

The Advocate of Truth.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

VOL. I.

TIDWELL, TEXAS, FEBRUARY, 1902.

NO. 11.

LOVE'S PURPOSE.

This day twelve months where will I be?
I'm sure I cannot tell;
I thrust my hand in His right hand,
Who doeth all things well.

This day twelve month, before the throne,
I may the story tell,
How Jesus washed me in His blood,
And rescued me from hell.

This day twelve months, in garments white,
I may be with the throng,
Cleansed in the fountain of Christ's blood,
To sing redemption's song.

This day twelve months, I yet may weep
With those who weep and tell,
Through sorrows sore we reach the door
Where joy and gladness dwell.

Master, I'm poor and in distress,
My griefs to Thee I tell;
Hungry, and cold and comfortless—
My wants Thou knowest well.

To God my all I now commend,
Trust Him in every ill;
Leave all the future in His hands,
And yield to Him my will.

Thy faithfulness doth reach the clouds,
Thy wonders who can tell;
In desert lauds the streams break out
Thy promise to fulfill.

Young lions cry to Thee for help,
Yet lack and suffer ill;
But children's wants shall be supplied,
For Thou art faithful still.

The winds and clouds and lightning flash,
Obey Thy sovereign will;
All projects and all things do work
Thy purpose to fulfill.

Deep unto deep are clasping hands,
Thy billows o'er me roll;
Yet in them all is God's design—
Love's purpose to my soul.

These very waves and restless winds,
Which toss me o'er and o'er;
But fill the canvass of His love,
To waft me to the shore.

Komoko, Ont.

J. LINCE.

UGHT INFIDEL PUBLICATIONS BE PROHIBITED BY LAW?

[The following verbatim report of a speech by Elder H. M. Curry before the National Normal University, in Lebanon, Ohio, on Thursday, Dec. 15th, 1892, is published at the request of many who heard it. The circumstances that called it forth was a speech from a gentleman advocating the prohibition of Infidel publications by law.—Ed.]

The question involves the most sacred rights of men, and the most vital principles of human government. I take my stand upon the side of truth, justice and freedom. I am not an infidel; but suppose I were one, would that subject my conscience to the dictates of other men? Would that take from me the inalienable rights to which I am born, and which are vouchsafed to me by all right principles of government? So far as human legislation is concerned I have a perfect right to worship any god or no god, just as my conscience might dictate. I have a perfect right to confess or to question any creed, any religion, or any book, notwithstanding any claim that either may make to divine origin. If I should not believe the Bible I have a right to say so, and no one has the right to prohibit me from publishing to the world my reasons for not believing it.

This nation is not owned by a church, nor creed, nor any body of divinity. This is a purely secular government, a government for the people, without respect to any shade of religious belief whatever. Let us forget then for a short time that we are Methodists, or Baptists, or Presbyterians,

or Catholics, and remember that we are men and women, American citizens, living under a constitutional government, which declares that all men are created free and equal.

First, then, so-called Infidel writings are not so baneful to society as is generally supposed; but, on the contrary, they have been and continue to be a positive benefit. We are too prone to judge the music by the amount of gilding on the organ pipes. We are too apt to forget that gold is gold, whether in the leathern pouch of the beggar, or in the silken purse of the king. We should remember that truth is truth, though it fall from the lips of the Infidel; and falsehood is falsehood, although served in the name of Christ from the silvery tongue of a pious priest. What evil is found in such writings, per se, that they should be denied publication? Where is the example of a man being inspired to commit suicide, or to take the life of another, by reading the "Mistakes of Moses?" Who ever heard of a young woman, just in the bloom of youth, being incited to drown herself, or to elope with a worthless lover, by reading Voltaire? Where is the example of young men being incited to burglary or highway robbery by reading "Hume's Essays?" Who ever heard of men being incited to arm themselves with fire and sword for the purpose of suppressing false worship by reading Paine's "Age of Reason?" But turn to history, turn to our daily papers, and there are thousands of examples, of every specie and shade of crime, in which the unfortunate actors were incited to the destruction of themselves, and of others by reading some modern novel, some religious fanaticism, or some newspaper romance, written, nine times out of ten, by some professor of the christian religion. It is claimed that such writings make Infidels of the people. This is the merest assumption. Thomas Paine, Voltaire, David Hume, Diderot, and many other illustrious men, were driven to renounce the christian religion by the abominable practices of the so-called "christian church." The abuses of the name of the christian religion have led more thinking men to question the truth of the Bible than all the Infidel books ever published.

This class of writings has promoted literature and art, science and civilization. As soon as the astronomer began to scan the heavens, the so-called church branded his noble forehead with the word Infidel. As soon as the geologist began to read the history of the earth in books of stone, the same anathema was hurled at him. When men in the realm of political and moral science began to question the divine right of kings, and the cunningly devised fables of priests, they received the same mark in their hands and in their foreheads. Take away from our libraries of science the writings of Huxley, Darwin, Spencer, and a few others, all of whom have been called Infidel, and what is left is almost worthless. Take from every department of knowledge the contributions of Humbolt, and each is robbed of its brightest gems and most valuable treasures. Did all the priests of Rome increase the intellectual wealth of that nation as much as Bruno? Did all the priests of France do as much for civilization as Voltaire? Did all the clergy of Scotland add as much to the sum of human knowledge as David Hume? Have all the clergy, monks, friars, priests, bishops, cardinals and popes of all Christendom done as much for religious liberty as Thomas Paine? The whole world is better off for his writings. Every sentence drawn from his pen was a blow against tyranny and a stroke for freedom. He was the only

man in America, except Jefferson, perhaps, who had courage enough to attack Washington and his State church in Virginia. He saw oppression upon every hand, hypocrisy at the altar, venality upon the bench, and tyranny upon the throne; and with the courage of a true hero he raised his voice and wielded his pen against it all. To his writings, the "Age of Reason" not excepted, even more than to Roger Williams, we owe the religious liberty of this nation. The charity of Williams was not extended to men who denied the Bible or suspected the divinity of Christ. It was not based upon the rights of believers who differed in nonessential points; but the charity of Paine was extended to all men, without respect to creed. It was based upon the right of man; and from this exalted position of freedom and patriotism he challenged the rights of kings and priests, and pointed the finger of scorn at every hypocrite in Europe and America.

But the religious people are afraid the Infidel will prove that the Bible is false, and destroy the christian religion. Where is their faith in the divine authorship of the Bible? Where is their faith in the divine origin of the christian religion? Where is their faith in God as the author and preserver of both Bible and religion, when they think the Infidel must be restrained by law to prevent them from demolishing both? If those who profess christianity, and pretend to believe the Bible, would show their faith by their works, others would have more respect for their profession, and more confidence in the existence and character of their God. True christianity does not need any such protective tariff system for its preservation. The current commercial religion of the present day may need such protection, but I am sure that Bible religion does not.

The evidences of the truth of the Bible are written far beyond the reach of Infidels. They are written in the very framework of the universe; written in the earth and in the sky; written in the stones and in the stars; and closer to us still, written in the experience of millions of human hearts. If the Bible should be burned, and the ashes scattered to the winds, the heavens would still declare the glory of God, and the firmament would still show forth his handiwork. If men should hold their peace, the stones themselves would cry out.

Truth has never sought protection behind legislation; neither has it ever sought to suppress error by law. It has always stood upon its own merits; and though sometimes crushed to earth, has arisen again, and in the resurrection has shone forth more brilliant, more convincing, more powerful than ever. Jesus said, "I am the truth." He also said, "I have overcome the world." Truth then has overcome the world; and the victory denies that this measure is for truth's protection. All the interests of the christian religion, both for time and eternity, are centered in Christ; and he said, when brought before Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world." This was the greatest crisis, from a human standpoint, that christianity can ever be called upon to pass through. Look at the picture: Christ, the founder, the builder, the prophet, the priest, the king, the hope, the life of the christian religion, stood arraigned before the judgment seat of the powers of darkness, to receive the sentence of death. If there is anything in the elements of this world that could contribute to the defense of his kingdom in any way whatever it certainly would have been called into action at this time.

and if in this most trying hour he had nothing to ask of the rulers of this world, we may safely conclude that there never can a period arrive when earthly governments will be required to defend his cause. Christianity is not of the world in its origin, elements, provisions, protection, government, nor destiny. It is of heavenly birth; and by its own inherent heavenly power it shall accomplish its mission in earth.

Infidels, in their efforts against the Bible, have unwittingly increased the general store of human knowledge, and yet failed to add one cubit to the stature of their own cause, or to make one hair black or white. This fact proves conclusively the truth of the Scriptures, that we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth; that "the wrath of man shall praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain." Even Infidel writings are among the all things that work together for good to the christian. So we see that some good can come out of Nazareth. Infidel writings have been a potent factor in our civilization, and have been far more beneficial to the race and to the church than religious intolerance and tyranny of creeds.

"All discord is harmony not understood;
All partial evil is universal good."

The proposition is altogether impracticable. What court or tribunal would decide the infidelity of a production? Congress would have to create a sanhedrim for this purpose, and the matter would naturally fall into the hands of the clergy. To favor one sect to the exclusion of all others would be acknowledging a State church, which is an impossibility in America, at least for the present. To form such a council of representatives of all sects and non-professing men would be creating a State authority in matters of religion, which is not only contrary to our Constitution, but would be trampling under foot the blood of our fathers, setting up a beast that would turn and rend us by devouring every principle of freedom we now enjoy.

By what criterion would the matter be decided? You answer, By the Bible. Have men ever agreed upon what the Bible teaches? Is not the world full of quarreling, conflicting sects, all claiming to be the church of Christ, and claiming the Bible to be their guide, yet differing as much among themselves in their ceremonies and government, and striving as much among themselves for the ascendancy, as the nations of the earth? Have not dissensions as to the Bible teachings called twenty Ecumenical Councils in less than that many centuries? The Nicene Council, with its three hundred and eighteen bishops and a thousand other dignitaries, the Council of Trent, with its twenty-one years' session, the Synod of Dort, with its numberless representatives from every nation in Europe, all testify that differences of opinion cannot be settled by the Scriptures as a criterion. These facts prove that the measure is absolutely impracticable without creating other evils a thousand times more destructive to public good than all the Infidel books that the world itself could contain.

The proposition calls for the restriction of the liberty of the press: and it is to be objected to upon that account. Our Constitution provides that Congress shall make no law whatever abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; and with jealous care of what is almost universally regarded as a sacred right essential to the existence and perpetuity of free government, a provision of similar import has been embodied in each of our State Constitutions; and a constitutional principle is thereby established, which throws a shield of protection around the free expression of opinion in every part of our land. Does this oneness of sentiment of the great and good men who framed our government argue nothing against this measure? They were men of the broadest experience, the ripest wisdom, the purest motive, and the profoundest statesmanship; and they with one accord declared that the press must be free. But we forget the experience, wisdom and prudence of our fathers, and are carried

away into the merest religious sentimentalism. Reformed drunkards, playing the role of evangelists, are wanting to dictate to the legislative assemblies of this nation; religious fanatics are laboring to manufacture all public opinion; and what has not been manufactured by them they desire to have prohibited by law. They want to dictate by legislation not only what free citizens shall drink, but what books they shall publish and read. These principles of prohibition are not found in the Bible—they are not found in the right elements of government; but they may be seen recorded upon almost every page of the Koran of Mohammed, which has found its way into our language and our homes through the enterprise of the Foreign Mission work.

To the freedom of the press, more than to any other institution, we owe our civil and religious liberty, and every advancement of science and art. Look at England a century before freedom of the press, and then look at it a century afterward. Not only England, but the whole world, was sunk in the grossest mental and moral darkness. Priests and monks monopolized every particle of information. The foulest licentiousness, the most intolerable tyranny, the most wicked cruelty, the most detestable fraud and violence, existed in the land. All orders of men were plunged in the deepest superstition and ignorance; they were led like idiot slaves by their religious and political masters. The blind led the blind, and all had fallen into the pit where there was no order, no peace, no morality; but priestcraft and ignorance, like two hideous monsters, ruled gloatingly over the whole. But as the sublime command of the Most High penetrated the original darkness of the universe, so the freedom of the press penetrated the darkness we have just surveyed. It said, "Let there be light; and there was light." Restrict the freedom of the press, and affairs will soon tend to the same deplorable condition. But one may say that such a slight restriction as the one proposed cannot do any harm, but must do a great deal of good, by suppressing Infidel literature. This restriction would be one step downward, and this step would call for another. A small leak will sink the great vessel. A match burned Chicago. Give this measure an inch, and it will take a mile. An ounce of preventative is better than a pound of cure; so keep the freedom of the press inviolable, as a certain preventative of all the train of evils that must necessarily follow its abridgement.

This proposition is barefaced religious intolerance; and what could be more hateful to a christian, more obnoxious to an American citizen, or more antagonistic to free government? Something occurs every day to remind me that the spirit of the Inquisition still slumbers in the breasts of the people. True, it has lately ceased to burn alive, to saw asunder, to lash the back, to bore the tongue, to cut off the ears, to build dungeons and erect gallowses; but it comes with the face of a lamb, and modestly, meekly, piously requests that the press be surrendered to its control—that the most sacred rights of man be laid at its feet. The spirit that would deny the Infidel the liberty of the press would forbid him the freedom of speech, and as a last resort would burn him at the stake. The leading creeds of the world, whether Catholic, Protestant, Jewish or Mohammedan, have arrogated to themselves authority over the consciences of men, and have taken upon themselves the Herculean task of ridding the world of heresy, Infidelity and all false worship; and in their vain attempts to accomplish their utopian whims they have filled the earth with blood. The principles of this resolution are children from the womb of Infidelity itself, cradled in superstition, nurtured in intolerance, and grown old in their father's business, and are calculated to raise up and dignify a religious aristocracy, to prostrate the rights of man, and eventually to repeat the dreadful scenes of persecution which in past ages have drenched the earth with human gore.

The gentleman who advocated this proposi-

tion from this stage had a great deal to say about a law for blasphemy. Concerning this allow me to relate an incident. The makers of the Presbyterian creed caused Servetus to be arrested for blasphemy. Calvin was his accuser. He was condemned to death by fire. He was bound to the stake, the fagots were lighted, and for awhile the wind carried the flames away from his body, so that he slowly roasted for hours. At last the flames climbed around his form; his murderers beheld through fire and smoke a white heroic face. There they watched until the man became a charred and shriveled mass. Law against blasphemy banished liberty from Geneva, and there was nothing but religious intolerance left. Hear another, and then draw your conclusions. A few centuries ago a serene and noble man made his appearance in one of the eastern countries. None had ever seen one like him before. He was wiser than Solomon, he was meeker than Moses, he was more patient than Job, more faithful than Abraham, more loving than Jonathan, and more prayerful than David. When he was reviled he reviled not again, and no guile was found in his mouth. He was not in sympathy with the popular religion, so he was arrested and brought before the judgment seat. The priests were his accusers. They testified, "We have heard him blaspheme;" and upon this charge he was put to death. This man was Jesus, the founder of the christian religion. What need we further witness to see that all laws defining and punishing blasphemy were passed by impudent bigots, and ought to be repealed at once by honest men?

Now, of the things spoken this is the sum. This measure is the embodiment of every evil, both civil and religious, that could possibly come upon a nation, and merits the contempt of every loyal citizen; so let every honest heart unite in willingness to "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."—*Signs of the Times.*

It is a question in my mind when I think of the conduct of some of our brethren with regard to preaching and with-holding. Some think that some truths in the Bible are unprofitable to the household of faith, and should not be preached. Now, the question with me is this: The spirit that prompts such a course, is it of Christ or is it of anti-Christ? And is it possible that God has truth written by inspired men that is useless and unprofitable to the saints? I must answer as I see it that I do not think that any truth concerning our God or His salvation is unprofitable to God's children, for it is positively said that the truth shall make us free. How? By with-holding and hiding it and failing to preach it, or denying? This seems to me to be the most absurd doctrine that I ever heard; a doctrine, when taught, will weaken and make sick a true child of God. Some of our brethren seem to be very prudent and careful; but is it the right kind of carefulness? It may be as Paul said, "They were somewhat whatsoever they were." Such as this may be done to prevent confusion, but it rather breeds confusion as I see it. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth should be our aim in writing for the edification of the saints. If God's people are unable to eat meat, Paul said it was because they were carnal and walked as men. He said again, "They that use milk are unskillful in the word of righteousness, meat besenses exercised to discern both good and evil." Some Baptists, I learn, have gone so far as to pass resolutions not to have the truth of God's purpose preached in their stands, and some have forbidden it to be talked in their families. That looks like the Arminian saying that predestination was a dangerous doctrine; and I admit it is for when tower and it is destined to fall, it shakes the old Babel the fall of it. When Baptists assemble in convention, to modify the faith of God's elect, it looks like the counsels of men who would set aside Jesus Christ. I am opposed to such once, now and always, as long as God gives me the vision of His holy word of truth.

Opelika, Ala., Dec. 1901.

W. LIVELY.

ELD. J. R. HARDY.

Esteemed Brother in the Faith of the Gospel of the Son of God:—Though I have been negligent, I have not been unmindful of you and your good letters, but through the pressure of business and other cares I have failed to find the time and a suitable condition of mind to write, and from this cause I have gotten very much behind with my correspondence. This I regret, because I do enjoy reading the good and instructive epistles from my brethren in the Lord. I know I cannot expect a continuance of those letters unless I answer, but I often feel that I am so poorly qualified to write to profit that I hesitate to make the attempt.

I see from the ADVOCATE that you have been traveling among the brethren in different sections since I met you at Mt. Pisgah. In this I can bid you Godspeed as long as you contend for the doctrine as you have in all that I have heard and read from you.

We had a pleasant Association (the Sulphur Fork). The theme of the preaching and conversation being, "Salvation wholly by grace, according to the sovereign will of God."

The text, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," has, seemingly, been upon my mind with more fullness of meaning than ever before. While I have, ever since I was made to hope that I was a partaker of life in Christ, understood grace to mean a free gift of God bestowed, according to His own sovereign will, upon creatures wholly and entirely unworthy, yet I do not remember having so much thought upon the sovereignty of God in the bestowal of favors or spiritual blessings all along life's experience as of late. Still the Scriptures, as well as my own experience, abounds with evidences of the truth of this. The text declares that "By grace are ye saved," which conveys the idea clearly that our present, or daily, experience of salvation is by grace alone, which of course means without any work, worth or merit on our part. It is strange to me how any child of God, in looking back over their past experience, can claim that any spiritual blessing that they have ever enjoyed has been bestowed upon them as a result of any good thing that they have done; or that by the doing of some good or obedient act they have caused God to bestow some blessing upon them that otherwise He would not. (Think of the idea of our causing God to do something). Yet this is a logical deduction from all conditional argument—no less from that of the "time salvation" conditionalist than from that of the fullest Arminian. All the experiences of God's children of salvation in time, recorded in Holy Writ ("And whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning"), manifests the wonderful, sovereign, saving grace of God. Noah and his house were saved in the ark, the preparing of which he did by faith (Heb. 11-7), "being warned of God of the things not seen." This faith was the gift of God, and this warning was from the same source; in which appears the sovereignty of God, in that this faith came only to Noah, out of the thousands of mankind then living.

The children of Israel also experienced "time salvation," or the salvation of God in time, at the Red Sea. At Moses' command they "stood still." At his bidding they "passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned." All of this they did by the faith of which Jesus is the "author and finisher," which was, and is, the gift of God. These were the chosen people of God, in all their journeyings they moved and halted at God's command. In all His dealing with them, His sovereignty, power, grace and mercy were fully exemplified. And notwithstanding their continued murmurings and rebelliousness God ever had respect to His covenant with Abraham, and remembered all His promises and all the provisions of that covenant, while if He had dealt with His people according to their waywardness in the manifestations of His love and mercy He would have destroyed them. So with His spiritual Israel, of which every heaven-

born soul is one. They are His covenant people, "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people."

The word of God the Father to His Son is: "As for Thee by the blood of Thy covenant I have sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." And then addresses the prisoners: "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee." (Zech. 9:11, 12).

In all His dealing with this people, as with typical Israel, He remembers His covenant which He has established with the great head of the church, and every jot and tittle of its provisions is fulfilled, including its many great and precious promises. This covenant "is ordered in ALL THINGS and sure." (2d Sam. 23:5).

"Also I will make Him my First Born—higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for Him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with Him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and His throne as the days of heaven. If His children forsake my law (The covenant makes ample provisions), and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with a rod and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from Him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out from my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David." (Our spiritual David). "His seed shall endure forever, and His throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon and as a faithful witness in heaven." (Isa. 89:27-37).

The above quotations, I think, embraces the covenant promises of God, which are "Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God." It is said in Holy Writ that "the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord."

Christ Jesus our Lord (who was man as well as God) evidently was that good man, and we being members of His body and all in Him and joined to Him, our steps are also ordered, and have, do now, and ever will, redound to the praise of God's grace. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This people are chosen, sanctified or set apart, to the end that they "should shew forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light." (1 Pet. 2:9). If they should feel at times inclined to do otherwise—to be stubborn, rebellious and disobedient, etc., which no doubt they have all felt in a greater or less measure at different times, yet He is able to subdue their stubbornness and rebelliousness and continue the chastening rod in their disobedience, and hence bring them in personal experience to praise His saving grace, by experiencing His great mercy, and acknowledge His sovereign power. Before any of these things fail in the experience of a single one of this covenant people, then must God the Father have forgotten His covenant promises, and failed in that He has promised His dear Son. Are we weak, in due time Jesus is made manifest as our strength. Are we ignorant, Jesus is our wisdom. Are we sinful, Jesus is our righteousness. "Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption."

When it comes to manifest obedience in our walk, I consider that to know our duty, to be inclined to do it, and the act of doing is all included in all these covenant provisions; and therefore of grace, because one of His promises was and is that He would lead and teach His children by His spirit. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Isa. 54:13).

"And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These

things will I do unto them and not forsake them." (Isa. 42:16).

Now, when I sum up in my own experience the many manifestations of God's goodness and mercy, I have to say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." If I ever saw myself in my true condition as a condemned sinner before God, it was the light God gave that caused me to see it.

If I ever truly repented it was the "goodness of God that led me to repentance." If ever I truly experienced justification in Christ it surely was the great mercy of a covenant God that gave it to me in Christ before the world was, and revealed it to me in time. If ever I was made to see the church in her beauty and anything of the meaning of her ordinances, and had a desire for her sweet fellowship, and a courage to obey the impression to follow the Master in obedience to His command, it was all of grace from first to last. For it was Him that "worked in me both the will and to do." The power was not given me to do all that would be enjoined upon me to do in shewing forth His praise. It has ever been the case with me, "The will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not." For about eight years I labored under the impression to declare in a public way the testimony of Jesus. I could have made a world as easy as I could have done it with any degree of satisfaction to my own mind or that of my brethren. This I know by actual experience, for I tried my best for about one year at our meetings. Then I traveled for about three years in Egyptian darkness, until the Lord was pleased to loose the cords and set my spirit free; and then, O my brother, I verily believe it would have been as impossible to have kept silent as it was before to preach.

This is merely a hint at the experience of this poor hobbler, but it all coincides with the way I understand the Scriptures on the subject. And the Scriptures and the experience I have along this line condemn the argument that our salvation in time is conditional, and we are given "power in the spiritual birth to keep all the commandments," and that it is "optional with the child of God whether he obeys or not." I believe that we have the will only when God works it in us, and we get the "to do" in the same way; and we cannot do until this is the case, and when this is done of God for us, we are sure to do. In this day of the fulfillment of the Scripture which says, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears," etc. In this day of non-fellowship resolutions, many cry "heresy" when this doctrine is preached, but I would say with one of old, "After the manner which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets."

Dear brethren, following the leadings of my mind I have written more lengthily than I expected. I hope, however, that it will not weary your patience too much to make it out. Give my love to Brother Sikes and all the brethren who may feel to inquire after me, and accept my best wishes for yourself. I esteem THE ADVOCATE OF TRUTH as among our soundest periodicals, and wish it God speed, feeling that the Baptists stand in need of just such a periodical among them. As I have several times been requested, and as many or more times felt inclined to write for the paper, you may put this in it if you think it suitable matter. Hoping to hear from you again when convenient, I remain your brother in the fellowship of the Gospel.

H. B. JONES.

Mt. Vernon, Tex., Nov. 9, 1901.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

During the holidays Bro. J. C. Sikes and myself at the request of a number of brethren, belonging to Salem church, near Honey Grove, Tex., spent a few days with them and tried to preach Jesus "the way, the truth and the life," and righteously sovereign in all things; and at their urgent solicitation that these things be spoken to them again, Bro. Jas. West of Bonham, Bro. Martin Davis of Edhube and myself agreed to be with them again, if the Lord will, on the 4th Sunday in February and Saturday before. Would be glad to meet as many of the brethren and sisters at that time as possible. Bro. Tatum, can't you be with us again? I felt that the Lord was with us in our feeble attempts to worship Him. While the faithfulness, meekness and tenderness of these precious servants of God, with whom we met, have united my poor heart to them in the strongest bonds of Christian love and sympathy. May they be enabled to stand in the strength of Israel's God, and with reverential fear and godly humility worship our sovereign Lord in Spirit and in truth. "Be thou faithful unto death." "The Lord preserveth the faithful." H.

Published at Tidwell, Texas, on the First day of Each Month.
Entered at the postoffice at Tidwell, Texas, as second-class mail matter.

All orders and communications must be sent to the ADVOCATE OF TRUTH,
Tidwell, Texas.

All money orders must be made payable at Greenville, Texas, as Tidwell is not a money order office.

We desire that all who write for THE ADVOCATE OF TRUTH do so in a spirit of kindness and use no unbrotherly epithets when speaking of those among us who differ from us. I have heard such epithets as "Arimineans," "semi-Arimineans," "ash-dogs," "bilddies," heretics, etc., used by some of our brethren, and can't help his notice. I am disgusted with it. We can say of them that they are in error and can't help his notice. I am disgusted with it. We can say of them that they are in error and can't help his notice. I am disgusted with it.

It is not necessary to make a brother think that we hate him in order to show him his error. We are to "meekly instruct those that oppose themselves." "A soft answer turneth away wrath." Let's try it brethren. — S.

ELDERS J. C. SIKES and J. R. HARDY,
Editors and Publishers.
Associate Editor: Elder W. LIVELY, Box 87, Opelika, Ala.

TIDWELL, TEXAS, FEBRUARY 1, 1902.

At the request of Elder P. H. James of Prescott, Ark., I will attempt to give a sketch of my experience and call to the ministry. I was born in Marshal county, Tenn., on Feb. the 6th, 1859. My mother died May the 7th, 1861. And my father was called out into the war in 1862. There were six of us children and none old enough to keep house. So we were scattered among our connection until the fall of 1865, when my father returned home from the war, all broken down in health, from the hardships of prison life, and had nothing on earth in the way of worldly possessions, except six children; so our school days were spent in the field. When but a child my mind became concerned about spiritual things, and while I had never been to any kind of religious services but very few times, and had never been taught by man to pray, yet in my childish heart I felt a burning desire to confess before God that I was a sinner, and to beg Him to have mercy upon me a poor wretched guilty sinner. What I had ever done to make me feel so guilty before Him I could not tell, yet I felt sure that I was a vile sinner in His sight. My eldest sister had taught me to read, and I would often get the Bible and go up stairs where no one could see me, and read it, and then get in a dark corner and try to pray. At this early age, (for I was not yet more than nine or ten years old) I began to dream of preaching; in my dreams it seemed that I had the scriptures always at my command, and I would always enjoy sweet liberty, and invariably in these dreams, my dear step-mother (for at this time my father had married again) would come to me and lay her hand on my head and say, "This is my preacher." These dreams continued with me until I joined the church and commenced preaching. This feeling that I was a guilty sinner and this desire to pray the Lord for mercy, continued with me. My father was a Primitive Baptist, and often the old brethren would come home with him from church, and they would spend a part of the night in talking of the goodness and mercies of God, and relating their experience. While they were thus engaged, many times have I concealed myself where I could hear them unobserved. I would weep both for joy and sorrow. Joy because they were so blessed of the Lord, and sorrow because I could not feel as I thought they felt. I loved them above every people on earth, and would have given this world had it been mine, to have felt worthy to be with them. When I was in my eighteenth year my father was running a sorghum mill; he was at the evaporator, and I was grinding at the mill. My brother, (now Eld.) W. B. Sikes, came to where we were at work and as he entered the door where my father was he said, "Pa, I am bound to preach." This was all I heard, my heart leaped into my throat and the blackness of darkness seemed to surround me. I stopt the team and ran in to a corn field near by, and fell down and wept and begged God for mercy. I felt that my brother was called to preach, and I was nothing but a poor hell deserving sinner. I dried my tears as soon as I could and went back to my work, fearing that they might miss me and inquire as to where I had been.

It was four years after this before I was made to hope that I had a hope in Christ Jesus. One evening I went to spend the night with a friend who was a licensed preacher; we sat up very late that night and talked on the Scriptures, for that was my chief joy. Finally he asked me to tell my experience, I answered, "I have none to tell." He said, "well you have had some thought over the matter at some time, tell me about that." I then told him substantially what I have here written, and when I got through, he was in a flood of tears, he then told me that if he had such an experience as I had he would never doubt any more. This astonished me beyond measure, for I had never regarded it as an experience of grace, but from this time on I would sometimes hope that I had a hope, and so it is with me until the present day. Dearly beloved brethren, if this is not an experience of grace I have none. But if it is, O will you bear with my imperfections and let me dwell in your sweet love and fellowship, and be the least one in the kingdom? Will you not let me stand at the foot of the class and say what little of my lesson I may have learned from my blessed Master? This is all I ask. But back to my childhood dreams; they continued with me. When they first began with me, when I would awake from one of them, when I had been blessed with such sweet liberty to preach the gospel of the

I finally concluded that if I had someone to work with me and talk with me, perhaps I would get along better; so I hired Eld. T. C. Hart. But instead of getting better, I grew worse. Friday evening came, and the next day was the meeting time at Pine Grove church, and Eld. Hart was their pastor. I had borne it as long as I could, so when we went to separate that night, I told him to come to church the next day prepared to attend to the ordinance of baptism, for if the Lord let me live till meeting time I would offer myself to the church. So I went and related a part of what I have written herein, and was received and baptized that evening by Eld. T. C. Hart. This was on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1887. I had some hope that with this performance of duty I would get relief, but I was mistaken. It grew worse if possible. On Thursday night following, I went home with Eld. Hart from my work, we talked till late that night. After we went to bed I was made willing to do anything that the Lord might require of me. Then I felt a sweet peace come over me, such as I had never witnessed before. It lasted till Friday evening. Everything seemed to be praising God. So on Saturday night before the first Sunday in November, I made my first effort to preach. This was just three weeks after I joined the church. While I found some relief, yet there was a heavy burden that continued with me. I talked with old ministers about it and they could not tell me what was the matter. There seemed to be a great weight upon me, but what it meant I could not tell. Some times I would almost shriek aloud with agony of soul. One day while in this condition, I was in company with (Deacon) C. P. Taylor, and he said to me, "Brother Sikes, I have been studying your condition, and why it is that the older ministers can't explain it. The Lord is preparing you for a great warfare, such as these older brethren have never been called to pass through. In olden times, when a great battle was expected, the soldiers were put to heavy drill and exposed to severe hardships to enable them to endure the hardships of the bat-

tle. I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but you mark my prediction, there is a great battle before you, and the Lord is preparing you for it." O how often I have been made to look back over my ministerial career, and to think of Brother Taylor's prediction, I have longed to take him in my arms and say to him, blessed art thou, dear brother, for flesh and blood did not reveal it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.

At this time I had decided to move to Texas, so in December of the same year (1887) I started. My father lived in Tennessee, and I came by and stopped a month with him. While there I preached one night, and when I was through, my stepmother came to me (just as she had so often done in my childhood dreams) and laid her loving hand on my head and said, "This is my preacher." At this time my heart overflowed. No one on earth knew of this oft repeated dream but myself, and now it was fulfilled. I took this as another evidence of my calling. While she has passed over the river, yet she still lives in my heart, and her words yet sound in my ears. From there I came to Texas. I landed in Honey Grove on January the 25th, 1888, and put my letter in Sardis church soon after my arrival, and was ordained by the authority of that church on Saturday before the first Sunday in August, 1889. About this time trouble began to come up over the subject of predestination, caused chiefly (I think) by the circulation of a pamphlet published by Eld. Jno. Roe. I shall not stop to dwell on these things, but will only say that what I have suffered is only known to me and my God.

I will now give some dreams or visions which I have had.

When the trouble first sprang up over predestination, I dreamed one night that I was living with my father, and he had a hive of bees. I thought he only had one hive, and part of the bees left the hive and went up into a hollow ash tree that stood near by. My father called on me to get them back in to the hive. I went and examined the hive, it looked very common on the outside, but inside it was beautiful and filled with very pretty honey. I then went and cut the old ash down, and when it fell it bursted open, I went to where the bees were. I found some honey, but it was so mixed with the doat of that tree (for it was rotten inside) that I could not separate it. There was a large nest of red ants in the tree, and they were destroying the honey. When I began to try to get the bees from among the ants, the ants got very mad and tried to sting both myself and the bees, but I finally got the bees back into the old hive. Soon after this I had another dream. I thought that there was a war over the subject of predestination. In the first battle the enemy tried to take refuge behind an old dilapidated building, but I saw some of them fall; after this battle there was a cessation of hostilities for awhile, during which time our positions were changed. When the time came for a second engagement, we had the strongest breastworks that I had ever seen. It was a solid stone wall about twelve feet thick and eight feet high. On the top of this wall was placed a large gun with a hopper over the breech like unto a mill hopper, with a crank on one side of the hopper. This hopper was filled with balls from the size of a water bucket bucket down to buck shot. I was commanded to get on the wall and shoot that gun. When I got on the wall, I saw the enemy only about seventy-five yards from us; all the breast works they had was a thin canvass cloth stretched from one end of their line to the other. I could see their forms moving to and fro through it. I began to turn the crank and the gun began to shoot, that canvass was riddled from end to end, and the whole army of the enemy were torn into mince meat.

Then about seven years ago I had a trio of dreams or visions. In company with Eld. J. H. Fisher and brother J. I. Money, I stayed all night with brother G. W. Herndon (now dead). A short while before this, I had lost my hymn book and bible. That night while preparing to retire I remarked that I never expected to preach again. Eld. Fisher asked, "What's the matter now?" I

replied that I had often doubted my calling, and I had now lost my hymn book and bible, and I took it as a providential occurrence to show me that it was not my duty to use them. He told me to go to bed and go to sleep. I did so, and while asleep I thought the Lord came to my bedside and took my hand in His. He spoke to me kindly and tenderly and told me my duty, and told me to go on in that duty and I should be blessed. I said, "Lord, how shall I know that this is not a dream, seeing that I am asleep?" He answered, "It shall rain." And at that instant a hard rain struck the house top and woke me up. The rain continued until the evening of the next day, so that we could not get to brother Fisher's appointment. The next night we stayed with brother J. A. Money. That night I was sleeping behind brother Fisher, and I thought the Lord came again and reached over brother Fisher and touched me, I looked up and there appeared before me the most beautiful sight my eyes had ever beheld. It was His doctrine unfolded to me. He asked me if I understood it and believed it, I answered aloud, "Yes, Lord, it is most sweetly and powerfully true." This woke me up. Next morning Eld. Fisher asked me what it was that was so sweet and powerful that I was talking about in the night, and I told him. The next night we stayed with brother William Funderburg, and while asleep, it appeared that we were standing out in the yard talking, and there came to me the largest yellow dog that I had ever seen. He was very friendly with me, and would fondle his head against me. We all went into the house and sat down and continued our conversation; but I got tired and though I would walk out for recreation. When I stepped out I saw that dog; he was laying down. He got up and came at me with the most vicious look I ever saw; he reared up and put his feet on my breast, I had my hands behind me. I drew my hands from behind, and in my right hand was a long keen knife as bright as polished silver. I cut his throat from ear to ear, and he fell down at my feet. I saw the blood spirting from both neck veins with each pulsation of the heart, and his tail was patting on the ground; they grew weaker and weaker, and finally stopped. He was dead. I awoke, and the visions of the three nights came rushing into my mind. In the first the Lord had shown me my duty, and had given me an unmistakable sign by which I might know that it was not a mere dream. In the second, He had unfolded to me His doctrine in its sweetness and in its power. And in the third, He showed me the opposition with which I would meet in preaching His doctrine, and how I would triumph over such opposition. I have had many more such dreams or visions, but time and space forbid the mention of them at this time. This may not be of any interest to some people, but it is to me. There may be some who, like Joseph's brethren, would throw me into a pit or sell me into Egypt, but let them remember the language of Elihu to Job, "For God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions." (Job 33:14-16).

Yet, with all of the above evidences, if they be such, I am yet a poor guilty sinner. I feel more and more my dependence upon an independent God, and daily I am made to cry out in my heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.
Leave O leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me."

Brethren, one and all, remember me in your prayers.

Your poor, afflicted brother,
JONAS C. SIKES.

ADDRESS CHANGED.

The address of Eld. J. A. Campbell and his wife, Lizzie Campbell, is changed from Sunset, Tex., to Tolbert, Tex. Their correspondents will please note the change.

As I indicated in my last communication I would write again, so I will again state that the only true basis of union and true gospel peace must arise and exist upon the true character of the God whom we worship. The attributes or perfections of our God are the springs from whence flow praise. We can never worship God in spirit and in truth unless we know Him, and we can never know Him unless we are gifted with life and the revelation which must come from God only. Hence we praise Him for that gift and for that blessing. What is meant by knowing God? "This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God and His Son, Jesus Christ." How many of us know God? God says, "I am God, and beside Me there is none else." This is true in the full sense of the word. God is infinite in every perfection of His character. He is infinite in knowledge and that means He is familiar with every thing. There is not a grain of sand nor a drop of water nor a microbe, however small, with which Jehovah is not familiar. It is His, He made it and He will be glorified in His creation. But as time and space would forbid in one article to take up all, I will now refer to His purpose, which He purposed in Himself before the world began. We all, who are taught of God and have access to the word of His testimony, know that God is a God of purpose in everything He created; and He created it for a purpose. However deep and inscrutable that purpose seems it is nevertheless so. I could produce line upon line to show how extensive was the nature and character of God's purposes, and from what I have understood, I don't believe there ever has nor ever will be any thing that transpires outside of God's purpose. I will now submit this matter: We say we believe in a God of purpose. Do we believe that God purposed Adam's sins? Now we must believe that God purposed it, or that He purposed that he should not, or that He had no purpose in it at all. Now, if we believe He is a God of purpose, which of the above can we take? We will call attention to the declaration by Isaiah: "Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand and I do all My pleasure." The 45th chapter of Isaiah and the 9th chapter of Romans are twin chapters, as it were, both asserting the same principle—a matter of faith to God's elect. These Scriptures are as true and plain as any other parts of the inspired record. The Arminian can explain them and still claim his doctrine, and I am sorry to know that some of our brethren seem to be in the same boat, and handle them about the same way. God says, "I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things." I believe this and yet I do not believe that God is the author of sin. Sin is the act of a creature and not of God. Hence, we see that God cannot sin nor make any mistake about His affairs. He is high and holy and His throne is without a spot, just and right is He—the King of saints. All His works shall praise Him. I will close here lest I become tedious.

Will follow this subject in my next.

Yours in hope,
Opelika, Ala., Dec. 1, 1901: W. LIVELY.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The time of all who began with the 1st number of THE ADVOCATE OF TRUTH and who have not renewed their subscription, will expire with the next issue. Remember our rule is to drop from our list all names at the expiration of their time, unless we hear from them. We hope to hear from you within the next month. We have not adopted this rule because we doubt the honesty of our brethren, but because we do not know who appreciates the paper and desires to read it only as they make it known. A cross mark thus X on the upper left hand corner 1st page indicates that your time has expired. Should you not be able to renew your subscription just at the time, we will wait on you a reasonable time provided you notify us of your desire to continue a subscriber. We do not wish to deprive any one of the paper who wishes to read it.

EDS.