ascertaining the exact day of Christ's birth. It was not until the fourth century that, at the suggestion of Cyril of Jerusalem, an investigation was made and the 25th day of December adopted. It was at this time received with much hesitation by some, and even some of the fathers opposed to refer the event to some time in the spring of the year. Prior to this decision of the Roman church, the eastern countries observed it in the months of April and May.

It is very probable that the celebration was assigned to the last week in December, because there already existed among the Romans an old custom of spending the last days of the year in great festivities; and by placing Christmas at a time the Roman Church would give a religious significance to festivities already existing. This would make our Christian celebration an adoption from a heathen bacchanalian festival. We are sometimes constrained to think that it has not yet lost the strong impress of this supposed origin.

In accordance with the spirit of the Middle Ages, Christmas was during that time celebrated by the "gay fantastic spectacle of dramatic mysteries, performed by persons in grotesque masks," as possibly resembled the Mardi-Gras of some of our Southern cities. In England the day was celebrated with the gayest merry-making, and at times the wildest license. A "Lord of misrule" was appointed in every house of the nobles and high and low gave themselves up to excess of fun and mirth. An Italian proverb says, "He has more business than an English one at Christmas."

In the Protestant countries of Germany, and in the north of Europe, Christmas became a domestic festival mainly devoted to the children. It presents, especially between members of the same family, by means of the Christmas tree. There was also developed at the same time the conception of that mysterious person known to the children as Santa Claus, alike the object of their admiration and awe. From Protestant Germany, and not from England, we have mainly derived our mode of celebrating Christmas. The Puritans who first settled New England were opposed to Christmas festivities, as they were to every thing that smacked of Romanism or the Church of England. The result has been that America has largely adopted the ideas brought from Germany by the Dutch settlers of New York. Thus has it happened that among us the celebration of the birth of Christ has become especially a children's festival, and is domestic rather than religious. It is appropriate as a children's festival because it celebrates the birth of Jesus, and reminds us that he was a little child—that he passed through all his varied stages—that he who we loved and blessed little children once lived the same sort of life. The interchange of gifts is appropriate, because it celebrates the greatest of God's gifts to us, and it cultivates feelings of love and generosity. On such occasions the children ought early to be taught not only to receive but to bestow gifts, and especially to give something to those most in need, and from whom they would not expect a return. Let me suggest that in making of this a children's festival it would be well for parents to make prominent the object of the day. Take an opportunity, when all are together on Christmas eve, to talk to the children of the happy memory, and tell them of the birth of Christ. Carried away by the festivities, the real object of the day is quite forgotten. While ministering to the joy of the beaming faces of the little ones, do not fail to teach them to remember and love the lowly babe of Bethlehem.

So far as the great event is concerned by adults it should be properly. Unfortunately, in the Southern States, method of observing it is a festival is too much supplied with the old English methods, we run to "excess of riot," an occasion of joy, let it not be an occasion for revelry and drunkenness—whirling in the dance or about the street—does not celebrate and degrades the day.

There seems to me a growing tendency among evangelic Christians by holding appropriate service. If the day is to be celebrated by adults at all, this would seem the most appropriate method. It would indeed be a happy result if, by some such substitution, we could eliminate from the day and its celebration, all excess of misconduct which so sadly characterize it in this Christian land.

J. S. DILL.

Five Important things to be Read and Thought About.

For several years past, as I have traveled, and listened, I have heard a great deal of a young woman named Sarah Vation. These preachers do not seem to have much respect for her. They talk about her in the pulpit, and in the prayer meeting, and they always call her Sal. I heard a man, not long since, preaching who seemed to have nothing else to talk about but Miss Sarah. He called her Sal every time, and so often that I lost respect for her. He was trying to prove that Sal was free. After I lost respect for her I didn't care whether she was free or not. I was married anyhow. And, then, I thought that if he had called her Miss Sarah, or even Miss Sally, that people would have had more respect for her, and Sal would have been more likely to lose her freedom in bondage to some good man. I write in the interest of the young woman. But she may be an old maid. Anyhow, these men ought not to call her Sal in public.

I do not like the nickel. It is the ugliest coin in circulation. Not long since a minister spent the night in my house. At family worship he read a passage of scripture that excited my curiosity. He read about a new kind of nickel—the tabber-nickel. I was curious to know more about it. I hope it was an improvement on the old coin. After he was gone I hunted up the passage read; and was disappointed to find that he had been reading about the tabernacle, and that the emphasis is on the first syllable.

I am always interested when a man uses a new word—a word the meaning of which I don't know. I heard a man talking, when he said something would be "indurous" to the human heart. I knew that indurate meant to harden. So I thought he meant that it would harden the heart. But soon he said it was indurated to the cause of Christ, and I didn't know what he meant. In conference with an intelligent brother, we concluded that he meant injurious.

I attended an association, and heard two brethren make the same prayer, on two successive days. They asked that God would bless "the gospel that had been dispensed with." Now I had preached a fratrate gospel sermon before one of them prayed. It hurt my feelings to have a man in my presence call it "gospel," and to say that the gospel had been dispensed with. I thought I had dispensed the gospel, giving each his portion in due season. Another brother preached a right good sermon, full of the very marrow of the gospel, and then came the prayer that God would bless "the gospel that had been dispensed with." The brother had not dispensed with the gospel in his sermon. He had dispensed the gospel.

I attended another association, and heard a brother, a very modest, pious

other, read a printed document. I listened until he read a sentence that engaged my attention to the exclusion of all else: "This association shall sit in an advisory council, and shall have power to 'lord it over God's heritage,' nor infringe on the infernal rights of the churches." I thought he had made a mistake; but nobody corrected him.

Now, somebody is going to call this Pharisaical chat or sanctimonious cant. The very first preacher who does this is the man that I am after. He will be hit certain, and for one I won't feel sorry, if he will just mend his ways.

It won't do for him to try to dodge his duty by calling me a Pharisee. If I am, he don't talk religion like he ought, all the same. And that is what I am after now. I wonder if these preachers ever have anything to say about religion in their homes. I have often thought of this. Well, people will notice these things and will remark about them. Now I think a preacher ought to talk about other things. No objection to his talk about politics, or real estate, or lots, or railroads, not a bit. No objection to his joking at the proper time, and in the proper way. No objection to his laughing and being cheerful. That's not the thing. But with these there ought to be religion. Now before you criticize me suppose you criticize yourself.

J. T.

Briefs from Our Exchanges.

Rev. Henry C. Davis a member of Walnut Street Baptist church, Louisville, Ky., was ordained at Beechland church, to which he had been called as pastor, on the 3rd. Drs. T. T. Eaton, J. M. Weaver, and Rev. F. D. Hall, constituted the ordaining presbytery. Eld. Davis was born in Bowling Green, Ky. In early youth was a clerk in a bank; he became an actor and fell into dissipation. He drifted into infidelity, and for several years wandered over the country dissipated and reckless. His mother's prayers followed him. She finally induced him to return home. "Five years ago he saw his sin and accepted Christ." He first joined the Disciples, but finding he could not fellowship their doctrines, he joined Walnut Street Baptist church.

Five hundred persons have been baptized in connection with our mission in Cuba since January last. There are said to be 7,000,000 Jews in the world. In Berlin, the capital of the German Empire, there are nearly 2,000,000 of people, and only about sixty churches and chapels. The National Convention of the Prohibition Party is to be held at Indianapolis on the first Wednesday in June, 1888. The conference held in Chicago last month elected Prof. Samuel Dickie, of Michigan, chairman of the executive committee, in place of John B. Finch, deceased. There are 144 students at the Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Dr. Boyce is making an effort to raise \$100,000 additional endowment for the Seminary.

REV. BEVERLY CARTER, D. D.

Irreligious Preachers.

BY KROSS-KUT.

What! A preacher irreligious? Well, yes, you would judge so. And you would judge so because some of them never seem religious. Now we all want to be saved from a lank-jawed ministry. We, none of us, are hankering after a hollow-eyed piety. But we would like to see people be what they profess—at least sometimes. And yet I know preachers who never talk religion, except in the pulpit, and sometimes I have found myself wondering if they would talk it there if it was not for the money that's in it. Now, don't let me be misunderstood. Preachers ought to be paid salaries for their services. The Savior taught that. But that's not the thing I am speaking of. It is one thing to be a good preacher, giving his whole time to preaching, and getting a salary; and it's another thing to preach only for the money that's in it. Now, I don't know that anybody does that, but I say appearances are that way with some preachers. I have watched them, and they don't talk religion about the fireside any. They don't talk it even at the meetings of the associations or the conventions—unless, as I have foresaid, they happen to preach. They will talk politics, world without end. They will smoke, and crack jokes, and sometimes they are not very careful what kind they crack, either. They will talk real estate, and corner lots, and the prices of stock. They will discuss men and things but—not religion. Now, there is a certain way of doing this thing—I mean this thing of talking religion. It won't do just to dump in a whole cart load of religious twaddle into every circle where you may be. It won't do to drag it into every talk you have. There is such a thing as knowing just how the thing should be done. It may be ingeniously or wisely or adroitly done; but I have seen it done nicely, and then I have seen it

done the other way. And it seems to me that a man who has it in, his heart will bring it out—at least sometimes.

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ten Baptists in Alabama who are able to give \$100,000 to Howard, and it will not cripple them financially. Some of you rich Baptists who read this paper think of this proposition.

The Evangelical Alliance met at Washington on the 7th inst. Wm. E. Dodge, of New York, president, and Rev. Dr. Josiah Strong, of New York, secretary. The object of this conference is to discuss measures upon which all unenomination may be brought to unite, to meet certain new and pressing emergencies which have arisen with the great increase of wealth, business, immigration, changed relation of labor and capital, &c. Well we hope that it may do good.

Kind Words for a Faithful Man.

In the removal of the Rev. G. E. Benton from our midst to Texas we feel both pain and pleasure. We are pained at the thought of losing one who has so long and faithfully served us as pastor and friend, and one whose daily life, walk and conversation has been such as to benefit all who came in contact with him. One who, in the nine years he has lived among us, has daily set us good examples by a godly life and conversation, and whose influence has done much to build up and purify the morals of our community. But while pained to lose a good pastor and true friend, yet we can and do take pleasure in recommending him to all in his new home as a good man, a pious Christian, and one who will wear well, and one devoted to the cause of his Master, and to doing all the good he can to his fellow man. And we pray God's blessing may attend him wherever he may go, and that he may be spared to lead many more sons into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The sentiments of Crawford church expressed by
N. P. WELLS,
J. W. GRIMES,
J. W. JORDAN.

Irene Sanctor.

Infant daughter of Mr. J. B. and Mrs. T. W. Sandifer, of Woodland, Ala., was born Sept. 15th, and died October 6th, 1887. But a few days of life make a history. The infant does not come and go without leaving its loving story behind—a story to be told a thousand times over by stricken parents, and to be fondly cherished when not spoken. It is especially trying to young parents to have to surrender their first-born—the first fruit of matrimonial union, in whose brief sojourn with them they discovered so many signs of promise. But even so it must be. So it has been with the youthful couple mentioned above, who so soon had to see the little one torn away. And when Jesus says, "suffer the little children to come," we must not forbid them; but rather we must respond—
The Lord gave in one trying, hopeful day; Yet with brighter hope and trial he takes away.
In view of the coming reunion and reward, We respond, blessed be the name of the Lord.

A FRIEND.

Frank Carpenter.

Frank Carpenter, son of Bro. A. M. Carpenter, was born September 21st, 1858. He grew up to be a general young man and firmly set in the ways of honor and right. From his innate worth he was a true and loyal friend, as well as given to performing deeds of love and charity. September 30th, 1878 he became a Christian, and united with Clinton Baptist church. This was the epoch of his life. He loved God's cause and nobly yielding to the claim of duty he took a lively interest in church and Sunday-school work. This was era that enabled him when departing to that "bourne whence no traveler returns" to say with simple trust and confidence that "If it is the Lord's will it is my pleasure to go." His illness, though brief, was painful, yet he was patient, brave and composed throughout the attack. He leaves many to mourn his loss. He departed this life Oct. 10, 1887.
W. G. H.

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT.

The Clinton Baptist Sunday school, wishing to show the high esteem and personal regard as well as due appreciation of the faithfulness of one of its members, has given expression to the following resolutions:

Whereas it has pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst our friend and companion, Frank Carpenter.

Resolved, That in his death, we as a Sunday-school, have lost one of our most punctual, attentive and faithful members, as well as a dear and cherished friend.

Resolved, That we extend to the bereaved family our heartfelt sym-

thy, and that we commend them for condolence to our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well," and whose chastisements are meant in mercy.

Resolved, That these resolutions be copied upon our record book and be given to the ALABAMA BAPTIST and the county papers for publication.

Very respectfully,
COMMITTEE.
Clinton, Ala., Nov. 1, 1887.

J. H. Wolfe—A Useful Life Passed Away.

The subject of this sketch, J. H. Wolfe, is an illustration of what industry, a wise economy, and the grace of God can do to lift one out of the depths, and place him among the noble of the land.

He was born in Wilkes county, Ga., Dec. 27th, 1822, of poor parents, and had no early advantages, but many obstacles in his way. At about eighteen years of age he united with Rehoboth church, and was baptized by Enoch Callaway. He came to Alabama in 1853, and was employed on the plantation in Chambers county which he owned at his death. His early earnings were invested in negroes that were lost to him by the war, in which he served faithfully two years, attached to the 61st Alabama Regiment. With energy and hope he began again, and in a few years was the possessor of a good property, dug from the soil, which continued to grow around him. He was not peevish, but liberal toward all worthy objects appealing to him.

He united with the church at Providence soon after arriving in the State, and only passed out of it as he entered the gates that admitted him to the church of the first born. His contributions for church purposes were large compared with many others. When, as deacon, the time came for paying the pastor, he paid down what was uncollected and took chances for getting it repaid. His last was never vacant at church when

rain, as though he could improve upon the divine management. He loved to attend the gatherings of the brethren at the associations, the State and Southern Baptist Conventions, and there doubtless imbibed much of that liberal spirit that characterized him. He was a liberal patron of periodicals, and was therefore well up with current events of a political and religious nature. Oh! that others would imitate his example in these things, and then we would see a difference in denominational progress.

He was married by Rev. Wm. Harrington in June, 1873, to Miss Mary I. Cargile, who, with their two daughters, Mrs. Harrington, and Shealy, are left to mourn a good husband and father, and to continue the good work he has dropped into their hands.

He was attacked by Bright's Disease in August, 1886. From the following March he was confined to his house in great pain, until released by death Nov. 10th, 1887. He was laid to sleep in the family cemetery, where the tears of family and friends bedew his resting place.

"The pains of death are past,
Labor and sorrow cease,
And life's long warfare closed at last,
His soul is found in peace."

GEORGE E. BREWER.

Jernigan, Ala.

The Jews as a Nation.

What they Represent—What their Laws and Ordinances Pointed To.

The Jews, as a nation, represented the church of Christ, and their laws and ordinances were types and shadows of the laws and ordinances of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the Missionary Baptists are the church of Christ, they have no right, nor scriptural authority to mix and mingle with any other so-called church. That is, we should not invite any but Baptists, to offer prayer in God's house, neither should we put them in our pulpits to teach our children since we believe them to be living in and teaching erroneous doctrines, and the Second Epistle of John to the elect lady, which means the church of Christ, from the 6th to the 12th verse gives us some wise counsel. I am sorry that so many of our Baptists favor this mixing of denominations; they are but sharpening knives with which to cut their own throats. Let us be Baptists all the time, and receive none in the Lord's house who fail to observe the commandments of the Lord. Let us be a separate people. So long as the Jews remained distinct from other nations just so long did Christians remain with them, so will it be with Baptists. If we love God and obey his commandments he will continue to bless us.
Wm. H. MEADOWS.

Deatsville, Ala.

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