

LEAVES FROM AN  
UNPUBLISHED CHAPTER  
OF CHURCH HISTORY...



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Southern Baptist Seminary

Houston, Texas. First  
Baptist Church.

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“ And this I shall easily aver, though it may seem a hard saying, that the Spirit of God, who is purity itself, when he would reprove any fault severely, or but relate things done or said with indignation by others, abstains not from some words not civil at other times to be spoken. \* \* \* And thus I take it to be manifest, that indignation against men and their actions notoriously bad hath leave and authority oftentimes to utter such words and phrases, as in common talk were not so mannerly to use. \* \* \* Neither can religion receive any wound by disgrace thrown upon [this order of folk] since religion, and they surely were never in such amity. They rather are the men who have wounded religion, and their stripes must heal her. I might also tell them what Electra in Sophocles, a wise virgin, answered her wicked mother, who thought herself too violently reproved by her, the daughter :

‘Tis you that say it, not I, you do the deeds,  
And your ungodly deeds find me the words,’

If, therefore, they complain of libels, it is because they feel them to be right aimed.”—Milton, *Apology for Smectymnuus*.

“ Now, the statement of such facts as these is doubtless *injurious* to the character and standing of those who are guilty of such outrages on all religious decency, but such a statement is not ‘injurious or *defamatory*’ in the sense that it is *slandrous* or libellous, for it is strictly and literally *true*.”—Author of *Theodosia Ernes*; quoted approvingly by Dr. J. R. Graves in *Both Sides*.

“ Truth is severe.”—Archb’p. Trench, *Studies in the Gospels*.

## INTRODUCTION — BY THE EDITOR.

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THE quotation following is made from an *Address* to the Baptist Church, at Houston, given in full in the succeeding pages. This extract is so apposite to my purpose, and forms so perfect a counterpart to the presentation conveyed in that detail of facts, which goes to make up the body of this pamphlet, that I cannot do better than transcribe it here as a fitting introduction to what is to come after.

Says the speaker (Mr. Cushman): "Facts speak for themselves, brethren; it is plain to you all, and patent to the world, that men may live in revelling and wantonness—may be gamblers, and drunkards, and whoremongers, and—*murderers* too—may become a blot on society, and a by-word among all decent citizens, and still be members in 'good standing' and, full fellowship, of the Baptist Church, at Houston—provided only that they contribute liberally to the Church treasury, subscribe for Mr. Link's paper, and do nothing to incur the displeasure of those gentlemen who represent the *Texas Baptist Herald* and its interests in this Church. It must be equally patent to the most cursory observer, moreover, that for a brother to array himself in hostility to these interests, or in any way to incur the displeasure of those distinguished personages to whom the custody of them is confided, is to ensure his expulsion from the body forthwith. Even though he might have the zeal of a Luther, the piety of a Bunyan, or the benevolence of a Howard, this would avail nothing towards shielding him from becoming the victim of this atrocious contrivance of theirs for keeping up the authority of a clique, and for ensuring a loyal devotion to the *Texas Baptist Herald* and its interests."

This is, doubtless, a very heavy impeachment, but the reader who scans the following pages will soon find that it is fully sustained by a collocation of facts and incidents such as, I venture to affirm, have never before been chronicled in the records of any of the *Churches of Christ*.

The publication of these facts is made in the hope that it may be the means of bringing public opinion to bear on this institution in such a way as may compel it to make a vigorous effort towards adjusting itself more nearly to those requirements to which—whether it will or no, it must ever be held amenable; and also that it may be led to see that such an adjustment is absolutely necessary to the enjoyment of that measure of credit and confidence, on the part both of the Baptist denomination and of the public at large, without which it can hardly expect to flourish or even continue to exist.

If the writer may be permitted to introduce a remark having an aspect personal to himself, he would say that the publication of this series of "Leaves,

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etc.,” so far as a careful scrutiny of his own motives enables him to judge, has been prompted solely by a desire to promote the cause of Truth and Justice, and the advancement of Christ’s kingdom. He believes, too, that he can say as much for those with whom he has coöperated in the work. The *purity, peace and prosperity* of this Mouston Church are matters of his constant solicitude and of his most earnest prayers. The man does not live who has more at stake in the growth and spiritual prosperity of that Church than he has. And notwithstanding the canker that now feeds upon its vitals, and the atrophy that threatens to end in its dissolution and its death, he believes that there are still to be found among its membership, men and women who “denying ungodliness and worldly lusts,” are striving to “live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world,” and to “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” These, however, are cowed and overborne by a faction which they have not the courage to oppose. To their *faith* they fail to add “*virtue.*”

Moreover, much of that havoc through which the Church has become so abased, has been wrought through defection from “the truth as it is in Jesus,” on the part of those “who have the rule over it.” The doctrine of *justification by faith only*, is not believed by the pastor, and, therefore, not preached from the pulpit. Two out of the four deacons care little or nothing about our distinctively denominational principles, and one of them does not believe in them at all. These two are also quite willing that members should dance *round dances*, and attend balls and theatres if they be so minded. A third deacon who is now trying his hand as an *evangelist*, some months ago made himself quite conspicuous in the Church by his very pronounced hostility to dancing, and then forthwith, was found signaling his own agility at a dancing party, as one of the most active and joyous participants in the sport. And a year or two ago, when this same deacon took it into his head to get married, he hired a fiddler, and “tripped it on the light fantastic toe” during a great part of the night, and that with an ease and grace which his brother in the diaconate, E. L. Dennis, I have no doubt, would greatly admire, and perhaps envy; albeit, he might despair of ever emulating it, for it is certain “there is no music in [E. L. Dennis’] foot,” nor any thing “light” or “fantastic” about his pedal arrangements. He is the more inexcusable in this matter, therefore, inasmuch as nothing, but “a superfluity of naughtiness,” could prompt him to give his countenance and sanction to a lascivious pastime such as this, when, through a constitutional inaptitude, he was himself debarred from ever becoming a participant in it.

The present condition of affairs in this church, therefore, is not at all to be marvelled at. The truth is, there is an utter lack of *principle* among those that govern it. They act entirely from the impulse which the present exigency supplies, eagerly availing themselves of any expedient whatever that promises to tide them over the pending difficulty.\* If Mr. Link gets knocked down for tra-

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\*For example, on a by no means remote occasion, when a three-fourths vote—and that by ballot—was required to realize a cherished project of Mr. Link’s, one of his parishans, as it subsequently transpired, did, in violation of all law or precedent, slip no the box from ten to fifteen proxies! And again Mr. Link was triumphant.

ducing the christian character of an excellent lady, by charging her in the *Herald* with dancing when no dancing had been done, either by herself or anybody else, then these obsequious parasites make themselves actually offensive by their obtusive officiousness in denouncing *dancing*, and in the spirit of "Holy Willie" offering up objuratory prayers against those that practise it. The next thing you hear of them, however, they are either dancing themselves, or zealously exculpating those that do. Now, this kind of instability and waywardness, I say, is clearly indicative of a *lack of principle*. Thus it is, from this and kindred causes, that "many are weak and sickly among us, and many sleep."

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#### A WORD ABOUT PEACE.

I LEARN that Messrs. J. B. Link, O. C. Pope and Jonas Johnston, editors and proprietors of the *Texas Baptist Herald*, have all on a sudden become strangely enamored of peace, and are now signalizing the ardor of their zeal by the vehemency of their pleading for the boon they so much desiderate. As was, of course, to be expected, the pastor and deacons of the church, with dutiful docility, have promptly taken up the same cry, and are now faithfully laboring to imbue the minds of the plastic and the impressible, with a strong sentiment of aversion against all such measures as at all tend to compromise "Zion's" safety by impairing her peace. These credulous and obsequent ones are solemnly admonished to be on their guard against recognizing, much more against sanctioning, the employment of the press and the publication of pamphlets as a legitimate agency by which to make known the lapses of a privileged fraternity, or to expose the aberrant vagaries of "Zion's sons."

"Peace," forsooth! "What have ye to do with peace?" was Jehu's exclamation to the messengers of Joram,—“What have ye to do with peace so long as the whoredom of your mother Jezebel and her witcheries are so many?” And in like manner would I say to these men, “What have ye to do with peace,” so long as ye make the house of God a place of sanctuary for the profane, the mercenary, the profligate, and for whosoever loveth and maketh a lie! “What have ye to do with peace” so long as “those that bear the vessels of the Lord” are steeped in iniquity, “working mischief by a law and condemning the innocent” —though shielding the perfidious, the profligate and the profane? “What have ye to do with peace,” ye whose works tend only to pervert judgment and foster anarchy? But what “peace” is this for which ye clamor? It is the peace that permits the wolf to devour the sheep without let or hindrance from the shepherd— It is the peace that smiles benignantly while the enemy is breaking down the fences of the vineyard and laying waste the heritage of the Lord.—It is the peace that Judas ratified with a kiss, after he had bargained for “thirty pieces of silver;” it may still be had on as easy terms and be fairly trusted to yield its possessor as bountiful a reward as that the Traitor reaped. “The peace of God,” however, is bestowed far otherwise. The *divine* order is: “First pure, *then* peaceable.—James iii., 17.

HOUSTON, Texas, Nov. 7, 1878.

## LEAVES, &C.

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PRELIMINARY ADDRESS TO THE BAPTIST CHURCH OF HOUSTON, TEXAS. BY J. A. CUSHMAN.

MR. MODERATOR AND BRETHREN.

A DOCUMENT has been placed in my hands by one of the deacons of this Church purporting to give formal expression to the sentiments entertained by the body towards myself as one of its members. This missive sets forth that there has been "put in circulation a pamphlet having the name and endorsement of a member of this Church seeking by its false and slanderous charges and insinuations to bring contempt upon the Church and the cause of religion." Accordingly, I am further notified that it was—

"Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed whose duty it shall be to notify Bro. Cushman to withdraw certain charges published in said pamphlet over his name at our next regular Church meeting."

I have only to say, brethren, that as the "charges published in said pamphlet," over my name are *true*, I shall not withdraw them.

Had you not seen fit to *pre-judge* me as guilty of *falsehood* and *slander*—and I know not what besides, without going through the formality of an arraignment even, much less of a trial, I should at once have proceeded to furnish evidence in proof of the truth of every statement for which I can properly be held responsible. But now that I have been pronounced *guilty* without being tried, I cannot consent to belittle myself by adducing evidence in proof of my innocence. "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?" If it do, then it is a law utterly unworthy of respect from me, or of recognition by you. And yet, *before I have been heard*, and without being tried, I have been juridically condemned for having committed wicked deeds and spoken "false and slanderous" words.

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### AN EXPLANATORY NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

NOTWITHSTANDING that Mr. Cushman took the ground thus indicated, he had been careful, in order to be equipped for every contingency, to draw up a document in the form of an address to the church, of a character to meet every requisition that had been made upon him, so as to be available at once, in the event of his being placed in such an attitude as that he could, consistently with the maintenance of some degree of self-respect, consent to plead to the *charges pre-*

sently to be given. But no sooner was the matter brought up at the regular church conference, than it became apparent that the whole programme was to be changed. Major Crank, a keen long-headed lawyer, as well as a "praying member" of the church, made a short but very lucid argument, showing that "a greater mistake could not have been committed than for the church to characterize Bro. Cushman's statements as 'false and slanderous,' and then to require him to prove them true. Slanderous they might be," he said, "but, for aught we knew he might be able to prove that they were true. Why, Brother Moderator," continued the Major, "if we were to allow Brother Cushman to go into the proof of these statements, before he had got half through, every lady present would be compelled to get up and leave."\* etc., etc. It was thereupon resolved to set aside the "committee of three" and appoint one of *five*, whose duty it should be to get Brother Cushman to retract what he had published about the church. He was, therefore, neither then nor at any time subsequently, allowed to utter a single word in proof of the *truth* of the statements he had put forth in the pamphlet.

The committee of five met and reported, and the outcome of the whole thing was, that Brother Cushman was required to make recantation by signing a document, to be afterwards "published in all (sic) the leading Baptist papers of the State," expressive of his penitence for having published the pamphlet in question and promising never to do the like again. Rev. O. C. Pope, the gentleman known here as the "cursing parson," is said to have drawn up the *recantation*, but he had his labor in vain; Mr. Cushman refused to sign it, and, for his contumacy, was forthwith expelled from this holy fellowship.

After reading the "Defence" following the charges hereunto appended, the public will be able to judge for themselves how far the Baptist Church at Houston is entitled to plead its own *inherent sacredness* as a bar to animadversion and censure.

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#### CHARGES.

THE FOLLOWING is a copy of the charges to which the "*address*" that follows is an answer :

##### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, HOUSTON, TEXAS.

"Whereas, there has been published and put in circulation a pamphlet having the name and endorsement of a member of this Church, and by its false and slanderous charges and insinuations, seeking to bring great contempt upon the Church and the cause of religion;

"Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed whose duty it shall be to notify Bro. Cushman to withdraw certain charges published in said pamphlet over his name at our next regular Church meeting.

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\* This remark of the Major's shows that he had comprehended the situation exactly. He was mistaken, however, in supposing that anything would be said by the respondent that could by possibility tend to disconcert the ladies. For, as the reader will not fail to observe, he had carefully guarded against mooted any topic that could not, without the slightest breach of decorum, be freely discussed in the presence of the gentler sex.

1st. The Church request and require that Bro. Cushman give the names of the members who form the 'miserable clique' that has so long been dominant in the Church and state what are the 'atrocities' they have perpetrated on the Church.

2d. The Church request and require that Brother Cushman state what meaning he intended to convey by calling a committee of the Church a 'star-chamber committee,' and to furnish evidence that the Church granted indulgence to the patrons of the *Texas Baptist Herald*.

3d. The Church request and require that Bro. Cushman give the names of those brethren that are so often seen reeling on the streets drunk and getting into scrapes in gambling saloons; when was the last occurrence and before what court were they tried?"

Adopted July 17, 1878.

[Signed,]

GEO. H. BREAKER, Ch. Clerk.

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## THE RESPONDENT'S DEFENCE AGAINST THE FOREGOING CHARGES.

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### AN ADDRESS TO THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT HOUSTON.

MR. MODERATOR AND BRETHREN :

I MAY state at the outset, that in vindicating myself from the imputation of *slander* and *falsehood*, I shall take cognizance of nothing but the *pamphlet* and its averments. I shall abide by these, and not concern myself about other people's *interpretations* of what I have said.

Among other things, I wrote that, "despite the existence of this grim star chamber committee, such of the members as are friends to the *Herald*, and give liberally to the church, may, and do, commit every offence interdicted by the decalogue, with absolute impunity. Accordingly, it is no unusual thing for these favored brethren to be seen reeling about the streets drunk, getting into scrapes in gambling saloons, where deadly weapons are drawn and a fatal rencontre barely averted. Peace officers and the police courts alone have sufficed for quelling these deadly feuds and, by the arrest of the parties, preventing bloodshed. A case of precisely this character occurred a few weeks ago on a *Sunday* morning."

I cannot help saying that the demand that I should furnish *proof* of the truth of this statement wears very much of a pettifogging aspect. Why, sir, if it be demanded of me to put this general statement into a specific form, surely nothing more can be necessary, at least, among this community, than to say that for six or seven years past, Isaac Fitgood, Quintus Fillup, and Robert Jun u', have been, and that they still continue to be, members in full fellowship with this Church! Does anybody need to be told—does not everybody know—is anything more notorious than that these *brethren* are, and for years past

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\*The address, as prepared for the Church, gave the true names of the "brethren" referred to, but for obvious reasons it has been thought proper to substitute fictitious ones here. This has accordingly been done.

have been, as renowned for their profligacy as Sam Bass was for his brigandage, with this difference only, that Bass had a State, and almost a national fame, while that of our brethren is merely local.

As I am thus then to furnish, in proof of what everybody knows, the sort of evidence that would suffice for commanding the verdict of a jury, I shall not mention the cases of other members of the Baptist Church at Houston, who otherwise might appropriately enough be associated with these, and all be linked together in the same category of profligacy with the trinity of worthies already named. Lacking, moreover, the power to command the attendance of witnesses by civil process, I might, without this limitation, find myself confronted with obstacles which my resources, whether in time, labor, or money would be quite inadequate to surmount. Were it not for this, the three might easily be augmented to something like *thirty*.

Restricting myself then to these three, I proceed to state that on a certain Sunday morning Brother Isaac Fitgood had an altercation on the streets with a gentleman well known here as a prominent member of the public press, Dr. McBride. Brother Fitgood, being the aggressor, was fined a small amount in the Recorder's Court, with costs: and the Doctor, though arrested, I believe, was discharged. I will not mention in the presence of ladies some other and more revolting and degrading broils in which Brother Fitgood has figured, and which all readers of the local press were familiar with at the time. How he signaled himself by his drunkenness and profanity at our last municipal election, I suppose must be equally well known. How in about the middle of May last he was principal in a duel, and was on the ground at the appointed time to fight it, must be a matter of equal notoriety to all who are accustomed to scan the columns of our daily papers. How it is that despite all these immoralities he enjoys absolute immunity from church censure and "discipline," and is even petted and put on church committees is better known to you, Brother Moderator, and to the members of the Committee of Inquisition than to anybody else besides. These are questions into which I will not obtrude—from all such mysteries as pertaining to the ruling order, I reverently stand aloof.

If I have referred to only two or three incidents as illustrating the profligacy of the life our brother leads, you know, despite those airs of judicial reserve which pastor and deacons may now affect—you know, I say, and *they* know, that there is scarcely a month in the year, nay, scarcely a week in the month—I might almost say, scarcely a day in the week, that does not contribute its quota in elucidation of the fact of his unintermitting profligacy.\* You know, too, that this has been the condition of affairs to almost an equal degree for several years last past.

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\*While this and a good deal more may be true of Brother Fitgood, yet there is very much about his case to excite our sympathy and commiseration. There can be no question but that he has experienced many a hard struggle in trying to gain the mastery over his more evil impulses. He has one constitutional quality, moreover, that in my estimation comes near to being a positive virtue; he is honest and outspoken even to bluntness; and, with Wordsworth, I am free to confess, "I like an honest bluntness." He is not, and never can be, one of your long-visaged, strait-faced, sanctimonious hypocrites, who have no use for religion any further than they can

Brother Quintus Fillup, I am glad to believe, is become somewhat more *circumspect* when practising his debaucheries than he was wont to be some four or five years ago. There is less of that recklessness and abandonment which aforetime was so marked a feature in his conduct. But though less frequently seen staggering on the streets under the influence of liquor, still if familiar with his haunts, you will have no difficulty in finding him in a state of inebriety almost any night in the week after 9 or 10 o'clock. The chances are that while I am speaking, he forms one of a party sitting around a card table, in a cozy retreat at the back of the *Casino* saloon, on Congress street, playing "seven up" for drinks, and that an hour or two hence will find him kicking up a row at Otto Erichson's shooting gallery next door to the saloon, or in some other way annoying the proprietor of that popular resort.

Our brother, Robert Junius, has a record in vice not a whit inferior to that of brother Isaac Fitgood; of this fact, I take it, you are all well aware. He has been engaged to fight as many duels, been as often involved in disgraceful broils, and has even been a good many times more frequently drunk. I often see him myself in drinking saloons not by any means esteemed as the most reputable of their order. Some time last fall or winter—I believe it was—he got into an altercation with Mr. Dave Lubbock, in Holmes and Prindle's billiard saloon on Main street; I know, and can produce, a party who saw him as he was driven, all covered with blood, away from that resort of rogues and vagabonds, by "Hank Tully," the manager. On another occasion, when he was in a state of—at least, partial, intoxication, he drew a dagger or bowie-knife on a man with whom he was quarrelling in the bar-room of the same establishment, and was only prevented from committing a deadly assault by Holmes' drawing his six-shooter on him.

But besides demanding of me "the names of those brethren that are so often seen reeling on the streets drunk and getting into scrapes in gambling saloons," the Church propounds the question, and "request and require" that I answer it: "When was the last occurrence, and before what court were they tried?" I own I cannot give a direct categorical answer to this inquiry. For more than a week past, I have been too busy to read the proceedings of the police courts as published in the daily local papers; still less have I been able to inspect the records of those courts extending over the same period. All I can say with any degree

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make it serve as a cloak for their villany. He comes too, I suspect, of an heroic stock. At all events, I know that the Fitgoods were prominent among the Huguenot refugees who fled from France to England after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, towards the end of the seventeenth century. His father, too, was one of the grandest characters—one of the most devoted servants of God that ever set foot on the soil of Texas. And if, when the heart of the son began to turn lovingly towards his father's God, the germs of a holy principle had received that fostering influence which the hallowed fellowship of a living spiritual church would have supplied, the whole complexion of his life might have been entirely changed. And let us still hope and pray that He who will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax, may yet reveal to this erring brother the paths of righteousness and peace, and give him grace to walk in them —EDITOR.

of certainty is, that *since* the inquiry was submitted to me, brother Robert Junius has, as I learn, been twice convicted and fined for "drunkenness and disorderly conduct." It was the recorder's court before which he was tried and convicted. The latter of these convictions took place on last Wednesday, the 31st day of July. In the first of these two drunken scrapes he committed an assault on a Mr. Albrecht, the bar-tender, at his father's saloon on Preston street, and in the latter, on Mr. Chas. Tinsley, a well-known resident of this city. I understand the charge in each case to have been that of "drunkenness and disorderly conduct." For reasons given above, I am unable to say whether these were the "last occurrences" of the kind or not. [Some five months have elapsed since the foregoing was penned; and as the interval has not been lacking in incident of a kind to elucidate the moral complexion of brother Junius' "walk and conversation" as well as to reveal the "true inwardness" of things in the Church whose fellowship he adorns, I will here, for the edification of my readers, briefly recount some of his more recent doings.

After reading our first pamphlet, entitled "Leaves, etc.," Bro. Junius naturally felt some solicitude about his Church standing. He, in common with others, thought that, from very shame, the Church would at once try to purge itself of the dishonor which the toleration of such material in its fellowship must inevitably bring upon it. To block them out, however, at a game of this sort, so far as he was concerned, he determined to be beforehand with them, and wrote them a letter confessing that he had been remiss in his duties and promising to reform. Anything more cold or heartless in its tone can hardly be conceived of. It contained, however, two Latin words, "*mea culpa*". Now, this display of erudition so wrought on the mind of E. L. Dennis, a member of "The Board of Deacons," as he is wont to designate that august conclave, that he moved a resolution expressive of the pleasure and satisfaction with which the Church had received Bro. Junius' penitential epistle. Of course it passed without a dissentient voice. The simple spontaneity, too, of Brother Junius' conduct in penning this epistle, was thought by Mr. Dennis to have greatly enhanced its merits. For, of course, no *charge* had been brought against so exemplary a member of the body. The very tenderness of his conscience alone had prompted him to "write bitter things against" himself. It is pleasing also to remark that Brother Junius was not altogether forgetful of his vows. As showing that he was ever mindful of "Zion's" interests, the very next time he was out on the streets drunk, the thought came into his mind to call on Brother Fitgood for the purpose of giving him some religious counsel. Accordingly, walking into the office, with generous frankness he put out his hand and seized that of Brother Fitgood. He then became hortatory. "Brother Fitgood," says he, "you are — a backslider (*hic*) I say you are a backslider, and now, damn it (*hic*). I want you to confess." At this particular juncture, he espied the Rev. O. C. Pope coming along the street, and relaxing his grasp on Brother Fitgood, exclaimed, "here comes old Hicockalorum. I'll be damned if I don't make him come in." And at once seizing the reverend gentleman by the arm, he brought him into the office. He then proceeded with his pious purpose, and in explanation said: "Brother Pope (*hic*). I am trying to

get Ike to (hic) con-fess. He is a backslider just as I was (hic), and you know (hic)—you know I co'fessed. I did by g—d, didn't I Brother Pope? Then, damn it, let him confess, too." This must serve merely as a sample of what then transpired.

Well, after a pleasant reciprocation of amenities on the part of this most interesting trio, just as the managing editor of the *Texas Baptist Herald* was about to leave, Brother Junius struck up, "When shall we three meet again?" But it lacked his usual brilliancy of execution, owing to a certain thickness of voice produced by an attack of catarrh, from which he was suffering at the time Brother Pope went off musing, it may be, on the frailties of poor humanity, but reassured, no doubt, by the reflection that the interests of the *Herald* were well secured so long as it should remain under his supervision, and have whole-souled and enthusiastic patrons like these to back it.

Now, Brother Junius, it will be observed, is a professor of the healing art. But so satisfactory and salubrious was the condition of things in Houston in the middle of this last September, that Dr. Junius found he could, without the risk of detriment to the public health, gratify the generous impulses of his heart by leaving us for a time without his presence and going to Memphis, where he would give the benefit of his experience and his skill to the fever-stricken inhabitants of that afflicted city. Accordingly, he went, he saw, he—got drunk, and the fame of his exploits was soon bruited forth to the world by the journals of St. Louis, Chicago and Louisville on this wise:

#### "DISCHARGED FOR DRUNKENNESS."

"MEMPHIS, Oct. 3.—Dr. R. W. Mitchell, Medical Director of the Howard Association, this morning discharged from duty Dr. R. Junius, of Texas, for drunkenness."\*

This is his record in Memphis! And while he cannot possibly be acquitted of the charge of having proved traitorous to the claims of humanity as well as to professional honor, he would probably plead as a set off against this flagitiousness, the merit of having faithfully reflected the moral features of that "First Baptist Church at Houston," of which, for so long a time, he has been a zealous and devoted member and whose fellowship he still continues to adorn. I am afraid, too, that it might be unjust as well as cruel, to deny to him such measure of comfort as this reflection might serve to give him.

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\* In the *Texas Baptist Herald* of Nov. 28th, 1878, Rev. O. C. Pope, the editor, makes kind and fraternal reference to Dr. Robert Junius in these terms:

"Dr. Robert Junius called on us last week. He has just returned from Memphis, where he went to offer his services to those afflicted with the yellow fever."

"Just returned from Memphis," indeed! Why, Mr. Pope knew full well that the "doctor" had been driven out of the hospitals there seven or eight weeks previously; Everybody in Houston knew it, and Mr. Pope would be one of the first to hear it.

Now, as straws show which way the wind blows, so every reader of these pages will recognize in this paragraph an infallible indicator of the mendacity and brazen assurance that prompted its insertion in *Texas Baptist Herald*. The "doctor," no doubt, doled out some of his Memphis pelf in payment for the *Herald*; and hence, this puff. In any case, Dr. Junius may rest easy about his church relations. He is in "good standing and full fellowship" now.—EDITOR.

## ON CALLING WITNESSES.

I CAN hardly think you intend me to cite witnesses to testify to the truth of what I allege. Such a citation, indeed, would be not only proper but indispensable, did not the notoriety of the facts seem to supersede the necessity of such a mode of procedure. If, indeed, the parties implicated deny the truth of my statements, then in justice to myself, as well as in fairness to them, I should have to bring forward my witnesses. But I do not think these brethren will in any essential particular challenge the truth of what I have said.

As a general thing, the witnesses are men not at all dainty in their speech, and unless there were an absolute necessity for it, I should not care to cite them before you. They are not simply dramatic, but even realistic, in their mode of stating things. One of them would testify somewhat in this style: "Ike drove up to my house in a hack with —— sitting beside him. Says he, I want you to take a drive with us. Says I, I don't feel like taking a drive just at this time. Oh, hell, says Ike, get up, what are you afraid of, damn it? Says I, I am not afraid of anything, but where are you going, and what are you after? Oh, damn it, says he, get up and we'll let you into the secret of a bit of scandal in high life." That would be a part of the testimony of Mr. Alexander Erichson in regard to the duel business. If, however, it be your pleasure that the witnesses should be present, I will certainly procure their attendance.

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 THE STAR-CHAMBER COMMITTEE.

## ITS ACTS THE TRUE EXPONENTS OF ITS FUNCTIONS.

I AM taken to task for calling a committee of the Church a *star-chamber* committee. Whether the term was particularly well chosen is a point I will not now attempt to determine. We have had, within the last two years or so, three of that particular kind of committees that I had in my eye at the time. The last of the three differs from the other two only in this, that *it* is a standing committee, the others were not—they were merely casually appointed to meet a particular exigency. As their acts furnish the best exposition of their character, instead of higgling about a name, I will briefly recite some of their doings. This, if it does not justify the term employed for designating them, will serve, at least, to show what I meant by it, and in this way will best suffice for meeting the demand you make upon me in regard to it.

It was on March 1st, 1876, that the first of these committees was appointed. This is the Church's record in regard to this committee :

\* \* "Moved and carried that Brother Clark and deacons comprise a committee for to investigate standing of certain members of this Church." It may be well enough to say here, that Dr. Clark would have nothing to do with it, and that of the deacons, only Judge Noble and M. Borst would consent to act as "a committee for to investigate" the standing of members. I may state further that the mover of the resolution was J. B. Link, and that the immediate occasion for introducing it was a reference that had been made by one of the brethren to the case of a lewd woman, which seemed to call for prompt action on the part of the

Church. The understanding was, that the resolution contemplated her case *exclusively*, and that it was framed in this loose style in order to avoid the necessity of going into disagreeable and even repulsive details. Once armed with a resolution of this tenor, however, Mr. Link was not slow to make the most of the advantage which he thought its vague and indefinite terms would give him in trying his dexterity at throwing a lariat over Prof. Tovell, and then staking him out just where he wanted to get him. Accordingly, as if utterly oblivious of the case of the fallen sister, the committee as guided by Mr. Link, at once proceeded to cite the Professor before them as a party whose standing required their "investigation"—him and nobody else. For several months they labored hard to see if they could not fasten upon this brother "some charges against his Christian character," as they expressed it. But having worked unintermittingly, and with heart of grace, for five months, they failed to find anything to report against him. They were annoying and harrassing him all the time, but he refused to hold any correspondence with them until they would tell him what charges had been alleged against his Christian character; this, however, they would not do. To this day, therefore, neither he nor anybody else can tell what charges they were which they were trying to trump up against him. On August 2d, 1876, the Church called on them for their report; they had no report to make, and did not know when they would have, and were, therefore, discharged, as the record shows.

It would thus seem that the case of the lewd sister, flagrant as it was, had to yield to the urgency which demanded the concentration of all the committee's energies in ferreting out the delinquencies of Bro. Tovell; so that when asked, as they were, by the Moderator, whether they "had done anything in regard to Miss ——'s case;" they said they "had not"; and yet, as it immediately transpired, all the facts necessary for their action were within easy reach; for then and there, without the intervention of a committee at all, in reply to a general enquiry made by the Moderator, Mr. J. H. Martin, now one of the deacons, testified, "To my certain knowledge, Miss —— has been guilty of lewdness both before and since her baptism, and if Bro. Wilson were present [a young brother in the employ of the Wheeler & Wilson Sewing Machine Co.] I know he could testify to the same fact." Whereupon, as the Church records of the date Aug. 2d, 1876, show, it was "moved and carried that because of the gross unchristian conduct of Miss ——, the fellowship of this Church be withdrawn from her after this date." \*Would that the same measure had been meted out to all those men in the Church who are as notorious for their lewdness as this poor frail sister was.

The committee having thus proved a failure, Mr. Link, at a special Church meeting a few days afterwards, on the 15th of August, moved for the appointment of another, "to inquire whether Brother John Tovell has been guilty of

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\*If this erring sister had subscribed for the *Texas Baptist Herald*, and contributed a small amount towards Church expenses, I have not the slightest idea that she would ever have been molested in her ecclesiastical relations.—ED.

unchristian conduct worthy of discipline." Of this committee Mr. Link was chairman. Mr. Tovell treated this as he had done the former one. As a condition of holding any correspondence with it, he demanded to know what charges had been alleged against him, and who were his accusers. This demand was refused. On Nov. 1st, 1876 the committee made their report declaring that Mr. Tovell was guilty, and, unless he could make satisfactory explanations, ought to be turned out of the Church. The document had two signatures besides Mr. Link's. When the matter came up before the Church, Mr. Link proved to be the only accuser, and the only witness in the case. One of the members of the committee stated that it was entirely on the ground of Mr. Link's own declaration of Mr. Tovell's guilt, that he himself had signed the report. He was explicit, too, in stating to the Church that *not a single witness* had been called before the committee, and that neither he nor his fellow committeemen knew a syllable about the affair beyond what Mr. Link himself had told them.\* His scruples, however, about signing the report were overcome, partly by the confidence with which Mr. Link assured him that *he knew* the facts to be as he had stated them—and as they were set forth in the report which, as chairman, he had drawn up, and partly by the reflection that the committee's action was not final, but subject to reversal by the Church if, when the question came up on its merits, the evidence should fail to sustain the charges.

The accused, on the other hand, after exposing the flagitiousness of the proceedings that had been adopted against him, did then prove by receipts and other well authenticated documents, that Mr. Link's statements were in *every* particular FALSE—so much so, as Mr. Tovell then said to the Church, "that the father of lies himself never concocted a falser or a fouler calumny." The Church had no alternative, therefore, but to dismiss the whole affair and quash all the proceedings against this offending brother. Accordingly, the Church record of Nov. 29, 1876, has this entry—"Moved and carried that all the charges of committee regarding Brother John Tovell be dismissed."

Mr. Tovell was thus honorably acquitted; but what of the man that had thus traduced and calumniated him? He was not so much as even mildly rebuked. For "the king," you know, "can do no wrong." I risk nothing in saying that every man who honors the claims of truth and justice, must reprobate proceedings characterized by such atrocities as these, and especially so, as being perpetrated in the sacred name of Christ.

But the man who had had the temerity to denounce and expose Mr. Link's, unsound and heretical teachings on the subject of *justification*, of course, must be

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\*The following presentation having reference to another Church trial, furnishes a parallelism to this proceeding, so perfect and exact, that I cannot help transcribing it. "The charge is entertained, and when the time comes the prosecutor brings in the charge, the accuser himself furnishes the specification, and when the proof is called for, *the accuser testifies that his specification is correct*. So, in fact, the charge is the accuser's, the specification is the accuser's, and all the testimony brought forward to sustain both charge and specification, is the simple declaration of the accuser!" Rev. Dr. J. R. Graves' Defence, etc., as given in *Both Sides*. —EDITOR.

hunted down and silenced at all hazards. Accordingly, a new device was now hit upon. A year has passed away. Mr. Tovell is in peace with the church and he supposes that the church is at peace with him. But this pleasant illusion is speedily and even rudely dispelled. A letter from Dr. Carroll, of Waco, received about the middle of last November (1877) showed that Mr. J. H. Martin, a deacon of this church and a member of this star-chamber committee,\* had written to Bro. Carroll begging that he would inform the said Martin of any slips or lapses that Mr. Tovell might have been the subject of during the period, some seven or eight years ago, in which he was under Dr. Carroll's pastoral supervision. This information was demanded, you will observe, simply that it might be made use of for the glory of God, and the good of His church! Now, Dr. Carroll being both a Christian and a Gentleman, was indignant at such an application being made to *him*, and the more thoroughly to purge himself of even the most remote implication in a procedure so dastardly and mean, he immediately apprised Mr. Tovell of what was being done. This, however, was by no means a solitary case. These gentlemen of the Committee of Inquisition are too discreet to deny that letters of a like tenor were sent to other parties besides Dr. Carroll of Waco.

I will now mention one other proceeding that may fitly be adduced as tending to illustrate the character of this standing committee of inquisition.

A lady had been a member of this Church well on for thirty years. She was baptized into its fellowship in her very girlhood. Her activities had been of the most laborious and self denying character. She never intermitted in her efforts to advance its interests. Her purse-strings were always relaxed at the call for money, and her response was ever prompt to the call of duty. This lady in one of her communications to the local press—for she is endowed with a high order of literary ability—this lady, I say, chanced to make what perhaps might be regarded as a sneering allusion to the *Texas Baptist Herald*. She was at once "spotted." The Committee of Inquisition had their eye on her. Well, being about to remove her residence to the national Capital, she desired a letter of dismissal to another Church "of the same faith and order"—a thing as rare, it is to

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\*It is only justice to Mr. Martin to say that although he was thus directly implicated in this disreputable proceeding, he was by no means the chief agent in conducting it. He merely submitted to become the cat's paw with which the monkey might rake the roasted chestnuts out of the burning coals for its own special delectation. Nature, moreover, having denied to him the instincts, as Fortune has the education, of a gentleman, he is clearly an object of our pity far more than our blame. I have remarked it, however, as—if not a universal, at least, a very common occurrence, that a low type of intellect like his—according to some general law, it may be, of equilibrium of correlated forces, naturally links itself to moral qualities correspondingly despicable. I have observed, too, that among the infelicities incident to a nature thus compounded of mental imbecility and moral abjectness, a very prominent one is that servile aptitude that inevitably dooms its possessor to become the pliant tool of the intriguing and the crafty. Just as Shakspeare instructs us, 'tis the wont of slaves to take the mere "humors" of their masters for a warrant to commit vicarious crimes,

"And on the winking of authority,  
To understand a law."—King John, act iv.—EDITOR.

be hoped, as a black swan. At this juncture she was notified, as I understand it, by this committee or some of its members, that there might be objections to granting her a letter of dismissal. They alleged something she had done some two years ago or more, that they wanted her to repent of, etc. But she showed no inclination towards penitence, and a more direct application to the Church may, perhaps, have been somewhat delayed in consequence of this official menace. But one of the brethren who knew her worth and the high estimation in which she was held by all, excepting those in the *Herald* interest, determined to test the spirit and learn the mind of the Church, by moving that the usual letter be granted. The vote was unanimous for granting the letter; and for once, the Link policy was thwarted. Now, the fact that this lady for nearly three decades had patiently borne the heat and burden of the day, did not weigh a feather in the estimation of this star-chamber tribunal, seeing she had committed the mortal offence of speaking disparagingly of Mr. Link and his paper. But besides this, the lady in question had no doubt forfeited all claims to Mr. Link's confidence by the fact of her having wrenched from his tenacious grasp, some four years previously, the money which had been received at the "Baptist restaurant" at the State Fair, and insisted on counting it. She thus did by main force what a deacon of the church a few moments previously had attempted, but failed to achieve. He refused to let the deacon count the money, but this lady knew her rights, and how to maintain and enforce them, and Mr. Link being no match for her, she succeeded in getting and counting it.

[Another example of the despotic and unprincipled character of this committee is furnished by their treatment of our brother, Mr. Vallie C. Hart, so well known from his connexion with Major Penn's evangelistic labors. Rev. O. C. Pope, managing editor of the *Texas Baptist Herald*, had *curst* Mr. Hart in the most shocking manner. When this fact had become notorious, Mr. Pope felt it necessary to make some sort of an explanation at one of the Wednesday-night prayer meetings. Mr. Hart hearing of this, put himself to considerable trouble and several dollars' expense to be present at the church's regular conference meeting, where he asked permission to make his own statement in regard to that occurrence. The following is Mr. Hart's published statement as to how that request was met by Mr. Pope and the "Board of Deacons"—the latter, with the pastor, constituting the star-chamber committee or Committee of Inquisition. "The only persons," says Mr. Hart, "who objected to hear me were Mr. Pope and the deacons who signed his statement." [The "statement" referred to was a document put forth by this committee with a view to whitewash Mr. Pope.] But for a full statement of the treatment Mr. Hart met with at their hands, the reader is referred to his pamphlet, where the facts are given in detail.—EDITOR.]

This will suffice for a statement of some of the things that these committees, or those that compose them, have done. Now, it is evident that if these same committees have been discredited and dishonored by what they have done, the present standing committee, which was organized at an early period of Dr. Breaker's pastorate, has incurred tenfold greater dishonor through what it has left undone.

You all know that I have only glanced at comparatively a few of the fearful

“irregularities” that prevail amongst us,\* or of the outrages that have been perpetrated by the clique that have so long dominated in this church. Facts speak for themselves, brethren, it is plain to you all, and patent to the world that men may live in revelling and wantonness—may be gamblers, and drunkards, and whore-mongers and *murderers* too—may become a blot on society, and a by-word among all decent citizens, and still be members in “good standing” and “full fellowship” of the Baptist Church at Houston—provided only that they contribute liberally to the church treasury, subscribe for Mr. Link’s paper, and do nothing to incur the displeasure of those gentlemen who represent the *Texas Baptist Herald* and its interests in this church. It must be equally patent to the most cursory observer, moreover, that for a brother to array himself in hostility to these interests, or in any way to incur the displeasure of those distinguished personages to whom the custody of them is confided, is to ensure his expulsion from the body forthwith. Even though he might have the zeal of a Luther, the piety of a Bunyan, or the benevolence of a Howard, this would avail nothing towards shielding him from becoming the victim of this atrocious contrivance of theirs for keeping up the authority of a clique, and for ensuring a loyal devotion to the *Texas Baptist Herald* and its interests.

Now, I say that a committee that would permit itself to be manipulated for such base purposes as these, has no right to complain even though an ugly name be applied to it.

I intend by these remarks no unkind imputations against the church as a body, but only to express my aversion towards the clique that has so long dominated over it. Yes, I repeat it that it is a *clique* that has done all this. These proceedings are so utterly in contravention of the order and constitution of a Baptist

\*An article published a little over two years ago in the *Central Baptist*, of St. Louis, contains the following statement in regard to this church and the general declension of its members. If the fearful disclosures which it makes have ever been called in question, then I am not aware of the fact:

“A large proportion of its members systematically absent themselves from the services of the Lord’s day, and for years past have not been present at a communion season; and some I believe have never communed at all since their baptism, and have, therefore, yet to make their ‘first communion.’ Others of them—and these comprise, I venture to affirm, some of the most exemplary members of the body—see nothing to revolt their consciences or to discredit their principles in becoming ‘sponsors’ at Episcopalian christenings, and promising in the name of the little innocent about to be ‘grafted’ by the grace of sacerdotal manipulation ‘into the body of Christ’s church,’ that it ‘should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh—that it should believe all the articles of the Christian faith; and should keep God’s holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life (!)’”

[And it is only about ten days ago at this time of writing (Oct. 24,) that Dr. Breaker, the pastor, was sent for in great haste by a lady, a member of his church of several years’ standing—for what purpose does the reader suppose? why to *baptize* her little son, a child of four summers as he lay a dying!]

As the writer in the *Central Baptist* proceeds to say: “These are some of the blessed fruits resulting from a belief in the doctrine of ‘justification by works,’ a doctrine whose beneficent and elevating tendency is so confidently vaunted by Mr. Link in the *Texas Baptist Herald.*” No marvel that the Baptist Church at Houston should have served for the last few years as a regular feeder to the Episcopalian communion!—EDITOR.

Church, that they could only have been done by a clique. It was just the same at Corinth where Diotrophes would not receive the Apostle John, but "cast out of the church" those brethren that did receive him. He, of course, was in like manner backed by a clique or a party, otherwise he could not have done it. Mr. Link for a number of years past has been acting the part of Diotrophes in this church and we don't know how soon he may be back again playing his old game. Meantime, he has his lieutenant and subalterns ever on the alert, and until you, as a body, become thoroughly aroused to a sense of the magnitude of the catastrophe that impends, it can scarcely be hoped that the efforts of an individual will be of much avail to avert it.

It can scarcely be necessary for me to say that the best and most cordial relations have ever existed between myself and the church at large. You elected me to the office of deacon and I served you in that capacity to the best of my ability for several years, till at last finding myself utterly impotent to stem that tide of corruption which I foresaw and forewarned you must ultimately land us in financial bankruptcy, and be our undoing socially, morally and religiously, I did, in the face of strong protestations\* from yourselves, surrender back the trust which you had confided to me. I can, therefore, have no feeling of personal pique or petty spite to gratify. The honor which your partiality conferred on me certainly transcended my ambition, as far as it was in excess of my deserving.

I now appeal to you brethren whether the facts I have adduced do not fully sustain the statements put forth in that obnoxious pamphlet, to wit :

1. That this Committee of Inquisition "was intended to operate as an engine of repression against those who should prove refractory to the behests of Mr. Link, or be derelict in duty, in refusing to subscribe for the *Texas Baptist Herald*, or who should in any other way prove themselves obnoxious to the great Herald interest."

\*A much more full and circumstantial account of the contest which Mr. Cushman waged against Mr. Link and his ruinous policy, will be found in a pamphlet soon to be published entitled "A Brief Sketch of Mr. Link's Diotrephan Policy as Spiritual Dictator and Financial officer of the Baptist Church at Houston, Texas, together with a statement of its Disastrous Results." Suffice it here to say that Mr. Cushman fought incessantly against that policy until he found that his hostility availed nothing, and being continually thwarted and defeated, he resigned his office as deacon. The Church, however, refused to accept his resignation; and at their urgent solicitation, he consented to resume the post he had abdicated. Only a comparatively short period had elapsed, however, when impelled by like motives, he again sent in his resignation, when the following resolution was passed, and is recorded in the Minutes of the Church for January 28, 1874.

"Resolved, That we hereby express our entire satisfaction with the manner in which Bro. Cushman has discharged the duties of deacon, and that we unanimously request him to withdraw his resignation, and continue to discharge the duties of the office."

Well, in deference to this earnest expression of the will of his brethren, he again consented to resume his official duties; but seeing no fruit of his labors, he was compelled once more to resign—this being the third time. And as his brethren showed no disposition to co-operate with him in his attempts to stem that tide of corruption which he foresaw must soon engulf the Church in financial, moral and spiritual disaster, he accompanied his resignation this time with the further intimation, that no amount of coaxing or entreaty could induce him to withdraw it, accordingly it was accepted.—Editor

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· II. That "despite the existence of this grim star-chamber committee, such of the members as are friends to the 'Herald,' and give liberally 'to the church,' may, and do, commit every offence interdicted by the decalogue with absolute impunity." And that, "accordingly, it is no unusual thing for these favored 'brethren' to be seen reeling about the streets drunk, getting into scrapes in gambling saloons, where deadly weapons are drawn and a fatal rencontre barely averted; nothing short of peace officers and the police courts having sufficed for quelling these deadly feuds, and, by the arrest of the parties, preventing bloodshed."

III. That "one brother, moreover, who is regarded as exceptionally pious and exemplary, paying, as he does, \$60 a year to the church towards the minister's salary and contributing to all other objects on a like liberal scale—as well as being a constant reader and prompt-paying subscriber to the "Herald," was only the other day, principal in a duel, and was plucky enough to be on the ground with pistols, seconds and doctors, to the moment." And

IV. "That atrocities have lately been perpetrated, equally in defiance of the law of God, and in contempt of the rights of man, through the influence and agency of a miserable clique that have so long been dominant in this church." That is my case.

Brother Moderator, I have done.

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A fourth series of "Leaves" will shortly be published, (as intimated on page 19,) in which fearful disclosures will be made of the selfish and ungodly policy of Rev. J. B. Lynch, as financial officer and spiritual dictator of the Baptist Church at Houston. Some reference will also be made to Rev. S. C. Pope, Mr. Lynch's editorial associate, with a view to a more full elucidation of their profane and unchristian conduct heretofore alleged against that gentleman.

This pamphlet will, probably, not exceed five cents a copy, and as only a few hundred will be printed, it would be well for parties wishing to secure any for sale, to send their orders in advance to Prof. Tovell, as below.

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Price for a single copy, 10c; for twenty copies, \$1 50; for a hundred, \$5 50, free of postage in each case. To be had on application to

JOHN TOVELL, Crittenden Business College,  
Houston, Texas.

\* \* \* There are many towns and villages in Texas, where an active youth could easily make for himself a round little sum, in the way of pocket-money, in a very few hours' time, by selling this pamphlet.

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