

1903

With the coming in of 1903 we learned that Bunyan was sick at Scottsboro and not able to stay in school. So one day my father handed me some money and told me to go to Scottsboro and see if I could buy a buggy and bring Bun home. I put a saddle on the little blue mule and went to Scottsboro. Sure enough there was a one-horse buggy for him and the harness for the mule. It was all new and I had enough money to pay for it. By that time it was mid-afternoon and promised to be a cold night. But Bun and I thought we would go part of the way home that night. We started with Old Beck pulling the buggy. First experience with us to have our own buggy and the first time Beck had been hitched to one.

We got to Mr. Tom Good Cornelison's home just when it was about to get dark. Here is how we thought:- This man is a brother to Mr. Cobb Cornelison who is our nearest neighbor in Paint Rock Valley. No doubt he would like to hear from his brother and family. We guessed right. They took us in, showed us a place to stable and feed Beck, and soon we had had a hearty supper and were given a real old-fashioned bed to sleep in. The room was cold, but two young men that couldn't keep warm in a bed like that wouldn't have got much sympathy. It was a feather bed with plenty of feathers and plenty of quilts to put over us.

Bun was better in the morning and still thinks he ate more eggs for breakfast than at any one meal in a life-time. We got across Cumberland Mountain with Old Beck and the buggy and Bun kept getting better right on through the winter and was able to make a crop in the spring.

For my part, Bun says I got home with a cold, and I remember that it was an old-fashioned case of flu that made my bones ache till spring.

Bun was at home to be the farmer and I was as free as any one could be to find his.

Brother Virgil came from Scottsboro to spend one Fourth-Sunday with us and hear me preach. I heard our pastor preach the First Sunday and Saturday before. And I heard the Methodist preacher the Third Sunday at Bostick's Hill.

We had had a Union Sunday School at Beach Grove and we undertook to do a similar thing at Freedom and Bostick's Hill, Bro. Bob Austell and I.

On the fourth Sundays not many notable things occurred, but one thing stands out in my mind: A man, passed middle life, who lived near Freedom and had never been a "Church man" was a regular attendant and a good listener when I preached. I was encouraged.

School Again.

With the coming of spring and the approach of summer, some of the people with children began to think about a school for their children. They spoke to me about it and wondered if I would not teach in the new house at Larkin. The process was rather simple. One day when several heads of families were at a local store they made and passed a motion to ask me to teach.

I agreed, and continued from May to September. It was two and a half miles from our home to the school. Bun needed the horses to make the crop so I just walked to school. The river had to be crossed twice a day, but I found four logs that would float and used two

short pieces of plank and used a few nails and made a raft using a pole to push it across the stream and a length of wire to anchor the raft to keep it from floating away. I used that raft to cross the river the whole summer.

I still meet people who were my pupils that summer, and what I earned helped to get some comforts for father and mother and what was left helped me to go to Louisville to the Seminary in the fall.

Along with teaching I was a "cotton farmer" for the only time in my life. I planted two acres of cotton on some beautiful land between the house and the river. But I had little experience in picking cotton, because I wanted to get to Louisville by the time the seminary opened, so I left a major part of the cotton farming to Bun.

The Seminary?

At the present time the question would settle itself:—You must finish college before going to the seminary. But I was twenty-two years old! And in a hurry! But when I got to the seminary I was almost the youngest of all the students there!

What is more, about the only preacher that I knew that had been to the seminary advised me to go, and he had not finished college himself.

My father and my oldest brother gave me the final push toward the seminary. At long last Virgil as a lawyer had succeeded in getting out of the extinct college at Scottsboro \$50.00 of a much larger sum my father had advanced to the college in its days of hardship, and he sent this \$50.00 to my father with the suggestion that it be used to help me go to the seminary. So, that makes it unanimous and soon I will be off.

September, 1903 Louisville, Ky.

Changed at Nashville, Tenn. late in the day to a Louisville and Nashville train going north. At 2:40 A.M. the train was slowing down and pulling into what seemed to be a big station with the train on a lower level than the first floor of the station building. It seemed like nearly all the passengers on the train, at least most of those traveling on the day coaches, were getting off. This was Louisville. The concrete platform seemed a long one. Some walked faster and some walked more slowly than ^wme. I found myself walking shoulder to shoulder with a young man I had never seen before. He looked like he would not object to being spoken to, and I got up courage to speak to him and openly wonder what was bringing him to Louisville. He seemed willing enough to tell me that he was coming to Louisville to enter the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He had been on the train longer than I, since he came from Marietta, Georgia.

I told my new acquaintance that I had come for the same purpose. About that time we had come to the foot of the high stairs leading up to the main floor of the station. By the time we had surrendered our tickets and walked out on the sidewalk of Broadway, Louisville, we had agreed that we would take a cab together and look for a place to spend the rest of the night. He was Eugene T. Booth and was to be my room-mate for my first year at the Seminary.

We happened to find lodging at a small hotel on W. Chestnut Street which we discovered had been the first home of the seminary when it had moved from Greenville, S.C. in 1879.

We were up in plenty time to get over to New York Hall at 5th and Broadway and get us a room before the opening ceremony would take place at Norton Hall on Broadway between 4th and 5th.

Norton Hall was then one of the handsome buildings of Louisville and quite big enough for the seminary of that time. About 125 men were to enter in our class and some four young women who were to be the pioneers in the Missionary Training School. But as at least half of our class would not stay more than about one year and a still smaller percentage would settle down with the languages and the whole course, at graduation three years later not more than 25 would be present to receive the degree of Master in Theology (Th.M.)

The first generation of teachers: Boyce, Broadus, Manly and Williams had all passed on and the faculty (in 1903) were mostly young men: Mullins, Sampey, Robertson, McGloth^lkin and Carver, with three older men teaching the more practical branches: Eager, Dargan and Dr. Hawes.

My 22nd birthday had just past and I was wondering as the teachers talked at the opening exercises if I should plan to stay just one year, or if I should take Greek and Hebrew and all that went with them. When the formalities were over and we could ask questions of individual teachers I got a chance to ask Dr. A.T. Robertson for advice about courses. He said "How old are you?" I said "twenty-two." He never said anything, but I saw his face, and then and there decided to take the full course leading to Th. M.