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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

REV. J. F. B. MAYS, D. D.,

AT AN

Educational Convention,

HELD BY THE BAPTISTS OF EAST TENNESSEE,

AT

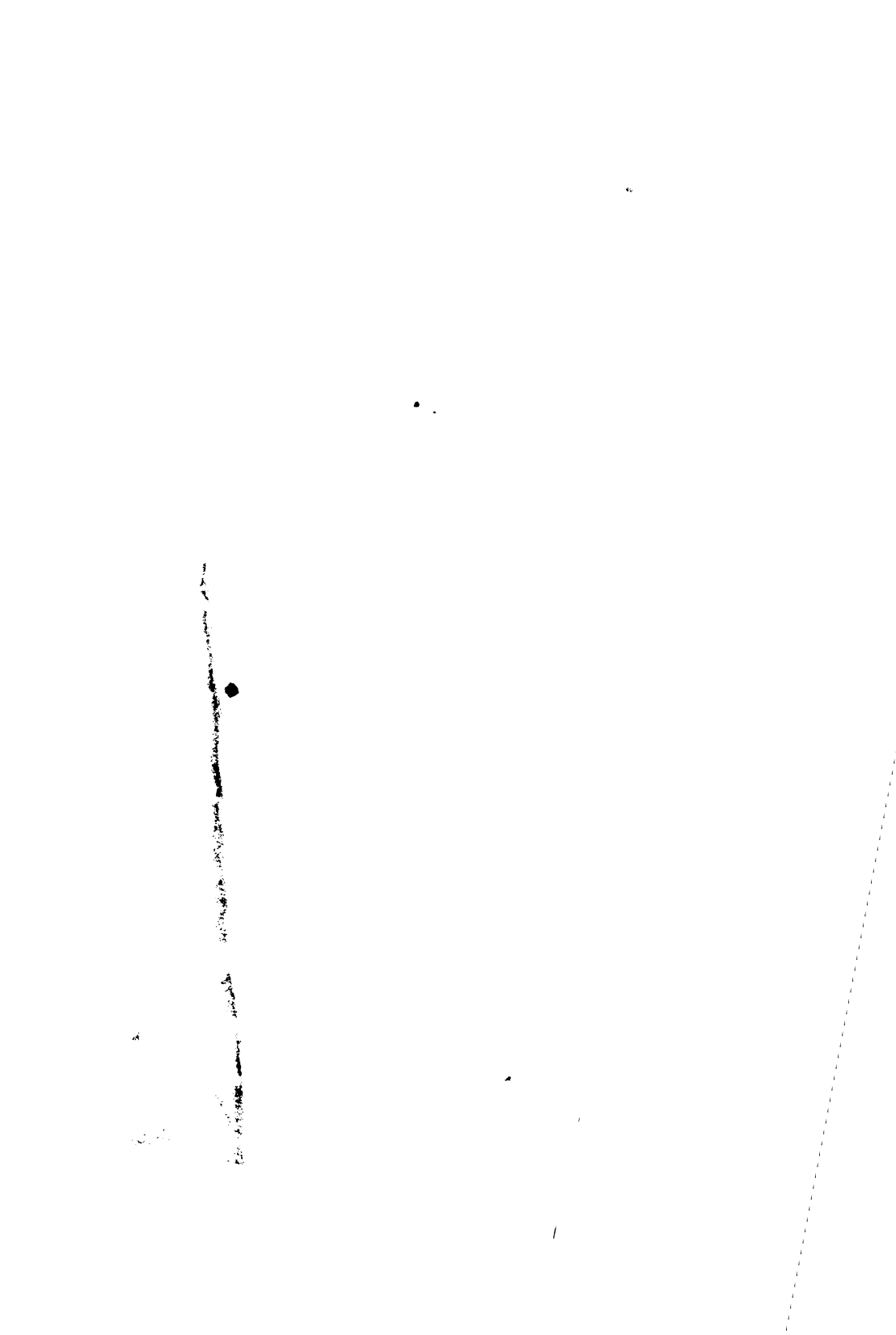
MOSSY CREEK,

ON

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 1873.

KNOXVILLE, TENN.:

PRINTED AT THE CHRONICLE STEAM JOB PRINTING OFFICE.
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ADDRESS.

There was a time when the plague was emptying one of the cities of France of its inhabitants, and Dr. Guyon flew to the rescue and confronted the monster, dissecting one after another of the subjects, making discoveries as to the cause of the plague and its remedies, until he found the secret. He then threw his notes into a vessel of vinegar and died. Another took his notes, and by their use, the plague was stayed. So, my brethren, I appear before you in behalf of others; yes, of generations who are to act their part on life's broad stage in the centuries yet to come; and the question as to whether they shall or shall not know the causes whose effects shall then appear, is not for me to determine.

The spirit of an ancient seer seems to gather upon me, and I feel sublimely sad as I look out upon the field of golden grain and think of the sharp sickle that God has placed in our hands, bidding us gather sheaves for granaries in the skies.

God, in his providence, has assembled us to-day for the purpose of starting influences that shall determine the destinies of men to the remotest ages. Your speaker will doubtless be gathered to our father's before there shall have been completed the great work whose picture is inscribed upon the tablets of his heart.

With these remarks, we come directly to our subject, which is, "The Necessity of Denominational Education."

Under this general head of Necessity, let me say, we owe it to our Lord to work for him as though there were none to bow the knee but ourselves, and to press our claims upon the children of men as though the whole world lay in the region and shadow of death except ourselves. The most effectual means of staying the tide of progress is to lie supinely on our backs and say, "others will do the work." Shall others sing our songs of redemption? Shall others wear our crowns and

white robes? Shall others strike our golden harps to the swell of symphonies and wild hallelujahs that roll around the throne of God? God forbid; but "let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us," inscribing upon our standard, "The world for Jesus." And in order to accomplish this end, we must become the educators of the world.

The Baptist denomination numbers about one and a half millions more than any other so-called protestants (though we are not protestants), save the State establishments, who take in the whole undigested lump of humanity now upon the earth. We are composed of none but those who have publicly professed to have hope in Jesus. And since love is the most powerful motive to work, we feel that no sacrifice is too great to be made for the amelioration of our people and the establishment of Messiah's reign upon the earth.

God, in his providence, has forced us to one of two alternatives, viz: to educate our children ourselves, or let others do it for us. While it is probably true that there is more Baptist money pouring into the treasuries of our States, for the support of State schools and all other State interests than any other one organization of Christians, and while it is probably true that our representation is more meagre in the Faculties of the State schools than any other denomination, yet circumstances force us to have our own schools, in order to be consistent with ourselves, as the authors of soul liberty and the foes to established religion. And, first of all, let me say, it is ruinous to our cause to patronise other schools; because, first of all, there is never a sufficient amount of Baptist representation in the Faculties to give any, not even the remotest tinge of our own peculiarities, in said schools, and it is during the college days of our young men that their character and mental bias is formed. Secondly, we sustain the heaviest possible loss in a numerical point of view, because it is a law almost universal that when our young men go to other than Baptist schools, they sooner or later join other than Baptist churches. Being cultivated in mind and manners, they carry off very many of their family and relatives with all their social, financial, and intellectual strength. Thus there is often no end to the loss we sustain in sending off one single boy to

a college not under our control. We only appeal to our brethren to set down the list of governors, congressmen, judges, eminent divines, United States senators, presidents of colleges, railroads and banks, all of Baptist ancestry, but irretrievably lost to the denomination, for want of zeal in education. And while it is true that we, as a denomination, have done more for liberty of conscience than any other people on the earth, and while it is also true that we have, according to the statistical tables, more schools than any other denomination, it is still true that we lose more by our intense liberalism, and by sending off our children to other schools than our own, than any other denomination at all. Such men as Rev. James H. Thornwell and Dr. Dabney, the ablest divines, logicians, and metaphysicians in the Presbyterian Church, were the sons of devoted Baptist mothers. These men, who were brought, in the days of their youth, from the faith of their mothers to that of Presbyterianism, were lost to the denomination because they were not sent to Baptist schools; and that mighty influence that will, in all probability, be felt for centuries, is all lost to the denomination on account of indifference to these things.

But, for our encouragement, let us remember the inducements found in the fact that education is a kind of self-generating system; that every man loves, with child-like fondness, his alma mater; consequently, every graduate becomes a patron and friend to the school giving him his diploma. Again, the said graduate may, himself, build another college, or at some future day, fill a chair in the faculty of his own alma mater, or endow a professorship in it, or some other school. Adoniram Judson graduated at Brown University, and under his and Luther Rice's influence, the Columbian College, and the college of that Niobe of schools, and a splendid theological seminary, turning out about eighty-five graduates annually, with their boundless influence, have appeared as witnesses for this last point in my argument.

Another means of strength, in self-perpetuity, is an exalted standard of scholarship. To be A. M. from the University of Virginia is a passport to honor and to a lucrative position; for, in the eyes of lettered men, it signifies more than fifty diplomas from the common colleges of the country. The A.

M. men of the University of Virginia are eagerly sought to fill important places.

But let me call your attention more particularly to the fact that in proportion to the elevation and universality of our culture, so is our strength; for it is a fact that knowledge is power. This fact is intensified when we modify it by the thought that mental discipline, accompanied by knowledge, is power, in truth and verity. Let us exemplify this remark by facts. Aristotle studied in Athens about twenty years, most of the time under Plato, and so powerful were his writings that for nearly two thousand years his sway over mind was almost despotic. Even in the dark ages, when the lamp to the feet of learning was almost extinguished, then in the Moslem capitals of Bagdad and Cordova, the philosophy of Aristotle was encouraged and his works diligently studied. We need not be surprised at this when we remember that he created, so to speak, the science of logic, inductive philosophy, and comparative anatomy. This great schoolmaster taught and drilled the mind of Alexander the Great, who shattered, like a potter's vessel, the empires of the earth, and united them again in one harmonious whole. And no student of history, I opine, will deny that the conquest of Alexander did more for civilization and the spread of Christianity than any other event of ancient or modern times. It was, in a remote way, through his instrumentality that Ptolemy Philadelphus founded the Alexandrian library, and through his instrumentality that the Alexandrian schools were founded; those schools which were illuminated by the genius of Philo the Jew, who expounded the philosophy of Aristotle, and the pious wisdom of Simon the Just, who closed, as some have told us, the Old Testament canon. Yes, it was the fires of Aristotle's genius flashing through the veins of Alexander, that caused him to take up the meshes of the net of Greek civilization lying on the edges of the Asiatic shore, and spread them upon the track of his campaigns. Through him the Greek became the dominant language of civilization. Through his instrumentality the proud cities of Antioch and Alexandria reared their gilded forms amid the effulgent glories and rainbow blendings of art, science and letters. Marvel not, my hearers, at the wisdom of the Roman, when he exclaims, "*Facet per alium, facet per se,*" for to-day the grand

principles of the Peripatetic philosophy have brought forth and nourished the schools of the earth; for, of Aristotle it is pre-eminently true, what has been so beautifully said of the ancients in general,—

“The great of old,
The dead but sceptered sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.”

The war between France and Prussia is still another illustration of the great truth for which I am contending—an educated people are a powerful people. An eloquent and patriotic Frenchman, with, as I suppose, the feelings of the great Marius while sitting upon the ruins of Carthage, has said, in reference to the education of his countrymen, “The only power that makes a nation invincible is *intellectual and moral power*.” He saw, in dark review, pass before him, almost half a million of uneducated people, who had to settle by the arbitraments of war, the destinies of his beautiful country. It was an army of ignorant men confronting the schoolmasters of the civilized world. His heart must have grown sick when he saw the French schoolmasters receive the pay of day laborers, for he knew it would drive the culture and the native intellect of the nation to other employments, and it took no wild sweep of fancy to draw the contrast between the army with which the first Napoleon shattered the thrones of Europe, and the Liliputian horde that crouched at the feet of the Prussian army and surrendered their flags like women and children. The humblest capacity imaginable among cultured men, would know to a mathematical certainty what would be the result of a conflict between two such peoples, if he could but look at the system of Prussian education, as compared with that of France. For Prussia has 27,000 elementary schools and over 43,000 teachers, and 3,000,000 scholars in these schools; she has 126 schools expressly for teachers, 361 gymnasia and high schools, 10 universities, and about 8,000 students in attendance, receiving instruction from 816 professors; she then has 175 special schools, such as navy and army schools, &c. Thus, under the best educational system upon the earth, the great Bismark has raised Prussia from the fifth to the first rank among the European States. If God requires us to learn even from the ant to be wise, let us who have gathered here to-

day, look at Prussia and learn lessons of wisdom for the greater glory of God.

If possible, we have another example more convincing, and it is the power of the church of Rome. "All the European universities were founded either by religious princes, or by bishops or priests. The famous University of Paris dates its origin from the time of Charlemagne, when Alcuin the monk, struggling against ignorance, formed the design of making France a Christian Athens. Here a Budæus, a Cassaubon, a Grenan, a Rollin, a Coffin taught; and here were formed an Abelard, an Amyot, a De Thou, and a Boileau. In England, Cambridge produced a Newton, the discoverer of the binomial theorem and differential calculus, by which to calculate the area of curves, and to solve problems which before were insoluble; he, too, gave the world what light it has on the principles of gravitation; he also discovered that light consists of rays of different refrangibility. The mind of Newton gave science an impetus that has accelerated with the sweep of time. But we owe to the papal hierarchy, Glasgow and Edinborough, in Scotland; Leipsic, Jena and Lubingen, in Germany; Leyden, Utricht and Louvain, in the Netherlands; Gandia, Alcola, and Salamanca, in Spain. But time fails to allow a category of their schools, and the great men educated therein.

But I deem it of great moment to press my illustration, that education is the secret of power. Then let me direct your most serious attention to a fact, whose potency is incomprehensible. The papal hierarchy has had a despotic sway over the realms of civilization for about fifteen hundred years, by an incomparable vigilance and energy in the line of education; for they seldom fail to make a papist out of each boy and girl receiving their instruction. It was in 1521, when Luther was confronting the diet of Worms for liberty of conscience, that Ignatius Loyola wheeled into being the order of Jesuits, who, by their incomparable system of education, snatched the falling papacy from the yawning chasm threatening to engulf it. In about two centuries, the order numbered over eight hundred schools, whose standard of culture was so elevated as to command the patronage and respect of all classes of men. The already existing universities and great men of the day were partially seized with the fire of their zeal. It has been said that the missionary spirit contributed to the

discovery of our continent; yes, the self-same spirit that developed the bloody scenes of St. Bartholomew's day, the banishment of three hundred thousand Huguenots, and the revocation of the edict of Nantz. Yet, the man who gave to Castile and Leon a new world, was full of high religious aspiration. On reaching the shores he had so patiently sought, he kneeled and kissed the ground. Their own Champlain declared that the object of a Christian king, in extending his empire, should be to subdue its inhabitants to the sway of Jesus Christ. That same Providence that superintended the selling, imprisonment and deliverance of Joseph, the benefactor of Egypt and the children of Jacob; that same Providence that superintended the betrayal and crucifixion of our Lord, the imprisonment of Paul, and the exile of John, teaches us that God can subsidize the empire of darkness to the reign of his Son, and at the same time teach us, by the example of our foes, to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Jesus rebukes our stupor by telling us, "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." The time was when the motto of the papacy was the motto I would have to be our's to-day, "The world for Jesus;" and in order to that end, they were represented in peace and war; by letters and by arts; in every department of civilization and barbarism; by brawny men in canals and ditches; and by kings upon their thrones. Does Pope Julius II. desire to see St. Peter's Cathedral at Rome? Then Bramanta, his architect, presents him with a plan. Does the structure continue a hundred and twenty years, and Bramanta die? Then the papacy has a Raphael, a mighty painter and architect, ready to the hand. Is he summoned "to that bourne from whence no traveler returns?" Michael Angelo stands ready to take his place. Does the Church of Rome desire a learned and a skillful artificer to unroll the manuscripts of Herculeum? Then a Barthelemi is at hand. Or the antiquities of Rome and Italy brought clearly to the light? Then Flavio, the author of "Rome Triumphant" and of "Rome Restored," is at hand. Is a concordance of the Scriptures demanded? Hugo de St. Charo presents it in 1244. Thus every department of life was subsidized to the one single aim of making all the human family papists, and of making all the departments in government, whether in trade and finance, navy and army, legislation, labor of body and of mind,

all headed by men who had been trained for the papal dominion. I commend to you their sagacity and their zeal, which, like the tempestuous winds of winter, makes itself felt and seeks admittance everywhere. In your theological dogmas, you are *wrong*, or else you are *right*. If wrong, you owe it to God and man to abandon the error as soon as possible. But if right, *guided by the spirit of God and love for his Son*, you need not fear to press your claims upon a fallen universe with too much zeal. Lift up your eyes upon earth's deluded millions, whispering peace, when God has sworn there is no peace. Behold the darkness, the obscurity, and the difficulty interlacing their pathway to the tomb, while you withhold the torch of light. Those sun-kissed hills and balmy vales, where blithesome birds so sweetly sing, are pressed with sorrow's feet, and moistened with her tears. Those cloud-capped towers, gorgeous palaces and solemn temples, of which Shakspeare sang, echo with the cry of earth's lost millions for the Bread of Life. Inasmuch, however, as all recognize the claims the world has upon us, I need not try to stir your missionary spirit save in pointing, in my feeble way, to the magnitude of the work before us.

And just here let me say, one of the most solemn problems at all mounts before us for consideration. If we have grown to the proportions with which to-day we are blessed, by using the literary tools of our ecclesiastical opponents, what think ye we will be in the next fifty years? I feel an abiding interest in the intellectual as well as the religious culture of my fellow beings, and can truthfully say, that wherever humanity pines in chains and gropes in the darkness of sin, there I feel to drop a tear, and for such I love to toil. And, while our ancestors have truly performed a noble work in the line of intellectual and religious culture, yet the magnitude of the work they have left undone surpasses all manner of delineation. I feel that we who have been so blessed, owe it to God and to our race to offer to posterity a school with advantages equal to any now upon the face of the earth. And in saying this, I am not forgetful of those splendid universities of Germany and of Great Britain too. My mind is distinctly clear that our people have pressed the utilitarian question beyond its proper bounds, resulting, necessarily, in criminal inaccuracy and meagre scholarship. I rejoice with you, my brethren, that already, even now, we have

some students who are subjecting the canons of interpretation to the severest scrutiny ; some applying themselves to the grammatical structure of language, some to lexicography, some to synonyms, and some to the history of versions ; while great masters are toiling in the science of man, or anthropology, in Biblical psychology, in the science of religion, in the science of language, the science of historical criticism, and in the bowels of the earth, at the *quasi* science of geology, or in the fields of comparative anatomy, testing the doctrine of the unity of the race, or among the stars, to synchronise the sweep of ages, thus trying to balance to the eye of reason, science and revelation. We must rise in our might, and rally around the standard of a sanctified scholarship, for the spread of the gospel and the glory of God.

“Through mutual intercourse and mutual aid,
Great deeds are done, and great discoveries made,
The wise, new wisdom on the wise bestow,
Whilst the lone thinker's thoughts come slight and slow.”

All our great deliverers from the shades of darkness and of wrong views of truth, have been men of vast erudition and marvellous mental discipline. And we have only to introduce to your acquaintance the father of transcendental philosophy, the man who lifted the thinking world from between the horns of the perilous dilemma constructed out of the philosophy of Lock, to make this remark hold true ; and if Lord Bacon is correct in saying the ultimatum of error is the place to find the truth, then we owe to Reid a debt of equal gratitude for the doctrines of the Scottish school of philosophy, pressed by Hume out of his brilliant ratiocinations. And when sensualism had become dominant in France, and mind viewed as correlative to the physiology of organism, and man's moral nature formally abolished, and mind had become a reflex of matter, and thought a secretion of the brain, then it was, that M. Cousin, the editor of “Proclus,” and Descart, the translator and interpreter of Plato, rescued from the oblivious wave of materialism that threatened to whelm his beautiful France forever.

And shall there be a pardon ready to the hand, if I trespass upon your time by telling of Bacon's *Novum Organum*, of the severely drilled genius of Arnauld and Nicole, the fathers of Port Royal logic, and of Pascal, whose beautiful training enabled him to hurl his barbed arrows of unrivaled wit, argument and elo-

quence upon the Jesuit phalanx, until they melted like snow before the sun. Page after page might be given, of the deeds of the great who have benefited mankind, after severe and prolonged application.

My brethren, the object of this meeting is to elevate the standard of education, and sound the tocsin, and make one more effort to educate the people, and give to the world great benefactors, in the persons of great educators. And when we look at our condition, calmly and with scrutiny, if we are patriots, or if we are Christians, we can but deeply deplore the state of things in our great country, this "land of the free and home of the brave." We read over the Report on Education from Tennessee, and find over 364,000 persons, over ten years of age, not able to read; then glance at the criminal docket, which reports 111 homicides annually; and worse still, she is reported as spending forty-three times more money for intoxicating drinks than for education; and out of 551 convicts in her penitentiary, 449 cannot read and write, and 500 have no trade at all. O what a picture!

And yet these drunken, ignorant criminals vote as heavily at the ballot box of this country, as the most cultivated, moral and far-seeing statesman of the land, as long as they are at liberty.

But we are told, the people will not read. Nor will the Arab of the desert, nor the African on the burning waste. The time was when our ancestors lived upon roots and acorns of the forest, and dressed with the skins of beasts. Yet old England and young America are doing more for the glory of God and the salvation of men than all the world beside.

When the star of liberty was about to sink in the pavillions of darkness, and hope for a season bid our country farewell, our great Washington was wont to say, "Give me the sons of West Augusta, and I will yet draw around me men who will raise their bleeding country from the dust and set her free." And may I humbly say, give to me the measures I have advocated to-day, and I will have a school in every neighborhood, an academy in every association, a Sunday-school in every church, a newspaper in every family, and one grand university for all Tennessee, yes, for all the South, whose graduates shall be missionaries and teachers through earth's remotest bounds, on account of the splendor of their erudition and the severity of their mental and moral discipline.