





warned and inspired by the Holy Spirit, how the glow will warm other hearts, infusing the spirit of love and activity into all under his influence. He can greatly interest them and furnish their minds with knowledge by giving them general instruction in sacred history and religious biography. But his duty goes further. He should cultivate their hearts by showing to them the beautiful life of Christ for their imitation, and awakening a desire to forsake sin, and accept Him as their Savior. It will not do for him to delegate these things to the teacher, entirely. A president of a college has teachers under him, but he does not on that account feel himself absolved from personal oversight of the pupils individually. And the position of a superintendent is much the same.

The teacher of the Bible class will find his duty a very important one. He needs before him some energy, inquiring minds anxious to know the truth, and looking to him to clear their minds of doubt and to solve many problems which they can not understand. There are among those before him, tender hearts waiting for the sympathetic word that shall show them their teacher feels for them, and will lead them to open their hearts to him. How sad, if the teacher in a light and careless mood fail to answer their heart-longings, and to go away, probably, without having made the impressions expected, and it may be they will never again feel as they did when the teacher's worldliness, passing over the plastic surface of their hearts, hardened them fatally.

If, instead of this coldness, timely assistance had been given, they might have been led out of the mists and clouds of doubt, into the green pastures where God's love would perpetually beam over them. There are some hearts hard to reach, and we should ever be on the alert to catch the propitious moment when good seed will find their proper conditions for germination.

Some one said to another, "Poet, thy task is before thee—to touch tender hearts." "Any bungler can do that," replied the poet. It is easy to touch the hearts of the little child, which has not been made callous by sin, but when sin has corrupted it by evil influences it requires all our skill, blessed by the Holy Spirit, to find one little spot not yet petrified, where the genial influences of God's grace may be felt.

And the small children should not be left out in making up the Sunday-school. The infant class furnishes a peculiarly important and attractive field for the earnest teacher. By all means take the little children as well as their minds are capable of understanding a father's or a mother's love.

If a loving child has a Christian father there is no better way of illustrating to it the love of a Heavenly Father than by showing it that—like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." The mind of a child is much more tenacious than it is in after years. Passages of Scripture that we learned when we were children are still fresh in our memories, while much later learning is entirely forgotten. How important, then, that the young mind be filled with knowledge worth remembering, which may bring forth fruit in the salvation of their souls. If the soil is not cultivated and made to bring forth good fruit, weeds will certainly grow and monopolize the field.

The work of training the rising generation—who are after a while to take our places and compose the church—is the knowledge and service of God, is the duty of the whole church, and she can not neglect this duty, or delegate it to other societies, without betraying her trust, thinning her ranks, and closing the avenue for future usefulness.

Although not always practicable for the pastor to be present at the Sunday-school, yet it is important that he feel that it is his Sunday-school, and that, by his presence when suitable, and a talk or a lecture, he should show his interest in the school and his desire for the salvation of the souls of all composing it. The teachers will feel their hands strengthened and their hearts cheered by their pastor's co-operation, and they will feel stimulated to greater efforts in qualifying themselves for the instruction of their classes.

bad reason, by ill health, or family care. They can offer their devout petitions for the blessing of God on the school, and vivify their interest by their readiness to contribute towards buying books and papers and by aiding in general expenses.

This work is no child's play, to engage an idle hour, but it is of momentous importance in developing souls for eternity. It should be remembered that the object of instruction is not to give the learner a few facts to remember. But the mind being susceptible of continuous and eternal development, it is to exert its powers and be trained to think connectedly, so that in after years it may grapple with any subject presented for its consideration. And while cultivating the mind and morals of a child, it should be taught to put forth its powers actively. Negative goodness does little good. The growth of the mind and heart must be kept up by corresponding action. The child must be trained not only to think and to love others, but that thought and love must be exercised in doing good to, and for, others. As has been well said, "Christian culture adds love to knowledge and by ever-widening sympathy enriches the life of the world, and leads to its own growth by increased happiness and intelligence in that society it was meant to serve."

May God help us all to be more faithful and zealous in laboring for the Sunday-school, and in every good work.

FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH.

BY BRUCE BAKER.

Light to us—No, not that you not be. Keep to be instructed, such is he? Mind, meek and lowly, seeking not his own? Thinking no evil—blinking before sin? Swift to forgive, and patient still to hear? Hiding the far-off prodigal day near? This would have made, and I would have been? This would have been the great of heaven's Father? No distance, and no darkness, and no frown? No shame in grace and joy all his own? "What wilt thou that I should do to thee?" "Lord, that those eyes of mine the light may see."

O wilderness show all wilderness to me! To see the words that smelt every ill? To say to the wild tempter, "Peace, be still!"

See, in his hand the cup of blessing—see! All that mark fulfills, dinner, is for thee? O, drink it, or with love of all thy foes? O, drink it, 'tis the cure of all thy woes!

See how he waits to see the stranger one? To step in his shadow the longest day? How glad to answer to his own desire? To smile to rest each child of sinners!

How sweet to his pardon and his grace? He love, he light, he love, he grace? Try him, he will not, nor say this word? Trust him, though heaven and earth should pass away.

GENERAL ASSOCIATION.

STATE OF THE CHURCHES, MINISTERS, AND

Articles written by the late William G. Barker, and published in the Western Recorder, 1894.

Under this head we propose to write a series of articles, at time and space will be afforded us, with the view of correcting the errors of some of our brethren, arresting the dormant soul of others to prayerful effort in the great work of spreading the gospel abroad, and to encourage those already engaged in the work to prosecute it with greater earnestness and zeal, and with increased confidence in the blessing of God that will attend their efforts. It is a source of irremediable regret and mortification to us, that in this enlightened day, with the Bible in their hands, there should be any found, especially among the Baptists, who are opposed, in any shape or way, to the spread of the gospel; but, painful as the admission is, it is nevertheless undeniably true. Some are openly at war with every effort to circulate the Scriptures or the preaching of the gospel to the destitute, and do not blush to avow their hostility, even with the profession of Christianity upon their lips. Others are ashamed to profess that they love Christ, and yet openly oppose the prosperity of his kingdom; and those do them no plain is right, and no opportunity timely; they are opposed to the measure that can be suggested, and never suggest any themselves, but such as are calculated to embarrass and retard the work. Some who profess to be friendly to the efforts making, are doing more injury to the cause than its greatest enemies, either by a dastardly unwillingness to meet the consequences of an open avowal of their sentiments, or by a guilty ambition to take the lead in affairs in their churches and associations; and in this rank, we apprehend, some of our preachers are to be found; many there are who seem to regard themselves, merely, as the favored objects of divine beneficence; they flatter

themselves that they are favorites of Christ and sure of heaven, but think that they have nothing to do, either for God or man (themselves excepted), this side of the mansions of glory; and these are of course at ease in Zion. Now our object, if possible, to correct these errors, to promote a healthy action throughout the whole body of our religious communion, and to unite the churches and ministry in a harmonious and spiritual effort to build up each other and to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

The great work assigned the church is to "make known, unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God." Eph. 3:10. It would be criminal for us now to stop and inquire, whether it was the duty of the church to engage in spreading the gospel, with all the other similar avowments of the Holy Ghost starting us in the face. The question is settled and settled by divine authority. The manifold wisdom of God is to be made known by the church; and for this purpose God has ordained the preaching of the gospel. It is worthy of remark here that the term church is used by the Holy Ghost, in the passage quoted above, and not churches, and we avail ourselves of this inspired argument to press upon the churches in Kentucky, and throughout the world, the duty of engaging immediately, unitedly, in efforts to spread the glorious tidings of salvation by Christ Jesus.

You are not to suppose, from the remarks just made, that we have fallen out with Baptist discipline, or that we suppose a plurality of churches to be incompatible with the Word of God. We are far from occupying either of these positions. We most firmly believe that the Baptist system of church government, by separate and distinct combinations, or congregations, of baptized believers, is founded upon the Bible, and according to primitive practice; but as the Greek word *ecclesia*, which in our version is rendered church, means literally a congregation, we maintain, that it is as applicable to a congregation made up of all the churches in the world, if assembled upon gospel principles, as it is to be a congregation of believers assembled in the ordinary capacity of a church; and we do not hesitate to say that this is the sense in which the word is used in the passage quoted above.

While, therefore, according to our views, it was the design of the great Head of the church, that believers should be associated in distinct and multiplied congregations or churches, for the purposes of convenience and safety, in maintaining the ordinances and discipline of the house of God, and that each of these churches should be independent and sovereign in all matters of government, we nevertheless as firmly believe that he designed also for all these churches to be engaged, in union of purpose and effort, in spreading the news of salvation throughout the world. Hence we see that while the Scriptures teach that it is the duty of individual believers to engage themselves in contentions and suitable societies for the ordinary purposes of a church, and that the neglect of this duty is an act of disrespect to, and rebellion against, the laws of Christ; they also plainly teach that it is equally the duty of individual churches to congregate and combine together, to as great an extent as possible, for the extraordinary work of making known the manifold wisdom of God by the preaching of the gospel, and that the neglect of this duty, upon the part of any church, is equally an act of contempt upon, and rebellion against, the laws of Christ's kingdom.

Is there any man on earth so imbecile as to believe, or so knavish as to assert, that a man sacrifices his liberty and independence when he associates himself with other independent and free men as a church-member? And must not a man be equally imbecile or knavish, who would believe or assert that an independent church has lost her sovereignty by associating herself with other independent and free churches for the spread of the gospel? Every man must say that the cases are perfectly parallel. Why then is the object contemplated by the General Association, spoken of as a new thing and the plan of it as a dangerous measure, by some who read their Bible, and profess to love the Savior, and to pray that his kingdom may come? And why is that even some of our preachers, who pro-

duce so friendly to the General Association and to the plan of the old and infallible one too, are using all their influence, air and soil, to prevent the churches and associations from uniting in the plan of the General Association, to liberate the ministry, and to supply the destitute in Kentucky? Has the General Association any other object in view than the spread of the gospel, and the prosperity of the churches, or does she in any way whatever interfere with the independence or the government of the churches? No. Like our first mother, were she to reach forth her hand to this forbidden fruit, she would sink, not only under a moral curse, but into annihilation.

The 5th article of her constitution reads thus: "It is distinctly understood that this association shall have no ecclesiastical power."

And the 12th article reads thus: "This constitution may be amended or altered (the 5th article excepted) at any annual meeting by a concurrence of two-thirds of the members present." The mere attempt, therefore, at power on her part would be to commit suicide, as she would by that act tear away her constitution—her very heart—her very being. Where, then, is the ground of apprehension on this quarter? None. Before the church and her dead king we repeat it—there is no ground of fear. Is it, then, that the spirit of Antinomianism has swept over the churches with the blighting influence of a scorching from the infernal pit, unwhiting all their moral susceptibilities and perverting their perceptions of revealed truth, so as to make them deny the very intention of their calling and dedication to God as instruments for the spread of the gospel? Or is it that the churches are infested with demagogues and aspirants for clerical distinction, who fear to come in contact with their brethren of superior talents and piety, lest they should dwindle into comparative obscurity; and are these keeping the churches in such a combination and effort in this mighty enterprise? Or is it that all these influences, and more, are put in requisition by the prince of darkness to counteract the authority of Christ and to neutralize the instrumentality of the church in effecting what God has designed to accomplish by her? These are questions that we refer to the churches and to the ministers, to know what kind of influences are directing their opinions and movements in all this matter; and we urge them to self-examination and prayer in view of this subject. Let them read the apocalyptic histories of the Asiatic churches, and tremble for their candle-sticks and stars, if they should be found fighting against God.

The General Association merits the confidence and cooperation of all churches and associations in Kentucky. Its objects are such as no Christian dare impugn, and the results of its labor sufficiently demonstrative of the divine approbation to silence anything of an infidel objector, and this we shall attempt to prove, in part, in our next.

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LOUISVILLE: THURSDAY, NOV. 6, 1879.

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An Age of Skepticism.

Skepticism seems sometimes to be coming epidemic. The history of Christianity has afforded only too frequent illustrations of such a widespread and disastrous outbreak of faith. The spread of corruption in the churches of Christ in all ages, has been more or less contemporaneous with and consequent upon such an outbreak. Even since the Reformation this tendency to periodicity has been only too apparent even in those countries where the acceptance of Christian truth has been most heartfelt. England has passed through several such outbreaks of infidelity. Germany is apparently just beginning to emerge from a long and gloomy spiritual night. Even in our own country, brief comparatively as has been its history, the evidence has been only too convincing that we are not exempt from this periodical tendency to drift away from the ancient and secure moorings of Scripture truth and launch out upon the dark and stormy sea of unbelief.

Such an epidemic of skepticism seems now to be passing over the world. No thoughtful Christian can watch the current talk and current thinking of the times without being made painfully aware that there is a certain prevalent unsettlement of faith in the all-important matter of religion. The very atmosphere becomes laden with this spirit of unbelief. The newspapers, the magazines, scientific, literary and educational, that find the widest circle of readers are not infrequently infested in spirit. The leading literature of the day seems indeed to be so thoroughly impregnated with skepticism that it is now, or is prepared to encounter the poison in some of its thousand subtle and all-pervading forms. Even from Christian sources we sometimes now-a-days hear views of inspiration and of Bible truth proclaimed which show that no place is secure from this subtle influence. In every part of the world and in every domain of human thought the waters of the sea of human speculation can not rest. The troubled waves everywhere "eat up man and dirt."

At a time when the very air seems laden with the malaria of unbelief, of course no one can count upon complete exemption from its presence and power. The aged, or those who have reached middle life, whose spiritual growth began in the healthiest atmosphere and more rigorous training of other days, who are now rooted and grounded in the truth, may measurably escape. But the young, bright, questioning minds that are soon to take their place as leaders of the world's work and thought, these are they who are most in danger of being taken captive by the glamour and baleful fascination of the current skepticism of the day.

the only competent judge, their offensive bigotry in denouncing the supposed bigotry of other people, and their intolerance of all intolerance but their own, with thinking men would naturally be quite sufficient to induce hostility in accepting, if not positive opposition to, the conclusions they reach. Unfortunately, however, the world is governed largely by sentimentality, and sentimentality is likely to be the worst enemy that a truth has.

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Our Case in the Purchase.

The editor has recently spent ten days in the Purchase. He is glad to be able to report substantial progress in all our denominational work in that part of the State. In Paducah Pastor Trupper is hard at work, and is rapidly bringing up his members to work both in the church and in the Sunday-school. In fact, he has been doing the work of two pastors. In addition to his work with the First church he has, by the assistance of some of his members, built up a good interest in the upper part of the city, to which his productions night in the week. We have a growing church and a flourishing Sunday-school. Rev. J. H. Wiman, who has recently taken a school in the vicinity, will preach to the church every Lord's day. In this work he should have pecuniary aid, as the church is able to pay but little. In the First church a meeting is in progress, conducted by the pastor.

The church in Mayfield is not in a good condition. Some of the members have been walking discipline, and the church has been too lax in discipline. For some time the church has had no pastor, but has been supplied by Bro. L. W. Morrison, a call has been extended to Rev. R. B. Fleming, of Clinton, who has been quite successful in building up the cause in other places, and earnestly desires to have the brethren with more zeal and lead them to greater conquest. Rev. James M. Misonri, an elderly minister from Missouri, has recently united with the church. He is poor in this world's goods, and has a large family dependent on his daily labor, but is rich in faith, and is a great help to the church. Prof. C. M. Williams, D.D., who was for many years Professor in our Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has charge of the Mayfield Academy. He is held in high esteem by the church and the community, and has the prospect of building up at that point a large and flourishing school.

At Fulton, a growing town at the crossing of the Paducah & Memphis and Cairo & New Orleans railroad, we have a young and growing church sustained in part by our State Mission Board. Rev. J. N. Hall, of Martin, Tenn., is the pastor. He is an "able minister of the New Testament," and is "esteemed very highly in love for his work's sake." The church has recently had an addition of twelve members. The membership is now about fifty. The brethren have no house of their own, but are preparing to build. They have a lot and the brick procured and expect to be soon, though they have not enough means to complete the house. They would be grateful for help from any quarter. We have no doubt that the

importance of the place will help if the matter be laid before them in a proper light.

At Clinton, the Athens of the Purchase, we have a good working church. Rev. R. B. Fleming, the pastor, lives here and preaches to the church in town and to mission points in the vicinity. He has done a splendid work, having baptized fifty since the commencement of his pastorate, some nine months ago. He will probably accept the care of the church in Mayfield for half his time. It is here that the venerable Willis White has lived for many years, and to him the Purchase is more indebted than to any other man. He was he who started and carried forward to its completion the Clinton Male and Female College, which has since that time become a center, not only for Southern Kentucky, but also for Southern Missouri and West Tennessee. This school is especially fortunate in having at its head Prof. T. N. Wells and his able assistant. It was our pleasure to spend several hours in the institution in witnessing the chapel exercises, and in hearing recitations. We have seldom met educators whose methods of teaching are more to our notion than are those of Prof. Wells and Miss A. B. Hicken. Their methods are not so much to cram the minds of their pupils with facts and dates as to teach them to think, and to acquire facts and dates as they may be needed. We noticed that they were particular to correct any faulty grammar or pronunciation that the scholars might use in their recitations, thus cultivating the habit of thought and accuracy in expression. In short, this school is one in which the people in Southern Kentucky, without regard to sect or party, should take a deep interest.

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NEWS AND NOTES.

A Rhode Island correspondent of the Central Baptist says: "It is no true that 'open communion' has found a congenial home in certain parts of Rhode Island—certain stations in State or more, have returned in good health. Dr. Smith is expected the last of their work, having stopped over at New York. Their many friends rejoice in their recovery."

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EDITORIAL VARIETIES.

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