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BIBLE KNOWLEDGE A SCARCE ARTICLE

IGNORANCE OF THE SCRIPTURES WOEFULLY PREVALENT.

Facts Given in Evidence of Great Lack of Knowledge of Biblical Mat- ters—Other News Items.

Wilkinsville, Jan. 19.—We took occasion in our last letter to refer to Bible reading and how little of it is done by the average citizen. This neglect is deplorable in the extreme as we might show by some data before us which we take as excerpts from Rev. E. E. Gillespie as published in the *Yorkville Enquirer* of the 12th instant:

Prevalent Ignorance of the Bible

Do the facts warrant the statement that there is a widespread ignorance of the word of God? We would gladly answer in the negative if we could, but investigations reveal such superficial and inaccurate knowledge of the Scriptures and such appalling ignorance of the simple facts and historical events of the Bible as to fully justify the assertion. An educational institution noted for the prominence given to the Bible in its curriculum, included in its entrance examination last year a few simple questions on the English Bible. One hundred young men averaging 19 years of age stood the examination. More than 75 per cent of them had attended Sunday school an average of six years. Thirty-five per cent came from homes in which family worship was observed. In intelligence and advantages they would compare favorably with the youth of our country. The following startling facts were revealed and given out by the professor conducting the examination. Only fifty-five were able to name any five books of the Old Testament, and only thirty-five of these could tell the subject or leading actor in the five books named. One gave as five books of Isiac, Peater, Paul; another, "Genes-Isiac, Peter, Paul," another, "Genes-Isiac, Luke, Matthew, Mark, John, and another, "I & II Judges, I & II Ruth, Galatians, Jacob and Saul." They were asked to give the first and fifth commandments. Seventy-four missed the first and eighty-four the fifth. Only sixty-nine could tell who were saved from the flood, and twenty-five only, knew who tried to save Sodom and Gomorrah, and not one was able to tell who lost his life on Mt. Gilboa. Some of the guesses at the last question were, "Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Aaron and Jesus." The question was asked, "What great event in the history of God's people happened at the Red Sea? At Mt. Sinai? At Jericho?" Only fifty-eight knew the first thirty-five the second and twenty-three the third. The guesses revealed ignorance of both events and Biblical geography, for example, "The ark rested on Mt. Sinai." "Mt. Sinai was the promised land." "Moses was tempted there by the devil." "The greatest sermon ever preached was preached on Mt. Sinai." "Abraham offered up Isaac there." "5,000 people were fed there." "Moses died there." Only seventeen knew who built the tabernacle and only twenty-seven had any clear idea of the temple. No one knew how the northern and southern kingdoms ended. Only thirty-five could give an intelligent account of any two important events in the life of Christ, twenty-five knew something about Peter, but only one could correctly place Bartimaeus. Just two were able to name the Pauline epistles in their New Testament order. One of the best attempts of the nine-ty-eight who failed was, "Romans, I & II Corinthians, Ephesians, Colosians, Galatians, Hebrews, I & II Peter, I, II & III James, John and Jude."

We have the Bible in our homes and we read much about it. But is it not a fact as revealed by the test given, that while our children may be well informed on other books and subjects, yet too often they are woefully ignorant of the Book of Books?

Further on Mr. Gillespie says: The wonderful circulation of the Bible would not itself command this book to parents as worthy of a place in the training of their children. It stands on its merit. It speaks to us of the great problems of life in a manner no other book can approach. Whence came I, why exist I, whether am I going, have been the profound questions that have claimed the attention of the men of thought in all ages. The only consistent and satisfactory answer is found in this book. How sublimely simple is its account of man's origin!" "So God created man in His own image, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." How clearly stated is man's purpose here below! "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." How succinctly expressed is man's destiny! "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." This is not the place for an inductive study of the Bible, revealing all its liberty, moral and spiritual beauty and value to the child of every home. Let us take the testimony of men whose opinion of other books we would not question. John Quincy Adams: "For years I have read my Bible through once a year. I read it an hour every morning, as the best way to begin the day. In whatever light we regard it—of morality, revelation, or history—it is a valuable mine of knowledge and virtue." Gladstone said: "I have served my

country faithfully because I have served my God so faithfully. There is nothing that makes a man brave and patriotic and faithful like a constant study of this old Book." Queen Victoria in sending a Bible to an Indian prince said: "Tell the prince that this Book is really the secret of all England's power and prosperity." Daniel Webster said: "From the time I learned to lisp verses of Scripture at my father's knee there has been my daily study. If there be anything in my style or thought to be commended, the credit is due to my parents' giving me an early love for the Bible." Sir Isaac Newton: "The Scriptures of God are the most sublime philosophy." Charles Dudley Warner: "A fair knowledge of the Bible is in itself almost a liberal education, and ignorance of it is a most serious disadvantage to the student." Ruskin said: "I attribute all my vigor of thought and expression to the fact that my mother taught me the Bible, and especially that she made me learn the first eight chapters of Proverbs." Sir Walter Scott, just before his death, said to his son-in-law, Mr. Lockhart: "Read to me." "From what book shall I read?" he asked. "The Bible," answered the dying man; "there is but one book." To these strong endorsements of the Bible, we all give our most hearty assent. Should not this pre-eminence of the Bible and its acknowledged supremacy among books constrain parents to give their children an accurate and comprehensive knowledge of its contents?

Major Thomas J. Bell, who was a prominent member of the Yorkville bar and a first-class criminal lawyer, told the writer that the Bible was the best law book in his library. He said: "When I can hang an argument on the teaching of the Bible before an intelligent jury I can always win my case. Without it I sometimes encounter very serious doubts."

Those having cotton on hand are not troubling themselves about the low price. One might spend several hours with a lot of farmers and never hear the cotton question mentioned. Those who are going to sell will sell any way and those who are not won't.

Mr. L. M. Hartford, of Spartanburg, was among his lower Cherokee friends last week.

Miss Maud Blackwell spent last Friday with Mrs. J. L. S. and family.

There are several people in this community who have yet to move to their new homes and farms.

Mr. W. T. Osment has moved to Esquire C. P. Huggins' near Ararat.

Several of the colored people have moved over on the York side of the river.

One good day of real life is better than a century of suspended animation.

Infancy in its time is very good, but to remain an infant through life is a great misfortune.

It's better not to be born at all than not to be born again.

A faith that won't trust God will bear watching in civil contracts.

The most dangerous force in the affairs of men is a fortune with no character behind it.

There is not so much in the success of life as the success of living.

Contentment don't consist so much in adding fuel as in taking away the fire.

Robbie Wilkes has answered our miller's question—5-5 bushels of corn will furnish 5 bushels of meal after paying one-tenth for toll.

Here is another, try it:

A plank (length not given) is 15 inches wide at one end and 9 inches at the other. It's required to cut it in two so that each end will contain the same amount of lumber. How wide is the plank when it must be sawed? Give the rule, please.

Rev. Mr. Boozer preached at Salem last Sabbath. Owing to the river being too high to ferry none of the York county people got over. He will preach there again on the 3rd Sabbath in February.

Experience has taught other towns that sewerage properly installed decreases sickness and lowers the death rate. Surely no one can oppose a sewerage system for this reason.

It enhances the value of property, makes a town more desirable to live in, creates business, and gives employment to the laborer. Can this be the cause for opposing the issue of bonds?

The real estate owner pays the bulk of the taxes required to pay interest on the bonds. Does he wish his property to deteriorate in value for the sake of saving the few mills he would have to pay in consideration of benefits he would receive? Surely not. I hardly think any property owner would be so short sighted.

Can it be that anyone who pays only a poll tax, and perhaps a personal property tax, would oppose a bond issue, when the cost to him is so small and the general benefit so great? I hardly think so?

Then why opposition? Can any one give a good reason why he should oppose a measure that will tend so much towards upbuilding his town and put money in circulation where those who need it can earn it. The real estate owner is like "Jones he pays the freight." So let us have it and no kicking.

good time to tell something about him and a lesson he learned in early life which may account for his successful business career. He came home from the war a poor boy with nothing but his honor, but chock full of grit. He began business first on the farm and then he went into the tanning, shoe and harness making business. In each of these he was successful. He then married an estimable lady, Miss Nancy Scoggins, who is and has been an ideal helpmate in the fullest meaning of the word. He worked hard, managed well and laid up money, buying land and improving the same as his means would admit of. He was generous and ever ready to help the poor and distressed when their needs were presented to him and his means would admit of it.

Behind him stood men with money who seeing his determination to make something of himself offered him any assistance he needed.

In his neighborhood lived a "no-count" kind of a man by the name of Lige Elders, whose family were badly in need of food and clothing. His excuse for their destitution was that he (Lige) could get no work to do.

Mr. Wilkerson gave him a bushel of corn and told him it would make bread for his family till he (Lige) could find work somewhere.

Time passed on but Lige found no work (or rather no work found Lige). Mr. Wilkerson told Lige he didn't particularly need the rails but if he would split him 1,800 rails he would pay him 50 cents per hundred. Lige told him it was a trade and took his maul, axe and wedge and went off as if to make the rails. Every day or two he would call on Mr. Wilkerson and report so many rails made and get his pay for them. Every now and then when he found Mr. Wilkerson busy he would ask him to come and see how he was getting along making the rails. But Mr. Wilkerson told him to go ahead and when he finished the job he would go and count the rails and pay him. After so long a time (about long enough for him to have finished the job) Lige went to the shop where Mr. Wilkerson was at work and set round waiting for him to get into a job he couldn't leave right well, then he asked him to go and count the rails and they could see their settlement.

Mr. Wilkerson asked him if he was doing making the rails and Lige told him he was. Mr. Wilkerson told him for he couldn't go then and paid him for 1,800 rails, \$9.00, and Lige went off.

Some days after that Mr. Wilkerson went and counted the rails and there were only 200 or 250 small splinters of rails unfit for anything but firewood.

Mr. W. B. Jenkins, the genial representative of the Cincinnati Cordage and Paper Co., whose headquarters are in Louisville, spent yesterday in the city. Mr. Jenkins is well known by many of our people, having spent the week here when the State Press Association was here last year.

Plans are being considered for the construction of a telephone line into the Macedonia neighborhood. Telephones are most convenient things and when this line is completed we can communicate with "the brethren which are in all Macedonia; but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more."

The third Faculty Concert of Limestone College was given last night in the college auditorium, under the direction of Mr. Henry Foote Perrin, director of music at the college, who was assisted by Misses Higley, Dew and Farr. Quite a number of the music-lovers of Gaffney went down and spent an enjoyable evening.

I have heard that in all probability there is a good reason to oppose a measure that is for the benefit of the whole town? A measure that is intended to safeguard the health of all who live in or near the town?

Experience has taught other towns that sewerage properly installed decreases sickness and lowers the death rate. Surely no one can oppose a sewerage system for this reason.

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The real estate owner pays the bulk of the taxes required to pay interest on the bonds. Does he wish his property to deteriorate in value for the sake of saving the few mills he would have to pay in consideration of benefits he would receive? Surely not. I hardly think any property owner would be so short sighted.

Can it be that anyone who pays only a poll tax, and perhaps a personal property tax, would oppose a bond issue, when the cost to him is so small and the general benefit so great? I hardly think so?

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