

# THE ALABAMA BAPTIST.

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## Growth of Catholicism in the United States.

Some Protestants, governed by their wishes and hopes rather than by facts, are constantly talking about the "evident decline" of Roman Catholicism in the United States. One does not become an alarmist, nor give evidence of Romanophobia when he expresses the folly of such Protestants.

Two great facts in Christianity are Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. The former has historic precedence and prestige in many ways. In the opening up of the "New World" Protestantism, then a growing babe, gained a strong foothold in what became the United States. But the Catholics gained all of South America, the south western and north eastern portions of North America, and many points in the United States. Changes in Europe have conspired with the early advantage gained in the New World to enable Roman Catholicism to give much attention to the problem of obtaining a controlling position, in not absolute ascendancy, in the United States. These plans have been manifested with such care and statesmanship, such quietness and patience that superficial observers have thought the United States to be secure to Protestantism for all time. The quickly following events of 1892 and 1893 will dispel this illusion if anything can.

The following extracts from the *Catholic Mirror* of Feb. 1, 1893, compel attention, even when they are discounted as being the testimony of an "interested witness":

"The advance sheets of the Catholic Directory for 1893 show that there are nearly nine millions of Catholics in the United States, and if all who are Catholics by baptism and inheritance, and the 'hickory' Catholics who never enter a church, but still consider themselves as belonging to the faith, were counted, there would be, perhaps, a million more."

"Wonderful is the increase. There was a time when Catholics were few, and, in one sense, it was far from a glory to be of their number. Scarcely they were not esteemed, and in some sections of the country, especially certain portions of the South, they were ostracized and hated."

"It is marvelous to read of the growth of the Catholic Church in this country—the hardships, trials and dangers of those who carried on the missions and of those who professed the faith in the early times. Churches and religious buildings were few. To be able to hear mass was a rare privilege. And with what gratitude the faithful availed themselves of the sacramental. There are old letters and writings which tell a pathetic tale."

"Who could have dreamed of what has come to pass and of what this Catholic Directory shows! Here we have a Cardinal, fourteen archbishops, seventy-five bishops and nearly ten thousand priests. There are churches, chapels, colleges, schools, asylums and institutions of charity almost innumerable. There are nearly a million Catholics in New York alone; Chicago has half a million, and Philadelphia almost as many. Here in Baltimore we have 235,000."

"Catholics are, therefore, a great power in the State, and ought to exercise considerable public influence, and yet, wisdom, as such, they venture to take part in affairs, there is, on the part of some people, an immediate and indignant protest, as if such a proceeding were the height of presumption."

"Proud of their country, they are also proud of their religion. And as Christianity, it flourishes on this new soil with the vitality which belongs to truth. No doubt many a social economist, wise in his own conceit, said a hundred years ago, remarking upon the condition of the church as it then was, that nothing so antiquated and effete could thrive in the new republic then beginning. How he would rub his eyes in wonder if he were to return to look about him now!"

"And there will be no falling off or stay, but the march of the church will proceed in the same swift and stately manner. Some of her enemies are still croaking out their dismal predictions, which will pass away as the idle wind, not even remembered."

"We would emphasize the last paragraph. It is not an idle boast. The swift and wise adjustment which Catholicism is making between its interests and the Republic, is a new and an immense element of strength. In our practical organization, divided and discordant Protestantism has nothing with which to meet it. Catholics are, therefore, a great power in the State." So they are, and one prominent element of that power lies in the fact that they do not seem to

"push themselves," when in fact they are doing this most effectually.

All this it is their right to do. No one can deny them a free field and a fair fight. Neither may Anti-Papistic Protestants hope that God will work any miracles to check this growth. If Protestantism does not possess, or does not hasten to obtain, the vigor and unity which are essential to successful competition with its enemy and rival—for whatever they may have in common, Romanism and Protestantism, as systems and as historic movements, are enemies and rivals, and must always be—Catholicism will gain the ascendancy.

Protestantism has no ground on which to hope for victory except by more real and practical adherence to the theory of an open Bible, really obeyed. On our position of the Bible, as the supreme authority, and the gospel as the message of God to all men, we welcome the Roman Catholic to the contest. On no other ground can that be done.—*Evangelist and Sabbath Outlook*

**"Impressions."**

Bro. Baptist: I like your name. I hope you will like me—regardless of my name. "Impressions?" Yes, I have some. Do you readers care for them? Who knows?

I have come, I have seen, and I am con-gratulating myself on having come. Perhaps I should rather say, I came, &c., &c., for the impressions mentioned are of the Convention. But I had to come—to try—before I could go—to Greenville. Therefore, I will not change the tense in the above rare quotation, but shall leave the imputation, with all it means or can be made to mean, to be charged up to Troy.

And now I add—I went, I saw, I was captivated. This "furner," to gather with several others, of the same "persuasion," was "taken in" and most graciously welcomed by the royal brotherhood, the King's sons in Alabama. Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi and Georgia were represented among the happy initiates, and I think I heard a bugle note from Hampton's division. But we were not permitted to feel like strangers a great while. We were soon acclimated—ed, or—ized, as you prefer. Fine-ance, or fine-ance, just as you please. These big-hearted Alabamians allow no latitude in everything that does not affect orthodoxy.

I suppose it was mean in me, to do so, but I couldn't help drawing comparisons. The result, however, was not at all discreditable to the Alabamians.

I am an ex-Georgian, (did you see me flinch, under that ex?) but I tried to be, and I think I was, impartial. Of course, in many respects, the brethren of the two states are very much alike; but the rotund and ponderous eloquence of some distinguished Georgians was unheard in the Alabama Convention, there was more sprightliness and less red tape formality among the Alabamians, the latter are more direct and, as rule, quicker in the dispatch of business, there are more speeches, but generally shorter than in the Georgia Convention, and the younger men take a more prominent part in the proceedings. There are many splendid specimens among the young Baptists of Alabama, preachers and laymen, and some of them are destined to become great, in the best sense of the word. The Alabama Convention, however, makes men in any state, and young and middle-aged will not lower the lofty stand and maintained by their seniors.

It would not be becoming in me, a novice, to express any opinion about the actions and measures of the Convention. Suffice it to say, that it is in my opinion, composed of able, earnest, godly men, and I believe the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom are, under the Divine guidance, safe in the hands of the noble, consecrated band of brethren I met at Greenville.

R. BERT H. HARRIS  
Troy.

**As it is Seen in Texas.**

The following correspondence explains itself:

To Rev. J. B. Link, D. D.: Several of the brethren here wish to know your opinion on the following: A man and wife who are devoted Christians bring letters of dismission from a Baptist church in Cincinnati. They wish to join a Baptist church here. Before presenting the letters the minister makes this statement: 'My wife was baptized by a Campbellite minister. She was received by a Baptist church in Cincinnati on that baptism and has never received any other baptism.' Should the Baptist church here receive the woman? If so, why? If not, why?

Fraternally, — Pastor.

DR. LINK'S REPLY.

Dear Brother: In answer to your letter and query I would say this is not a new question with us in Texas. I do not know how uniform has been the action of our churches, but I suppose with very few exceptions, if any, they would require the baptism of the lady referred to. This has been required where a party had put in a letter and had been received without the facts being known. When the party thus received had the requirement laid before him and the propriety of submitting to baptism, or rebaptism, if you choose, he saw the propriety of so doing and was baptized, and has since entered the ministry. Of course if one who has no authority as an officer performs an official act it is null and void. We, therefore, do not and ought not to accept the baptism performed by those not authorized.

Respectfully, J. B. LINK.

Dr. A. J. Holt's reply to the letter of inquiry is as follows: 'In re-

ply to your letter of inquiry I will candidly state my opinion:

1. A Campbellite minister is not an officer of a Baptist church, therefore cannot administer her ordinances.

2. A Baptist church cannot authorize Campbellite baptism, hence cannot endorse it.

3. Such endorsement on the part of one Baptist church cannot have any binding force on another Baptist church.

4. No church can make that baptism which is not baptism, even though she do so pronounce.

5. A church letter pre-supposes baptism. If it is ascertained that this pre-supposition is erroneous the letter is void.

6. This baptism is plainly invalid from the further fact that the man who performed it could not himself at the time receive the fellowship of any Baptist church.

7. Endorsing a wrong cannot make it right.

A. J. HOLT.

**Baptist Ministerial Bureau.**

The significance of this title is a Committee of Correspondence to be appointed by and in each association in the state, consisting of the most judicious pastors and laymen, the object being to constitute a medium of correspondence between pastorless churches and churches with pastors, with a view of bringing them together.

The advantages of such a Bureau will be many; among others the following:

1. It will conserve the interest of the cause by opening up a channel, and bringing the pastorless churches and churches with pastors into speedy and direct correspondence with each other. Much time, unnecessary expense, and loss of advantage, will thus be saved, both to the churches and pastors. As it is, there may be, as there frequently are, scores of vacant churches, and scores of pastors churchless, who might be speedily brought together. Such a committee as this, through whom both churches and pastors could make their needs and wishes known, would, we believe to be a great saving of time and service to our denomination in the state.

2. Such a committee could also systematize the work of each association, by recommending the grouping together of two, three or four small churches contiguous to each other, under one pastor. As it is with us now, a man may be imported on Saturday night, once each month, a distance of fifty or a hundred miles, to supply a church, and to return home on Monday morning, while another of said church, exports himself an equal distance to supply some other church once a month; and so it occurs that none of our smaller churches enjoy what may be termed pastoral care.

3. Again, the appointment of such a committee would serve as a check to any unworthy man thrusting himself upon our churches. In some of our associations committees on "Ministerial Credentials" are appointed. This Bureau would cover that ground, and also include much more good service. These are some of the advantages that would be gained. And such a committee would be no infringement upon the independency of our churches, as it is intended only as a medium of communication, and aid and advice in its mission.

But can it be made practical? We think so. How? We have in our state a white, English speaking association. Perhaps the *Journal and Messenger* would give a little space, in one corner, to insert the name and address of the chairman of the Bureau, in each association, as a standing record for the year. Thus the plan would be very simple, and would serve, in our opinion, a good and desirable end.

We clip the foregoing from the *Journal and Messenger*, of Cincinnati, the organ of Ohio Baptists. It shows that the Baptists of that state have one of the same troubles that we of Alabama have. There is this editorial comment on the above.

How to bring pastorless churches and churches pastors together is a question, which has excited much thought, and its solution does not seem to be very near at hand. A communication from a highly esteemed minister in Ohio appears in another column of this paper, and there is reason for believing that such a thing as he suggests might accomplish something along the line of his inquiry. We should be very glad to see it tried.

It will be remembered that some months ago Secretary Crumpton made a suggestion somewhat like that printed above, and having the same object in view; but so far as we know it did not attract the serious attention of the brethren generally, and it appears that nothing has been done. One difficulty in the way of the practical operation of any such plan for supplying the churches is the fact that a large majority of our preachers are farmers, living in their own homes, and do not care to move about so as to get near to churches that might be induced to call them. They want work near where they now live.

**Criticizing the Sermon.**

We clip the following from the *Examiner*, of New York. It might be well for some church members to cut it out and carry it with them for frequent reference:

One of our best Baptist laymen makes it a point of conscience never to speak disparagingly of a sermon.

"I once," he often says, "heard a discourse which seemed to me so lacking in pith and point that I did not see how it could possibly do good to any one, and I criticized it quite sharply to a number of friends at the close of the service. But afterwards I learned that it had been of great spiritual comfort to one of our members, and I determined then that I would never again condemn a sermon simply because it didn't happen to suit me." This rule may be carried too far, for a sermon is only a human production, and necessarily partakes—and sometimes very largely—of human imperfection. But it is much better to err in the direction of our friend's rule than to indulge in the perpetual criping and snoring at the sermon which comes to be a habit with many. "Don't shoot the organist—he is doing the best he can," was the legend inscribed over the singer's gallery in a mining town meeting-house. At least be as generous to the man who is trying to preach the gospel, and so long as he preaches sound doctrine, even if he does not always do it as well as we could wish, refrain from peppering him with the stinging shot of needless and often most unjust criticism. If it seems necessary to criticize, do it kindly to the pastor himself, and thus help rather than hinder him in his work.

**Literary Notices.**

**IMMERSION: THE ACT OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.** By John T. Christian, D. D. Price: Morocco, \$1.50; Cloth, \$1.75; Paper, 35c.

"CLOSE COMMUNION," or, Baptism as a Prerequisite to the Lord's Supper. By John T. Christian, D. D. Price: Full Morocco, \$1.50; Cloth, \$1.75; Paper, 35c.

These two books by Dr. Christian are the fruit of a good deal of labor and research, and yet it is not laborious to read them. The style is easy and natural, and the arguments and proofs fit into their places naturally and easily. Both the books ought to be in the hands of every Baptist, and of every seeker after Scripture truth on the subject of baptism and communion.

If you wish the books, or desire to take an agency, write to Dr. Christian at 429 East Chestnut Street, Louisville, Ky.

A new volume of The Century starts in November with an extraordinary table of contents, including:

Russell Lowell, Charles Eliot Norton, Col. John Hay, George Kennan, Mary Halleck Foote, Miss Schuyler van Rensselaer, E. B. Hall, Thomas Charles Egbert Craddock, and many others. As to the contents themselves, these include nothing more absorbing than the second or concluding part of the diary of the Admiral's Secretary describing Napoleon's voyage to St. Helena.

In this month the frontispiece portrait of Edwin Booth in his younger manhood is accompanied by the first part of "Memories and Letters" of the great actor, by his friend and executor, William Bigham.

A two-part story by Charles Egbert Craddock, entitled "The Casting Vote," begins in this number, and there are completed stories by Richard Malcolm Johnston, Mary Halleck Foote, and A. W. Drake, the latter being entitled "The Yellow Globe"—the first of a series of strange "Midnight Stories." The good articles are too numerous to mention.

Sidon has a number of The Century contained so much in the way of fiction and adventure. Here also are Mr. Stoner Carr's account of killing his "First Lions," and an historical paper of romantic interest describing the escape of the Confederate Secretary of War. The November number also contains the first of an illustrated series of articles on American and English tramps.

The "Ghosts of the Past" department is unusually varied and strikingly illustrated, and includes a full-page drawing of negro life by Helmeck, which is one of the most careful studies of character of this sort that The Century has published.

Mark Twain's new novel will be in the Christmas number of The Century.

**A THREAD OF GOLD.** By Lucy Day. 12mo. 254 pp. Price, \$1. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1420 Chestnut Street.

The thread of gold in this story is formed by the character, winsomeness, and Christian consecration of Leslie Hope, its principal figure. We meet her first upon the Rocky Mountains, where she, a girl of ten, gives her Bible to a poor boy who had come for a minister to attend a funeral in the cave in which he stayed. We see her as she comes from boarding school, a simple hearted Christian girl, much to the disappointment of her worldly minded mother, and we follow her into the fashionable life into which that mother plunges her. Out of that, and the "valley of the shadow" into which it brings her, we come with her. We see how she gives herself for others, braving ridicule for the sake of "Still Bill," helping to bear the burdens of the paragon and making them lighter, going in bravely, though tremblingly, amid all the horrors of the yellow fever in a distant city for the sake of a friend, simply, according to her own account, "helping the doctor and because she could not do otherwise." It would hardly be expected that the book would end without at least a touch of romantic love, and here it is, and marriage, too, but it is well told. It is a

thoroughly wholesome, Christian book, which no young girl especially can read without profit.

**CHRIST'S ACTED PARABLES.** A Study of the Miracles. By N. S. Burton. D. D. 12mo., 156 pp. Price, \$1. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1420 Chestnut Street.

The relation of the miracles of our Lord to his ministry has been subject to very great misapprehension. This has pertained to both the nature and function of miracles with consequent detriment to their legitimate influence.

Mr. Burton has conceived of the miracles of Christ as acted parables, as the title indicates. The miracle, according to his thought, contains moral truth no less than the parable itself. It is conveyed in a different way, it appeals to the eye, it so emphasizes what had been otherwise considered to be the moral truth.

Thus Dr. Burton holds in the miracles just what we might expect to find with this conception of them, a progressive unfolding of spiritual truth.

Dr. Burton has given us a thorough good book. Its style is clear, its thought evangelical and strong, and its tone devotional throughout.

**Bro. Lindsey's Field—Bro. Crumpton's Work.**

Bro. W. B. Crumpton will never know, in this world, the good that he is accomplishing as he goes from place to place, dispensing the truth, and giving a fresh impetus and new life to the Master's workmen. While he and Bro. McGaha were here at the last session of the Bethlehem association, they did a great deal of work, representing the different interests fostered by our denomination, which is already bearing fruit. In every church in my field there is one member or more who gained inspiration from their speeches, which is exceedingly helpful to me. They are much esteemed by the people here, and frequently the request is made of me to try and get Bro. Crumpton to come back next year, and as one brother expressed it, bring with him the brother who wore the straw hat, giving him also a funny name, which must not be printed for the president of Howard College. He could not recall or pronounce the name McGaha.

While in this section, Bro. Crumpton, noting the rapid increase in the population, and the growing necessity for more churches, as well as the scarcity of preachers, at once set at supplying the need. "I was glad to come here by him, and am glad that I yielded to his strong appeals in behalf of these people. He has also endeavored Bro. Green Ray, as I am informed, to give all of his time to the ministry, lower down in Escambia county.

There are other "waste fields" here which he will reclaim as soon as he can lay his hands on the right man. I have noticed some complaint in the columns of the *Baptist* about the country being neglected by Bro. Crumpton, but this is wrong, for I am, and have been for some months, in a position to know that he is doing all for the country that is in his power to do.

My churches are all taking on new life. We worship in a union house at Perdue Hill, but the good sisters are at work doing all in their power to secure funds to build a new house of worship. They have by their own exertions raised something over two hundred dollars for this purpose. They gave an entertainment and oyster supper on last Friday night, and their receipts were something over forty-five dollars. There is no church in the state that can boast of a nobler set of ladies than we have in our church at Perdue Hill. The brethren are but little behind them, and they, too, will "go down into their pockets" when the time comes to begin work on our house. The ladies of other denominations were very kind, and aided the "Willing Workers" all they could in their entertainment.

At McConico the brethren have repaired their house of worship, and are earnestly at work raising their pastor's salary, which they propose to pay by installments.

Pleasant Hill vies with its sisters around in good work. Their house has never been completed, but the brethren are already maturing plans by which they will complete their church, ceiling and all, real soon. The good sisters there are not idle. I suggested to them on my last visit, at the Sunday school, that a stove was very much needed to heat the building, and before Monday morning sister Annie Moore, an active, devoted Christian woman, and Miss Bertha Lambert, an estimable young lady, had secured nearly enough funds to buy a good stove.

Oak Grove saints have been working in a small log house for a long time, but now have determined that the Lord should have a better house; so they have the frame up for a much larger building, and we hope to worship in our new church in a few fortnights.

The brethren are very kind in keeping us supplied with edibles such as they grow, paying their share of pastor's salary in potatoes, corn, beef, etc., when they have not the money.

All things considered, we feel that we are doing very well, and will push with vigor on, trusting God, and doing all we can for his name's honor and glory.

S. P. LINDSEY.

The man who starts out to use up the Bible will be too old to enjoy his victory by the time he gets through with his job.

## Trip Notes.

The Sunday after Convention found me at Wetumpka. The church is without a pastor, and has been for nearly a year. I hope this condition will not continue much longer.

This ought to be one of the best churches in the State. They have a strong membership; a splendid brick building, erected before the war, and a cultivated community.

They need a good pastor to live among them.

The town is improving; some handsome new residences have been erected. Lock No. 31 is being built on the river, just below the bridge. In the course of a generation or two, boats will run from Rome, Ga., to Mobile. Four of the locks in the upper river, below Gadsden, have been completed. The old penitentiary still stands. They have some thing over 200 convicts within the walls, the most of them brought here from other places, sick and broken down, so that really it is the penitentiary hospital. The State has purchased several thousand acres of land on the L. & N., near Spigener, and will begin at once preparations for moving all the convicts to it. Taking them out of the mines has been determined on. Farming will be, I suppose, the principal employment of the convicts in their new quarters. It is hoped that this change will be better for the convicts, their health and morals, and as well for the State. As the prohibition sentiment continues to grow the number of convicts will decrease.

This reminds me of the remark of a railroad man. He said that fifteen years ago you could get liquor at every station and cross road from Montgomery to Birmingham, but now, Calera was the only place where you could find it. And yet some people say prohibition has made no progress.

With the railroads, express and telegraph companies, and all the great corporations helping us, we can and will put down this evil. If the secular press and the politicians can be won over to our side, we will sweep the traffic in liquor from the face of the earth.

W. B. CRUMPTON.

**I Ask.**

I ask, after carefully considering the matter, what should the pastor of the Baptist church do, in a little town like this, when a Methodist tent is pitched in the midst of his people, and a shout is raised, and there is a general stampede? Now what? Here comes never saw a Methodist; neither did Christ till John Wesley was born nearly seventeen hundred years after the angels sang over Bethlehem's cradle.

Ought the Baptist preacher "hands off" or ought he to join in the shout and go forth to the battle?

If he has nothing to do with it, his young people are dragged in by these boisterous sons of thunder—they making the young people believe that "the church is the place to get religion—a means of grace." Mr. Price, companion to Mr. McIntosh, said: "The church is a great hospital—a place for the sick." "He is a fool who will not go to school before he is educated—the church is the place to learn religion—come in out of the world." I knew it was better to do part and be with Christ. But I could not see how getting into the Methodist church would lift me over the fence and out of the world. My opinion was that if I went into that church I would be getting into a good deal of the world. Mr. McIntosh is what some men would call "a hustler"—up and all over the tent, snapping his eyes, his fingers, his mouth, his hands and his feet. Excitement don't express it—the people run wild. The novelty of the tent draws the crowd. And the preacher—"This is my tent, and I can say what I please!" and it is generally said.

Is this right? Well, right or wrong, they are sweeping multitudes of people into their organization. Now, I ask, if it is right, then it is proper for the Baptist pastors to join in with them in their meetings; and if it is not for policy's sake. And if it is right for Baptists to join in with them, then it is right for some of our evangelists to take to the tent. Brethren, it draws. And if it is right for us to help them to draw, why is it not right for us to have a state evangelist with his tent, and help ourselves?

I ask a serious answer.

R. M. HUNTER.

**Queries.**

I have been taught that there are only two ways to get out of a Baptist church, one is to die and the other is to be excommunicated. I see now they use the word "erasure." Please tell me the difference between the words "exclusion" and "erasure" in a Baptist church. We have some members who have joined the Methodist church; should we exclude, or erase them from our church?

H.

Ans.—The Scriptures give no directions, either by precept or example, on the subject of our brother's inquiries. When a person should be excluded from the church, the Scripture phrase is "cut off," or "with-draw." Whether this is to be done by an order of the church to "erase" the name, or by a motion and vote to "exclude" is not said. "Erasure" has been common with Northern Baptists for a long time, and has been employed, so far as our information goes, chiefly to dispose of members who go away from a community with-

out a letter, and fail to report to the church. Something of that sort is needed in the South. Some churches have what they call a "silent roll," on which they place the names of absent members who do not work with the church, or assist in its contributions. Those members are not counted or reported to the association. That is a good idea. The custom of our churches is not uniform, at least as to words used, in the case of a member uniting with a church of different faith. Some churches exclude on a charge of heresy; some recite the offense, and say that "we hereby withdraw fellowship;" and here and there a church says that the person has withdrawn fellowship from us, or has shown a want of fellowship with us, by uniting with a church of different faith, and his name is hereby dropped from our roll. This amounts to "erasure" for reason given. The difference appears to be that "exclusion" is the result of a formal charge of wrongdoing, while "erasure" is employed to dispose of a person who has done no serious moral wrong, but whose conduct toward the church is not that of a member.

**Persuasion.**

1. Men are made Christians by persuasion. All inspiration attests this. The instruction to go out into the highways and hedges and compel men is no exception to the general course of Scripture teaching; it simply means that men are to be compelled not by any physical force but by the force of holy earnestness. Love cannot be compelled by physical power; and without love to God and cheerful obedience to his will there can be no true religion. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink and dress, not creeds and confessions, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

2. The gospel furnishes right motives to persuade men. These motives are as large as human necessity, as lasting as eternity, and as authoritative as the voice of Jehovah. They appeal to every high and noble principle. They are drawn from hell and its unspeakable horrors, from heaven and its supernatural glories, from earth and its victories or defeats. They involve the supreme interests of the soul for time and for eternity. And for men who resist such motives there is forward to judgment and fiery indignation which shall consume the adversaries.

3. Those who hear the gospel have felt the force of these motives. Few men can say they were never inclined to be Christians. Here the preacher indulges in some touching reminiscences concerning the experiences of the past.

4. Sad to say, with many all the motives of the gospel have been unavailing and they are yet in their sins. Some have procrastinated. Some have felt that religion was incompatible with their earthly happiness. Some have been held back by pride, and have been ashamed of Jesus. So the days have gone by and have lengthened into years, and men have gone on in sin, bespunging wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.—S. F. Taylor.

**Free Will Baptists and Regulars.**

For some time past there has been talk of union between the Free Will Baptists and the Missionary Baptists in some of the Northern States. There are Free Will Baptists in Alabama and other Southern States, and union between the two at the North may extend to the South; hence the following extract is of interest:

In a report of the Michigan Baptist Anniversaries mention is made of the proposed union between regular and Free Will Baptists in the Peninsular state. It is said that no formal action has been taken committing the denomination at large, but in several communities where weak churches of both denominations exist, the relations between the two have become far more cordial. It is said, moreover:

In the Pastors' Conference at Muskegon this year, topic, "Baptist Fellowship," was assigned to Rev. H. M. Ford, the state superintendent of missions for the Free Baptists. This excellent brother delivered an address upon the assigned subject, rapid in style, and characterized by a rare spiciness of Christian charity and common sense. In a frank way he told of the snags which had appeared in the course of navigation of the movement in his own denomination east of New York, yet believed that time and charity would bring about practical union in the not distant future, if it were not attempted unwisely to force it. A resolution was adopted by the Pastors' Conference affirming the eligibility of the Free Baptist pastors to full membership in it. The same spirit of fraternity characterized the Convention itself, which exchanged telegraphic greetings with the Western Free Baptist Association in session at Evansville, Wis., recognized Free Baptist brethren present in various courteous ways, and formally expressed itself in the following resolution: "That in the movement toward the union of the Baptist brotherhoods of the state and in the country at large, we recognize the leadings of Providence, and earnestly desire the consummation of the union as rapidly as shall seem good to the Holy Spirit and to us."

## Central Committee

On Woman's Work for Missions in the Churches.

Mrs. T. A. Hamilton, Pres., Birmingham, Ala.

Mrs. L. F. Stratton, Vice Pres., Birmingham, Ala.

Mrs. Geo. M. Morrow, Treas., Birmingham, Ala.

Mrs. I. C. Brown, Cor. Sec., East Lake, Ala.

Mrs. G. B. Eager, V. P. Ex Com. Montgomery, Ala.

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