

Alabama Baptist.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., MAR. 5, 1891.

Address all correspondence to
HARVEY POPE,
Montgomery, Ala.

ROMAN CATHOLIC persecution must soon be at an end in Brazil, as that country is now in reality a republic, where freedom of conscience will be protected.

A writer says, "People are ashamed of their religion as they are ashamed of their clothes, only what it is shabby. Brush it up and keep it clean, brother, and you will regard it as rather a compliment than a disgrace."

The State Sunday-school Convention will meet in the Parker Memorial Baptist church at Anniston, April 14th. Every school in the state should be represented. The writer attended last year and received great help.

CHURCHES and brethren who have not contributed to the Board of Ministerial Education should do so now. We must have funds. Send all contributions to Geo. W. Ellis, secretary and treasurer, Montgomery, Ala.

Gov. Jones has appointed Bro. W. W. Wilkerson, assistant city judge of Birmingham. Judge Wilkerson is the second son of Dr. W. W. Wilkerson of Marion, and is a graduate of Howard College. His many friends rejoice at his appointment.

The Methodists throughout the world observed the one hundredth anniversary of John Wesley, their great founder. He built a monument in behalf of evangelical Christianity which has done much to carry the news of salvation to perishing millions.

The Southern Baptist Record says that a brother who takes four secular papers and no religious paper belongs about four times as much to the world as to God. This seems to be correct. Religious papers tell us about the affairs of Christ's kingdom, and when a professor refuses to take and read one of these papers it shows that he cares very little about what is being done or is to be done.

One of the best men in the late legislature was Prof. M. V. Henry, of Birmingham. His associates speak of him as being a man to the core. He was ardent in his efforts to better our educational interests, and his school law for Jefferson county is a monument to his wisdom and to his love for his people. He was a friend of temperance, for he believes the educational interest has no greater foe than the saloon. He had the courage of his convictions on all occasions.

ONE THOUSAND new subscribers and 1,000 renewals in the next two months would enable us to reach a position the ALABAMA BAPTIST has never yet occupied. Let each preacher and earnest brother and sister, who reads these lines, determine to help in this struggle. We are making many sacrifices that we may be more useful to the denomination, but as we have before urged we should not be allowed to bear the heat and burden of the day when a little help from the many would lighten the load.

Why are whisky sellers and whisky drinkers kept in our churches? It can't be because of their Christian influence, for it is impossible for them to have much of that. It is said to admit such things, but most of them are retained because they contribute liberally to the pastor's salary or church expenses, or because they are members of good families, some of whom might be offended if such men were excluded. Better far let our pastors do with half salaries than for our churches to be loaded down with such men.

A brother wrote recently: "You may stop my paper, the Bible is good enough for me." Our bookkeeper, noting that the brother was due something on his subscription, wrote in return: "We are glad you love the Bible, there is nothing better than its teachings; and as you remember it says, 'Owe no man anything,' we trust you will remit the amount due for the time you have received the paper." Most of those who excuse themselves from reading a religious paper on the ground that they have their Bible, do precious little studying that volume.

It is truly gratifying to know that the outlook for the Mississippi Baptist Record is so bright. The times have been hard with the proprietors of that paper, but now they have a good circulation, and back of that the love and confidence of the brethren and sisters of the state. For the past two years the senior editor, Dr. Gambrell, has given most of his time working to endow Clinton College, but since that is practically completed he will concentrate his energies and splendid abilities on the Record. We predict a yet more useful career for that already valuable paper. Every Baptist family in Mississippi should subscribe for and read the Record.

How does this strike you? "A preacher who says, 'I can't quit tobacco,' discredits the grace of God. Brother, you can quit and you ought to. Read that twice." This, from our Mississippi neighbor, should make a lasting impression on every preacher who reads it. We preach to men and women that God's grace is able to help them quit any habit or appetite, no matter how low hanging, and yet by our preaching we acknowledge that God's grace is not strong enough to help us quit a miserable habit which is enfolding our manhood, and wasting thousands of dollars each year. "Quit ye like men," or quit claiming so much of the grace of God.

Dr. Broadus says: "Only those who are eager and ardent in their undertakings, secular or religious, can expect a great blessing from on high." The world grows upon fanaticism and enthusiasts, and yet search history as we may and we find that no great fortune was ever built or fame acquired by a man unless he put his whole heart and brain into his work. Martin Luther was called a crank, but he turned the world of religious thought upside down and elevated the doctrine of personal faith in God. Napoleon Bonaparte was an arrogant genius, and yet he was the greatest military genius the world ever saw. The Apostle Paul brightened his pathway with work for Christ, and yet his one motto was, "I press forward," and his strength, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." So would we find were we to go into an investigation of the life of every successful worker for Jesus. With faith in God and faith in themselves, they builded monuments whose bases rest in the hearts of men and women, and whose tops reach into eternity. The path which is void of enthusiasm is sure to be a failure. His heart must be kept alive with love for God and for his flock. He would have done something worthy the name they profess.

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WHEREVER the downfall of a young man is traced to gambling, a great cry is made through the papers, and yet these same organs have never a word of condemnation for the prominent men, legislators, senators, judges, solicitors, mayors, etc., whose regular habit is to gamble. To the example and influence of such men can be traced the ruin of so many of these young men. Good people must cease elevating such characters to office. There are now in our penitentiaries and work houses many men, both old and young, who were ruined by gamblers who occupied high social and political positions. These unfortunates were caught, but the real thieves go free.

Dr. JOHN A. BROADUS in the March number of the Baptist Teacher says:

Elisha was eminently loving and mild, and thus fitted to be the great prophet, and to work out permanent results for Elijah's stern ministry of judgment and overthrow. He made a small part of their work, and was ready even to punish when necessary; but he liked to rebuke gently, and sometimes it was with tears that he exhorted or warned. We often observe a similar difference in our preachers, and each has his work. Let us bear constantly in mind that the prophets were preachers, prediction being only a small part of their work; and we can understand them, and profit by their example, only in proportion as we compare them with the unspiced preacher to the bad by gamblers who occupied high social and political positions. These unfortunates were caught, but the real thieves go free.

For years we have been impressed with the importance of pastoral work. Of course, the preaching of the gospel is the preacher's great business, but a tender, thoughtful pastor can make preaching so much more effective by being careful to know the people among whom he lives. If he goes into their homes in times of trouble and affliction, and shows himself interested in their welfare, he binds them to him by the tenderest ties. It has been our privilege to try this very work and we know its worth. One of the sweetest memories connected with our recent bereavement was the visit from our pastor. Tenderly he brought before us the promises of God, and his prayer for the comforting and sustaining grace of God made the burden less heavy to bear. Brother preacher, if you have neglected pastoral work, we beg you to try it.

The following note from Rev. David M. Ramsey is of special interest at this time. We are glad to learn of the success of the meeting with our brethren at Tuscaloosa. The high endorsement that is placed upon Bro. McGaha and his preaching is true, every word of it. The pastor and brethren of the Adams Street Baptist church, this city, are conducting a series of prayer meetings this week preparatory to his coming next week. Bro. Ramsey says: "We have closed a gracious meeting at Tuscaloosa. The elements were against us, but the Lord was for us, and hence the weather was made a means of grace. The congregations were large, both day and night, and the preaching was of a high order. Many people are revived and are tenderly spiritual. We had thirty-one additions, and the unconverted are still genuinely concerned. At our young people's meeting several have asked for the prayers of Christians. There are other evidences of profound interest among those who are out of Christ. Bro. A. W. McGaha, of East Lake, did the preaching. The sermons were tender, strong, fearless and evangelical. I have heard the leading evangelists of this country, and not forgetting the consuming zeal of Mr. Moody, the versatility of Edward Judson, the unique gifts of the Hale brothers, the tenderness and magnetism of H. M. Wharton and the directness and union of Culpender, I call Bro. McGaha a great evangelist and give it as my opinion that were he to devote himself to holding meetings he would not be excelled by any mentioned above, unless it be the first named. He disarms criticism by impressing all that he is a man of God and a man of prayer."

Two and a half years ago, in issue of August 9, 1888, we spoke of a little son, then about two weeks old, in the home of our senior, Bro. Hare. Our brethren, possibly recall to mind the role, in which occurred the following: "Here's a happy wish for the youthful preacher, and long may you live to be an honor and comfort to your parents, Joseph Curry Hare!"

It now gives us pain to chronicle the death of the little child, which occurred in Verbena on the night of Feb. 26th, 1891. He was a bright child and was buried deep in the affections of his parents. He battled against disease, membranous croup, but died clasped him to his bosom and he is no more on earth. He was buried in Montgomery last Sunday morning by the side of his little brother who preceded him about four years.

O the empty little chairs around the hearth in Alabama! O the bleeding hearts of mourning parents in Alabama! But life is only a span; yesterday we dreamed, to-day we live, to-morrow we are not. The scars upon the human heart are but impressions of the Divine finger, the signs of God's love, the monuments of his glory, the evidences of his wisdom, the assurances of the disciple's acceptance. "Whom he loveth, he chasteneth."

It nearly breaks the heart; God knows it. It crushes the fondest hope; God knows it. It can hardly be borne; God knows it. "The Lord goeth," he knew them that trust in him.

Let all who are sad take heart again, and be alone in our hours of pain. Our Father stooped from his throne above to soothe and quiet us when our griefs were high, and we have safety for his night. Can it be trouble which he doth share? Oh, rest in peace, for the Lord will call us.

The loving sympathy of many will be extended to the bereaved family in the removal by death of one of its jewels. God bless them and comfort them.

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some months since on this subject, and our worthy corresponding secretary, at Marion, in commenting on it, pronounced it to be very faulty. Now this practice of dancing is growing, and growing fast; is it right or is it wrong? If it is wrong, why not have more of these sermons, and then have them read to the people? It is a waste of time to have some backbones to do it; and looking at it in the other light, would it be worth the cost? Baptists will be as good dancers as Episcopalians or Catholics if it is not stopped.

Now I am young in years, and am a Baptist, and may be of the track; but if you will give us your ideas on this subject through the Baptist, probably I will get on all right.

In replying to the above, we must state: Our Bible teaches us that a thing is either right or it is wrong. We are sorry the brother who wrote the above letter was weak enough to lend his presence to an "attraction" which has thrust many thousands of souls into perdition and endless woe. The glided ball room is but one step to the bacchanalian feast, where "familiarity breeds contempt" and morals are discounted and sold to the lowest bidder. The heathen dance, and rage, and pull their hair in times of rejoicing and in times of grief, and the modern ball room dancer, in his sounds of intoxicating delirium, to a degree above those ignorant creatures in their heathenish customs.

Going to one of these places as a "spectator" makes the sin none the less great. Our Bible tells us to "abstain from all appearance of evil." And if the ball room, has not, next to gambling and the bar room, blighted more young people's prospects than all other sources of evil, then statistics are untrue. Whether are we drifting when church members grow wild and dance about the hall, the theater, and the german?

The "preacher's wife" who was present would find it a very difficult matter to lead an unconverted soul to the Master. We believe it impossible for her to do so. The "handsome deacon," "big lay members," "their wives and daughters" and "some ladies whose husbands were keeping house," may be so-called Baptists, but we deny their being "first-class Baptists" because first-class Baptists are first-class Christians, and no first-class Christian will enter a ball room. We'd about as soon take a drink of whisky at a bar with a man who is a notorious gambler and drunkard as to associate with him and encourage him in sin by our presence in these hell-holes of sorrow and shame. Doubtless the great crowd that sat beneath the shadow of the cross on which the Savior of mankind was crucified, and watched him there, "claimed that they had no part in his death; but if nothing else conscience taught them the still small voice of God, they were guilty in that they did not put forth their hand to stay the dreadful proceeding. Their inactivity crucified the Son of God!

We have never known a dancing member to be of any spiritual strength to the church. In witnessing for the world they crucify the Savior afresh. They bring reproach upon the cause of the Master. The apostle says: "There are some who walk among you disorderly." "Withdraw from a brother who walks disorderly" and the same is applicable to a sister. So far as walking disorderly is concerned, we have never yet been able to discern the difference between a young lady's dancing and a young man's tipping; if one is wrong (and no fair minded person will deny that) both have evil tendencies, the other is equally so, and hence both should be subject to church discipline. This is common sense, and the Lord's apostles had no small amount of this great essential in serving churches in the olden time. They stood near the cross and let the message down with prayer and love.

The supposition that "Baptists are getting enlightened" on this subject, and hence are dancing more, is a supposition which is founded in loose church discipline. The time has been when some churches condemned such conduct by disciplining their members who engaged in dancing, but fearing lest they be called "unpopular" they have left the old moorings and are drifting out on the current, counting the applause of the world, or floating down stream to failure and ruin. Over such a church the Master may weep, and as in the time of the prophet, the Lord may repeat, "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone."

Yes, we must admit, and we are made sad at the thought, that "this practice of dancing is growing, and growing fast." It does no good to that body of members of whom it is said, "It is a good dancing church." It is the funeral knell of spirituality in that membership and it won't be long ere dead piety and a lifeless church are buried.

God forbid that the time shall ever come when it will be said that Baptists are "as good dancers as Episcopalians and Catholics." We had rather read, a thousand times, "Failure" over our life-work, than have it said that Baptists had forgotten their God and their church and gone the way of the world. God help us to be earnest workers for his cause. God forbid that we should enter any place that we cannot go in company with our Master.

It has not been our purpose to condemn any man or any set of men on account of honest views. We have been plain, very plain, in our language criticizing the position of legislators on moral questions, whether they were church members or not. We have not had occasion to feel sorry for the language used, nor shall we retract one word uttered or one sentiment expressed.

In the late legislature there were a few men who prided themselves as leaders who should never have been nominated to positions of honor. They thrust themselves forward as "leaders," when the only way forward led was moving toward ruin. They would lead us moving toward ruin. They were politicians of the kind that oppose temperance legislation because it destroys their business—their "practice." They know full well that a jug of whisky, nine times out of ten, causes drunkenness, a fight or street brawl—very often a murder—a trial in the courts, and it is money in their pockets, always. This is why some lawyers and politicians plead for "democracy" at the cost of morals. The politician would grow old as Methuselah he is initiated into the form and mode of championed the cause of right and virtue.

On the floor of the house and senate they boast of the honor conferred upon them by their constituents, alluding in glowing terms to the million and a half subjects over whom they preside and whose interests they must look after and for whom they must legislate. Now isn't it strange that after having "had their day," and after storming the legislature with their eloquence, condemning all legislation looking to the morals of the people, they turn and fret and smart and cry aloud when their positions are discovered and their language criticized?

They have stated their position, and we have seen it in action. We have seen the soldiers of Christ are engaged in the hand-to-hand conflict. If any are of our faith, we are as ready to fight as they are, and we desire to be on the side of truth.

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STATING IT PLAINLY.

During the legislature we "bounced up" a member for his position on temperance legislation and showed his lack of constitution. His feelings were wounded, that we had so treated him, and he was sure we did not understand his situation. A friend of his, thinking he had unconsciously done a good man an injustice, upbraided him, and said he could not possibly do anything favorable for temperance, because he had promised the saloon men of a leading town in his district that he would not "bother with the whisky interest." This explanation said the whisky sellers had heard that he was a temperance man, and would not let him be elected without such a promise, and that he accompanied the candidate to the place of business of each saloonist, where the promise was given.

This explanation told the brother in a worse light than he before appeared. It is presumed that, as he professed to be a Christian man, and had, during his last legislative experience, stood up for temperance, the Christian and temperance people would not promise of him. But, while professing to represent the whole people, he actually represented only the saloon interest, because, forthwith, he had given them his promise, and he gave them his promise because without their aid he could not have been elected. So far as the people's and his own good is concerned, he had better, a thousand times, been defeated.

OFFENSES OF THE CHURCH.

(1) What shall we do with members of the Baptist church who sign petitions for men to sell whisky? (I take the position that the man who signs the petition is as guilty as the man who sells it, because without the aid of the signer the whisky could not be sold. The need of discipline arises from the fact that there is a state of things in our churches which is in conflict with the will of God. If God is to be honored and glorified in the church, discipline must be exercised to correct that which is in conflict with his will.)

(2) What shall we do with retail and wholesale liquor dealers in our churches? (3) Will you please give in your next issue all ordinary cases, this should be deemed satisfactory, and the case be dismissed. (4) But if, after patient, deliberate, and prayerful labor, all efforts fail to reclaim the offender, then, however painful the necessity, the church must withdraw its fellowship from him, and put him away from its midst.

(5) If the case be one of flagrant immorality, by which the reputation of the body is compromised and the Christian name scandalized, all ordinary cases, this should be deemed satisfactory, and the case be dismissed.

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