

LEAVES FROM AN UNPUBLISHED CHAPTER OF
CHURCH HISTORY...



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Southern Baptist Seminary

Houston, Texas. First
Baptist Church.

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LEAVES

From an Unpublished Chapter

OF

CHURCH HISTORY.

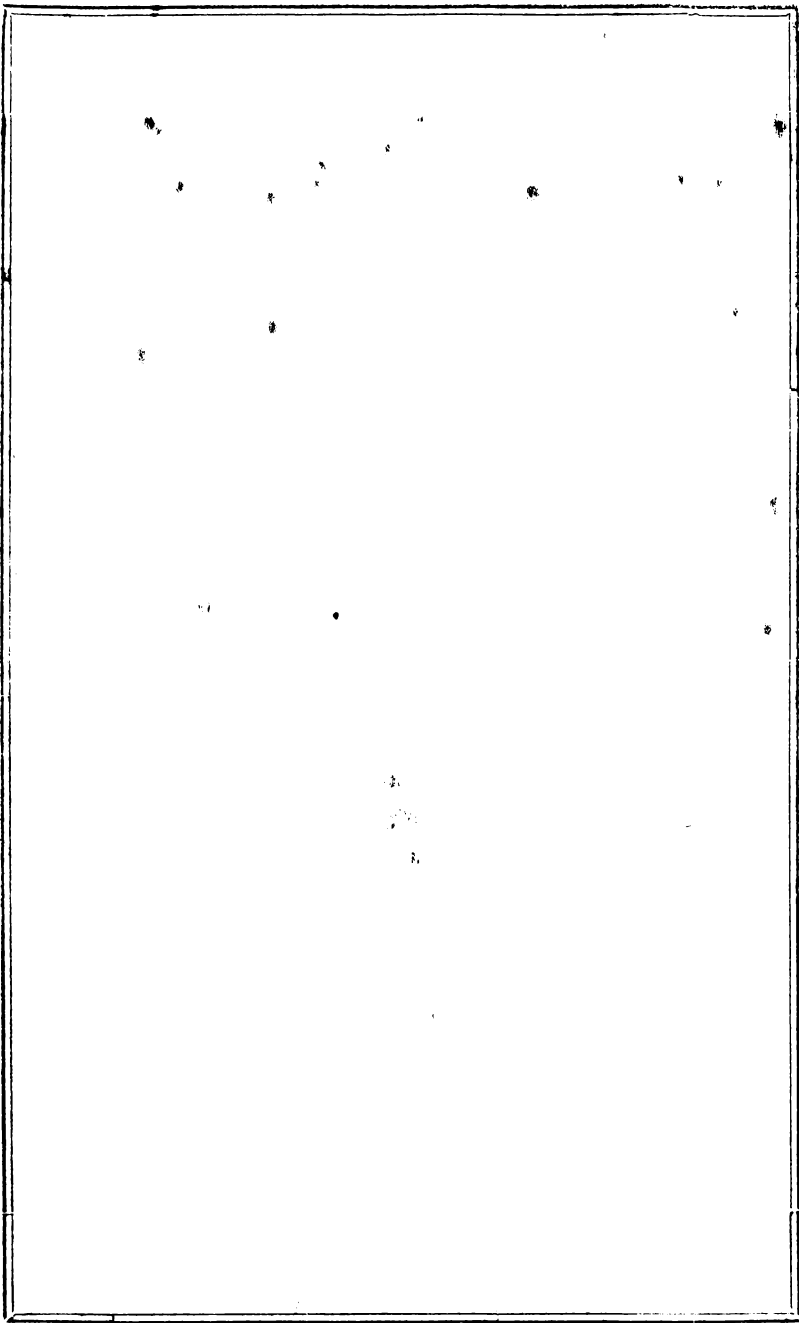
By a Member of the Baptist Church at Houston.

EDITED AND REVISED BY PHILOALETHEIA.

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To the Reader.

One thing, and one thing only, could justify the publication of the following "leaves," to-wit: that they state *facts*. The thoughtful reader, if in any degree apprised of the atrocities that 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, will at once understand, not only how Truth sanctions, but how Justice *demand*s just such a turning of things inside out as is here attempted. The facts stated are not only true, but *incontrovertible*. Mr. Vallie Hart is responsible for all that is stated in regard to the *cursing* done by the managing editor of the *Texas Baptist Herald*. He has just given me, not merely his verbal assent, but his written attestation, over his own signature, to the truth of all that is said in regard to that matter. He also assures me that he has in like manner made known the facts to the pastor of our church.

J. A. C.

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L E A V E S, & C.

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SECTION III.—Members of this Church divided into two classes—
those that subscribe for the *Texas Baptist Herald*, and those that do not.
* * * * *

Through the strenuous efforts of Rev. Mr. Link, a Standing Committee of this Church, (Baptist Church at Houston,) consisting of the pastor and deacons, was some months ago appointed and organized, whose peculiar function it should be to keep a sharp look-out for the lapses of members. This "watch-care" and supervision, however, was all a mere pretence. What it has done, and still more, what it has *not* done, show that this committee 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. Hence, 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.

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.* The other party was too discreet to stand the encounter, and did not put in an appearance. This peaceful termination of the affair would

*See the Galveston "News" of May 21st, 1878.

seem to have been regarded by some of the brethren as a providential intimation of the favor which Heaven bears to those who pay liberally towards the support of the preacher, and even as realizing the declaration of Solomon, that "when a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." This brother accordingly may now be considered the hero of the body, and will likely enough soon be made a deacon of

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SECTION V.—Lager Beer and a Cursing Parson, or Preparing the Way for Major Penn!

* * * It will be understood then that the Baptist Church at Houston had engaged Major Penn, the renowned evangelist, to hold a series of meetings with them. Now it seems to be a traditional proceeding of this Church, when a "revival," as it is called, is to be got up, to set its members on a rigid course of self-mortification, for the time being, so that neither the world, the flesh, nor the devil, may have a chance of interposing any hindrance to the free flow of those influences, psychological or celestial, which are supposed to have their confluence in Major Penn, and on which the whole success of the performance is thought to depend.

Well, Mr. Vallie Hart, famed as the sweet vocalist whose musical performances in connexion with the Major's meetings have contributed so much to their success, was already on the ground, laboring assiduously to get the church members into that moral attitude that should put them *en rapport* with those beneficent influences to which reference has just been made. In prosecuting this holy purpose, Mr. Hart undertook to rebuke sin in a clerical member of this church, a gentleman whose ministries, whether in preaching, exhorting or praying, had been for some three months previously, so manifold and unintermitting that he might appropriately enough be designated as the "Deputy Shepherd."* He

*It is not intended to hint at any moral parallelism as between the managing editor of the *Herald* and the veritable Stiggins himself. Far from it. The "Deputy Shepherd" that signalized his pastoral visits to the senior Mr. Weller's spouse, by invariably depleting the gin bottle till there was "nothing left—nothing, Samivel, but the cork and the smell," could never be thought of as the typical representative of a gentleman who, having "graduated" at that renowned institution of learning, Goosehatch University, on Bear Creek, in East Tennes-

is better known, however, as the *deputy editor* of the *Texas Baptist Herald*. It seems, then, that this worthy functionary is in the habit, these hot days, of solacing himself at reasonable intervals with a "schooner" of ice-cold *lager*.*

Well, this, it was thought by some, was not quite the thing, when an evangelistic enterprise was about to be inaugurated on a scale of such magnitude and comprehension as was then in contemplation. Still, if an offence at all, it appears to have been regarded as, at most, a very venial one in comparison with that of sending one of the *catechumens* of the church to fetch the grateful beverage for him from a neighboring saloon. For here the youth is necessarily confronted, if not with lascivious, at least with voluptuous, pictures, which, as Mr. Hart says, are much more adapted to operate on the neophyte as a stimulus to fleshly lust, than as an incentive to heavenly love. The deputy of the *Texas Baptist Herald* claims, however, that though a catechuman † of the church, the youth in question is also the "devil" of his office, and therefore the proper person to send for the editor's *lager*.

This may not have been—probably was not, the only sin which the faithful monitor charged upon the conscience of his clerical brother. Be that as it may, the latter was so incensed with the kind of freedom thus taken with him, that he used "cuss

see, did afterwards serve with distinguished honor a long pastorate of no less than ten weeks' duration with the Central Baptist Church at Nashville, in Middle Tennessee. No, nothing like this is intended to be conveyed. Those who are privileged to read those tender, if lugubrious, utterances in which the ardent yearnings of the pastoral spirit towards "our old church" are set forth with such edifying frequency, in the *Texas Baptist Herald*, cannot fail to be convinced that, however it may be with his head, there is no lack of softness in the editor's heart. I should sooner expect to hear that he carried his own liquor with him, and divided with his "charge," than that he trenched on the domestic supplies of his parishioners, by practising any of those sinister devices by which his prototype became so notorious. I hope I shall not be misunderstood.

*No exception could be taken to a *schooner* of *lager*, if our friend with delegated functions could only be got to restrict himself to so moderate a medium, repeated—say twice or thrice only during the day, with perhaps an extra allowance on meeting nights. But it is feared that his indulgence is too frequent in its recurrence. Facts as well as rumors would seem to look that way. "Many a mickle make a Muckle," as it is the wont of Rev. Mr. Link to remark—not without something of vehemence in his manner, when discoursing on *economics*, where he is notably an authority. But despite the remonstrance and the warnings of the editor-in-chief, it is to be feared that his deputy is constantly in danger of exceeding the mickle and being trounced by the muckle.

†The young man was a member of Mr. Vallie Hart's Sunday School class during the whole period in which the latter was Business Manager of the *Texas Baptist Herald*. Mr. Hart then considered him one of his most promising and hopeful scholars. Naturally enough, however, he stands in jeopardy of him now.

words," and when Mr. Hart suggested that this was somewhat unclerical, he replied, "I don't care a damn if I am a preacher. I swear I won't let any man attack my honor, though I am a Baptist minister." And then, seizing the young vocalist and newly-made Benedict, by both wrists, he shook his arms with a vigor that almost threatened dislocation to his shoulders. While this performance was going on, curses loud and deep were freely indulged in by this distinguished ornament of the Baptist church. As this took place in the public street, in close proximity to the post office, no small excitement was being created by it, but the hectoring editor was at last persuaded to retire to his *sanctum*.

Having now regained his seat on his three-legged stool, he became somewhat less obstreperous, and his mental perturbation assumed a somewhat milder type; but the tumult was far from having "dwindled to a calm." His words, his looks, his gestures, still continued to be of the imperial and peremptory order—so much so that he threatened to send for a policeman forthwith, if Mr. Hart did not leave the office *instantly*. But his parting injunction to his visitor, as the latter, acting on this civil intimation, was walking off, was: "Now mind! don't say I cursed, for I did n't." Says Mr. Hart, in relating this incident, "But, as the Irishman said to the chick that chirped as it went down his throat, 'yer too late, me darlint!' It is a matter I cannot conceal. I shall, immediately on his return to town, request him to meet me and talk over the matter with his pastor." * * * *

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