# The Press and Banner.

By Hugh Wilson and H. T. Wardlaw.

Wednesday, August 4, 1880.

### The Bible Society.

Our readers, we know, will thank us for giving them so full a report of the doings of the last annual meeting of the Abbeville District Bible Society. The sermon by the Rev. Mr. Stafford will well repay a perusal. The various "Reports" which are published will give interesting information—that of the Librarian as to the progress of the work of distributing Bibles to our destitute, and from that of the Treasurer may be drawn the inference that this old and respected institution is nearly dead. The receipts seem to be growing less and less every year, and if something isn't done to revive the public interest in it, it may not be long before the Society will close business. The Report of last year exhibited very small cash receipts, and the receipts at this meeting are even still more discouraging.

It was pleasing to note however, that a number of those present, in their remarks, evinced a commendable anxiety as to the prosperity of the Society in the future, and they seemed to think the usefulness of the Society depended largely on the formation of Auxiliary Societies. We hold exactly the opposite opinion. We believe the Auxiliary Societies have had the effect of killing out the District Society. Ever since the organization of these Societies the attendance at the annual meetings of the District Society has been gradually decreasing, until at the last meeting we had present only fifteen old members and one new member. There were positively not enough members who had paid their annual dues, to fill the offices, and gentlemen, so far as we are informed, were elected to fill the offices who are not now members of the Society, some of whom at least, have not in years contributed a cent to the Treasury. Under the present regulation the names of all annual members who do not pay at the annual meeting are promptly dropped from the roll, unless, perchance, the member happens to be an officer, in which event he need not pay at all, as at the annual election of officers, some member in order to expedite business, generally moves to re-elect the old officers. The motion is always seconded and the gentlemen are elected to high offices in an organization of which they are not members, and to whose existence they contribute nothing. Such a course is wrong. We think some officer of the Society should keep an account with the members, and if they do not pay, the bill for their delinquencies should be sent to them. We know that the Society loses many a member and many a dollar, too, by the present plan of dropping the names of those who may not pay and attend the an nual meetings. When a man joins the Society his name should be continued on the rolls until the Society should vote his release, and at each meeting the names of those who pay should be read out as they were at the last meeting, and if the Treasurer should receive additional fees for membership between now and the next meeting, a note of their names and the amount so paid should be made and read. We know by a proper course that there are a hundred good men, representing every section of the County, who would cheerfully become and remain members under a different system. Some of the best men in the town of Abbeville, and some of the most effective workers in the cause, too, are temporarily absent from town, at the present time. Under the existing system, they have forfeited their membership, unless they should hunt up the Treasurer and pay their fees to him. Let us have a different system—call the roll at the annual meetings, and present bills to delinquents, and we are no judge of small matters if the Society doesn't receive something of its former usefulness.

In this connection, we may be allowed to remark on a discussion which arose as to the propriety of asking the different preachers to deliver a sermon and make a collection on one Sunday in the year for the benefit of the District Bible Society. Some objected to this on the ground that where the local clubs existed the members would be called on twice to contribute for the same object. We think it right and proper to make not only one call, but that it would be well to make two, three or even more calls during the year—if the money should be needed. In taking up a collection in church everybody gives a little, whether he is a member of the church or of the Society. The little mite is freely contributed for the benefit of the cause. These little free-will offerings are not given grudgingly, but freely. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

### Letters of Acceptance.

Elsewhere in the *Press and Banner* will be found the letters of General Hancock and Hon. W. H. English, accepting the Cincinnati nominations for President and Vice-President. As a rule these letters must be acceptable alike to Northern and Southern voters. The Presidential nominee evidently does not expect many voters from "the Republican side of the house" when he says, if elected he shall "see that the laws are faithfully and "equally executed *in all parts of the country alike.*" His declaration in the face of the past policy of the Republican administration of governmental affairs at Washington which has overlooked and ruled the affairs in the States of the South by the wiles of the emissary and the force of the bayonet, will be earnestly supported by all true Democrats—whether living in the North or the South.

The Presidential nominee does not speak out on the money question—but the nominee for Vice-President speaks with no uncertain sound. And he speaks the words of soberness and truth. The Vice-President evidently offers a bid for the votes of the Pacific slope when he speaks of the "destructive competition of Chinese" labor. Unless there was something of a tangible nature to gain by such an expression, it would have been in our opinion better for us, if it had not been said. The wealth of the country consists in money and muscle, and whoever robs us of either, will be set down by some people as a public enemy. Neither candidate adds anything new on the subject of "strong governments" or "sectional jealousies." The letters are not long and will be found to be quite readable. It is important that their supporters know the principles of their candidates.

### The Savannah Valley Railroad.

In another column will be found much valuable information in regard to the Savannah Valley Railroad. For the report to which we refer, we are indebted to the *Anderson Intelligencer*, as we were for the article published a week or two ago on the same subject. We forgot to give our esteemed neighbor credit at the time of the first publication. Our friends on the Savannah side will read with interest the minutes of the meeting of the Directors of the Road, as well as the Report of the Engineer. The Engineer's statements, we presume, may be relied upon as solid facts. The question for the tax payer is, will he raise the needed money to carry forward this grand enterprise which was begun many years ago. It is said that a grand enterprise once begun never turns backward.

### Our Candidates.

Thinking that some facts in reference to the candidates for political preferment in Abbeville County may not be uninteresting to our readers, we have concluded to offer the following scattering remarks for what they are worth:

**Jesse S. McGee, Esq.**

The name of this prominent citizen of the Mulberry section appears this morning in the *Press and Banner* as a candidate for the Legislature. This is the first time that Mr. McGee has allowed his name to be used in connection with any public office. Being a leading farmer in his neighborhood, and one who has made money at the most honorable of all the pursuits, he is an excellent representative man who would give satisfaction to his friends. He is a member of a numerous and influential family connection, and stands high in the Baptist Church of which he is a consistent member. Conscientious and honorable in all his transactions he is a safe man in whom to confide any trust which he would accept.

**Captain Wesley A. Black,**

is not unknown to the people of Abbeville. Twenty-five years ago he graduated at Due West, and since that time has been living in the neighborhood of Antreville where he has been prominent in every good work. He is a descendant of Hon. Jo Black who represented Abbeville County in the State Senate for many years, and was afterwards elected to the office of State Treasurer. He was the author of what was known as the "Cow Law." Up to that time everything a man possessed was subject to levy and sale to satisfy debts. Through his influence a law was passed exempting from such levy and sale certain household goods, and a milch cow. The poor people appreciated this act in their behalf and ever afterwards voted as a unit for him. Captain Black is just as good a man as was his grandfather, and would no doubt be as faithful to any trust that might be imposed upon him.

**Dr. F. F. Gary**

of Cokesbury has been nominated for the Legislature to represent that portion of the County in the Lower House of the General Assembly. He has for many years been a prominent citizen of his section and well known to the people of the County. His popular manners and fine address always distinguish his intercourse with his fellow citizens and his merits have frequently won for him substantial evidences of the esteem and confidence of his fellows. He is the son of Dr. Thomas R. Gary who in former years so ably represented the County in the House of Representatives. Dr. Gary is a graduate of the Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia, and has been actively engaged in the practice of medicine since receiving his diploma in 1851, and now ranks as one of the leading physicians of our State. The fact that he has been twice elected President of the Medical Society of Abbeville County, shows the esteem in which he is held by the medical fraternity. Dr. Gary for many years has been considered one of the brightest masons in the up-country, and as a mason last February to his merit was elected Grand High Priest of South Carolina, the highest office in Masonry in the State. During the late war Dr. Gary was a surgeon, and did his whole duty faithfully and bravely as a soldier. When the grange was first organized Dr. Gary became a charter member since which time he has been a member of the organization.

**Colonel James M. Latimer,**

of Lowndesville is announced as a candidate for election to the House. He is well known to nearly everybody in the County, and is justly one of our most respected citizens. A man of means, patriotic and liberal in his impulses, he has for half a century been one of the most useful citizens of that section of the country. Whether in religion, politics, or public improvements no man takes a more active part, or is more influential in inculcating a high tone in public sentiment, or in advancing the material prosperity of the County. Being portly and handsome in appearance, with a genial nature, and possessing those noble qualities which never fail to command the respect and confidence of all with whom he comes in contact, he would make a trusted and influential member of the Legislature.

**Dr. J. D. Neel**

was a member of the House at its last session, having been elected to fill the unexpired term of General McGowan who had been promoted to the Supreme Bench. Doctor Neel was graduated at Erskine College in 1853. Afterwards he graduated in medicine, married and settled in the Long Cane country, where his talent and application to the study of his profession soon gave him a high stand among his medical brethren, and for many years he has been awarded a liberal practice in his profession. In the war he was a gallant soldier, and in politics he has ever been an uncompromising Democrat who never failed to strike square out from the shoulder. In the meetings of the County Club his speeches are always short and explicit. In the Legislature his deportment commanded respect alike of his colleagues and his constituents.

**W. K. Blake, Esq.,**

Mr. Blake is a lawyer by profession, having an office at Greenwood, where he was born, being a member of the well-known family of that place. He is a brother of Prof. J. R. Blake, of Davidson College, and of Dr. Thos. S. Blake and Mr. A. M. Blake of this County. He commenced the practice of the law at Newberry, where he was the partner of Lambert J. Jones, a leading member of the Bar of that County. Marrying early in life a lady of wealth and accomplishments, he moved back to Abbeville, his native County, and formed a partnership with W. A. Lee, Esq., of the Abbeville Bar. Mr. Blake is possed of a vigorous mind, and is a clear and impressive speaker. He is a man of popular manners, and is appreciated by all who know him as a man of acute intellect, fine practical judgment, and of high integrity. An elder in the Presbyterian church, and a public spirited citizen, he is identified with all that concerns the best interests of the County. If elected he would make a very useful member.

**O. T. Calhoun, Esq.,**

one of the youngest aspirants for political honors in Abbeville County, is a member of the Abbeville Bar. Having studied law in the office of Messrs. Perrin & Cothran, he was admitted to the practice of the legal profession in 1874, and since that time he has won a commendable success. With fair practice in the courts, and a rush of business in his own office as Trial Justice he has already had an extended experience in the law, with fine prospects of attaining still higher laurels not only in the law, but in politics as well. He is never absent from the meetings of the County Club, and always actively participates in whatever may be done.

**Wm. H. Parker, Esq.,**

For the first time, Mr. Parker has allowed his name to be presented to the people of Abbeville County for public office. He is a modest man—has not thrust his name forward—is no electioneerer and desires the people to consider his claim solely on the ground of merit. Mr. Parker is competent to discharge the duties of any office he would accept. A graduate of College and an excellent business man, he long discharged satisfactorily the important duties of Commissioner in Equity for this County. He is a good lawyer, brave conscientious and perfectly trustworthy in every relation. But more than all he is an honest man and Christian gentleman, the soul of honor, truth and fidelity. At this time we need precisely such men in public office. Abbeville will maintain her old-time high standard by electing William Henry Parker.

### A FREE CIRCULATION OF IT WILL DO GOOD.

#### A High Compliment to the Press and Banner from a High Source.

A leading preacher in the Associate Reformed Church, living in a neighboring State, and whose loyalty to Erskine College has never been doubted, writes to us the following letter which is gratifying indeed. We endeavor to merit the kindly feeling of all true men, and when their expressions indicate an appreciation of our efforts, we are more than repaid for our labor. The letter is as follows:

"July 29, 1880.

"GENTLEMEN—Please send me ——— copies of your paper containing the account of affairs at Erskine, your interviews, &c. I think it the most impartial account possible, and a free circulation of it will do good. ———"

"Yours, &c., ———"

As a set off to this however, we received a letter from a Little Sparrow at Due West on the subject of our publication in reference to Erskine College, that was so totally devoid of the amenities and courtesies which usually characterize the letters of gentlemen, that, under our rule not to receive or publish disrespectful communications, we were compelled to return it at once to the author. The letter above quoted, coming, as it does, from a prominent Christian preacher, would be more than an equivalent for the foracious attacks of a dozen Little Sparrows.

# The Bible Society.

## SIXTEEN MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.

### EXCELLENT SERMON BY REV. A. J. STAFFORD—INTERESTING REPORTS FROM THE AUXILIARIES.

### Tributes to the Dead—The Cash Receipts and the Work of Distributing the Bible.

### Owing to the Scarcity of Actual Members, the Society Goes Outside of its Organization for Many of its Officers.

#### Meeting of the Board of Directors.

The anniversary meeting of the Board of Directors of the Abbeville District Bible Society was held in the office of the President Judge Thomson, on Wednesday 28th July, 1880, at 10 o'clock, a. m.

Present, Judge Thomson, R. H. Wardlaw, Dr. J. L. Pressly, Rev. Dr. Grier, P. H. Bradley, T. T. Cunningham, J. F. C. DuPre, L. W. White.

After prayer by the Rev. Dr. Grier, on motion of Mr. Wardlaw, W. A. Lee was requested to act as Secretary pro. tem. in the place of W. H. Parker, who was absent.

The Reports of J. F. C. DuPre, Librarian and Treasurer were read, and on motion of Mr. Wardlaw, were ordered to be read before the Society.

The Report of L. W. White, Corresponding Secretary, covering Reports from the Auxiliary Societies at Cedar Springs, Greenwood, and Due West, were, on motion of Mr. DuPre, referred to the Society for action.

After prayer by Mr. Wardlaw, the Board adjourned.

#### Meeting of the Bible Society.

The Anniversary Meeting of the Abbeville District Bible Society was held in the Baptist Church. The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. W. M. Grier, D. D., and the Anniversary Sermon was preached by the Rev. A. J. Stafford, and owing to the absence of Mr. L. W. Perrin, the Orator, there was no Address.

#### The Excellency of the Scriptures.

SERMON BY THE REV. A. J. STAFFORD, OF THE METHODIST CHURCH.

"The entrance of thy words giveth light."
—*Psalms CXIX, 130.*

None will deny that the Bible is one of the great facts of our time. Its impress is upon our language, our manners and customs, our social and civil institutions. It is the standard of our religious faith, and the most efficient agent in the formation of that high character which has made Protestant nations the leaders of the thought, the civilization and the progress of the world.

The Bible is much more than a public or State institution of the nations that have it; it belongs to individuals rather than to communities. Our relation to it is not a public but a personal one. We have in it a private interest. It descends to us as a part of our paternal inheritance, and without our choosing, enters as an important factor into the problem of our life. It meets us in our infancy, and as our knowledge and responsibility come on it presents issues whose consideration we cannot escape. Unlike other books, it will not be dismissed with a perusal, and the formation of an opinion; but it speaks with authority, claims to guide our conscience, and demanding the submission of the will. And in support of its high claims, it presents evidence showing that it came from God, and contains that revelation which he has been pleased to make to man.

We propose to consider to-day whether the Bible is what we might expect it to be as the will of our Heavenly Father, communicated to us in love, and designed for our good. Have we reason to prize it as a treasure? Does it meet any felt want of our nature? Has it been proven that the entrance of its words gives light to the understanding? Does it evince any adaptation to the proclaims it to be a necessity to our nature, or is it only an unnecessary restraint? Does it act as a *wing or a weight?*

You will perceive that we waive all consideration of its external evidence, and for the present rest its claims upon its own merits. Our inquiry to-day is, can we discover in the book itself such excellences as would naturally belong to the origin it claims, and such correspondence between its doctrings and our wants as prove that it was designed to be our teacher and guide. With this end in view we will consider first, some of its more obvious characteristics.

1. It claims a greater antiquity than any other book, and this claim so far as we can judge is well sustained. Its earliest portions give no hint of any contemporaneous literature, and their style is different from that of all other ancient books now extant, whenever written it is the well from the most important subjects that can come within the range of our knowledge. Its history begins with the beginning of time. It relates the story of the creation, shows the grand process by which this earth was prepared to become the abode of man, reveals the origin of his body and of his spirit, explains the existence of the opposite qualities of good and evil in human nature, and follows the career of the first inhabitants of the world till their sins called for divine vengeance and they were swept away by the flood. It explains the origin of the different races of the human family, and their dispersion to those quarters of the earth which they at present occupy. But for the Holy Scriptures the first two thousand years of the world's history would be a blank.

2. It exhibits a complete unity amid a wonderful variety. We speak of the Bible as a *book*—it is rather a collection of sixty-six very different books, comprising history, poetry, prophecy, memoirs, travels and letters; whose writing covered period of about two thousand years, and whose writers included learned and unlearned men, shepherds and fishermen, warriors and priests, statesmen and kings. Of these men some wrote at home, and some in exile; some at the height of earthly prosperity, and some in distress, persecution, and pain. Yet there is no discrepancy in the record, but on the other hand its different portions all fall into place and make a complete whole. Does the whole history of human testimony furnish any parallel to this? Can we anywhere else find as many writers, as widely separated in time, and character, and circumstances, who not only agree, but who pursue the same plan—one supplementing another, one commencing where another left off, and one explaining what another had merely mentioned? Such wonderful completeness challenges our admiration, and opens the way for our belief.

3. Its teachings are adapted to all people and all times. From it the most enlightened nations of the present day derive the principles of their jurisprudence; to it we are indebted for the beneficent provisions of the Sabbath; and in it we discover the first recognition of the family, and of the sanctity of the marriage bond.

4. Written before the dawn of science, and not claiming to teach science, its statements are nevertheless in accord with all that has been learned by human investigation of the laws and operations both of mind and matter. The metaphysical subjects of the last and preceding centuries for a while involved some of its positions in difficulty; and the wonderful discoveries in natural science in our own day have been thought to conflict with the Mosaic account of the creation, but it is now shown to the satisfaction of every candid mind that this conflict is purely imaginary. Not only does true science harmonise with revelation, but becomes the Interpreter of revelation, and gives us the key to passages which otherwise would be obscure.

These statements may serve to show the connection of revelation with the progress of thought, and the adjustment of social relations in the present life. In all that promotes human welfare, all that builds up society on a sound basis, all that dispels superstition and ignorance, all that alleviates human suffering, and promotes good will among men the word of God is our only trustworthy guide. And it is one of the properties of the light which it gives, that it shines just with that degree of clearness which we are able to bear. The unlettered and ignorant are instructed by it, while the philosopher finds in it matter for profoundest thought. The rude and warlike tribes of the olden times were elevated by it to a higher civilization, while the Christian Church of the nineteenth century is urged to be "blameless and harmless," taking for her motto, "Holiness to the Lord."

Let us now pass to another view of our subject:

It has been objected to the Scriptures that they are difficult to be understood; that interpretations differ, and we are often left at a loss as to their true meaning. If they are from God this is precisely what we should expect. A communication from infinite intelligence to finite minds must contain difficulties. Again, it is better for us that they do contain difficulties. It is necessary for us to be continually reminded of the present imperfect state of our faculties. We are as yet only in the childhood of our being. We look for a higher state, but it is not yet attained. Now we know in part, and we "prophesy in part. But when that which is "perfect is come then that which is in part "shall be done away. When I was a child I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I "thought as a child; but when I became a "man I put away childish things. For now "we see through a glass darkly, but then face "to face; now I know in part, but then shall "I know as I also am known."

It is only to that pride of understanding which stands in the way of true knowledge as well as of spiritual elevation that the mysteries of the Scriptures present a serious obstacle. The flippant critic declares his purpose to reject whatever he cannot understand, but the devout student finds ground for adoration and trust in the mysteries which his reason cannot comprehend. He learns too that humility is the handmaid of knowledge. He finds obedience to be the organ of spiritual vision, even as our Saviour has said, "If any man will do his [the Father's] will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself."

Here doubtless is the true key to all the difficulties which men have found in the reception and belief of the Scriptures. The true light shines, but the darkness often comprehends it not. The design of revelation is sufficiently manifest, but that design is not taken into the account in the short sighted judgment which is often pronounced upon the Divine word. Man seeks after one thing, but God has provided for him another and a better thing. He seeks for knowledge, God would develop in him obedience, faith, and hope. He is satisfied with the present, God is training him for a higher and a better world. Therefore he is not only taught in the sacred Word, but he is also trained. He finds enough to command his belief but much also to exercise his faith. Faith and reason must ever walk together after the search after truth. Revelation is designed for both; and while it is clear enough to satisfy a reasonable faith it is also difficult enough to baffle an indocile reason. There are many points of view from which this principle may be seen:

1. In the inspiration of the Scriptures. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved "by the Holy Ghost." They were enlighted by the inspiration of the Spirit that their words were not merely their own but also the words of God. Revelation, like the incarnate Word, is both human and divine. Because it is human, that is, in the language of man, it is intelligible to reason; and because it is divine, it has authority to demand the submission of faith. Again the human element gives to revelation a natural and life-like character. It preserves the style and individuality of the different writers. While they are saved from all error, yet each presents the truth in his own way. Thus Isaiah is glowing and sublime, Jeremiah tender and pathetic, Ezekiel rugged and severe. Hosea writes with sentimental brevity, while Nahum sounds the trumpet of war. This individuality of the sacred writers shows that they were not mere passive machines, narrating the same events in the same words, but independent witnesses. Their substantial argument commands our belief, while their seeming discrepancies prove the absence of collusion. The scholarly Luke, the speculative John, and the practical Matthew and Mark have each given us their own impressions of the events of our Saviour's life, and have thus furnished a fuller and juster account than any single writer could have done. And though these independent accounts have provoked the attacks of enemies, they have not been found by the most rigid criticism to contain any irreconcilable statements, but on the contrary, have yielded under the crucible many beautiful and delicate harmonies that do not appear to the superficial reader, so that the things meant to injure "have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel."

2. In what is revealed of God. The existence of the Supreme Being is in the Scripture declared, rather than proved. The proofs are found mainly in the inate convictions of the mind, and in the works of power and design which nature, the great counterpart of revelation, exhibits. It has never been shown that the human reason without aid could have discovered the existence of God. But the great truth being simply announced reason finds so many confirmations that a firm belief is at once reached. And until this idea of God is reached and rested in the mind is in painful perplexity. It seems to need this starting point even to think satisfactorily. The reason resents the absurdity of supposing an effect without a cause. As one of the able writers has forcibly put it, "That somewhat now exists proves that somewhat must have always existed." To this conclusion our minds inevitably tend. Darwin & Co. may try to show how nothing may have produced something—how the world may have come into existence without a creator, but it is only under severe driving that the mind reaches such a conclusion, and then under protest.

Giving us firm ground for our faith in the existence of a Great First Cause, the Maker of all things and the Governor of the universe, the Scriptures reveal to us so much of his character and attributes as it concerns us to know. What He is in His absolute and glorious perfections we cannot comprehend. "Dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen or can see." "Canst thou by searching find out God, canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" He is not revealed to us as He is Himself but as we may know and serve Him. He is a Person, a Will exercising self-determining power, one who can be influenced by motives though not controlled by them, one consequently who hears and answers prayer, and who shapes his treatment of his creatures according to their conduct and deserving. He is "our Father in Heaven." This is the utmost we can know, and enough to know. With this assurance we approach him in confidence, and render him our ready and cheerful obedience.

The reasonableness of accepting what has been revealed to us without vainly striving to discover more is manifest when we consider how little we know or can know of anything. We do not know how a blade of grass grows, or how the wind blows or how the sun shines. We do not even know what our own mind is. "Mind is matter modified," says one philosopher. "Matter," says another, "matter is mind modified, for what you call matter is a phenomenon." The mind often questions itself: "Where do I exist? Am I in the brain? Am I in the whole body? Am I everywhere? At one time it says, "I can have no local existence for I am immaterial." At another time, "I must have a local habitation for I am material," and so this endless doubt and disputation proceeds. The result is often is destructive to all belief. The soul lands on the shores of universal skepticism, with the conclusion. All that can be known is that we know nothing!

3. Once more, we see in the evidence which establishes the truth of Christianity the reasonableness of the faith which it requires. Its claims, and the influences of the reason which rejects its claims. We freely admit that there are difficulties in the way of Christian faith, particularly as to the doctrine of the atonement and that of the resurrection. But the faith which accepts these mysteries rests upon conclusive evidence that they are from God, while the perversity that rejects them argues not the absence of faith, but rather the possession of a faith which has nothing for its support and yet is strong enough to surmount all difficulties and absurdities. The Christian believes the miracles that prove his religion to be from God. The infidel professes to disbelieve the miracles, yet he believes much greater things than these. He must believe that these impostures of frauds as he holds them to be, have been performed in open day, on a great variety of occasions, and in presence of malignant enemies, were never detected and exposed. He must believe that a few fishermen, men of obscure, and bigoted, persuaded multitudes of their countrymen by these miracles to surrender their religion which they acknowledged to be divine, and multitudes of Gentiles to give up their venerable and well established superstitions. He must believe that this imposture succeeded so well that in a few years prejudice and persecution were disarmed, and in about three centuries the intelligent world took possession of the temples of the vanquished deities of the great Roman Empire. He must believe that the first preachers submitted to the greatest privations and persecutions, in their work, not only without any assignable motive, but in opposition to the strongest motives, and that while practicing this fraud they invented in connection with it a system of the purest and most exalted morality the world has ever seen, and that notwithstanding their villainy, they had effrontery to preach, and the inconsistency to practice this morality.

Or, if he maintain that the accounts of the miracles are fictitious, then he must believe the most unparalleled literary forgery the world has ever seen—a forgery which the literary world of Jews and Gentiles had at the time to expose, and which has continued to impose on the acutest minds in different nations and ages ever since. He must believe that the world, knowing the character of these fictions, suffered itself to be imposed on by them, and to be thus befooled out of all that it had previously believed; and it acted thus, as strict historical investigations have shown within thirty or forty years of the very time when the alleged wonders were said to occur—wonders which the world must have known it had not seen, but was determined to believe in spite of evidence, prejudice and persecution.

He must believe that this imposture, so far from being confined to the land where it originated, has been making progress for more than eighteen centuries among all nations of the earth; and that the most enlightened and powerful nations have been those most fully under its influence.

He must believe that there have been multitudes in every age who from their belief of this delusion have derived the greatest peace and consolation, that it has wrought a wonderful change in the lives of many who were addicted to vice, and that whenever persecution has arisen on account of it its votaries have generally been ready to seal their attachment to its cause with their lives. All this and much more must he believe who rejects Christianity. Truly we may say to him, "O infidel, great is thy faith!"

And what is the reward of all this marvel of credulity? What does the infidel gain by his boasted freedom? Nothing but the privilege of saying that there is no light beyond the grave, no peace for the troubled conscience, no Mediator between God and man, and no hope when we bury our loved ones out of our sight that we shall ever see them again. On the other hand the Christian's faith assures him that the God whom he serves is a God of mercy and love, who gave his Son to be the Redeemer and Saviour of fallen man. It shows him the person and offices, the love and suffering, the cross and crown of Him who was manifested to take away the sin of the world. It sets his sin and guilt in a true and luminous point of view, and points out too the way of salvation. It assures him of life life and immortality, the gift of God to all who truly repent and believe in Jesus with the heart unto righteousness. O heavenly balm for all our woes! O light divine to dispel all our darkness! O welcome deliverance from the bondage of sin and the horrors of the grave! Nowhere are you to be found but in this sacred book, which is the charter of our Christian privileges, and the basis of our immortal hopes.

And now while we return our gratitude and thanks to the Father of Mercies for the light of revelation, let us remember the condition of all those to whom this light has not shined. They are sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, doomed to lives of doubt and uncertainty, with absolutely no hope beyond the grave. For anything they know to the contrary the grave closes upon them forever. They have no hope as an anchor to the soul, no eye of faith that can pierce the heavens; for how can they believe when they have not heard, or how can they know what has not been declared unto them? And can we, who have the unsearchable riches of God's grace declared to us—can we think with indifference of those who are living in the darkness of nature's night? Freely we have received, freely let us give. This blessed Bible is the light and strength and joy of our hearts—let us not cease our efforts in circulating it, till it sheds its light in every land, and into every doubting heart.

#### The Business of the Society

Was opened with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Martin, and the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

The names of the following delegates from auxiliary societies were reported as in attendance. From Greenwood, J. S. Bailey, J. W. Greene; Lebanon, John Martin; Due West, Rev. Dr. Grier, Dr. Miller; Hodges, J. C. Hodges, W. R. Jones; Long Cane and Cedar Springs, W. K. Bradley, William Kennedy, Dr. A. T. Wideman.

The Rev. Mr. Stafford was enrolled as a member of the Society, and assigned a reason for the absence of Mr. Pratt, the pastor of the church.

The reports of the Librarian and Treasurer were then read and on motion of Mr. Martin referred to an auditing committee consisting of Messrs. T. T. Cunningham, Dr. Wideman and J. C. Hodges. This committee made a favorable report which was adopted.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

J. F. C. DuPre, Treasurer, in Account with Abbeville District Bible Society.

| | | DR. |
|---|---|---|
| 1879. July 30. | To Cash on hand | $ 21 23 |
| | To cash from Due West Society | 21 75 |
| | To cash from Greenville Society | 8 00 |
| | To cash from Long Cane and Cedar Spring Society | 6 20 |
| 1880. | To cash from membership | 22 00 |
| July 28. | To cash from sale of books | 74 55 |
| | | $150 73 |
| 1879. | | CR. |
| Aug. 12. | By paid American Bible Society | $ 45 00 |
| Sept. 3. | By paid freight | 3 25 |
| Jan. 19. | By paid American Bible Society | 30 00 |
| May 10. | By paid American Bible Society | 30 00 |
| May 25. | By paid American Bible Society | 10 00 |
| | By paid freight | 4 62 |
| June 1. | By paid freight | 45 |
| | By paid Due West Society in books | 23 21 |
| | Postage and Post Office Orders | 1 25 |
| | By paid expenses | 1 00—148 78 |
| | To balance on hand | $ 1 95 |

J. F. C. DUPRE, Treasurer.

Abbeville C. H., S. C., July 28, A. D., 1880.

| | |
|---|---|
| Due American Bible Society | $49 74 |
| Cash on hand | 1 95 |
| Balance due | $48 79 |

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT.

J. F. C. DuPre, Librarian, in Account with Abbeville District Bible Society.

| | | DR. |
|---|---|---|
| 1879. July 30. | To 166 Volumes on hand | $ 81 03 |
| Aug. 13. | To 266 Volumes bought | 52 06 |
| Aug. 13. | To — Volumes bought for Due West | 23 03 |
| 1880. May 11. | To 320 Volumes bought | 78 95 |
| May 25. | To 4 Volumes bought | 10 70 |
| | | $245 80 |
| | CR. | |
| | By Long Cane and Cedar Springs Society | $ 27 56 |
| | By — Volumes donated | 26 00 |
| | By — Volumes donated to directors | 10 00 |
| | By — Volumes sold for cash | 74 55 |
| | By 234 Volumes on hand | 107 75—245 80 |

J. F. C. DUPRE, Librarian.

The report of the Corresponding Secretary was then read and adopted.

REPORT OF CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

ABBEVILLE, S. C., July 28, 1880.

*To the Officers and Members of the Abbeville District Bible Society:*

GENTLEMEN—I beg leave respectfully to report, that in compliance with a resolution adopted at the last meeting of the Abbeville District Bible Society, I have addressed communications to the different auxiliary Bible Societies in the county and requested that each society send not less than six delegates to the next meeting of the District Society and forward such contributions as they might make, to said Society before this, the regular annual meeting.

In response I have received only two communications, one from the auxiliary Society at Cedar Springs, and the other from the auxiliary Society at Greenwood, both of which accompany this report, and are referred to your society for consideration and action.

Respectfully submitted,

L. W. WHITE,
Cor. Sec. A. D. Bible Society.

REPORT FROM GREENWOOD BIBLE SOCIETY.

GREENWOOD, S. C., July 27, 1880.

The Greenwood Bible Society begs leave to report that, on the 17th inst. they elected the following officers for the ensuing term of twelve months:

R. C. Gillam, President,
Dr. A. P. Booner, First Vice-President,
M. H. Coleman, Second Vice-President,
J. W. Greene, Secretary and Treasurer.

We now have fifty members. Nothing was done during the past year for want of money. Our numbers were small, and little interest manifested. We hope to do better for the future.

Respectfully submitted,

J. W. GREENE,
Secretary and Treasurer.

REPORT FROM LEBANON BIBLE SOCIETY.

LEBANON CHURCH, July 25, 1880.

The Lebanon Bible Society, auxiliary to the District Society, met and reorganized with Rev. J. F. Gibert, President, S. C. Link, Secretary and Treasurer, and twenty-eight present. A collection was taken up amounting to seven dollars. The Society agreed to give it to the District Society to aid in the Bible cause.

Four delegates were elected to meet with the District Society, S. F. Gibert, J. H. Ligon, John Martin and A. J. Woodward.

S. C. LINK, Secretary and Treasurer.

The following Report of the Cedar Springs Society was then read:

REPORT OF CEDAR SPRING AND LONG CANE BIBLE SOCIETY.

*To L. W. White, Corresponding Secretary of Abbeville District Bible Society:*

I. Our annual meeting was held last Saturday 17th inst. at Cedar Springs, less than half our members attending.

II. An excellent address was delivered by Mr. Haddon, Student of Theology.

III. The committee appointed at last meeting to canvass the territory of our members of our church, and to see how our own people and others living amongst them are supplied with the Bible and report what destitution, if any exists, reported that they find in all our families one or more copies of the scriptures. Occasionally a family where there is only a Bible for the heads of the family and their children, and none of the family who can read. Some families of other denominations who are living amongst us are but poorly supplied with the word of God, and one or two families who have no Bible at all, but rather are of no denomination entirely without a Bible.

IV. We also find great destitution amongst the Colored people in our midst. A great many of them have learned to read and are very anxious to obtain a Bible.

V. The fifty Bibles our Society received from the Abbeville District Bible Society last year have all been distributed gratuitously, mostly amongst our own people, some to those who belong to no church and a few to colored people.

VI. We have sixty-four names on our roll, a good many of them ladies and children. It is our painful duty to report a growing indifference to the Bible cause.

VII. This Society was organized on the 25th July 1853, with a membership at that time of 130, we have paid to the Abbeville District Bible Society since that time the sum of seven hundred and seventy dollars and fifteen cents. Three hundred and seven dollars and a half of that sum was Confederate money, balance good money.

VIII. Our contribution at last meeting was fourteen dollars and forty-five cents.

IX. In view of the continued and indifference manifested by our people generally, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted,

*Resolved* 1. That this Society of Cedar Spring and Long Cane hereby memorialize the present society at its approaching meeting to adopt some measure to give more interest to the cause of the Bible in our midst.

*Resolved* 2. That we suggest the encouragement of Auxiliary Bible societies, and issuing a request to all the ministers of the several denominations to preach at least once on the subject in their respective churches, and that a day be set apart and the collection be forwarded to the District Society before its next meeting.

X. It was resolved that our delegates to the Abbeville District Bible Society bring to the attention of that society the matter of supplying to some extent the destitute amongst our colored people.

Respectfully submitted,

P. H. BRADLEY,
Secretary.

After some discussion the first resolution was modified so as to authorize the President, First Vice-President, Treasurer and Librarian and Corresponding and Recording Secretaries to confer with Rev. Mr. Witey, the General Agent as to the best mode of establishing auxiliary societies.

The second resolution was changed to authorize the Corresponding Secretary to publish a notice in the county papers urging ministers to press the claims of the Society before their congregations, and to take up collections and forward the same to the District Society.

The consideration of the third resolution was postponed to the next meeting.

Gen. Bradley read the following tribute to Gen. James Gillam, deceased:

The Committee appointed by the President of the Abbeville District Bible Society to prepare a memorial and resolutions in regard to the late Federal James Gillam, would respectfully present the following:

General James Gillam of Abbeville County, S. C., died at his residence in Greenwood, July the 28th, 1878, in the eighty-eighth year of his age. He was long a member and a ruling elder of the Rock church. He was also for more than thirty years President of the Greenwood Bible Society, Auxiliary to the Abbeville District Bible Society.

Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God in his Allwise Providence, by death, to remove from our midst our venerable and beloved brother General James Gillam who for many years has been President of the Greenwood Bible Society, and was a member of the Abbeville District Bible Society, and an unflinching advocate of the Bible cause throughout our land. Therefore,

*Resolved*, 1. That we recognize the hand of God in the death of this esteemed and worthy member of the Bible Society, and bow with reverence and submission to his holy will.

*Resolved* 2. That we readily and cheerfully testify to the zeal and liberality of our deceased brother in behalf of the Bible cause. We also commend his example to all who have any means and are disposed to cooperate in the great and good work of supplying the people in our own country and those in foreign lands with the word of God.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN McLEES, Chairman.

The President called Mr. Wardlaw to the Chair and then read the following tribute to the memory of the late Hon. Thos. C. Perrin:

RESOLUTION TO THE DEATH OF HON. THOS. C. PERRIN.

*Resolved*, That a page in the record of the Abbeville District Bible Society be set apart in memory of the Hon. Thomas C. Perrin, deceased; on which shall be inscribed his name with the dates of his birth and death, when he became a member of this Society, the offices in which he served, with the time of service.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ABOVE RESOLUTION.

ABBEVILLE S. C., July 28, 1880.

The committee to whom was referred the resolution to submit a memorial in relation to the death of the late Thomas C. Perrin ask leave to report:

That though two annual meetings have passed by, the mention of his name presents him before us as but of yesterday. Were the loss of such men as he, felt as keenly after the lapse of years, as at first, life would be filled with abiding affliction. Time however soothes the pain, and substitutes for it a tender regret.

Unmeaning eulogy is often an offence, and in the case of the deceased would be against good sense and propriety. All who knew him however will recognize as a marked trait of his life and character, general usefulness, more valuable than erratic mental power. This quality he exhibited by a steady and conscientious discharge of the numerous and oftentimes weighty duties placed upon him by his countrymen, or rendered necessary by the exigencies of his relations in private life.

He became a member of this Bible Society at the annual meeting in July A. D. 18—, serving in the different offices of the Society, and was elected president at the annual meeting in July A. D. 18—, which office he filled until his death.

He has finished his day, and as a good servant has done his work as member and officer of this Society. Need it be said he has secured a kind remembrance in the hearts of the members—which if living he would love so well—until