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G. C. RANKIN, D. D., EDITOR.

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Editorial.

A SKELETON WITH A CIGAR IN HIS MOUTH.

We were passing down the street the other day and happened to look into a window where surgical and dental supplies are kept, and there sat a large skeleton of some defunct man, cross-legged, with a cigar between his grinning teeth! The sight startled us, and we stopped and gazed for some moments at this gruesome spectacle. Once there was flesh upon those dry bones, and a network of nerves was wrapped round them. In his now empty skull there were brains, and in them thought was generated and volition exercised. Out of those hollow sockets eyes of fire and light once gleamed, and from between those grinning teeth intelligent words once found articulate expression. At some time in the past he was a man, and moved with the activity of manhood's strength. Maybe he was a good man, some woman's kind husband and some children's loving father. He may have lived out a useful life and died amid the comforts of home and the sobs of loved ones; or he may have been a criminal, with a bad heart in his bosom and evil purposes in his mind, and he may have died on the gallows, unwept and unlamented. Who knows his history? No one! He can no longer talk, or think, or look upon his fellow men. His flesh has long since returned to the dust and his soul to God who gave it. But there are his bones, held perfectly in place by hidden wires, and his fleshless skeleton occupies a place in the window, with his leg-bones crossed and the teeth of his lank jaws closed on a cigar! He is only an advertisement now, and all that he does is to sit there, gaze out of his hollow sockets at the passers-by and say in mute language: "We have dental and surgical instruments on the inside for sale." But that cigar between his teeth! It impressed us with many thoughts. Maybe that he was a tobacco user all his life, and if so, his ruling passion is strong in death, for there he sits trying to smoke when there are no organs to extract the smoke and no power of taste to enjoy the flavor of the weed. But he is doing his best. We have nothing to say to the old and the middle aged men who are addicted to the use of tobacco, but we would love to get the attention of young men and boys on this subject. We would love to lead them up to that window and tell them to look at the gruesome sight, and then beg them to desist from the habit before it binds them with its unbreakable chains. That man was addicted to this habit, and perhaps he had no will power to overcome it, and now that he is dead and his flesh decayed, his exposed teeth and fleshless jaws are still grasping the cigar. The tobacco habit enslaves a man. It imparts to him a bad odor, and it makes him filthy. And by and by it fills his system with the poison of nicotine. More than that, it ultimately weakens his heart action and hastens his death. The doctors said that President McKinley had a "tobacco heart," and his system could not respond to treatment. So

did Sam Jones, and so do thousands of others today. It is a useless, a filthy and a hurtful habit; and no one can find a sensible argument in its favor. Young preachers especially ought to desist from it, not only for the reasons above assigned, but for their example's sake. Thousands of good mothers, all over this land, are striving to teach their boys that it is wrong to use tobacco in any form; but when the young pastor comes along the street or into the homes of his people, either with a quid or a cigar in his mouth, or the smell of the offensive odor about his clothing, the teaching of these good mothers is more than offset by the example of the tobacco-using preacher. It is a shame! To say the least of it, it is "a needless self-indulgence" and, therefore, a violation of one of our General Rules. Would that we could now get the attention of the younger brethren in the ministry and prevail upon them, for the sake of their own cleanliness, their health and their influence, to give up this obnoxious habit. It is bad enough to see a grinning skeleton, looking out from a window, as an advertisement with a cigar in its mouth, but it is infinitely worse to see a living young man, called to the holy work of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, chewing a dirty quid or smoking a fuming cigar as an example to his flock! And we are glad that we have reached a time in which many people say to the Bishop: "Send us a preacher who does not use tobacco." May their numbers increase a thousandfold!

STAND BY THE POSITIVE TRUTHS.

We are living in an age of doubt and speculation. Skepticism of the most subtle type is abroad over our land. The human mind is delving into matters and it is in a state of intellectual fermentation. Things are only seen through the clouds and the mist, and our apprehension of many matters is only dim and obscure. Some of our educated ministers seem to have fallen into the habit of speculating, and much of their reading and thinking is crude and undigested. They are in the process of investigation. They want to go beyond what is written and add their supplemental thought to their interpretations of the gospel. Sometimes they mistake their own mental disturbances for new discoveries of truth, and they go into their pulpits and speak without due caution and deliberation.

We have no objection to the deepest thinking of which the mind is capable. We do not even object to curious thinking on those occult subjects which have not yet reduced themselves to a scientific basis. Let every lead of thought be followed to its utmost limit until it yields up to investigation and research all that it contains. But the pulpit is no place for the exploitation of our processes or the results of our speculative studies. People hear enough of doubt and crude thinking in the world about them. When they go to Church, they need solid and unmistakable truth. The gospel contains this in rich abundance. It present them to us in the concrete. It has settled some things and settled them once and for all. Concerning

these there ought to be no doubt or misgiving. They are ultimate and complete. The progress of the ages can make no improvement upon them; neither can the investigations of science add to their intrinsic value. Christ passed them through the alchemy of his own mind and heart, and gives them to us in their unadulterated substance. They are the power of God unto the salvation of every one that believeth. They are adapted to all peoples, to all conditions and to all human needs. Man can not outgrow their necessity. They are the staples of spiritual experience and moral transformation. The heart needs them, the mind is converted by them and the character is developed through their acceptance and experience. Therefore let these old and settled truths be given to the people in the power and demonstration of the Spirit, and the Church will move forward and the world will grow better.

CHRIST THE SINNER'S FRIEND.

The chief thought in the gospel is that Christ came into this world to save sinners. To do this he had to place himself on a level with sinners and he did this without becoming affected by their sins. He lived among them, learned their needs, their sorrows, their burdens, and he placed himself in their stead. Yea, he went further than this: he died for them. He did not die because he courted death, or because he could not resist death. He died because it was necessary for him to die to save sinners. There was a broken law between a sinful world and God. This law had to be satisfied. Man could not satisfy it, because he had broken it. No sacrifice he could make could repair the broken law. Its curse was upon him. He was condemned and the sentence of death was hanging over him. Justice demanded his execution. His guilt was his ruin. This law had to be satisfied.

It required the death of a victim that had never sinned, and upon whom the broken law had no just claim. Hence Christ came in the flesh to condemn the law in the flesh—to satisfy it. He knew no sin. He was perfect before the law. He met every demand of the law by the perfect life which he lived. So when he voluntarily laid down his life for the guilty and the condemned sinful men were redeemed from the claim of the broken law. They were delivered from the bondage of sin, and through Christ had the privileges of free men. His death, therefore, vindicated justice and placed God in such relation to the law that he could remain just and yet justify the ungodly. He can now forgive sin, because Christ has died for the sinner. His blood has made atonement for sin. The only act now incumbent upon man is to repent of his sins, come to God through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and obtain pardon. The sinner who now remains in his sins and dies and goes to hell on account of his sins, does so because he is too rebellious to repent and accept forgiveness. Such a condition is the fault of the man himself and not the fault of a loving Father. Christ has made salvation possible for him and for all if they will accept it. "Greater love hath

no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This is what Christ has done for all men—yea for his enemies also. Hence we reiterate the statement that Christ is the sinner's friend. He loves him with a love that could only reach its limit in his death. He died the just for the unjust. Every pain he suffered, every grief he bore every sorrow he endured is a living token that he loves sinners. His life and his death stand out as the great facts of his love for a lost and ruined world. How can men reject him? How can they neglect so great salvation? How can they hesitate for a moment to look upon him whom they have pierced and live? The only answer is that sin has blinded them, deafened them and hardened them. He invites them, and they will not heed, he pleads with them and they turn away from him. But those who hear and obey his voice, he saves from sin, and makes them new creatures in him. Sinner hear his voice today and yield yourself in obedience to his call and live. You treat no other friend as you treat a loving, indulgent Savior. We have tried him, and know him to be true. We know that he saves to the uttermost all who come unto him and ask pardon. He is the sinner's warmest and most persistent friend.

Whatever may be our limitations, God's grace will supplement them so as to make all things possible to them who trust him. If we are weak, he will give us strength; if we are ignorant, he will give us wisdom; and if we walk in darkness, he will give us light. Our fullness is in God.

No one man is independent of others. We are so related that mutual helpfulness is a necessity. However wealthy you may be, you need the labor of the men who have no financial standing to carry on your enterprises; and however poor you may be, you need some of the money of your rich neighbor to support yourself and family. Paul is right when he says, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

God needs the entirety of mankind to carry on his work. Each one is to perform his part and in keeping with his own individuality. The sum total of individualities is God's working force in the world. When thus thrown into one whole there is a balancing of forces which results in harmonizing all, and thus the work moves forward. In this way the peculiarities and eccentricities of men and women are made to help in great enterprises.

Jesus Christ is not only the greatest moralist who ever lived among men, but is also the greatest spiritual teacher whom the world has ever known. In morals he tells us our relation to each other, and our treatment of each other; but in spiritual matters he teaches us our duty to God. This is fundamental and all good morality flows from it. More than these, he is the Savior of the world, because he has made atonement for sin by his death on Calvary. To believe on him as such is our highest duty and most wondrous privilege.

Cures Drunkards

MARY'S MIRACLE.

The day of working miracles, I'm sure is far from past, And now to show you what I mean, I'll tell you of the last Great one that happened right to me. For I was part of it, you see.

You know the life I used to lead— O God, a living death, And whiskey's wicked power, A drunkard of the hopeless kind— For, scarce a sober breath I ever drew, and hope and pride Were lost to me and nearly all beside.



One friend alone was left—my wife, God bless her ev'ry hour! She saved me from a drunkard's grave, And whiskey's wicked power, Just how she saved me you shall see— This is the way she told it me.

When hope was almost dead within Her faithful, constant breast, She read of Dr. Haines' Cure, Then without stay or rest, She sent for one Trial Sample free, And gave it unbeknown to me!

I drank of it at ev'ry meal— I ate it in my bread, While Mary watched me anxiously, But ne'er a word she said; Until one day I stopped to think, That I had lost my love for drink!

When, quite unconscious I was cured, My Mary told me all: It seemed the very act of God, A modern miracle; I call it this, because my wife And Haines' Cure had saved my life.

And now my little story's done, My ev'ry word is true, And what this treatment did for me, The same 'twill do for you; And wives and mothers—one and all, Take heart of Mary's Miracle.

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Notes From the Field

Cross Plains Circuit.

Walter L. Brandon: When Bishop Hoss read us out to Cross Plains Circuit we were made to rejoice, and we are glad that we have found no occasion to repent of that rejoicing since we arrived. After four days of hard travel through the rain and mud we arrived at the hospitable home of Brother E. C. Austin (our steward, Sunday-school superintendent and local preacher), where we were entertained royally for a week, awaiting our household goods. Upon their arrival we moved into a splendid parsonage. We picked up the Advocate and soon found that Brother Jas. S. Chapman would be with us on the 13th. We had a good Quarterly Conference at Burnet Prairie Church. Then Brother Chapman preached for us at Cross Plains at night to an attentive and appreciative congregation. At the close of the services the people marched into the parsonage kitchen with everything that it takes to complete the pastor's table. We believe we are serving a great people. We know there is before us great opportunity. This is our first year. Brethren, pray for us.

Richland.

Benj. L. Crow, December 18: We have been received kindly and pounded in the good old fashioned way—country sausage, sauce, sweet potatoes, butter, canned fruit, jellies, and many other good things in that line, also a nice dining table. Hospitality abounds in our homes. Many have been the tokens of kindness and respect shown to us. Our beloved presiding elder, Rev. H. Bishop, was with us today. We had dinner on the ground; a fine sermon at the eleventh hour by Brother Nevill, of Wortham. Brother Bishop, at the two o'clock hour, baptized Rev. H. B. Laney's baby and received our two daughters (Ruth and Adelia) into the Church. Then our beloved preached a sermon which can not be surpassed. After this came the business of the Quarterly Conference, and this closed one of the happiest days of our lives. We have the best charge in Texas, and they say they have the best preacher. We are planning for a great revival at every appointment on every line. We have not forgotten the Advocate. We will put it in every home possible. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Bandera.

Rex P. Wilkes: After two years' hard work at Johnson City we were moved by Bishop Morrison to Bandera. It was with some regret that we pulled loose from old and tried friends on the Johnson City work, but we knew there were others just as true waiting at the new home and work. I believe there is nothing that so completely binds together the hearts of men as Christian service, and there are some as faithful and earnest people in the Churches that make up the Johnson City Circuit as can be found anywhere. We have been well received here—pounded before we came, and it has been kept up all the time until verily we have been led to think that the liberality of this people knows no end. Our stewards are faithful men, and regardless of the fact that our first Quarterly Conference is not until the last Sunday in January, a goodly amount of quarter- age has already found its way into the preacher's purse. We have found also a good, strong current of religious feeling at all of the appointments, and at Bandera we believe there has already been some growth. Many of our people have been despondent because of a very large colony of Polish people and a strong Catholic plant, but there has been a rallying to the Church and many have begun to pray with renewed faith, and it is our earnest belief that there are better days ahead for the Church in Bandera. Our town is a health resort for tuberculosis. A noted and reasonably successful specialist lives here and has a good many patients, who, for the most part, live in tents about the town; so we don't have to put ourselves out of the way at all to carry out the Lord's injunction to visit the sick. In a short distance from Bandera also lives Brother J. P. ("Polly") Rodriguez, a superannuate Mexican preacher, and one of the pioneers of that work. It is interesting to hear him talk and inspiring beyond measure to hear him tell of his desires for his people. Brother Rodriguez has built a church house on his ranch, and has both Mexican and American congregations worshipping there. We have with us also Rev. H. L. Atkins, a superannuate member of the Western North Carolina Conference. Brother Atkins is a good Christian man, and his life is a benediction to the community and a continuous strength to the Church and pastor. Everyone has learned to love and trust this man of God. He was one of the foremost men of his conference, but

gave way to a severe attack of tubercular trouble and came to this country seeking health and strength, and has in a large measure found both, and is now in the real estate business here. We are blessed with good counselors and true Christian friends in our new home, and pray that God may help us to be a blessing to them.

Cedar Street, Tyler.

J. L. Russell, December 17: We reached our new charge on Friday of the same week our conference closed; found our people waiting for us with open arms; so they accorded us a right royal welcome. We have been greeted by good congregations. The people came to the parsonage one evening and absolutely took possession of it; for awhile, as all bore a burden they unloaded right on our dining table, so when the "mist had cleared away" (from our eyes) we found we had been pounded. We had music by the young people, a hymn and a prayer, then all took leave of us to their homes, leaving the preacher's family happy and feeling that our lot had fallen among good people. We are very hopeful of a good year. Some strange things happened at our conference, but this preacher is well pleased.

Daingerfield.

S. N. Allen, Dec. 20: We are starting off nicely. Our people have made us so glad that we don't know how to behave ourselves. The Daingerfield brethren have already expressed their appreciation for our return in a big pounding. A delivery hack drove up to the parsonage gate loaded with good things, such as flour, sugar, syrup, coal oil—to give us more light on the subject—then coffee and soda and eggs and soap, that we might keep clean. Well, after all, it a grand thing to be a pastor of a good people. Wife and the children and the preacher all felt so thankful. Not so much for the good edibles—while that was grand—but to think that we have such a people to serve as the Daingerfield people. May the good Lord help us to do the best work of our lives, and may all of the loved ones of this people be saved, is our constant prayer.

Rising Star.

C. W. Macune: After the usual statements about being appointed by the Bishop, and how we took farewell of the dear people of Sipe Springs, and what a noble-hearted people they are, and how kind they are, all of which I omit because, in the first place, everybody knows by this time that the Bishop did then and there assign this scribe to Rising Star Station; and, in the second place, the Texas Christian Advocate would not grant me sufficient space to tell of the kindness and courtesy extended us at Sipe Springs during the past two years; and really it is not necessary because we can bestow upon them the highest tribute when we simply say that they endured us for two whole years without complaint, and they seemed to enjoy it. Now, I am not sure whether this is bragging on the preacher or paying a just acknowledgment to their Christian patience and fortitude, but it matters not. We let the Bishop take notice that "we" means the preacher, his wife and his daughter in this particular case) arrived at Rising Star on Tuesday, November 27, at noon, and found the ladies of the Church assembled at the parsonage for the purpose of serving a dinner to the retiring pastor, D. A. McGuire, and family, and also to the incoming pastor, C. W. Macune, and family. Words fail me when I attempt to describe the felicity of this whole arrangement. The farewell, the reception, the dinner, were each a success in the fullest sense. McGuire ought to love this people, for they certainly love him, and he accomplished a grand work here in his three years' pastorate—a deep and abiding work that no man can estimate. It is a pleasure to follow so good a man and take up a work in such good condition, and still it is no "picnic;" there is always room for improvement on all moral achievement. May God give the wisdom, energy, love and tact necessary for a great and continued forward movement here this year. Thanksgiving Day was doubly celebrated. In the morning a goodly congregation assembled at the church and engaged in appropriate services, which included a sermon by the new pastor; and at night the "pounding" came in due and ancient form. Nevertheless it possessed a new element as follows: On Wednesday, November 28, Brother J. J. Canafax moved into the "Superannuate Parsonage" in Rising Star. (I must say here that the above name is to be preferred to "Superannuate Home," but both should be superseded by the simple word "manse;" it is short, true, and has some style about it). So when the

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Church assembled for the purpose of giving expression to their feelings by pounding the clergy, they very properly first visited the manse and pounded Brother Canafax. I do not wish to publish any secrets, but I can not help saying that Rising Star is proud of Canafax, and glad they secured him; and Canafax is a grand man. He loves everybody, and appreciates their love in return. Our first Quarterly Conference was held on the fourteenth instant. The weather was very bad, but we had a good meeting. The pastor's salary was raised \$50, and a good payment made. Brother J. S. Chapman, our new presiding elder, preached a splendid sermon on Sunday. The rain and cold interfered with several of his appointments. The good sisters of the Home Missionary Society have purchased a nice carpet for the parsonage parlor.

(Granite). One (Banker Jones) made me a present of \$25 just a few days before starting to conference. If this man had a good case of religion he would be a tower for good in that town. I do hope and pray that he may soon be saved. Sometimes I think I would like to be back in the bounds of the old Northwest Texas Conference, but this is too fine a country and too good a conference for me to leave just now. I still love the old Texas Christian Advocate. It is a great paper and its editor, Dr. Rankin, is a great man. The Church needs more just such men. Where are the old Weatherford College boys?

Hico.

J. E. Stephens, December 22: We were returned to this charge and received a royal welcome—poundings that continue to pound; a reception given us by our Junior Epworth League the first Sunday after conference. We were invited to the Junior service. They placed us on the front seat. Then came one of the finest greetings and tokens of welcome this pastor and family has ever had. Welcome addresses by the children, presenting beautiful bouquets of chrysanthemums until we all laughed and cried for joy. Nothing we have ever had gave us so much pleasure as this. If any preacher has had anything better we would like to hear from him. We certainly serve a noble people, who know how to show their appreciation. We have put a fine organ in our church, and built a barn, remodeled our choir rostrum since conference. We are planning largely this year. We are praying for a revival and working to bring it about.

Bells.

D. F. Fuller: Our people have been most cordial in receiving us for another year of service. In many ways we have been kindly remembered. The people of Bells gave us a royal pounding. Many were present, and a good time it was. Brother J. M. Everheart and wife, of Memorial, furnished us a fine supply of preserves and pickles; and Brother Whiting, of Virginia Point, pounded us with a big fat hog ready to cut up and salt down. Such love and kindness make us great debtors. God help us to pay the debt!

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