

R.C. BUCKNER'S  
LIFE OF  
FAITH AND WORKS



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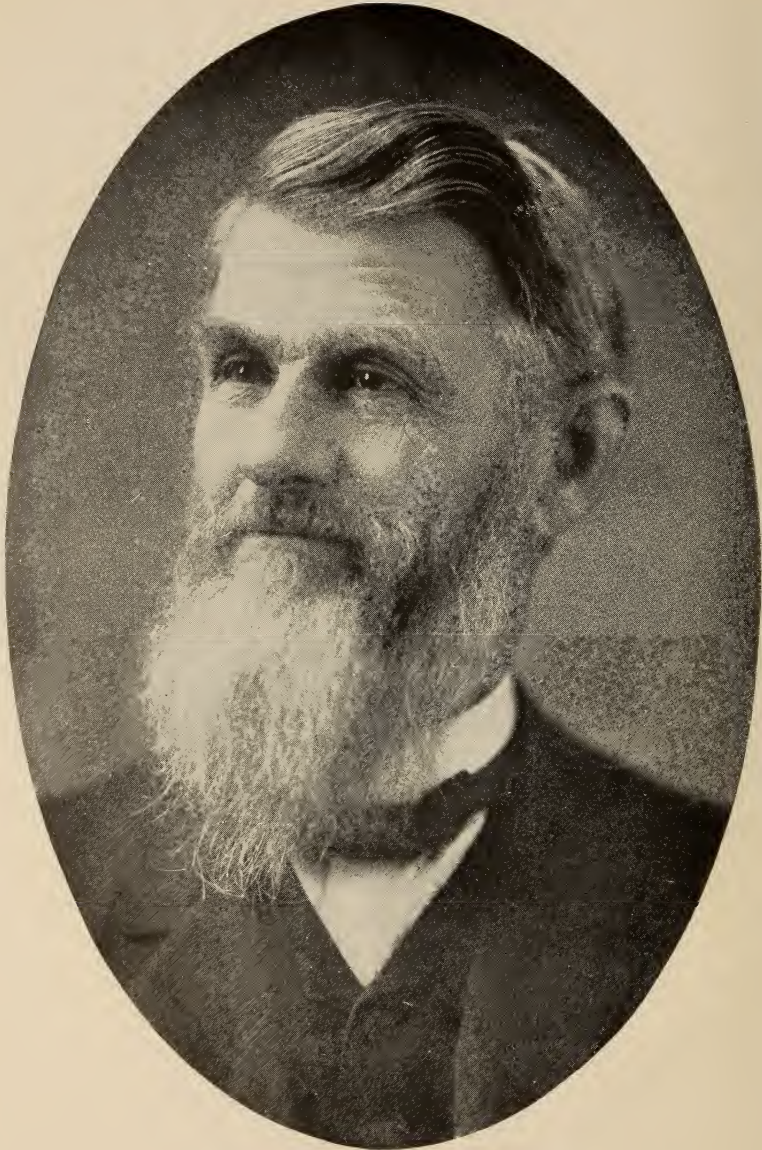
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yours in faith & works.  
R. C. Buckner.

**R. C. BUCKNER'S  
LIFE OF FAITH AND WORKS**

**Comprising the Story of the Career of the Preacher, Editor,  
Presiding Officer, Philanthropist, and Founder  
of Buckner Orphans Home**

*James  
Cranfill*  
BY  
**J. B. CRANFILL AND J. L. WALKER**

**DALLAS, TEXAS  
BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME  
1915**

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## Dedication.

The authors of this volume  
have requested me to dedicate it in  
my own way, out of my own heart.

Now, therefore, —

To my beloved wife, who  
has been the balance-wheel of my  
life, for over more than sixty years  
of happy wedlock; to our delightful  
children; to the thousands of Orphans  
who call me "Father Buckner," and to  
all people who have sympathy for  
orphan children this Biography is  
affectionately dedicated in the  
name of the God of love and "pure  
and undefiled religion."

And all returns from sales of the  
books are, by agreement, sincerely  
dedicated to the betterment of  
Buckner Orphan Home, Amen.  
Robert Cook Buckner.



## FOREWORD

---

This volume is the joint work of J. L. Walker and J. B. Cranfill. It is but just to say that the major part of the labor on the work has been done by J. L. Walker. As most of the friends of the Buckner Orphans Home already know, J. L. Walker has been chaplain of the Home for quite a while. He is a man of exceptional qualities as a writer and historian, and it thus fell out that on account of his intimate familiarity with Texas Baptist history and his daily association with R. C. Buckner, he was in position to discover, enucleate and collate the salient facts of this great man's life at first hand. As this foreword is being written wholly by J. B. Cranfill, it may not be amiss here to say that J. L. Walker is a man of kingly Christian character, gentle, loving, self-sacrificing and capable.

Of course, the writer of this foreword has labored much on this volume in the matter of revision and arrangement and has written a part of this Biography, but, as stated, the major part has been written by J. L. Walker.

The funds for the publication of this work have been furnished by private individuals. Not a cent of it has come from the treasury of the Buckner Orphans Home. It is the wish of R. C. Buckner, however, and of the authors that every dollar of the profit made on the book shall go to the Orphans Home. When enough of the books are sold to pay for the initial cost of publication, all of the succeeding income will go to the help and maintenance of the orphan work. The copyright belongs to Buckner Orphans Home as well as the proceeds.

At the special request of the authors, R. C. Buckner has written the dedication of the book. This was thought most appropriate, and we trust it will be approved by the great public, who at last are the arbiters of the destiny of the work itself.

## INTRODUCTION

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Instead of a formal introduction, written by one friend, it was the decision of the authors to present estimates of R. C. Buckner's life and labors from a number of leaders in our Southern Baptist work. The following are given, our regret being that we could not incorporate a larger number:

## An Estimate of Dr. Buckner.

It would be altogether impossible for me to give adequate expression of my appreciation of Dr. R. C. Buckner as friend, counsellor, citizen, philanthropist, leader, preacher and man. In all these relations, he stands out against the horizon, a man difficult to match.

The most casual glance at his life reveals its vast and many sided serviceableness. In every relation he has been preeminent. He has been one of the most prodigious toilers of his own or any time. And the abundant favor of God has manifestly crowned his labors.

As a preacher, both in the

realm of winning souls and of teaching them; as a constructive organizer and leader in practical Christianity; as a counsellor, whether in causes great or small; he has wrought in each and all of these realms in such a way as to win an enviable immortality.

But greater than all that he has said or done is the greatness of his character. His virile, intellectual power; his indomitable strength of will; his moral resoluteness; his dauntless courage; his remarkable faith both in God and in men; his never failing optimism; his rich, deep, tender, human sympathies — are all such as to make his personality greater and more valuable

than can be measured in any terms that are human and earthly.

No reference to him would be complete without a reference to his modest, capable, faithful wife, of whom it is enough to say that she has, through the long years, been to him and his incomparable work all that his heart could wish.

God be thanked, with unexpressible thankfulness, for these two valiant soldiers! One may well wonder whether we shall ever see their like again! May every needed blessing be vouchsafed unto them while yet they tarry with us! And when the King summons them to join the hosts above, who doubts that many trumpets on the other side will sound Heaven's loudest welcome for their coming?

Geo. W. Truett.

When the authors wrote to Dr. B. H. Carroll at Fort Worth for some words as a part of the Introduction to this volume, he was too ill to respond. Later, the subject of this Biography, R. C. Buckner, and one of the authors, J. B. Cranfill, went to Fort Worth to see Dr. Carroll, who was held in his bed on account of his long and painful illness. When we reached his room, after he had greeted both of us with a smile, cordial words and a warm handclasp, he held on to R. C. Buckner's hand, and looking steadily into his eyes, he said:

"I am glad you came to see me. I had rather see you than any other man in the world. I have some things to say. I love you with undying devotion. Your life has been given unstintedly to the Bible, to Jesus Christ and to orphan children. You have never faltered in preaching the whole truth, and have always stood for peace and spirituality among the brethren. As a peacemaker you have always been gentle and equally fair to all on both sides of every question, urging peace and spirituality, but without the least sacrifice of any fact or principle. Our close personal acquaintance began at Fairfield at the second annual session of the Baptist General Association of Texas in 1870.

"Wm. Henry Parks was pastor of the church at Fairfield, and you remained and conducted a protracted meeting, doing all the preaching. The meeting was characterized by a glorious revival. You declared it as one of your purposes to try to start the newly organized General Association out on a career of peace and spirituality, and all through its history these principles were dominant. Afterwards your many years as president of that body seemed ever to make prominent these two graces, but without any compromise of principle. And after the consolidation of the General Association and the old State Convention, in your presidency of twenty years the same love of the brethren and the same example and advocacy of peace and spirituality characterized your life and powerfully impressed and influenced the body.



"I have wanted to write about all, but I am not able to write. I want Brother Cranfill, who now hears these words, to reproduce them in writing for some place in your Biography.

"There has never been the least discord between us in all our years of close acquaintance, and never the least difference in our views on doctrines and practical Christianity. I believe in you and I love you as a friend, a brother, a preacher and as a presiding officer, but above all these I love you because you love our Bible, our Savior and the little children, and for what you have done for the orphans.

"We shall meet in heaven. I have been afflicted so long and am so near the border land that the veil is very thin. I can see through it. I feel that I breathe the atmosphere of heaven and I regale myself on its sweet fragrance. There will be no difficulty about us recognizing one another in Heaven. Goodbye."

## AN ESTIMATE OF R. C. BUCKNER

I have known Dr. Buckner since my earliest manhood, as Christian, as preacher, as friend, and as denominational leader.

As a Christian, he is and always has been above reproach; a man of rare spirit and highest integrity. As a preacher, he is clear, scriptural, evangelical, fervid and soulful, moving his hearers with a gospel of power. As friend, he is loyal and steadfast, appreciative and faithful. As denominational leader, he is sympathetic with his brethren, broad in his outlook, courageous in the expression of his convictions, missionary in spirit, and a heart great enough to receive inside of it every orphan child on earth.

E. Y. MULLINS.

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

## A NOBLEMAN INDEED

Dr. R. C. Buckner, honored much above most men, is indeed a nobleman among all who know him. In character and achievement he has made a record of eighty-two years not only untarnished but growing brighter to the end. Through all the years he has been to us all an inspiration and something of a model in Christian bearing and usefulness. His works go on before and will also follow after.

I greatly honor him and earnestly pray that the glory of our Father's face, in great richness and fullness, may be upon him, and upon his noble wife, and upon all he counts dear—shining brighter and brighter to the perfect day.

J. M. FROST.

Rooms of the Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn.

## R. C. BUCKNER, THE LEADER

The multitudes of friends of Dr. Buckner will be greatly rejoiced by the announcement that we are to have his biography.

He is a most remarkable man. For half a century he has been one of the great leaders of Texas Baptists. He has had a large part in the promotion of almost every denominational institution Baptists have in Texas. The Buckner Orphans Home, the Women's Training School in Fort Worth, and the Baptist Memorial Sanitarium in Dallas, are largely the outgrowth of his great mind and heart. Every school and everything else we have has had his unstinted support.

He has been president of the Baptist General Convention for twenty years and carried it through times and scenes that for tragic importance were never surpassed in the annals of Baptist history. As a preacher, newspaper writer, pastor, philanthropist, and promoter of great and good works he stands

among the foremost that Baptists have produced. He is now eighty-two years old, and possesses wonderful vigor of both body and intellect. We all hope he will be with us many years yet and confidently believe that his biography wherever read will inspire hundreds to emulate the example of his noble life.

F. M. McCONNELL.

Rooms of the State Mission Board, Dallas, Texas.

### DR. ROBERT COOK BUCKNER

I feel that I can do no better as my contribution to this volume than to recite some history.

On April 21, 1903, there was held in Baylor University what perhaps was the greatest academic occasion ever attempted in the State. It was the dedication of the "F. L. Carroll Chapel and Library" and the "Geo. W. Carroll Science Hall," gifts respectively of the men whose names they bear.

To give added dignity to this day—a Texas Anniversary—to show courtesy to the gentlemen whose munificence made it possible, and withal to honor itself, Baylor conferred upon eighteen men honorary degrees. The eighteen men stood in line on the rostrum, each as his name was called coming forward to receive his diploma. As the subject of this sketch stepped to the front, the president of the university handed him a diploma, speaking the following words as he did so:

"Robert Cook Buckner: When, sir, your friends shall speak the last praiseworthy words about you, they will be more desirable than the crown worn by the Czar of Russia. We hail you today as the foster father of more children than perhaps any man in America, as the friend of the helpless and the fatherless, as one powerful in utilizing the forces of this world for the promotion of the spirit of fraternity, as a preacher honored of God, as convention executive honored of men. Sir, for your pre-

eminence in so many fields of human service, it delights me, the president, upon the authority of the Commonwealth of Texas committed to the trustees of Baylor University, and upon the unanimous recommendation of the Faculty thereof, to confer upon you the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws and to admit you to all its rights and privileges wherever in the world you may go.”

S. P. BROOKS.

Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

### BROTHER GREATHEART

Dr. Buckner is our Brother Greatheart. He has great capacity for love. This has been the impelling force in his life work for helpless children and the magnetic quality which irresistibly draws to him these little creatures of strong intuition. He has literally loved into fame, as he has into great usefulness in holiest service. Everybody recognizes his greatness of heart and honors him for it. He is indeed so pre-eminent in this grace that the casual observer is likely not to discover other gifts which entitle him to distinction. He is a great lover, but he is also as fresh and vigorous a thinker as any man of his age that I ever knew. His public speech is rarely characterized by a dull or commonplace remark. This has been to me a growing surprise upon closer acquaintance with him and study of the man. He is, too, a refutation of the hackneyed charge that preachers are poor business men. He is one of the best business men in Texas, as is shown by his easy and successful management of the great institution he has built up and conducts. This institution will stand as a great monument to his memory and his praises will be sounded half around the world by those who have shared its benefits and been blessed with his care.

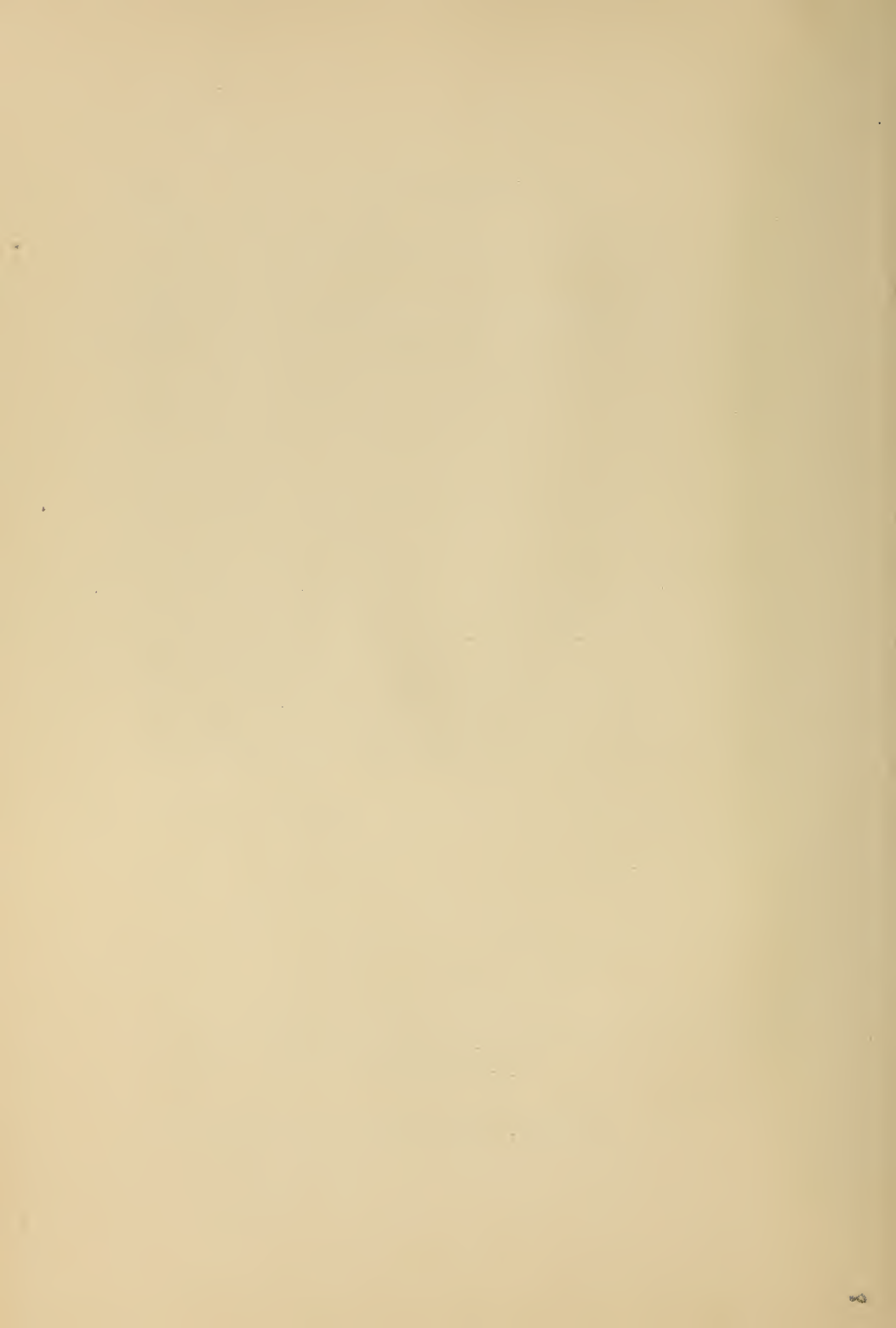
J. F. LOVE.

Foreign Mission Rooms, Richmond, Va.

## CONCERNING DR. R. C. BUCKNER

Dr. R. C. Buckner is one of the most useful men of his generation. His coming to Texas at an early day has proven to be a great strength to the State. He brought with him rich natural endowments and good preparation, which made him a leader. He took his place naturally with a remarkably able set of men, who laid the foundation of all that is best in civil and religious life in Texas. His mind is initiative, constructive, circumspect and tenacious. His working power is remarkable. For a period much longer than an ordinary life, Dr. Buckner has contributed the forces of an extraordinary manhood to the progress of humanity and Christianity mainly, but not entirely in Texas. While he has been identified with practically every good move among Baptists and has held many positions of trust and usefulness, he is most widely known as founder and manager of the Buckner Orphans Home. The work done in connection with this noble institution for the helpless will always endear him to the heart of humanity. He has put it on enduring foundations so that he will project his life far into coming generations. Such a life is rarely lived.

J. B. GAMBRELL.



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## CHAPTER I

### MANY-SIDED MAN

While it is the purpose of this narrative to set forth in some detail the history of the life of R. C. Buckner, it is impossible in so brief a compass to record all the deeds that have made up the warp and woof of his eventful career. The biographers, therefore, have been shut up to a choice of some of the material in which his life has been so rich, and the sheaves that have thus been garnered are now given to the public.

R. C. Buckner is a man in a class by himself. His life has been a many-sided one. As a preacher, as a philanthropist, as an editor, as a writer, as a kingly business man, and as an organizer of virile forces in the Master's service, he has achieved distinction and renown. Of him it can be said that he has been a marked success in every line of life to which he has devoted his attention. If he had given all of his life to the work of the ministry, thus spending it in the rich pastoral service which he gave to a few churches in his earlier years, he would have left an impress upon Texas and the South that would have endured until the coming of the King. If he had remained permanently in journalism, in which he shone so resplendently during the few years that he gave to that most useful service, he would have made a name as an editor and writer that would have lived and blessed mankind through all the after years. If he had done nothing but give his entire life to orphan work, had never preached and had never been an editor, he would have attained to heights in this specific line of heroic endeavor that have never been reached by any other Southern Baptist philanthropist. If

he had turned his heart and thought toward business and given of all of his time to the co-ordination of commercial and financial assets and forces, he would have been one of the South's great men of wealth, for he has shown his ability in this field in a manner to command the admiration of all. If, passing by all of these great fields of activity, he had taken the oversight and management of some great enterprise, so that his talents of organization could have had free exercise, he would have been a possibility as a great railroad magnate or as the creator of some colossal mercantile establishment or bank. When we consider that he has had such marvelous success in every line that has been named, we can but contemplate this remarkable man with the sincerest admiration.

Above everything, R. C. Buckner has been a gentle-hearted, loving, faithful, sincere, active, self-sacrificing Christian. The question that flushed his heart when he first entered the Christian ministry in the dear old Kentucky-land was not "How can I achieve renown or glory or wealth or fame?" but it was, "How can I do the most for God and my fellow men?" This has been the key-note of his remarkable and transcendently useful life.

A study of the details of his life as unfolded in the pages that follow will reveal to the observant mind the fact that from the days of his early boyhood he was in preparation for the trials and triumphs that have been so manifest throughout all his pilgrimage. He was born to be a leader, a philanthropist and a winsome and an able preacher. None of this was accidental. It takes a thousand years to make a man, and while this biography reaches no further back than the immediate parents of the subject of this sketch, it is obvious that there must have been fortuitous conditions conspiring together covering hundreds of years to produce such a man as R. C. Buckner.

Of course, when all is said, God makes men. God makes men for specific purposes. He begins the making of men in the remote antiquity of history and looking down the corridors of

time, He suits the man to the age in which he is born and to the mission to which aforesaid God dedicated the man's life.

Let it be said of R. C. Buckner that in every relation he has managed his life well. He has coupled wisdom with aggressiveness, gentleness with courage, integrity with acumen, religion with business, and prudence with aggressiveness. His is one of the most completely rounded lives that have ever been known to the writer of these lines. He has made no blunders; he has shown no excesses; he has never been guilty of intolerance; he has bridled his temper and his tongue; he has curbed his passions; and he has done befittingly everything he has achieved.

One of the chief characteristics of this great man is his fidelity. When he took to his heart the great army of lonely orphan children scattered throughout Texas and the South, he became married to the orphan work, and through sunshine and storm, evil as well as good report, and in every vicissitude that has transpired since this great work was begun, he has had a thought and a care in every one of his relations and all of his varied environments for the orphans thus committed to his hands.

But that is not all. He has been to every friend a strong right arm of power, support and confidence. He is no fair-weather friend. He lingers by his friends in their adversity as well as in their days of strength and success, and through all the mutations of life he proves himself the partial, kind, gentle, generous-hearted friend, no matter whether the skies are bright, or whether lowering thunders roll.

Among the manifold characteristics of this great man has been his long life of happiness and Christian good cheer. Although, as these words are penned, he is nearing his eighty-second birthday, there is not now living any man, woman, or child who ever saw R. C. Buckner hopelessly discouraged. He has smiled a Christian smile nearly 82 years long. Everywhere, anywhere, in every relation of his great life he has carried with him the sunshine of Christian optimism and has met his friends and

brethren with a hearty handgrasp and a cheery smile that doeth good like a medicine. If this writer were asked to name the one great characteristic in R. C. Buckner's life that differentiates him from other men this chronicler has known, it is not certain that this one monumental element in his life—that of happiness and buoyancy of spirit—would not thus be named.

In addition to all of his other mountain-peaks of character, R. C. Buckner is one of the most devoted and genuine missionary spirits this writer has ever known. Through the closing years of his strength the beloved R. J. Willingham, so long the capable leader in the Foreign Mission work of the Southern Baptist Convention, would, every time he met R. C. Buckner, throw his great loving arms around him and say, "And this is Brother Buckner, the father of missionaries and the grandfather of missionaries!"

It thus fell out that in his eighty-first year R. C. Buckner, together with his beloved and faithful wife and gentle-hearted daughter, sailed round the world to visit Dr. Buckner's son, grandson, and other grandchildren in the far-off mission fields of China. This achievement is without parallel in Baptist history. Not only did he gloriously undertake the journey, but it was joyfully completed and he returned to Texas happy in the contemplation of the stirring events of which he had been so conspicuous a factor, and buoyant and lighthearted in the re-assumption of the gigantic work to which he has turned the great talents that God gave him during the latter years of his eventful life.

This biography has been written for a purpose. Certainly the purpose is not to make money for the subject of this sketch or for its writers. The men who have prepared this sketch have done every atom of the work purely as a labor of love. They sought no remuneration and would absolutely decline such paltry recognition of their services with the feeling that if such remuneration were tendered, it would be a reflection upon their



devotion to a great man and a noble cause. Dr. Buckner himself would not accept a penny of profit on the sale of this work. Every dollar that it brings will be donated to the Buckner Orphans Home. So, it has been with no financial gain in view that the work has been prepared and is thus given to the public.

It has been written purely in a spirit of helpfulness. No man has ever lived in Texas just the life that has been lived by R. C. Buckner. He was a pioneer in orphan work in our great State. As founder and manager of the Buckner Orphans Home, he has led in the creation of an orphanage, the largest in the whole Western hemisphere. It is to help the orphan work and to help and hearten every man and woman, young and old, to whom these pages shall come, who has a care for the lonely, suffering, needy souls who cry out on every hand for Christian help and sympathy.

Most profoundly does the writer of these words believe that wherever this life of R. C. Buckner is read, there will rise up young men and women to say to the Master Workman, "Here am I; send me." No one can read the life of R. C. Buckner without a kindling of holy zeal to give the best that is in him to God.

Much more could be said, but this writer feels that the indulgent reader is impatient to begin the perusal of the chapters that follow. They await his contemplation and thus this first chapter must reach its close.

It will perhaps not be thought amiss for this writer to add that he has counted it one of the greatest joys and privileges of his life to number R. C. Buckner among his most intimate friends. When the dear man was sailing in far-off seas, tempest-tossed by adverse currents, and feeling that possibly he would never again reach his native heath, he sent a letter to the writer of these words, written in his own dear hand, that will be treasured as long as life lasts. It has been an unmixed blessing to the one that pens these words to have had the pleasure and the

joy of intimate relationship with this great, good man, covering a period of almost an average lifetime. And now it is with a feeling that cannot be put in words that this book is given to the public. How the heart of the one who sets these words down rejoices to have had a part in such a cherished task as this!

God speed these pages and send them round the world to bless all to whom they shall come during the remaining days of the beloved subject of this biography, and to continue to bring light and hope and joy and inspiration to countless thousands of our young and old long after the beloved Dr. R. C. Buckner has been gathered to his fathers. This is his most cherished wish and in this hope and purpose his biographers most joyfully join.



## CHAPTER II

### DANIEL AND MARY BUCKNER

*Good Baptist Stock.*—It was good for R. C. Buckner and the world that his parents were Daniel and Mary Buckner. For this he was always grateful. After his head was crowned with silver he wrote:

“The life-blood of human kindness ever flowed freely in the veins of my marvelously patient mother; and tender sympathy for the poor and distressed filled my father’s great preacher heart. He always kept open doors for the afflicted, by day and by night.”

*Birth of Daniel Buckner.*—A baby boy, Heaven-sent, arrived at the Christian home of Henry Buckner, September 30, 1801. A sturdy farmer in Lawrence District, South Carolina, of the old-time honest type, was this Henry Buckner. The boy was named Daniel in honor of the father’s friend, Daniel Boone, of Kentucky fame.

When young Daniel was a romping boy of six summers, his father crossed the Great Smoky Range into Cooke County, East Tennessee, and again engaged in farming, teaching his sons farm work.

*Surrendered to God.*—The crowning day of Daniel Buckner’s life was the day on which he gave God his heart. This occurred at the age of sixteen, and ever and forever afterward he was on God’s side. Jesus Christ was now to him both Savior and Lord. He walked twelve miles to Lick Creek church, now Warrensburg, related his experience of grace, and was baptized in Nolichucky River by Elder Caleb Witt. Soon he transferred his membership to Big Pigeon church, near Newport.

*Marries Mary Hampton.*—At seventeen years of age he was married to Mary Hampton, of the Hampton family of South

Carolina, and a relative of Gen. Wade Hampton. She was a superior woman, better educated than her husband, and aided him no little in his efforts to acquire learning. The well-known minister of the gospel, A. J. Holt, D.D., was her grandson. Hear him: "All my life, Grandmother Buckner has been my ideal woman, pious, cheerful, intelligent, diligent, wise." She was born in South Carolina in 1799.

*Liberated and Ordained.*—In 1823, Big Pigeon church liberated Daniel Buckner, authorizing him to preach the gospel. And he did preach with unction and acceptance during a spiritual awakening that continued a whole year.

He afterwards moved to Monroe County and was ordained by Chestnut church of that county to the full work of the gospel ministry. The ordaining elders were George Snider and James D. Sewell.

*Church Planted at Madisonville.*—His heart was turned to Madisonville, the county town, where no Baptist preacher's voice had yet been heard. Here a fruitful meeting was held and many baptized. Assisted by Elder George Snider, he constituted the Madisonville Baptist Church in 1827 with twenty-seven members. Then, also through his labors, Ebenezer Church was constituted, and he served these two churches seven years, building them up in the faith, and gathering into their folds many souls.

Of the number baptized at Madisonville, four became distinguished preachers. One was his own son, Henry Frieland, afterwards missionary to the Creek Indians. Another was a young lawyer named Bradley Kimbrough, and still another was Sam P. Henderson, D.D., for many years a leading preacher in Alabama. A good meeting-house was erected at Madisonville during this pastorate.

*Birth of R. C. Buckner.*—Robert Cooke Buckner was born at Madisonville, Tenn., January 3, 1833. The log-house in which he was born now stands beside the stately chapel at Buckner Orphans Home. It was first built at Madisonville about 1820.

*Falling of the Stars.*—When Robert was a baby, his brother Henry rose early one morning, and running to his mother much frightened, he exclaimed: "Oh, mother, the world is coming to an end! The stars are falling!" The followers of William Miller had proclaimed throughout the country that the world would soon come to an end. When Henry startled his mother with those words, she peered out the window a moment and then clapped her hands, saying, "Thank God, I am ready." And she was. The strange phenomenon known as the "Falling of the Stars" was a vivid meteoric shower, extant over many states. The Seventh Day Adventists still point to that event as a "sign of the end."

*The Denominational "Split."*—Now came the strenuous days when the Baptist people divided in many states, part standing for Missions, Sunday Schools and an educated ministry, and part opposing these with all their might. Daniel Buckner took his stand with the missionaries. Rev. S. P. Henderson, who was on the ground, writing some years afterward, had this to say: "Rev. Daniel Buckner espoused the cause of Missions with all his zeal, and became one of the leaders of his brethren on that question in all East Tennessee. He and such noble spirits as Bradley Kimbrough, James Kennon, Samuel Love, Richard and Charles Taliaferro, traveled over East Tennessee, steadying the ranks of the wavering, so that when the division came, the majority stood by the old standard."

*Pastor in McMinn County.*—In 1835 Elder Buckner was called to and accepted Zion Hill church in McMinn County. This was a happy pastorate, with good results. Years afterward he referred to this work with much joy: "The Zion Hill church gave me a fine horse, and I rode down many a wild goat, and gathered in many a wandering sheep." All the year of this pastorate the church was in a state of revival, and more than one hundred were baptized, one of whom, Wilson Chapman, became a useful minister of the gospel.

*Missionary of the Convention.*—His brethren would not allow him to remain with the good work at Zion Hill. It was a trying time, and he was needed in a wider work. Accordingly, in 1836 Elder Buckner moved to Big Spring, and the family joined the Big Spring church. He was now ready for his wider work. But he must not neglect his promising young son, Henry Frieland, and this son was immediately put in Maryville Seminary (Old School Presbyterian). There was not at that time a Baptist High School in the State. With Big Spring as headquarters, he accepted an appointment of the Tennessee Baptist State Convention to labor as a missionary. The salary was fixed at \$15 a month. It was his first salary, and was thought good compensation in those early days.

*Missionary Leaven in Seventeen Counties.*—The Convention had been organized only three years, and to many churches such a step seemed an innovation foreboding only evil. There was much opposition to it, and the Big Spring church stood with the opposition. Elder Buckner went to his work as missionary with apostolic zeal. He shall tell it himself:

“I was the first to introduce the missionary leaven into seventeen counties. My first appointment kept me from home two and one-half months. Sometimes I preached in school-houses, then in the woods, then in a family room in some brother’s home, and sometimes in meeting-houses. Such was the opposition to the enterprise that some churches closed their doors against me. Seldom could I get a brother to take a collection, which was sufficient apology for me to take it myself. Soon after I got home from this missionary tour, the church at Big Spring preferred charges against me.”

*Turned Out of the Church.*—Big Spring church believed their member, Daniel Buckner, had gone wrong; that he was incorrigible, and that his example was dangerous. He even dared to wear boots! They called him “the booted apostle.” Following are the charges read before the church:

1. He is a hireling and not a true shepherd.
2. He has defied God in that he is educating his son to preach.
3. He is a money-hunter.

They gravely found him guilty on every count, and solemnly withdrew fellowship from him! They offered to give his wife a letter of dismissal, saying they had nothing against her, but she declined, protesting that she had something against them, and proclaimed in open conference that she and her son Frieland believed the same doctrine for which they had withdrawn fellowship from her husband. Elder Buckner and family then went to Caussauga church, Polk County, presented a copy of the charges, and were joyfully received, the same as if they had presented a letter.

*In Washington County.*—It was now thought wise to transfer his labors to Washington County, one hundred and fifty miles to the northeast. He was still under the appointment of the State Board. The people in Washington knew him, as he had but recently traversed that county and all the other counties touching North Carolina, both east and west of French Broad river, and all south of the Tennessee River. In Washington were many staunch friends of missions and progress. The people received him with joy and gave him a comfortable home of fifty acres, for which he was thankful to the end of his days. Here he continued to spread the "mission leaven."

*In Bradley County.*—We next see Daniel Buckner at Cleveland in Bradley County. He was clerk of the townsite company when the town was laid out. Assisted by his brother Burrow, he organized and built up the Cleveland church. Elder Burrow Buckner was a preacher of ability. Going to southwest Missouri, he evangelized several counties, baptizing large numbers and planting churches. After establishing the church at Cleveland, Daniel Buckner moved to Somerset, Kentucky, where he had a call from the saints and from God.

## CHAPTER III

### A HAPPY FAMILY

The Buckners are of English origin. Their ancestors came to this country before the Revolutionary War and participated in that historic struggle. They established themselves in several States in the early decades of the Nineteenth Century.

*Six Happy Children.*—Six beautiful children, the best gifts of God, jeweled the home of Daniel and Mary Buckner. The oldest, Henry Frieland, early gave evidence of ideals and principles of more than ordinary promise. This incident will illustrate: When about thirteen years old, he was sent by his mother one day to consult a doctor with reference to the illness of one of the younger children. The doctor, who was not religious, was thoughtless enough to use some profane language in the presence of the boy. He was much shocked, and hastening home to his mother, said: "Oh, Mamma, that doctor is bad. He used cuss-words right before me." The second child, Harriet Caroline, while still a baby, went home to God. Bennett, the third child, was a fine looking, scampering boy, full of life and fun, and the joy of the household. Miriam Isabel came next. Baby Harriet had drooped like a tiny flower, and was blooming now in the Paradise of God, but an aching void was left in the mother's heart. Miriam's coming comforted her, and helped a little to fill that void. Robert Cooke was the fifth child, and Ann Haseltine the youngest. "Aunt Annie," as the Buckner Orphan children love to call her, and her illustrious brother, Robert Cooke, are still living. All the children were born in Tennessee.

*The Joy of Their Parents.*—There was love for father and mother and for one another, together with love of fun and sport in the lives of these happy children, such as made them the crown



of joy of their parents. There is no more beautiful or Divine thing this side of Heaven than an orderly, intelligent, Christian house, and such was that of Daniel Buckner and family.

*Molding Hand of Mother.*—The father was much away from home, publishing abroad the good news of the Kingdom. The care of rearing and training the children fell mainly to the lot of their mother. But she was equal to the task. Love for God, love for her children, a patient spirit, a trained intellect and practical sense are the high qualifications of motherhood. All these, Mrs. Buckner possessed.

Along with the others, Robert Cooke came under the molding hand of this mother. The seeds of divine truth were planted in his heart from infancy. And whenever the fond father did have the sweet joy of spending a night at home, a chapter from the New Testament was read, and all the family carried into the very presence of the King on the wings of holy prayer.

It was during Daniel Buckner's seven years' harvest of souls at Madisonville, Tennessee, that his son, Robert Cooke, was born, January 3, 1833. As already said, the log-house in which the future "orphans' father" first saw the light, now stands on the grounds of Buckner Orphans Home. It is known among the orphan family as the "Tennessee House."

*A Dream Come True.*—Mrs. Mamie Daudlin, who was reared in the Home from early childhood, daughter of "Aunt Sallie Britton," many years matron, dreamed one night that the identical log-house in which "Father Buckner" was born stood on the grounds of Buckner Orphans Home. She told the dream to her mother and others, and there was desire to see it come true. The owner of the house, S. D. Reynolds, was willing to sell, and his price was accepted. Matrons and employees paid the money. Joe Dudley Buckner visited Madisonville, took down the house, shipped it, and it was rebuilt at the Home. This was in the autumn of 1912. W. Morris Harrison, attorney at Sapulpa, Oklahoma, conducted the negotiations.

The broad open fireplace has been restored. The same old, old door with "latchstring on the outside" is in place. On the wall hangs a large "quilt square," of beautiful floral design, containing a thousand stitches, the work of Mary Buckner's hands.

When the house was being re-built, "Father Buckner" wrote these lines in reply to a hundred little questions:

"This is the house that I was born in  
Early on one winter mornin',  
Third day, first month after December,  
So they say—I don't remember.  
It was the year the stars all fell.  
What year was that? Say, who can tell?"

Till this day the foregoing lines hang on the wall in "Tennessee House."

This log-house was an object of unusual interest on January 3, 1913, when 2,000 people visited Buckner Orphans Home, in recognition of Dr. Buckner's eightieth birthday.

*Good Place for Children.*—There is no better place for growing children of strong bodies and strong intellects than the hill country of Tennessee and Kentucky. Development is usually rapid. It was so with the Buckner children. Before his mother was aware of it, Henry Frieland was almost grown. His mind grew with his body, and he made marvelous progress in learning. He early acquired a good foundation in Latin and Greek. He was ordained to preach before leaving Tennessee, and though but a youth, had a warm welcome in Kentucky, and was soon in the midst of a fruitful ministry. In 1841, when twenty-three years old, he began work as missionary of the General Association of Kentucky, doing acceptable work and growing in favor with God and men. In 1848, he became missionary to the Creek Indians, and went to Indian Territory in 1851. During a life among the Indians of more than a third of a century, his labors were owned of God and crowned with glory. He made for the

Creeks an alphabet and grammar, compiled for them a hymn book and translated much of the New Testament into their tongue. He baptized large numbers of them, and established among them schools and churches. He at length finished his course with joy and was buried at Eufaula, loved as a brother by all the Creek Tribe.

Bennett's fine appearance and fine spirit made him a great favorite among all his friends. He was just such a Christian boy as parents delight to point to as examples for their sons. Just as he was turning into promising young manhood, he entered the United States Army, went away to the Mexican War, and gave his life in the service of his country. Breathing out his spirit in the City of Mexico, he was buried there, mourned by all who knew him. Mrs. M. P. Elliott nearly sixty years afterward wrote to Dr. Buckner: "Your brother Bennett was about the finest looking of you all. His army comrades said he was the very soul of honor."

Miriam became the wife of Elder Aaron Holt, a Baptist preacher and schoolteacher. This union gave to the world Adoniram Judson Holt, D.D., Baptist preacher and leader in the foremost rank, known and beloved in every State.

Ann Haseltine married L. R. Williams, a Christian gentleman of exemplary life and delightful spirit. He has been dead many years.

*Missionary Mantle.*—The missionary mantle of Daniel Buckner fell on his son, Henry Frieland, missionary to the Indians; and his son, Robert Cooke, missionary in both Kentucky and Texas; on his grandson, A. J. Holt, for a time missionary to the Seminole Indians; on his grandson, Hal F. Buckner, missionary in Canton, China; and on his great-grandson, R. E. Beddoe, medical missionary and builder of the S. P. Ramseur hospital at Yingtak, China. It looks as if the Buckner missionary wave which started in the hills in East Tennessee is destined to go on, ever widening, till Jesus comes.

## CHAPTER IV

### BOYHOOD AND YOUTH

*Early Start in Books.*—Robert was a real boy, wide-awake, running, laughing, shouting, and quick to learn. When but five years old, while the family still resided at Cleveland, Tennessee, he learned all the letters of the English alphabet in one day. They were taught to him by his brother, Henry Frieland. He was beginning to learn to read, when the family moved to Kentucky in the fall of 1838. The settlement in Kentucky was at Somerset in Pulaski County, where Daniel Buckner enjoyed a prosperous pastorate of fourteen happy years.

*School Books.*—Young Robert's earliest recollection of books reaches back to early childhood, when Webster's "Blue Back Speller" was the corner-stone of all learning. Then came Smiley's Arithmetic, Kirkham's Grammar, and books in geography and history. The educational stairsteps known as "first grade," "second grade," etc., had not been invented in those days. Even the boy himself had not been "discovered" except among a limited number of families. Robert's father and mother kept the children at their books as much as time and their restless natures would permit.

*Brick Seminary at Somerset.*—A school at Somerset doing a measure of academic work was known as the "Brick Seminary." The preceptors were William Fitzpatrick and H. A. Anderson. The boys called them "Uncle Billy Fitzpatrick" and "Scotchie Anderson." But all the same, "Uncle Billy" and "Scotchie" saw that the boys did creditable work. The Buckners were not long at Somerset before Robert's mother was engaged as assistant teacher in the Seminary, and Robert with the older

children, except Henry Frieland, were placed in this school, where they got a good start.

*His First Bible.*—Soon after the removal to Kentucky, Robert's mother gave him a copy of the Scriptures. Robert was pleased with his Bible, and at once set about its study. He was assisted by his mother, who taught him how to use "Butterworth's Concordance," the identical copy of which he still possesses. Careful perusal of the English Bible was thought to be necessary if one would become a good reader. The fine old hymns of his father's hymn-book were also read by the boy with delight and profit, and a good store of truth and metaphor from the Bible and hymn-book gave commanding strength to his intellect and diction through all the lengthened years of his useful life.

*Boy-life at Somerset.*—Work and study with intervals of freedom, sport, hunting and fishing, made boy-life worth while in and around Somerset. Within proper restrictions, Bennett and Robert were allowed to ramble with the others. Somerset with a population of near seven hundred at that time, teemed with boys, as did the settlements in the country, and there was no end to their good times. Many of these boys developed into the highest type of Christian manhood, and lived far down to the ripe age of silver crowns and glory. And even their early boyhood excursions remained as golden pictures in their memories. L. D. Porch, an old Somerset boy, became a wholesale merchant in Louisville. Another, Brent Girdler, became a hardware merchant in Louisville. Will Curd became an eminent lawyer and judge in Somerset. Another, familiarly known as Buck Taylor, became a preacher of great usefulness over all that part of Kentucky. Others became men of note in the business and professional world. Hard study under preceptors "Uncle Billie" and "Scotchie"—hard work, with seasons of "good times in the woods," and rest and worship on the Lord's Day—these things were the making of the Somerset boys.

Deacon V. W. Allen, now (1913) eighty-eight years old, living at Elihu, Kentucky, tells with keen relish of Somerset boy-life in those early days. The following shall suffice:

"One time we 'robbed' a bee-hive and ate honey till we could eat no more. Then Bennett Buckner made 'honey-bread,' and we ate again and pronounced it 'good.'

"On another occasion several of us boys met at the 'Daddy Buckner' home. It was the season of wild cherries and we were soon out gathering and eating. Bennett and Robert Buckner were with us, and we had a first-rate good time. But some were greedy and ate too many cherries to their sorrow. Sometimes there was a fight. Then the balance of us stood and looked on, and would not allow a boy to get hurt."

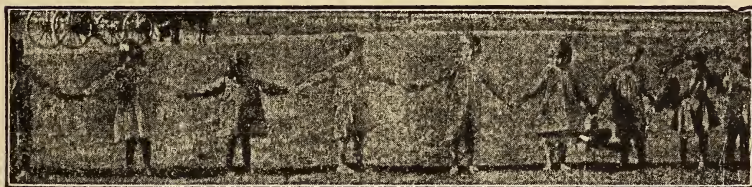
*Initiated Into Delights of Horsemanship.*—When Robert Buckner was a small boy, he was extremely cautious—so much so that it gave his mother concern. He could scarcely be coaxed to ride a gentle horse when other boys of his age were expert riders. One day he was persuaded to mount a gentle animal. Then his mother and his brother, Bennett, urged the horse into a swift trot. Robert held on, liked it, and was soon as daring as other boys.

*His First Gun.*—The Somerset boy in the forties who could not ride on horseback and could not shoot a gun was "no boy at all." Robert was now getting to be a skilled equestrian and, of course, he must have a gun. His father yielded, the gun was bought, and Robert was a proud boy. It was different from other guns in the neighborhood in that the wood-stock reached only a third of the length of the barrel, whereas other guns had the wood-stock full length. It loaded from the "muzzle," requiring a "ramrod" to "ram the bullet down," as did other guns.

*To Shoot Rats.*—The proud boy hastened to his father's barn to shoot rats. But while climbing, by accident, the gun "fired," sending a bullet through a toe on his left foot. His mother

dressed the wounded toe, removing fractured bones, and the young sportsman was a shut-in for six weeks.

Dr. B. F. Riley of Birmingham, Alabama, author of a "History of Texas Baptists," remarked of Dr. Buckner: "Beneath all his cheerful exterior there has been a will of iron." This was true even when he was a boy. In his first attempt to shoot rats, the toe was wounded, but the "will of iron" was not. So as soon as he could cripple back to the barn on crutches, he was there, determined to shoot rats. Nor did he leave till he had killed one. The "will of iron" grew as the boy grew, and in the meridian of his life it built Buckner Orphans Home.



## CHAPTER V

### EARLY IN GOD'S SERVICE

God's program for uplifting humanity included the life of R. C. Buckner. God must use him. And, like Timothy, from a child he must know the Holy Scriptures. And, like Samuel, he must enter upon God's service in boyhood. It was a day when church people, as a rule, did not much encourage child conversions. Robert had not had Sunday School training, but he had had training in a Christian home. God meant to use him in more than seven decades of unselfish Christian service. In after ages it can be fitly said of him, as of Sir Isaac Newton, "Let mortals congratulate themselves that so great an ornament of human nature ever existed."

*Regenerated.*—To open the boy's eyes to his undone condition, the Holy Spirit made effective that grand, old, soul-searching hymn:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound."

This hymn was a favorite in the Buckner home, as it was among Christian people the world over. Robert learned to sing it when yet a child. He loved it. One day while singing it, he stopped short and began thinking. Then he repeated the second line:

"That saved a wretch like me."

"No, no," he said to himself, "I am not saved." The third line:

"Was lost but now am found."

"No, I am lost and not found."

"Was blind but now I see."

"No, I am still blind."



His heart was touched to the depths, and though only nine years old, he clearly saw he could not sing that hymn and apply its meaningful words to his own soul. He was not saved. Immediately he began weeping bitter tears, and his sister, Miriam, inquired the cause.

"Oh, I am so sorry I am bad," was his reply.

Many days passed while a sense of his lost condition lay like a dark cloud on his soul. At length after two years a good meeting of days was carried on at Somerset by his father, assisted by his brother, Henry Frieland. Robert was forward several times for prayer. But there came a service when he did not go forward. Henry went to him and asked if he felt better.

"No better," was the reply.

Then his heart cried out to God in deep repentance. Soul sorrow for sin, this was, but it was brief. Suddenly the burden was gone, and light and joy and sweet peace with God filled his soul. It was an experience not to be forgotten in this world nor in that to come.

Soon afterwards, he was baptized by his father in Sinking Creek, when he was one day over eleven years and nine months old. He became a member of Somerset church, where his father was pastor.

*Bible Study.*—Robert had read the Scriptures much during the dark days when under conviction of sin. He was seeking light. And now, after his baptism, the Bible became his daily counselor, and continued to be his counselor all through his lengthened days. Into his life he incorporated the great thoughts of God. The words of the English Bible became to him thought and language and utterance.

Of the English Bible, Pattison has well said: "Never was nobler thought welded to richer tongue." And what else made Bunyan and Milton immortal, and Watts and Dickens and Burke and Daniel Webster, and a hundred others?

*Favorable Environment.*—The Buckner children were all

early enlisted in the army of God. The power was in the home. The good influence of Daniel and Mary Buckner, over their own children and over their neighbors, was irresistible.

Deacon V. W. Allen, who grew up under the spell of Daniel Buckner's power, says: "Elder Buckner was a nice man, a man that everybody liked and everybody had confidence in."

Said R. C. Buckner: "My father always kept open doors for the afflicted and unfortunate by day and by night." Thus was Buckner's gospel lived, and his gospel lived was blessed in the saving of souls, the same as his gospel preached. We instance the following story given the world by Dr. A. J. Holt. It was published in the "Western Recorder," July 18, 1912. It is here abridged:

*Intoxicated Judge Saved.*—Elder Daniel Buckner was pastor in Somerset in 1852. District Judge Joseph Porter rode up to the Buckner home one evening intoxicated. His own home was in Somerset, but he would not go home. He hailed:

"Parson Buckner, Parson Buckner, I want to sleep in your barn!"

"Come right in, Judge; come right in, and make yourself at home."

"No. I want to sleep in your barn. Your wife is a lady and my wife is a lady, and I shall not sleep in any lady's bed. I deserve to sleep with the cattle."

Elder Buckner was quickly out and had the Judge off his horse, and the animal was stalled and fed.

"Now come with me, Judge, and I will smuggle you into the side room and Mrs. Buckner will not know it." The Judge was put to bed and a cup of coffee brought him. It was the invariable rule of Daniel Buckner to pray in his family at night before retiring, and he did not know how to pray in an ordinary tone of voice. Of course, Judge Porter heard him. A. J. Holt was lying on a "trundle-bed" in the same side room, trembling with fear. He was but a child, and was mortally afraid of a drunk

man. The light was still burning and the boy kept his eye on the judge. A hymn-book was lying on a small table beside Judge Porter's bed, and he, taking up the hymn-book, began reading Joseph Stennett's heart-moving hymn:

"As on the cross the Savior hung  
And wept and bled and died,  
He poured salvation on a wretch  
That languished at His side."

"Yes," said he, "I am as mean as that wretch, too." He read and commented all the way through the hymn. Then he got out of bed and fell on his knees in prayer. At the next meeting-day of Somerset Church, Judge Porter asked for membership, and Daniel Buckner baptized him. And to the end of his days Judge Porter was faithful to his church and to his God.

Stennett's hymn, "As on the cross the Savior hung," was his sweet favorite. One day he sang it in the presence of a young girl with such power and pathos that she was saved, and was soon afterwards baptized by Elder Buckner. The room in which this occurred was the same in which, years before, R. C. Buckner was brought under conviction while singing "Amazing Grace."

A preacher much loved in Kentucky, Rev. W. L. Porter, was a son of Judge Porter, and three preachers of power, J. J. Porter, J. C. Porter, and T. J. Porter, were his grandsons. They are remembered over the whole South, from Kentucky to Florida. Each of those distinguished grandsons was regaled with "D. D."

*Comforting the Dying.*—Deacon V. W. Allen, elsewhere quoted, loved to tell how Daniel Buckner, away back in 1844, visited and prayed with his (Allen's) dying father. "He sang for my father his good songs, and prayed with him, and then, when he was gone, preached his funeral."

As has been remarked, the environment within which the Buckner children were reared was favorable, and for this they never ceased to praise God.

*Daniel Buckner and Somerset.*—Daniel Buckner was shepherd of the spiritual flock at Somerset for fifteen happy years. They were among the years of his strength. During this time he buried with Christ in holy baptism 250 new-born souls, and left the church with 325 members, trained missionaries and united.

When he went away, he was not gone. He projected his spirit down into the coming generations of that church. Mrs. M. P. Elliott, who came into the church during this pastorate, wrote more than fifty years afterwards: "I am not ashamed of Somerset Church, nor of its fruits. The Buckners and Sallees and others known on two continents are products of this church."

Leaving Somerset, Daniel Buckner accepted Perryville Church, and others in surrounding communities, remaining six years. Of his life in Kentucky he wrote many years afterward: "I shall never enjoy any better society till I get to the better land. I labored in Kentucky twenty-four years."

*Last Days in Texas.*—After the removal of R. C. Buckner to Texas (of which I shall tell you later), Daniel Buckner could no longer content himself among the good people where he spent the strength of his manhood—the good people of old Kentucky. He shall tell it himself:

"The cause of my removal to Texas was as follows: My youngest son, R. C. Buckner, had come to the State two years previously, and as he had always been the pet of the family, we felt that we could not do without him. On August 20, 1861, we set out on a 900-mile journey, and I drove my own team. I was in my sixtieth year. Soon after we got to the State, and within thirty-six miles of our destination, my wife was taken sick and we could not travel. I sent for a doctor, but all was in vain. On the ninth day of her illness, and my birthday, September 30, 1861, she died, among strangers and in a broken up condition, and all the privations of the war upon us. Thus she, who had been my comforter and in every way my helpmate for forty-

three years, was taken away from me. Yet amid all these afflictions, we always found good, kind, sympathizing friends."

When it was seen that Mrs. Buckner's sickness might prove fatal, a messenger was dispatched to Paris for her son, Robert. He was holding a meeting at the time. It was not reported to him that the condition of his mother was serious, so he remained in Paris and preached at night and then hurried to see his sick mother the next day. The camp of his father, where she lay sick, was at Clarksville. But when the son got there, his mother was gone. Her last words, "Hasn't Bobbie come yet?" were ever afterward enshrined in his heart. Her body was laid to rest in the Clarksville cemetery, but her soul was with Jesus.

Elder Daniel Buckner lingered on this side of Jordan twenty-two years longer, preaching as God gave him strength till he was four score and four years old, when he passed over from his son's home in Dallas, October, 1883. His ashes sleep in the Dallas cemetery.

He had baptized 2,500 souls, of whom twenty-five had become ministers of the Gospel.

## CHAPTER VI

### EDUCATION

Already we have had some flashlight notes on Dr. Buckner's early start on the road to learning. We shall follow him further. The "Old Brick Seminary" at Somerset started him off well.

At scarce seventeen he began exercising as a minister. He needed to go up higher, and his father knew it, but it takes a little money to go to college, even when the most rigid economy is observed. The Buckners were resourceful, though not renowned for kinship to Croesus. Could the young preacher get help? It was not asked. Yes, he got help. Deacon B. Wilmott, who finished his good life in Dallas, Texas, paid one dollar to assist the young man through school. This was all. The deacon always claimed that he had an interest in all of Dr. Buckner's life work.

*Georgetown College.*—It was a sacrifice, but it was made, and young Robert went to Georgetown. Deacon V. M. Allen relates: "In the fall of 1850, Robert Buckner, a young licensed preacher, came to the wood where I was assisting his father to make rails. His father talked to him with great earnestness about going to college. His father was so nice to him and talked to him so pleasantly that he consented."

There were multitudes of people in that day who had never seen a "college man," or even heard of a college.

The fond father accompanied his son to Georgetown, a hundred miles distant. He was introduced to Dr. Howard Malcolm, Georgetown's president, and duly entered. Dr. Malcolm was near the end of his incumbency and was succeeded by President J. L. Reynold, who, after two years, was followed by Dr. R. D. Campbell. Young Buckner remained till after President Camp-

bell was installed, and had, therefore, the help and inspiration of three of the best presidents that ever graced old Georgetown.

*Preceptor Blewett.*—Robert Buckner's preceptor, Dr. B. L. Blewett, gave him careful attention, especially in Latin and Greek. He saw promise in his pupil and kept eyes on him for more than sixty years. At the advanced age of ninety-six, Dr. Blewett, in a letter to Dr. Buckner's biographer, used these words: "As a pupil under my care, I soon perceived young Buckner's promising capabilities. I love and esteem him for what he is and for what he has done. The impression of a successful future which he gave me when a boy has abided with me and has been fully realized. I desire a copy of the first issue of his biography."

Preceptor Blewett had a keen eye for boys, both in directing their progress and peering into their mischiefs. As to detecting their mischiefs, the following chicken story will illustrate.

*Chicken Story.*—Certain college boys "made up" to roast some of Preceptor Blewett's plump chickens. (Buckner was not one of this bunch.) But the doctor "caught on." The appointed night came, and the youngsters were in line at the chicken roost. The boy nearest the roost lifted a fine bird. It was passed to the next boy, and from boy to boy along the line, with the word, "This is Bet!" Another was passed, with the word, "This is Ned!" But it transpired that Preceptor Blewett was also in line. Suffice to say the chicken feast was not a success.

Quite soon thereafter "Doctor Blewett" made a dinner and invited several of the students. They were prompt to accept, esteeming it no small honor. A great dish of smoking "chicken pie" on the center of the table whetted every appetite. Blessing was spoken, then the good doctor began passing the plates, plentifully filled. "Have some of Bet! Have some of Ned!" Sad to relate, the young gentlemen were of a sudden entirely without appetites. Boys under Blewett soon learned that digging at Latin and Greek roots was better than planning mischievous escapades.

*Sunday School Teacher.*—While at Georgetown, Student Buckner's walk was orderly. This was quickly observed, and a class was given him in the Sunday School. He had never before, but one time, seen inside of a Sunday School. Just once he had been present at the meeting of a little Methodist school. The next time was at Georgetown, where he was soon a teacher.

*Well on the Road.*—Some men are "college-made," others "self-made." But some men who do things are both college-made and self-made. Dr. Buckner was of the latter class.

Returning from Georgetown well started on the road to learning, he never ceased to go forward. It is said of the immortal John Gill of England that after traversing continents of patristic, rabbinical and oriental lore, and after bringing out in nine large folio volumes his "Body of Divinity," he continued to go right on into still wider study and research, even down to advanced old age. "This," said he, "I do for the further instruction of the people under my care." Gill was Buckner's ideal.

And Buckner continued. His steps were cautious. He read none but the best books and periodicals. He kept pace with the advance of religious progress and of world history. He understood Beecker's words: "The periodicals are an ever unfolding cyclopedia."

*Theological Attainments.*—Buckner's theological attainments grew to be of the highest order. "Scott's Commentaries," "Barnes' Notes," "Wesley's Notes," Calvin, Watson, Dwight, Olshausen, Fuller, and Gill were studied with tireless care. But his main daily study was God's book.

Some lines in his father's hand on the flyleaf of his Bible were his guide:

"Men's books with heaps of chaff are stored,  
God's book doth golden grain afford;  
Then leave the chaff and spend thy pains  
In gathering up the golden grains."



Miss Lula Mae Whitehead, long years Dr. Buckner's secretary, says it was his delight to teach those lines to many orphan children.

"He did not spend much time with fiction," says Miss Whitehead. "He feared the embellished fiction might smile itself into where none but stern facts should be entertained." His complete set of Scott's Novels were given to his friend, Senator S. B. Maxey.

Says Miss Whitehead: "The old church hymns his mother sang were music to his soul. His heart continued to sing them."

*Legal Learning.*—Dr. Buckner made himself familiar with Blackstone and other writers on law. His zeal and aptitude in this field was taken note of by lawyers of renown, and tempting offers were made him to enter their offices and give his life to the legal profession. The charter of Buckner Orphan Home and that of the Texas Baptist Memorial Sanitarium, besides charters of other institutions, are his productions. They are documents worthy of a well-trained lawyer.

*Eleemosynary Information.*—In his later days, Dr. Buckner's acquaintance with eleemosynary literature came to be quite extensive. He read hundreds of productions bearing on this subject, and visited many institutions. At eighty years of age he towered above almost every other man in the world in knowledge respecting the good work of caring for orphan children and dependent aged people.

*What Others Think.*—President B. H. Carroll, of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary: "I hold in the highest possible esteem Dr. R. C. Buckner. I hold him as a personal friend, a man without reproach in character, wise in council, able in the interpretation of the Scriptures, sound in theology, safe in pastoral administration, and one of the few great presiding officers of the world, ranking with Brice of the Northern Baptist Convention, and with Boyce and Mell of the Southern Baptist Convention. Few men living ever had such clear conception of

parliamentary law, or were prompter in making decisions upon points of order. When the final history of the Baptist denomination in Texas is written, no name will be more illustrious than that of R. C. Buckner. Our Texas Baptist General Convention was delighted to honor him as its president for many years. His greatest monument, outlasting any memorial of granite or marble ever erected over the dead, will be the great institution which he founded and which has prospered to the present time." From letter to the author, October 17, 1912.

Fred W. Freeman, Christian lawyer, Denver, Colorado: "If to so accommodate himself in speaking and writing as to be thoroughly understood—if this is scholarship, then I am ready to sign a diploma for Dr. Buckner as a professor in the University of the World."

Rev. W. P. Harvey, Harrodsburg, Kentucky, many years auditor of the Southern Baptist Convention: "He has ranked through life as a safe, intelligent leader."

Rev. W. D. Powell, D. D., State Mission Secretary, Louisville, Kentucky: "Dr. Buckner ranks high as a finished scholar, and for more than thirty years I have devoured everything that has come from his hands."

President E. Y. Mullins, of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky: "I used to visit the office of the "Texas Baptist" in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Buckner was the editor. He was kindness itself to me. I very soon began to consider the question of entering the ministry. In Dr. Buckner's office I found excellent reading for a young Christian. He impressed me profoundly. His sermons moved me. It was while listening to him preach that my purpose to enter the ministry, in part, was formed. I have watched his course with the greatest interest and have noted the creative spirit that established and built up the Orphans Home. I know of no man whose simplicity and force of character have impressed me more than those

of Dr. Buckner." (Excerpts above are from letters to J. L. Walker.)

The preceding excerpts are from letters to the author, written in 1912. They could be multiplied.

Dr. J. B. Link, fellow-student with Dr. Buckner at Georgetown, and many years editor of the "Texas Baptist Herald," wrote: "The foundations of his (Buckner's) education were laid at Somerset, Kentucky, where the writer first knew him, and has been studiously built upon for many years. In the earlier years of his ministry he was an untiring student and made it the rule not to preach from even the plainest New Testament text without examining it in the original Greek."—Biographical and Historical Magazine.

The degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on R. C. Buckner by Keachi College (Louisiana) when that school was at the height of its prosperity.

The degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on him by Baylor University at Waco. On the same occasion Baylor conferred a like honor on President W. R. Harper, of Chicago University; President E. Y. Mullins, of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and others:

Dr. Buckner was sitting among the others on the platform at the time and facetiously remarked: "I caught that by absorption." But President S. P. Brooks, of Baylor, arose and said: "I would rather have to my credit the good work wrought by Dr. Buckner than to be Czar of all the Russias."

## CHAPTER VII

### EARLY LABORS IN KENTUCKY

The sunrise of R. C. Buckner's ministerial life was cloudless. His call into the ministry by the Spirit was heard by both himself and the Baptist Church at Somerset. He was but a youth of seventeen summers. But the church liberated him and encouraged him, and he was in favor with God and all the people. With joy he preached the good news of the Kingdom and comforted the sick and distressed. For his work's sake, he was remembered by the good people of Somerset for many decades.

This incident will illustrate: After an absence of forty years, he again visited the home of his boyhood and early ministry. To a lady, at whose home he called, he announced: "I am R. C. Buckner, from Texas." She looked him in the face a moment and replied: "Dr. Buckner, you are welcome to my home. You are the man my mother told me to never forget, because of kindness to my brother in his sickness."

But to come to his best, the young preacher must have additional training. And as we know he was soon away at Georgetown, sitting at the feet of Preceptor Blewett and of other preceptors. And never a potter knew better how to mold the yielding clay than did Dr. Blewett the plastic mind of his pupil.

*Meeting at Fishing Creek.*—After returning from Georgetown in the summer of 1852, young Buckner held a meeting of power and results with the Fishing Creek Church near Somerset. Elder James Cooper ("Good Uncle Jimmie"), the pastor, was aged and "palsied."

There were fourteen unsaved people present on the evening of the beginning, and twelve of them were saved that evening and the other two were saved with others as the meeting progressed. At the close, the baptizing was done in Fishing Creek

at midnight. Among the baptized was a young man of honorable connection named A. J. Dye, whose family held with the followers of Alexander Campbell. This young brother developed into a Baptist preacher of strength and influence. He has long since gone to his eternal home.

Not far from this time our young minister passed a pleasant evening in a hotel parlor in Somerset with two young lady friends, sisters, who were strangers to grace. Dancing was going on in another room. The sisters asked him to accompany them to that room.

Said he: "I will go with you if you will do the first thing I shall ask after reaching there."

"We will do what you say," they promised.

He went, remained a few minutes, and said: "Now my request is that you return with me to the parlor."

They returned. Then he talked to them about the evils of dancing and of their need of a Savior. They promised never to dance again. Not long afterwards Elder Daniel Buckner baptized them.

The young preacher's friends had hoped that he would prove as useful in advancing the Kingdom as his illustrious brother, Henry Frieland Buckner, who was now in the beginning of his good work as missionary to the Creek Indians. Albany Church in Clinton County, some fifteen miles away, had an eye on him as a possible pastor.

*Separation to the Work.*—Two months after the Fishing Creek meeting, R. C. Buckner was ordained to the full work of the Gospel ministry. This solemn service was authorized by the Somerset Baptist Church and was observed in the Somerset meeting-house.

Following is a copy of his credentials:

*"To Whom It May Concern.*—This is to certify that the undersigned, after satisfactory examination of our beloved young brother, Robert C. Buckner, as to his Christian experience, call

to the ministry and views of doctrine, when convened for the purpose with the United Baptist Church of Jesus Christ at Somerset, Kentucky, did proceed in accordance with the wish of said church to set apart by solemn prayer and imposition of hands the said Robert Buckner to the ministry of the Gospel, investing him with all the duties and privileges belonging to that most sacred office; and we hereby recommend him to the Christian regard and confidence of all the churches, and to the favorable notice of all magistrates and men in authority, praying that he may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness.

"In testimony whereof witness our own signatures this 13th day of November, 1852.

"B. T. Taylor, Pastor Columbia Church, Kentucky.

"Daniel Buckner, Pastor Somerset Church, Kentucky."

Rev. B. T. Taylor, whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument, had been a fellow-student with R. C. Buckner at Georgetown.

*Meeting at Somerset.*—Immediately after his ordination, R. C. Buckner and his friend, Rev. B. T. Taylor, held a meeting of days in Somerset which resulted in fifteen additions to the church by baptism.

Though his father was pastor, it was decided that the son should administer the ordinance of baptism. The first to receive the ordinance at his hands was Miss Moriah Porter, daughter of Judge Joseph Porter. Sixty years afterwards this lady, now Mrs. Moriah Porter Elliott, in a letter to Dr. Buckner, thus refers to that happy occasion: "You baptized me, the first person you ever baptized. All the others saved in that meeting have passed on into the next world. Your mother saw that I was under conviction and led me to the altar, where I made the good confession."

It was at Somerset that R. C. Buckner was saved, baptized, licensed to preach, preached his first sermon, was ordained and did his first baptizing.

*Church Planted at Stanford.*—From the Somerset meeting he went to Stanford, in Lincoln County, where he and Elder Jesse C. Portman conducted a good meeting. The Baptists had no house, and were glad to hold in a house belonging to the Disciples, which had been tendered.

While the meeting was in progress the Disciples came together and held a communion service. They invited the Baptists and others to partake with them. Portman partook, Buckner declined. As soon as the service was adjourned, Buckner asked:

“Brother Portman, why did you commune with the Disciples?”

Portman: “They were so good in letting us have the house that I couldn’t help it.”

Buckner: “I declined in order to show them that I stood for principle.”

Elder Portman was at that time forty-six years old; Buckner not yet twenty.

The fruit of this meeting was the organization of the Stanford Baptist Church by a presbytery composed of Elders Jesse C. Portman, R. D. Potts (later missionary to the Choctaw Indians), and R. C. Buckner. Elder Porter was afterwards its pastor. Later he came to north Texas, where he did substantial, constructive work as evangelist and pastor. During the Civil War he was pastor of Rowlet’s Creek Church and moderator of Elm Fork Association.

*Albany Pastorate.*—Albany was the county seat of Clinton County, about fifty miles from Somerset. No more refined or cultured people could be found in Kentucky than had their residence in this town. Among them were Deacon Sam Long, member of the Kentucky Legislature; General Rice Maxey, deacon and lawyer of ability and large practice; also Judge George N. Denton, deacon. These gentlemen with their families were all members of the Albany Baptist Church.

Accepting their warm invitation, Dr. Buckner, at the age of twenty, became pastor of this delightful people January 20, 1853.

A congenial friendship sprang up between young Sam Bell Maxey, worthy son of General Maxey, and Pastor Buckner that continued through life. Young Maxey was a graduate from the United States Military Institute at West Point, and a capable lawyer with a growing practice. His pastor had the happiness to say the word that made Maxey and Marilda Denton husband and wife. This young man's star of destiny in after years led him on to a place of distinction as an officer in the war with Mexico in 1845 (in which war Bennett Buckner, brother of R. C. Buckner, lost his life), as a Confederate general in the Civil War, to a seat in the United States Congress as a Senator from Texas, and to a position of leadership in the councils of the great Baptist denomination.

*Blind Widow at Albany.*—In the Albany flock was a blind widow, familiarly known as "Blind Grandma Stoddard." She was devout, intelligent, a lady of convictions, a Baptist, and knew why. Dr. J. M. Pendleton, towering scholar and author, had been her pastor and she loved him devotedly, and now that R. C. Buckner was her pastor, she loved him none the less. One day "Blind Grandma" handed Pastor Buckner \$5.00 in gold.

"I cannot take it," he said. "I would rather give you five times that sum than take it."

"But you must take it. You will break my heart if you do not take it."

He took it and asked: "Where did you get so much money?"

"Earned it knitting. I knit from morning till night and am happy in my occupation."

It was during this pastorate at Albany that R. C. Buckner made choice of Miss Vienna Long as his life partner in God's service. They were married June 7, 1854. With the glad coming of this sunny Christian companion into his life came new light and strength, such as a God-sent helpmate only can give. Miss Long was the accomplished daughter of Deacon Sam Long, elegantly brought up and noted for her personal charms. Hear Dr. A. J.



Holt: "Miss Vienna was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. Her beauty seemed almost angelic."

Miss Long was at Henry Female College when the Albany people gave the hand of welcome to their new pastor. Returning, she was gracefully presented to him by her father. The pleasing occasion is set to music in some beautiful lines found among the papers of Dr. Buckner.

*"The Place Where First I Met Her."*

"Gracing hillock stood a mansion,  
Home of this girl's honored father;  
There, the fact I softly whisper,  
(She was reared without a mother);  
There we met when day was going  
Into quiet twilight shades,  
Evening sunset backward throwing  
Lines of gold on mellow clouds.  
Entered I at that sweet hour,  
As from distant school she came  
And stepped beside her father's chair,  
When he pronounced to her my name,  
My name to her, and hers to me,  
As, rising from his easy chair,  
He said, 'Our pastor, Dear, you see,  
We all have made him welcome here.'  
I turned aside from grace and beauty,  
Said 'Goodnight,' and then retired;  
Left because it was my duty,  
Felt my soul with love inspired,  
Felt to sing of joy that fills  
The heart when holy, youthful love  
Responds to heart, responds and thrills  
With bliss, like bliss in Heaven above."

The bridal tour across the undulating country, part of the way on horseback, to Somerset was enjoyed. At Somerset the young tourists procured a buggy and continued northward through woodland parks, across sparkling streams, over fragrant hills and along golden vales, at length alighting at a place in Mercer County, where a gospel meeting was being conducted by two of Kentucky's most valued preachers. They were V. E. Kirkland, D. D., and A. W. LaRue, D. D.

*Sample Sermon.*—Young Buckner was asked to preach in the Kirkland and LaRue meeting. No excuse would be heard. Preach he must, and did. He learned afterwards that there were present brethren from Owensboro who wished to hear him preach without letting him know it. The bridal tour here ended and the young couple returned to Albany.

Dr. LaRue was the man who convinced George C. Lorimer that God needed his splendid talents in the pulpit. Lorimer was among the most famous stage actors in America, and soon came to be one of the first preachers on the continent. At one time R. C. Buckner and George C. Lorimer were neighboring pastors, Buckner at Salvisa and Lorimer at Harrodsburg. When Lorimer resigned Buckner was urged to accept Harrodsburg for life.

In a brief time young Buckner received a call from the church at Owensboro at a salary of \$500. Then came an invitation to visit Louisville with a view to the pastorate of Portland Avenue Church. Portland Avenue was under the foster care of Walnut Street Church.

He was soon in Louisville. Here he beheld the crowds at the altar of Mammon, and his heart was stirred within him. He entered the elegant, fashionable Walnut Street Church, where the illustrious W. W. Everett, D. D., was pastor.

The pipe organ pealed forth swelling music. It was the first pipe organ he had ever seen or heard. It seemed attuned to the harmonies of Heaven. And deep down in his soul he wished that the music of human activity in that city might praise God

in harmony with the grand pipe organ. He felt he could preach, and did preach.

A tempting offer of \$1,200 was tendered him if he would become the settled pastor of Portland Avenue Church. The officers of Walnut Street Church stood ready to make good his salary.

*Open Doors.*—Louisville offered \$1,200, Owensboro \$500. Then the church at Albany would consent to no change.

What must he do?

Deacon Long could see no good reason why his talented son-in-law should go to either Louisville or Owensboro, so he gave the young man \$2,000 with which to buy an interest in a store. "He can own an interest in this business, live in Albany, preach for Albany Church, and do better financially than in either Louisville or Owensboro." So reasoned the deacon. The trade for the business was not made, but the young man was expected to keep the \$2,000. He returned \$1,000 to his father-in-law, saying he did not need it.

*Pastor at Owensboro.*—Dr. Buckner settled the question of pastorate, as every conscientious pastor settles such questions, on his knees.

Dr. S. L. Helm, one time corresponding secretary of the American Indian Mission Association (the same that sent out Henry Frieland Buckner), had been shepherd at Owensboro, and the call to young Buckner came as the call of God to care for the flock now suffering because of the going of Dr. Helm. It was his duty to accept. A happy pastorate it proved, too, continuing through 1855 and 1856.

As choice spirits as could be found anywhere were counted among this Owensboro household: as Mercer Moreman, J. Fink and Lockett Hall. A worthy citizenship held these gentlemen as *primi inter Pares*. The McKays also were ornaments both of society and of the household of faith. Dr. W. H. McKay and Mrs. McKay, many years prominent citizens of Tyler, Texas,

were children, not yet grown, in Owensboro at the time when Dr. Buckner was shepherd in that city. Writing fifty-eight years afterwards, Dr. McKay says: "Both R. C. Buckner and Mrs. Buckner were liked in my father's family, and I remember being very fond of them. My wife and I are sure that a life that has been as full as that of Dr. Buckner's will furnish rich materials for an interesting book. We love and revere the dear man."

*Agent for Domestic Board.*—The pleasant task of feeding and leading the Owensboro flock could only continue two years. The young shepherd must have other experiences. It was in the plan of God.

Accordingly, the year of 1857 was given to the Domestic Board. He was the first agent of this Board in the State of Kentucky. Optimistic, cheerful, active, and everywhere welcome, his labors in this new field were crowned with success.

The Board profited by his collections, as for instance, Mrs. J. M. Frost, mother of Dr. J. M. Frost, of the Sunday School Board, contributed through him at one time \$500.

(Elder J. M. Frost, Sr., good man and able minister of the New Testament, died in Lexington, Kentucky, May 31, 1876. His last words were, "And now I am saved in fact in the Kingdom of God.")

But the sowing done by Agent Buckner was worth more to his Board than his reaping. Mission seeds were lodged in the hearts of the Baptist people in all parts of the State, and from that day forward through the oncoming decades Kentucky's missionary record has been luminous.

Buckner not only advocated missions, asking others to put their money into the work of advancing the Kingdom, but he put his own money into it. At this very time, and out of his own purse, he was supporting Elder Levy Mitchell, a missionary of the Domestic Board and kept it up for two years. Mitchell was a Choctaw Indian laboring among his own people in Indian Territory. He was an eloquent preacher and a charming singer.

Though R. C. Buckner kept Mitchell in the field, he himself was a poor man and working for a very small salary.

*Pastorate at Salvisa.*—A call from the church at Salvisa put Dr. Buckner back into the pastoral office, January, 1858. Salvisa was a pleasant field, the home of many refined and sunny people. A delectable company of saints, coveting earnestly the best gifts, made up the congregation of the Baptist Church.

Salvisa was not far from the place where, in 1854, Doctors Kirkland and LaRue held a great meeting and where Dr. Buckner delivered a sermon that made a deep impression and abided in the minds of the people.

It is in the bearing of fruit that our Heavenly Father is glorified, and the Salvisa pastorate was one of continual gathering of sheaves. A rich harvest came in December, 1858, when Pastor Buckner baptized a large company of willing converts in Salt River, a mile from the town. The weather was cold and water froze in the hair of the converts as they came up out of the baptismal wave, yet none suffered in health.

In the spring of 1859, Dr. Buckner baptized an elderly Presbyterian lady. This was displeasing to the Presbyterian minister, a Dr. Reeser. And right soon the displeased Dr. Reeser brought out a booklet entitled "Divine Testimony in Favor of Infant Baptism." Dr. Buckner replied in a booklet bearing the title, "Absence of Divine Testimony in Favor of Infant Baptism."

Dr. Reeser's production laid great stress on circumcision performed on infants under the Abrahamic covenant as proof that baptism must be administered to infants under the Christian covenant.

Dr. Buckner's reply made the argument that nothing in the Abrahamic covenant belongs to the Christian unless plainly so stated in the inspired record, and that the ceremony of circumcision is nowhere said by the inspired writers to be a part of the Christian covenant, or a type of baptism required by the Christian covenant. This was unanswerable, and the booklet was well

received with pastors and others. Especially was it commended by Rev. B. T. Taylor, whose name was signed to Dr. Buckner's ministerial credentials.

In the summer of 1859, Pastor Buckner had an attack of typhoid-pneumonia, which came nigh taking him to his long home. Recovering, he gained strength very slowly. This led him to resign at Salvisa and move to Paris, Texas, whither some of his relations and some of his best friends had already gone.

Eighteen months of joyful service had been given to Salvisa and more than seven years to Kentucky. His impress on that goodly State abides and will abide.

It might be appended that after the Civil War five of Salvisa's ex-pastors published the good news over all of northeast Texas. They were Elders Josiah Leake, Daniel Buckner, P. S. G. Watson, H. H. Tilford, and R. C. Buckner.



## CHAPTER VIII

### TEXAS AND FIRST STEPS

*Texas.*—Delightful clime, balmy air, smiling skies, fruitful fields, happy homes; famed for heroism above ancient Sparta, and for patriotism beyond imperial Rome; charmed land, surpassing the fabled gardens of the undying gods—this is *Texas*.

*Move to Texas.*—In the summer of 1859, Dr. Buckner spoke a tearful farewell to his loved church at Salvisa, Kentucky, and in the autumn following moved to Paris, Texas. He made the long overland journey by wagon, with his wife and two children, driving his own team and camping out at night. Some of his relatives and some other warm friends had preceded him and were now citizens of Paris.

*Bird's-eye View of Texas, 1859.*—Dr. Buckner's quick eye took in all Texas. Elder W. R. Green was pastor at Paris, and the Paris Church was coöperating with the Eastern Texas Baptist Convention. There were 429,000 whites and 180,000 blacks in the State. A Baptist named Sam Houston was governor-elect, and was that year inaugurated.

The Baptists numbered near 30,000, and had 80 houses of worship. The Methodists had more members and more houses, the Presbyterians fewer, while the Catholics exceeded both the Baptists and the Methodists in members, but had fewer houses.

There were two Baptist general missionary bodies in the State, the State Convention in south Texas and the Eastern Texas Convention in east Texas. The self-sacrificing missionaries of those bodies were doing heroic work, though on salaries of \$100 to \$600.

There were twenty-six Baptist associations, each competing for a share in the labor and in the joy of saving Texas. Many of the watchmen were men of intellectual might and kingdom hearts.

R. C. Burleson, pioneer and patriarch of Texas education, was president of the State Convention and of Baylor University. And this Baylor was the pride of Texas. Self-grown A. E. Clemmons, pastor at Marshall, was president of the Eastern Texas Convention. George W. Baines, of radiant memory, was shepherd at Anderson, and was editor of the "Texas Baptist," sending that Kingdom sheet into 2,200 homes. Judge J. M. Maxcy was preaching the gospel every Sunday in east Texas, while holding court during the week. At Mount Pleasant was Joshua F. Johnson, pastor and statesman. That eminent jurist and gospel hero, R. E. B. Baylor, was holding court and preaching the gospel over all south central Texas.

The grand old "canebrake preacher," Z. N. Morrell, in feeble health and silver age, was living at Blue Ridge, in Falls County, and preaching to the limit of his strength. Then "fighting preacher," Ephraim McDonald, armed with double-barrel gun, was chasing back the Indians and sowing gospel seed over all the settled portions of Williamson County and in parts beyond.

D. B. Morrill, east of the Trinity, was threading every trail and publishing the glad tidings from Red River to the Gulf. Also M. V. Smith, in the sunny morning of his ministry, was evangelist in the counties of Rusk and Smith, while Jonas Johnson, brave as Paul and lovable as John, was saving the counties of Grimes and Walker. Wharton and all the region round about was under the healing touch of a shining young spirit named J. H. Stribling. F. Kiefer was in the sunrise of his work among the Germans in Washington County and in other parts.

We cannot mention all. There were 300 of them, a Gideon's 300, too intent in pursuit to lie down by the cooling brook. But mocking at ease, they were grappling with the dragon, strangling



every reptile of heresy and publishing the evangel of peace and good will among all the people.

*Ladonia Academy.*—Dr. Buckner's first work after settling at Paris was to raise money and build a schoolhouse at Ladonia, in Fannin County. This was the beginning of a most excellent academy at that point. A few years later, two of the best educators in the South, W. B. Featherstone and W. J. Brown, presided over this academy and trained a thousand young people to be lights along the highway of progress in all parts of the State.

*A Debate.*—About the time of building the Ladonia house, Dr. Buckner had a debate with a Methodist preacher whose name was Dr. Love, and whose stock in trade consisted largely in assertion. Among other things he asserted that there was not a Greek lexicon in all the world that gave "immerse" as a meaning of the Greek word for baptize. Dr. Buckner's library had not yet arrived from Kentucky, though he was expecting it. But luckily in a day or two it came. "Now," said he, "I will show you that 'immerse' is given by respectable authors. I hold in my hand a copy of 'Greenfield's Greek New Testament,' with his lexicon in the back part of the book. He gives as meanings 'immerse, submerge, sink.' Will my brother come and read?"

His brother would not read.

"Has my brother a friend who will come forward and read in the hearing of the congregation?"

No friend would come.

Dr. Love immediately left the house, followed by several of his friends. This adjourned the debate.

Dr. Buckner mounted his horse and started home. A gentleman friend of Dr. Love's mounted and drew his horse by Dr. Buckner's side. Buckner tried to show this friend the definition. "I will not read," he replied.

*Evangelistic Excursions.*—While at Paris, before beginning his pastorate and afterwards, Dr. Buckner made frequent evangelistic tours into the surrounding country, reaping on many

fields. A meeting was held at Ladonia, where he baptized Lewis Holland, a gentleman of finished education, afterwards a preacher well known and of wide influence.

Dr. Buckner made journeys on foot regularly to Sylvan, some seven miles west of Paris, and preached to the people. They were a high type of citizenship, maintained a classical school, and were grateful for this service. He also kept up regular preaching appointments at another schoolhouse five miles east of Paris, going and returning on foot. Here, too, a good meeting was held.

*Meeting at Brakeen Schoolhouse.*—Brakeen Schoolhouse was fourteen miles south from Paris, near the Sulphur. Under a bush arbor at this point was held a meeting such as would rejoice the angels. Dr. Buckner made the trip on horseback from his home each day, preached at eleven o'clock and at night, and then returned home after the night's service. The congregation grew daily till one day a multitude stood before the preacher. The text was, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

As the arguments, illustrations, and appeals succeeded one another, the multitude hanging on his words, the speaker became marvelously conscious of the Divine Presence. Speaking of it many years afterward to his biographer, he used these words: "I felt a consciousness of the Divine Presence and power over the great audience and in my own soul. It was in the days when it was customary to invite penitents to the front seats for special prayer. At the conclusion of the discourse I felt confident of the immediate and all-conquering power of the gospel over the people, and that a number of the front seats would be needed. After requesting the seats to be vacated, I gave the invitation about as follows:

"Many of you unconverted people now feel that you should at once surrender to Jesus, the only Savior. It is said in the text that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. You

cannot resist it. You cannot do otherwise than surrender to this power. Now promptly come to these front seats and let us pray together, and you will experience in your own souls that the gospel is the power of God unto your own personal salvation."

A multitude came forward. Among them was an old veteran sinner, who was saved. The meeting continued two weeks, and a large number was saved. There was a hard case in the neighborhood known as "Uncle Sheb Williams." Would Uncle Sheb come to the meeting? He did come and was soon under conviction. He left, no one could tell where. But soon he came back, shouting a glorious Christian experience.

"Down in the Bois d'Arc bottom," said Uncle Sheb, "beside an old stump, I wrestled with sin and surrendered to the Lord."

There was no man in the community more prominent, influential, or worthy than Uncle Sheb Williams. Many of the best citizens of Paris are, and have been all along, of this Williams family.

## CHAPTER IX

### PARIS BAPTIST CHURCH AND PASTORATE

*Paris Baptist Church.*—The Paris Baptist Church was constituted April 23, 1854, by Elder Willis M. Pickett, who resided at Clarksville, Texas. Before coming to Texas, Elder Pickett planted the church at Owensboro, Ky., where Dr. Buckner afterwards served as pastor.

Elder Pickett led the infant church at Paris a year, helping it grow strong. Under his care it received twenty-one members and received anchorage in the Red River Baptist Association. When he afterwards died at Clarksville, Dr. Buckner conducted the funeral service and helped fill up the grave.

The constituent members of Paris church were J. Homer Cross, John Chinoworth, Goodman Tucker (afterwards deacon), Elizabeth Bell and Cynthia A. Little.

J. Homer Cross was a son of Kentucky, of the type in that goodly State noted for vigor and integrity. When he was preparing to leave his native heath for Texas, R. C. Buckner, successor to the apostle of the tent-making craft, cut out and helped make the duck tent for the use of Cross and family en route. Faithful Goodman Tucker, some sixteen years afterward, was a constituent member and deacon of Sulphur Springs Church, planted under Dr. Buckner's supervision while superintendent of missions.

After Elder Pickett, Elder R. L. Baker guided the church at Paris two years, carrying its coöperating strength in 1858 to the Eastern Texas Convention. Following Elder Baker was Elder W. R. Green, who was pastor at the time of the arrival of Dr. Buckner.

*Pastor at Paris.*—R. C. Buckner was called to the care of the church at Paris in January, 1861. In March, he accepted, which with him meant the taking of all the flock and carrying them in his bosom. As every time the Jewish high priest went into the most holy place, he bore upon his heart before God the names of all the tribes of Israel, inscribed on his breastplate; in like manner Pastor Buckner, day by day, bore up before God on his heart, in holy prayer, the name of every member of his beloved church.

*Full Time.*—The church called for one-fourth time, but the voice of God, speaking in the pastor's inner ear, said, "Full Time." And the church made the salary \$800. Dr. Buckner was the first pastor in North Texas to give full time to one church.

But the brethren at Paris were awake to the needs of evangelistic work in the adjacent country, and cheerfully made the sacrifice of lending their pastor to hold meetings and preach stately at different points. He often walked out to those appointments and then walked back home. It is amusing to recall that, when a little later Dr. Buckner's name was brought forward (though without his knowledge) as a suitable preacher to employ as city missionary in San Antonio, a prominent member of the board gravely objected on the ground that "a preacher who would make pedestrian journeys out to country points to preach would never do for a city missionary!"

*New Meeting House.*—Immediately after accepting the church, Pastor Buckner turned his attention to the erection of a new church building. The church was now six years old. It was holding its services in what was called the "Seminary." Elder W. R. Green, who preceded Dr. Buckner, had earnestly advocated the building of a meeting-house, and had led the church to appoint a building committee. But nothing more was done, and the church continued to meet in the Seminary. Probably because of delay in putting up this building, the little Baptist

company was held up in derision by some of the town people, as the "calico-bonnet crowd."

When Pastor Buckner declared the house must go up without delay, a prominent brother, E. Sanders, expressed grave doubts, because the preacher "looked so much like a boy." This E. Sanders was still living at Anson, Texas, in 1913. For more than three-score years and ten, the feet of good E. Sanders walked the path marked out in the New Testament. And through a long half century he kept in memory with undying love his early Paris pastor. Writing in the late sunset of life, he could say with deep tenderness of heart:

"My dear Buckner: It is now above fifty years that I have remembered you as the man who spoke comforting words at the graves of my three children."

But many good brethren at Paris saw graver things in the way of building a meeting house, than the fact of a "boy preacher." And they were bold to assure their pastor that this year, 1861, was a most inopportune and ill-chosen season for building, as now America's greatest war-cloud was already spread over the whole of the heavens, and all the strong men were hurrying away to the field of blood. But Pastor Buckner said: "The house must go up." It went up.

The pastor put his own money into the building and worked at it with his own hands. Where did Buckner get money? He bought quantities of wheat, had it ground and sold the products, realizing a handsome profit. This money he put into the building, and this money made the building possible.

With a hired man he went to Pine Creek bottom, and "rived" the lathes for interior plaster work. And he and Deacon William Jones went to the woods and hewed out of heavy oaks the columns that supported the building. He burned the lime himself for the plaster work, and hauled it with his own team. With his own hands he built one of the dressing rooms, while the carpenter, Mr. Smith Owenby, built the other. Nor did he

cease his efforts till the edifice was finished and furnished with baptistry and furniture. Among the last things he did was to go thirty miles north into Indian Territory, to an old Presbyterian mission, where he bought two large stoves, hauled them to Paris in his own wagon, and placed them in the meeting house. The building was a credit to Paris and to all North Texas. It stood forty feet by seventy with a spire twenty-eight feet above the building.

After the new building was completed, Dr. Buckner rented the Seminary building, in which the church originally worshiped, and opened a high-school with Colonel W. L. Williams and an accomplished lady as teachers. Colonel Williams afterwards married the daughter of a distinguished Missouri Baptist preacher named Beckley. This gifted sister in coming years touched for good the lives of multiplied thousands of Texas Baptist women.

Colonel Williams became a constituent member and senior deacon of the First Church of Dallas, holding fast his Christian integrity to the day of his death.

*Calico Bonnet Church.*—As already stated, the Baptist Church at Paris was called by some of the town people, "The Calico-Bonnet Church." But all the same, the church counted among its membership as noble and cultured people as any in the State.

We mention General Rice Maxey and family. Dr. Buckner had been their pastor at Albany, Ky. They united with the church at Paris in 1858, where General Maxey was a faithful deacon to the end of his earthly pilgrimage in 1878. He was at one time a member of the Texas Senate. His son, Sam Bell Maxey, graduate from West Point, rose to the position of major-general in the Confederate Army, and after the Civil War to that of United States Senator. A lawyer of eminence and wide practice for a half-century, he was a Christian gentleman, a man of convictions and a believer in world missions. At his funeral, Dr. Buckner could say: "I have never heard so much

as a whisper that Sam Bell Maxey was ever guilty of a single questionable or dishonorable act."

Later Sam Bell Maxey became a member of the Baptist Church at Paris. He sometimes electrified the councils of his denomination, as when he addressed the General Association at Paris in 1877 on "The Colored Population," and the same body at Waco in 1881 on "Christian Hospitality."

Others of the "calico-bonnet crowd" were Deacon Esquire Long and family; the family of Judge Henry W. Lightfoot; the trusted deacons, A. P. Hatcher, L. W. Williams, Goodman Tucker, William Jones and Colonel George N. Denton, all of them pillars in the church and society.

Deserving of mention also were Deacon and Mrs. L. P. Wolfe, parents of the loved layman, M. H. Wolfe, of Dallas, Texas. These good people came from South Carolina in 1859. They afterwards located near where now stands the town of Wolfe City, and were foundation stones in the old Rehoboth Church, where Dr. Buckner supplied for several years. While he was supplying Rehoboth Church, Sister Wolfe spun, wove, cut and made, all with her own hands, a full suit of clothes and presented them to her favorite preacher. Dr. Buckner never forgot this kind deed.

*Bandbox Preacher.*—Did you know they called Dr. Buckner the "Bandbox Preacher"? They did all his young days. This sobriquet was gained for him by his tidy appearance and his soldierly bearing. "Calico-Bonnet Church" and "Bandbox Preacher" may sound a bit comical, but there was no misfit.

*War and Work.*—The Civil War was raging, and all the country groaning and bleeding during the earlier years of this pastorate. The strong men were away on the tented field. A look into the future could see nothing but darkness.

It taxed the best pastors to hold even a remnant of their flocks together during those dark days. To attempt any forward movement seemed but to court failure. But Dr. Buckner never



did comprehend the meaning of the word failure. He did not even know how to stand still and "hold the fort." But what could he do during those four terrible years? Lay out work for everybody and put everybody to work.

*Caring for the Estates of His Brethren.*—During the Civil War, Pastor Buckner not only cared for the spiritual wants of his flock, but looked after the estates of the men who were away on the field of carnage.

Though he also cared for the interests of others, we will only refer to the attention he gave a thirty-one-acre orchard and vineyard belonging to General Rice Maxey. He kept all the grounds of this orchard in good condition, budding, grafting, cultivating and transplanting, and did it without charge. But labor always brings its reward, and his experience here made him an expert vine dresser and orchardist; and right soon he had a vineyard of 1,500 bearing plants of his own.

## CHAPTER X

### ORGANIZED AND DOING

The war was raging and the strong men were away on the field of carnage, but nevertheless quite soon the pastor had such forces as remained at home well organized and at work.

It is said that in Virginia the leading question is, "What is your pedigree?" In Boston it is, "How much do you know?" In New York, "What do you possess?" In Texas, "What can you do?" Buckner was not long giving answer to the Texas question.

*Prayer Meeting.*—A prayer meeting was put in operation immediately. It met regularly for many years. During the war it was well attended. Wives and mothers came to pray together for their husbands and sons on the far-off fields of death, and to ask others to pray with them. Every promise in the Bible to the desolate heart was hunted up and read in these church prayer meetings.

*Sunday School.*—About the time of establishing the prayer meeting, the pastor led his people to organize a Sunday school, which has continued to the time of writing this book, more than half a century. Sunday schools were not very common in those days, and half the grown-up Christians had never seen one, and not a few were opposed to them. To make the Sunday school a success, a strong committee was appointed, specially charged with its development, called the "Sabbath School Committee." Their names were B. F. Fuller, Francis Williams, Clem Wortham, S. A. B. Fuller, Cora Dodson, Bell McBath and Rebecca Albright. Written instructions were given this committee as follows:

"As so much depends on the religious and moral training of the young, and the proper understanding of the Scriptures by all, let it be the duty of this committee to promote the interests of the Sabbath school for these purposes. Let this be done by interesting parents and children, young and old, to attend regularly and take an active part. Let the members of the committee visit and urge this duty upon all. And let them pray God's blessings upon all engaged in this work."

*First Ladies' Aid Society.*—Within one month after he became shepherd, the new leader of the flock at Paris and his wife, Mrs. V. L. Buckner, organized the first Ladies' Aid Society in Texas. We are not unmindful of the report, away back as far as 1832, of a prayer meeting held by Mrs. Massie Millard and other Christian women, as they were hiding in a thicket from savages near Nacogdoches. And we rejoice to look back on a picture of sixty-five women at Nacogdoches in 1839 sewing for the poor, and led by Mrs. Antoinette Bledsoe, sister of Margaret Lea, who afterwards became the wife of General Sam Houston.

While these and other efforts move our hearts to thank God, yet it remains true that the society of the sisters in the Baptist church at Paris in 1861 was the first compact, purposeful and permanent organization of Christian women in the State.

In those days many good people looked on the organization of women into societies for Christian Endeavor as an innovation portending no good. It may surprise the reader that such honored and trusted leaders as John A. Broadus, T. T. Eaton, and R. C. Burleson looked with grave doubt on such efforts. There were plenty of ordained preachers strenuously opposed to women's societies, and this state of affairs continued for a generation. Some forty years afterwards the writer heard an ordained preacher standing before an intelligent audience, declare his opposition to woman's work on the ground that he had never seen in the New Testament such titles of "Mrs. President," "Mrs. Secretary!"

The society of sisters at Paris was called "The Ladies' Sewing Circle." Prominent among its members were Mrs. V. L. Buckner, Mrs. M. J. Snow, Mrs. Clem Wortham, Mrs. Virginia Dickens, Mrs. Maxey, Mrs. Babcock, Mrs. Jennie Hatcher. There were many others. This society did valuable work in helping complete and furnish the new meeting house. They gave much attention to their own social and religious improvement. An excellent custom was to appoint one of their number to read from a helpful book while the rest were at work. It is often said that the best pastor is not the man who does the most work himself, but who puts the most people to work. The preacher at Paris knew this well, and he also knew well the worth of the sisters.

Besides the committee on Sabbath Schools, already referred to, there were six other committees on church work, and there were sisters on them all, save the Deacons' Committee.

It is believed that to list those committees will be helpful to other pastors.

*Sick Room Committee.*—Instructions: "Let this committee see that no sick person be neglected, whether Baptist or not, whether Christian or not, and that all sick people are visited by at least one of their number, or by others; and always, when prudent, let the subject of religion be talked of. If a visit from the pastor is thought to be prudent, let him be advised."

*Strangers and General Visiting Committee.*—Instructions: "Let this committee, in a quiet and unobtrusive way, seek the acquaintance of strangers who settle in our city, learn from them their feelings on the subject of religion, acquaint them with our religious meetings, and, if needful, introduce them to the pastor and membership of the church. Let the committee also encourage others to attend our meetings."

*The Sabbath Committee.*—Instructions: "Let this committee note every Sabbath-breaker and on suitable occasions approach them, not in the spirit of reproof, or of fault-finding, but with

the faithfulness and kindness of a neighbor and the meekness of a Christian."

*Committee on Congregational Singing.*—This committee had charge of the work of instruction and training the membership in good congregational singing, and of keeping them trained.

*Temperance Committee.*—Instructions: "Let it be the duty of this committee to give their personal attention as Christians to the crying sin of intemperance, to reform the dissipated and prevent others from forming intemperate habits. Let them pray fervently and frequently for grace to help and for God to prosper their efforts."

"*A Great Harvest.*"—With committees at work along all the lines named in the preceding paragraphs, we would naturally expect a good ingathering. We shall not be disappointed. The names of the committees included well nigh all the members. They were written in a little book with their instructions, which the pastor kept, and in that little book was the following prayer:

"O Lord, bless thy servant. May he be humble and pure in heart, sanctified to Thy service and devoted to Thy people's spiritual welfare. May the church in whose service Thou hast put him be wide-awake and active. May the committees be guided by Thy word and Spirit, and may a great harvest be the speedy result of the seed they sow. O Lord, we beseech Thee, send prosperity; O Lord, revive Thy work."

The revival came. In June, 1863, a meeting of days was begun in which the pastor did nearly all the preaching. It continued 90 days. From the first buddings of this revival to its close, 99 members were received into the church, 74 by baptism.

Deacon John W. Jones of Honey Grove, Texas, who attended this meeting, writing about it nearly 50 years afterwards, said: "Considering the few inhabitants of the country then, it was regarded as one of the greatest meetings far and near."

*Began in the Sunday School.*—The awakening had its beginning in the Sunday school and in the pastor's class. Three little

orphan girls in that class became concerned for their souls. The pastor's heart was tender towards them and he was happy to baptize them.

One of the orphans, afterwards known as Clara Babcock, had been set out from a wagon passing through the town. She was put out in front of the home of Mr. Willet Babcock, and kind Mr. Babcock and his wife adopted her. This gentleman did not belong to any church. Dr. Buckner baptized his wife.

Another of these little girls, Dora Moore, was an adopted daughter of Senator and Mrs. S. B. Maxey. She was afterwards happily married to Hon. Henry W. Lightfoot. The third, Mary Gatewood, was a granddaughter of the Senior General Maxey. Dr. Buckner married her to her second husband, Mr. Terrell, and afterwards buried her in Evergreen Cemetery, of which he was one of the founders.

*Newfoundland Dog.*—Pastor Buckner sometimes took short intervals for rest and recreation, but no vacations. One diversion at Paris was the training of his fine Newfoundland dog, "Lupus." This dog was possessed of remarkable intelligence, and in a short time was so well trained as to be the marvel of the town. If a basket of fruit was given him, with the command, "Carry this to General Maxey's," he would obey. If another basket was given him with instructions to carry it to another neighbor, he would obey. He could be set to rocking the baby and would do his work perfectly. If the children were wading in the pond nearby, Lupus would sit and watch with the deepest concern; and as soon as a child approached deep water he could stand it no longer, but would plunge in and pull him out.

But alas! Lupus after a while learned to stroll about town and seek the society of the idle and vicious. He learned the bad habits of the loafer and the tramp, and right soon was wholly unreliable and worthless. He even learned to steal, and one night stole meat dosed with strychnine. This was the sad end of Lupus.

More than once has Dr. Buckner used this story of Lupus to warn his orphan boys, and with good effect. The reader has guessed, perhaps, that Dr. Buckner always had some fondness for dogs, and has guessed correctly. Once in his boyhood days he owned a dog named "Henry Clay," after his favorite politician. On one occasion he loaned Henry Clay to some hunters, and they lost him in the wild forks of the Cumberland River in Kentucky. Forty years afterwards, visiting the county of his boyhood, he came to the little town of Bronston in Pulaski County. To some men of the town he said:

"Gentlemen, I have lost my dog, a valuable dog, a fine brindle fellow. Have you seen him?"

"Where? What's his name?"

"He was lost out in the forks of the Cumberland. His name was Henry Clay."

"When did you lose him?"

"About forty years ago!"

A good laugh followed and the Bronston gentlemen made Buckner at home.

## CHAPTER XI

### A WIDENING INFLUENCE

*Widening Influence.*—As the years passed, the growing work done at Paris, Texas, came to be known over all the State of Texas and beyond. There were as yet no railroads, nor other roads, except mere trails through primeval forests and across broad, grass-covered prairies. Nevertheless, prominent brethren, patriarchs of the coming Texas Israel, journeyed from distant points to visit this young builder at Paris and enjoy his fellowship. President R. C. Burluson of Waco University came. Likewise Editor J. B. Link from Houston. Then the three distinguished preachers and educators, W. B. Featherstone, W. J. Brown and J. R. Clark. Also came Joshua F. Johnson, preacher and statesman. Also the towering S. R. Freeman, D. D., of Jefferson, Texas, whose sun went out at high noon, leaving his church in tears. You would expect preacher and builder, J. T. S. Park—he came too. And quite refreshing to both the guests and host were visits from the missionaries of Indian Territory, H. F. Buckner, R. J. Hogue and D. R. Potts. There were others, among them the man of might, J. R. Graves, of Tennessee.

When the "Texas Baptist Herald" at Houston was yet but a little way started on its light-giving career, R. C. Buckner was engaged as one of its paid correspondents.

*General Association, 1868.*—Those days following the Civil War were trying days. It was a time when the denomination was on the look for men of worth and leadership. They were needed in the great councils and on the field. The brethren seemed to think that Buckner had come to the kingdom for such a time as this. We note the recognition given him at the first session of the Baptist General Association. This meeting was held at Chatfield in Navarro County, July 17-20, 1868. Dr.



Buckner was present, not as a messenger, but as a visitor. Other visitors of note were Elders M. V. Smith, W. J. Brown, William Manning, John Manning, J. M. McGraw and S. E. Brooks (father of President S. P. Brooks, of Baylor University).

All the visitors were allowed to sit as interested spectators, save R. C. Buckner. He was made chairman of the Committee on Home (State) Missions, with L. Holland and T. Pyle as his associates; a member of the committee to audit the books of the sainted D. B. Morrill (deceased general agent), with B. Wilmot and W. L. Foster as associates; a member of the committee to nominate and locate the boards, with R. C. Burleson, J. Beal, M. Carter, W. L. Foster, J. B. Link and J. T. Hand as other members.

General J. E. Harrison, president of the Association, added Dr. Buckner to the Missionary Board, and on motion of Dr. Burleson he was made one of the corresponding messengers to the next meeting of the Baptist State Convention. On the Sabbath night he was asked to preach, and the next day was made alternate with Josiah Leake to preach the next annual association sermon.

*Report on Home Missions.*—"Home Missions" meant missionary operations within the bounds of the General Association. Dr. Buckner wrote the report on Home Missions at Chatfield in 1868. It was unanimously adopted as follows:

"Your committee on Home Missions entertain the opinion that nothing merits a more thorough and prayerful examination by this body than this particular work. Its great importance and pressing claims require not only concert of action, but also the highest degree of Christian energy. It is emphatically *the* work for which we are assembled, and all other subjects that we have under consideration are important only from their connection with this.

"In considering this subject the following question first occurs: What is the extent of the field of our operations, and

the destitution within it? The territory occupied by this association extends 300 miles east and west, and north and south about 225 miles, embracing a large number of extensive and populous counties. We know of but two churches in all this vast region that have preaching every Sabbath. Several that were self-sustaining previous to the late war are now extinct, and many of the most important towns and neighborhoods are without Baptist churches, and wholly destitute of gospel preaching. Add to this the fact that in many communities where an occasional sermon is preached, the doctrines characteristic of our churches and essential to the perpetuity of the Redeemer's Kingdom have been but seldom, if ever, advocated, and the destitution will appear really alarming, and the work of supplying it equal to our energies and all our means combined.

"Now, what system shall be adopted for the regulation of our efforts to supply this destitution? We think efforts should be made to reorganize our disorganized churches, to act in concert with and assist weak churches in supporting their pastors, and with executive boards of district associations in the appointment and support of missionaries; and also, as nearly as possible, to settle at every important destitute point a preacher of undoubted piety and fair ability, who will zealously labor to build up a permanent interest in his immediate field and to supply the destitution near him. When this cannot be done, let him preach regularly at several important localities, so that he may be sustained by the people to whom he preaches. In addition to all this, as many traveling missionaries should be employed as can be supported, and suitable fields assigned them.

"To carry out this plan efficiently we should have a general agent, competent to advocate and defend our peculiar doctrines, and to explain and impress upon district associations, churches and communities the nature and merits of this system, and to aid in the selection and encouragement of suitable ministers to effect its purposes. We feel confident, however, that success

cannot be attained without united and self-sacrificing efforts by churches, pastors and missionaries, all impressed with the value of souls, and feeling constrained by the love of Christ. In view of the great work before us, and of the importance of concentrated and systematic effort, your committee recommends the adoption of the following resolutions:

“Resolved, That this Association adopt and recommend to the district associations and churches within its bounds, the system suggested in this report.

“Resolved, That in our opinion much good would result from holding monthly concerts of prayer in all the churches, imploring God to increase the missionary spirit among us, and to attend our efforts with His blessings.”

*General Agent Called For.*—In the foregoing report on Home Missions is pictured the field of the General Association and its imperative needs, and a plan of work suggested for supplying these needs. The report calls for a competent General Agent to carry the plan into effect and superintend its operations. It was his business to bring the work to the highest degree of efficiency possible. One must be chosen for that work who is “competent to advocate and defend our peculiar doctrines, to explain and impress upon district associations, churches and communities the nature and merit of systematic and vigorous mission work.”

*R. C. Buckner, General Agent.*—When Joseph counseled Pharaoh to appoint a man “wise and discreet,” to provision Egypt against the coming famine, Pharaoh said: “There is none so discreet and wise as thou art,” and he immediately appointed Joseph. So when R. C. Buckner wrote: “We should have a General Agent,” the Missionary Board got together and elected R. C. Buckner. Then the board sent a petition to the church at Paris, asking that church to release its pastor “for a year or more” that he might “enter upon the work of General Agent.”

This request from the Missionary Board was granted. But he continued to supply the church for another year, though travel-

ing much and doing a prodigious work for the General Association.

He distributed printed forms for letters from churches to district associations and to the General Association. He traveled much, visiting churches and associations, everywhere preaching the gospel and forwarding missionary effort. Pastors were encouraged to supply adjacent destitution. New churches were set up and weak churches strengthened. The associations were assisted to put strong men in the field. Many churches and associations not affiliating were encouraged to send messengers to the meeting of the General Association, which was to be held at Tyler in July, 1869.

He was everywhere received with joy, and the funds for missionary work were put into his hands. It was at a time when there was very little money in the country. The amount raised for all purposes was close to \$1,000.00. About \$80.00 of this was for ministerial education. Then at the next meeting at Tyler more than \$500.00 was raised and added to the amount for ministerial education.

Under the direction of the General Agent, nine missionaries labored in different parts of the Association. They were sustained mainly by collections on their fields. The important towns of Dallas, Sherman and Jefferson were supplied with regular preaching. The General Agent held a fruitful meeting at Sherman, and organized the church there. In this he was assisted by Elder T. B. McComb, who lived to a ripe old age at Van Alstyne. During this meeting he baptized Dr. J. B. Stenson and other leading citizens.

A sermon preached by Dr. Buckner while General Agent had the effect of leading John H. Boyet to investigate the teachings of the New Testament, which resulted in his becoming a Baptist. Boyett was quite young at that time and a Methodist. Hear him: "He so impressed me with the need of an intelligent personal loyalty to Christ, and what the Bible requires, that I went

quietly home determined to know for myself the path of obedience, and to do the will of Christ in the matter of baptism. Two years later, I joined the Baptist church as the result of study and prayer. That sermon has affected my whole life as a preacher and Christian." Dr. Boyett is well known over the whole South.

The year's work under General Agent Buckner resulted in one hundred and fifty-nine baptisms, seventy-nine received by letter, nine prayer meetings, four Sunday schools and three churches organized. When Dr. Buckner began work as General Agent there were sixteen churches and two district associations coöperating. When he had labored a year, messengers were sent to the next annual meeting from thirty-nine churches and eleven associations. He did all this work without salary and no debt was made.

In 1869 Dr. Buckner was re-elected General Agent, and this time the church at Paris called Elder W. M. Burke as supply from September to January, when the pastor again took charge. He resigned the work of General Agent, because his work at Paris imperatively demanded his presence.

During the five months from August 1 to December 31 he put in full time and had two other strong preachers on the field. The two other preachers were M. C. St. Clair and J. Ziegler.

The next session of the General Association was held at Paris, and was entertained by Pastor Buckner's church. It was the second annual session. Great dishes of smoking biscuit, and appetizing barbecue, and toothsome "yellowfoot" caught the whole company of guests. They fell in love with Paris and held, in all, three sessions of the General Association there, whereas only two sessions were held at any other point.

At this meeting in Paris, 1870, there was subscribed for home missions \$1000.00 to start the work off well for another year.

Dr. Buckner gave his time as General Agent without salary.

## CHAPTER XII

### STRENGTHENING THE WORK AT PARIS

*A Question of Duty.*—It was a true saying of Dr. B. H. Carroll that "Duties never conflict." But that truth had been known in the Baptist family all the way back to Jesus Christ and John. Most assuredly was it known to R. C. Buckner.

The work at Paris had suffered for seventeen months, while the pastor was away laboring to advance the mission interests of the General Association. A supply preacher for five months helped the cause some, but the supply preacher was not the shepherd. Even under the hand of the supply preacher, the people "fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd." The heart of the "Good Shepherd" was moved with compassion. So also was the heart of the undershepherd, and what must he do?

The brethren of the church at Paris felt keenly the need of their pastor. A stranger they would not follow. They came together and by unanimous vote asked him to come back and feed and lead the flock. "Duties never conflict," and a shepherd's first duty is to attend his flock. The God of Missions was able to take care of the mission work, even a work of such import "that all other subjects were considered important only from their connections with this." The pastor returned to his people.

*Rejuvenating His Church.*—Returning to his church, the pastor found his brethren discouraged. They had grown cold and unsympathetic. They were wanting in zeal. Coöperation was indifferent. The congregation had fallen off sadly in numbers. As he took in the situation, he set to work with great

zeal. Church work was reorganized and the entire body rejuvenated. A series of meetings was held for building up the church in doctrine and active work. As a result of this series of meetings, the church was greatly strengthened and ten new members added, four of them by experience and baptism. Then the meeting house was repaired at a cost of \$500. Lights, and furniture, and a melodeon were put in at a cost of \$300. Liberal contributions were made to missions, and the pastor's salary was paid promptly. Glad songs were sung and thanksgiving prayers offered. The old-time life had returned.

We have referred to the melodeon, as the church organ of that day was called. The organist was Pastor Buckner's little daughter, Mary Bell. She was too small to reach the pedals, and another had to pump the instrument. But she was able to carry the music. Thus we see in early childhood a prophecy of that remarkable musical talent which in after life placed her in the position of musical director of Buckner Orphans Home.

A sermon that touched the church to its soul was preached on the first Sunday in January, 1871. This sermon reviewed the year of 1870, and also pointed to the future path of duty before the church. Its bold rhetoric, its searching interrogatories, its conquering logic and its many finger boards are well worth careful study. An abridgment is here given.

*New Year's Sermon, 1871.*—Text: So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Psalm 90:12.

"The great current of human life is constantly flowing, and is incessantly carrying immortal souls into the boundless gulf of eternity. This stream is supplied by every nation, kingdom, tongue and tribe, and borne along on its irresistible tide are the young and old, the high and low, the rich and poor. How many have gone since the beginning of A.D. 1870! And look, that year itself has just been added to the Eternal Past. Yes, time itself is passing away. The vibrations of its pendulum are with-

out intermission, and every vibration shortens our lives. Moment by moment it transmits the hours of our existence to the past. And think how rapidly those hours become days, and that all the days of our years are but three score years and ten!

*You Make Calculations.*—“Many times you have gone over the calculation, subtracting your age from the number of years allotted to the average human life, and wondering whether or not you would be spared to the end of that period. Various motives have prompted you to make this calculation. Perhaps it has been that you might make the necessary preparations for the comfort of your family in this life. Or, that you might divide your time between the acquisition of knowledge and property. Or, that you might employ more time pleasure seeking. Some, perhaps, are influenced by motives of a more serious character. But, alas, how few consider the number of their days with an eye to their obligations to God, and the eternal interest of their souls! He is not a wise man who, after counting his money carefully, stores it away in some secure place to be added to by his hard earnings, for wisdom would prompt him to invest it judiciously, that with his five pounds he might gain five pounds more. Neither is he a good financier who makes money rapidly, if he spends it with reckless indifference to its value.

“Now time is said to be money. But really it is worth more than money, for with time enough, money a plenty can be obtained. But if you possessed all the gold that has ever been taken out of the earth you could not purchase one moment of time. Yet time, precious as it is, may like money be thrown away. It may be spent to profit, or wasted in riotous living. How have we been spending our time during the past year? And how do we propose to spend the present year?

*A Retrospect.*—“As the experience of the past may be made profitable in the future, I propose that we retrospect our history as a church and as individuals during the past year. In doing this, we shall likely be more powerfully impressed with the fact



that time may be wasted by the neglect of duties and privileges, and by the commission of sin; and that it may be employed to great profit in the service of God. Have we spent the past year as with a knowledge of the value of time in the service of God? We have not been altogether inactive. We have made progress, though the year's work was commenced with great embarrassment.

"At the beginning of the year the discouraged flock had been shepherdless for seventeen months. The wolf had made his appearance and scattered the sheep. Some were wounded and some gone. At your first meeting in January, you voted, asking your pastor to return, he having been relieved for seventeen months at the request of the General Association that he might travel as their General Agent. We set to work with efforts somewhat united, and from the outset proceeded upon the Scriptural plan of meeting for worship every Sabbath. Interest improved and the congregation increased.

"All the year, the pastor carried burdens that can be known to none save himself and his God. A sermon was preached on 'The Fearful Responsibilities of the Ministry,' which had the effect of awakening sympathy for the preacher and of moving some to offer prayer for him. This was good. Another sermon was preached on 'The Claims and Watchful Care of the Lord Our Shepherd.' This was designed to move us to gratitude and faith and service. After this, another element of society was reached by a series of sermons on 'The Destiny of Man.' Then the regular services were interrupted while your pastor was away six weeks, holding meetings in Shreveport and Jefferson. We all thank God for many souls saved in those meetings. I remember hearing some of you brethren predict that the pastor's absence to hold those meetings would again have the effect of diminishing the congregation. And so it did. Then followed our own meeting of days, during which all who attended regularly were revived. But some did not attend. 'Thomas called

Didymus was not there.' But the Lord gave us ten additions, four by experience and baptism, and six by letter and restoration. These employed their time to profit. But how many wasted those days of opportunity? Then we went to work and repaired and refitted our meeting house at a cost of \$800. You joyfully gave \$50 for missions and you are pledged for a much larger sum. You have paid your pastor his full \$800 and other home expenses amounting to \$50. Our gain in members has been nine, and we have been called on to mourn one dead.

"What have we done as individuals in the service of our God? I will not mention names. Let memory, as the authorized sheriff, go out with summons and bring every act before the bar of conscience. Have you given of your means as the Lord has prospered you? Have you grown in grace and in the knowledge of the truth? Have you made progress in spiritual life?

"Dear unsaved sinner, how have you spent the past year? What has been your attitude toward your God? What provision have you made for your soul? Are you any nearer prepared for death and the Judgment than you were a year ago? Have you suffered the whole year to run to waste? How much time have you spent in sin and how have you multiplied iniquities? Remember this: No day nor hour of the past can be called back.

*The Year Now Before Us.*—"The past year is gone. Not a moment will return at our beck. But the New Year of 1871 is before us. How are you going to use it? It is before us as a clean white sheet of paper. Not a blot has been made on it, not a mark. On this sheet is to be written our history for the twelve months. What shall that history be? It stands before us as a kind friend with winning smiles, loving heart and extended hands, holding out to us comforts and aid on the way to heaven. Shall we be rude to our friend, deny ourselves of his offered comforts and of his generous aid? The New Year is

before us, a beautiful garden through which we must pass. Shall we like earthworms feed upon the earth? Or shall we, like beings with souls, regale ourselves with the flowers and their sweets? Are not the countless flowers that shall blossom in its bosom intended for us? For whom will God's golden sun paint the flowers and ripen the fruit? For you! For me! Shall we not reach forth and pluck our own with thanksgiving?

"Let us be happy. Let us serve our God. Let us so number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. In this garden our stay will be brief. The year 1871 will soon pass. During the year what shall we do as a church? Grow in spiritual strength? In doctrine and faith? In numbers and influence? You will be as a city set on a hill and the eyes of the world will be upon you. How will we appear as individual Christians? We will be known and read of all men. Sinner, what will you do? Will you answer now as you value your soul? Apply your hearts unto wisdom. You invest your money judiciously—why not your time? Remember that time is not the measure of your existence."

## CHAPTER XIII

### BUSINESS VENTURES

*Business Ventures.*—A venture that molded North Texas Baptists into one was launched January 3, 1874. Not only did it give shape to North Texas, but its influence was felt to the confines of the State. It was a venture that continued nearly ten years, and was a success. We refer to the launching of "The Religious Messenger." The "Messenger" was the answer to a long-felt need that voiced itself in a call made by an assembly of ministers and deacons in Lamar County in 1873. Not alone for the space of ten years was its influence felt, but its messages went into the hearts of the people, creating therein ideals of sacrifice and service to be transmitted to future generations far down to the day when our Lord shall come again.

Before viewing this enterprise, let us take a backward look with glances at some other ventures that with entertaining prominence stand forth along R. C. Buckner's life road. As a rule, preachers are not credited with having a reserve fund of business sense. But will they not compare favorably with men in other walks? With a smaller salary and with a larger family, the preacher usually feeds, clothes and educates his children better than his average secular brother, and then has a larger sum to give away. Or else his wife does it.

It is not within the scope of this work to cite shining examples. Later on, our eyes may see in Buckner Orphans Home an illustration of business sagacity scarcely matched, and yet it was born and nurtured in the brain and heart of one Baptist preacher.

*Pocket Change.*—A boy is "no boy at all" without a little

pocket change. It was so in the days when Robert Buckner was a boy. While attending the "Brick Seminary" at Somerset, Ky., it was common in summer to see Robert Buckner coming into town perched on the back of gentle "Jennie Graw," with a sack of fine melons in front. The melons were left with an accommodating grocer to sell. But the grocer did not sell them all. At recess, while the other boys were at their games—ball and marbles and foot race—Robert might be seen speeding to this same grocer's to take inventory of the remnant of his stock. And see, he is facing the passing crowds and crying, "Melons, Mister, Melons!" And selling them and providing the boy life necessity, the inevitable pocket change.

*Gold Watch on a Credit.*—This, too, was when he was a boy. The watch was bought of a neighbor boy for \$40, for which Robert gave his note. Promissory notes were not "as plentiful as autumn leaves" in those good days. When the note was drawn up for the watch, according to the form found in their school arithmetic, the honest boys did not know who should hold it. Young Buckner assured his friend that the payee was the proper one to hold the note. "No," he replied, "the man who pays must hold it, so he can tell when it falls due!"

The note was paid. But who was that boy? None other than W. H. Prather, afterwards Captain Prather during the Civil War, and later leading citizen, business man and deacon in Dallas, Texas. Esteemed and honored by all who knew him, he bequeathed to his family a modest competency, and what is far better, the unweighed treasure of a good name.

Many years afterwards, this watch was traded for orchard and vineyard stock, which was planted at Paris, Texas, cultivated and brought to abundant fruitage, and then converted into \$3,000. A decade later this \$3,000 helped to equip the plant that gave to the world "The Texas Baptist."

About this time, Dr. G. E. Long, brother to Mrs. R. C. Buckner, bought out a small newspaper in Paris in order to get pos-

session of the printing plant. Some of the preacher's funds went into this plant, and at length he became joint owner, and then full owner, of this printing plant. He was now equipped in a small way for publishing a paper. He had some ambition to serve his brethren in North Texas by publishing a denominational journal. There was a demand for it. At this time, he was a paid contributor to the "Texas Baptist Herald," published in Houston, Texas. The fact that his talent was in demand inspired hope that he might publish an acceptable paper.

*Baptist Paper Called For.*—When the Baptist General Association met in Chatfield, 1868, and at Tyler, 1869, resolutions were adopted commending the "Texas Baptist Herald," and yet the question, "Do we not need a paper in the bounds of the General Association?" was in the minds of hundreds of brethren. And they were ready to welcome a paper that would represent the interests of the General Association and of Waco University, which seemed to be the coming school. The circulation of the "Texas Baptist Herald" was limited on the field of the General Association. For a while the brethren hesitated and letters and circulars were sent to all parts of the field to keep the churches informed.

But the country was rapidly filling up. Railroads were building. The rich lands of North Texas were in demand. Thriving communities, growing villages and stirring cities were coming into notice, and the Baptists were beginning to feel that they had a place and a mission. Then at a representative meeting of ministers and deacons, in 1873, a resolution was adopted to start a paper in North Texas, and R. C. Buckner was elected editor. He believed the call to be of God. In May of that year, he presented his resignation to the church at Paris, and during the remainder of the year he was on the field holding meetings and collecting funds for the work of the General Association.

*The Religious Messenger.*—On January 3, 1874, Dr. Buckner

brought out the initial number of "The Religious Messenger." He was worth at that time about \$18,000. Many friends were in doubt as to the wisdom of this new venture. The entire State had not given the "Texas Baptist Herald" sufficient support. More than once good men had made liberal contributions to keep it going, though years afterwards that paper paid all the money back.

A few months after launching "The Religious Messenger," a Mr. Peterson, who claimed to be an infidel, set up in Paris an expensive printing office, with cylinder press, and began publishing a secular paper. He was scarcely started in this enterprise when he challenged the editor of "The Religious Messenger" to a debate, saying it would help both papers by causing their friends to stand by them. There was no debate. But it was not long before "The Religious Messenger" owned Mr. Peterson's fine job office.

The paper prospered. It stood for evangelical religion, for the old-time Baptist faith, and for missionary activity. Its voice was heard in favor of Sunday schools, of Ladies' Aid Societies, of Bible and colportage work, of Christian education, of prohibition and of civic righteousness.

*Moved to Dallas.*—After a year at Paris, the paper was moved to Dallas, as offering a more central location and better mailing facilities. At the same time there was opened in connection with it a Texas Baptist Book Depository, in which was kept on sale a large stock of Bibles, religious books, song books, tracts and Sunday school supplies. In February, 1875, Rev. L. W. Coleman became associated with Dr. Buckner as business manager of the paper, and the book department. He was a young preacher of excellent attainments, had been educated at Mississippi College and had been connected with the Southern Baptist Publishing House of Memphis, Tenn. He traveled some for the paper, but mainly he did the office work while Dr. Buckner was field man.

*Name Changed to The Texas Baptist.*—In January, 1876, the name of the paper was changed to "The Texas Baptist." Dr. Buckner had some nice compliments on this change. Among others, Dr. J. R. Graves of Tennessee wrote: "That name will win." The paper was now well on its feet. It held up its head and wore an air of optimism. It enlarged to sixteen pages. Those who doubted at the beginning became confident. It was paying its way and doing good.

The deacon was found. His duties were outlined in many editorials. He was made to hear the orphan's cry. He was aroused. He said, "We must build an Orphans Home." Dr. W. H. Trollinger, deacon at Whitesboro, came to the front with a proposition to give one-seventh of his professional earnings. Deacon F. H. Oglevie of Anna gave \$15.65, the proceeds of one acre of wheat. Others gave various amounts. The Deacons' Convention at Paris, July 17, 1877, resolved to build the Orphans Home when \$2000 should be in hand. This convention, which was called by Dr. Trollinger at the earnest written request of the editor of "The Texas Baptist," was liberally advertised through the paper and was large and representative.

He now gave himself with great zeal, and without salary, to the work of building up Buckner Orphans Home, supporting himself and family out of the earnings of "The Texas Baptist."

Dr. B. H. Carroll wrote, January, 1878: "Brother Buckner's paper has grown on me in spite of myself. As a publisher, Brother Buckner is a decided success." The Baptist population in the bounds of the General Association was at that time about 40,000, and yet the paper had a subscription list of 5,000.

*Sold to S. A. Hayden.*—In June, 1883, Dr. Buckner sold his paper to Dr. S. A. Hayden. At the time of selling, he outlined in his valedictory what he thought would be the wisest policy for the paper to pursue under the new management. We quote:

"The advocacy of two general missionary organizations for the whole State—one for the North and one for the South—



working harmoniously and with mutual recognition as to territory, and in every particular. And if this should fail, to advocate as the next best thing, one organization for the entire State.”

Dr. Hayden accepted this as the true policy, and in his Salutory announced that it would be the future policy of the paper. Following are his words:

“As to organization, our idea of the best thing is an organization for the North and an organization for the South, each working in coöperation with the other for the advancement of righteousness in all that that word comprehends. The next best thing in our opinion is one general convention for the whole State, under a management so large-hearted and liberal as to secure the coöperation and sympathy of every other section.”

*Dr. Buckner's Business Maxims.*—The following maxims were printed in “The Texas Baptist,” January 13, 1875. Those of us who know Dr. Buckner best know that these maxims were a part of his very life:

Don't stop to tell stories in business hours.

No man can get rich sitting around stores and saloons.

Never “fool” in business matters.

Have order, system, regularity, promptness.

Do not meddle with business you know nothing about.

Do not “kick” every one in your path.

More miles can be made in a day by going steadily than by stopping.

Pay as you go.

Help others when you can, but never give what you cannot afford to, simply to make a display.

Learn to say No. No necessity for snapping it out dog-fashion, but say it firmly and respectfully.

Use your own brains rather than those of others.

Learn to think and act for yourself.

Keep ahead rather than behind the times.

Another: A day of idleness tires more than a week of work.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE TEXAS BAPTIST

*The Texas Baptist.*—The Texas Baptist has already been referred to. But who has traced the unfolding and expansion of a religious paper? Who has measured its strength? “Will he make many supplications unto thee? Will he make a covenant unto thee? Will thou take him for thy servant? Wilt thou play with him as with a bird, or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?”

The religious paper lines up the multitude. Its eye sees every step, forward or backward, of men and religion. It speaks without appointment on the program, and without being called to the platform. It proclaims or suppresses the opinions of men at pleasure. It turns on the light and turns it off. It puts the plume in the cap of whom it will.

*Edited on the Wing.*—During the entire ten years of his editorial life, R. C. Buckner was much on the wing. His editorials were written on trains, in hotels and in the homes of his brethren. He never once thought of a closed up “sanctum,” away from the “bother” of callers, and out of reach of the “noise” of the on-rushing multitudes. He was among, and one of, the Baptist people. He held meetings with many pastors, attended associations, collected for missions and the Orphans Home, and dedicated meeting houses.

*Dedication at Ennis.*—We will stop to look in on only one of those dedication services, the giving to the Lord of the new meeting house at Ennis. The day was Sabbath, January 28, 1876.

H. F. Buckner, of the Creek Indian Nation, was visiting his brother at Dallas, and the two went to Ennis together on Satur-

day. On Saturday night, H. F. Buckner presented the claims of Indian missions. Sunday morning, R. C. Buckner preached, after which the new meeting house was solemnly and joyfully dedicated to God by prayer. It was a neat house, furnished with lamps, carpets and bell, all paid for. At 4 o'clock p. m. a Sunday school was organized. At night, after preaching by H. F. Buckner, the Lord's Supper was administered.

The Buckner brothers did not meet often. This visit of H. F. Buckner is thus sketched by himself: "I could not, if I would, portray the joy and satisfaction incident to the meeting of two only brothers, who seldom meet. This joy is so sacred that it belongs not to the public. I was baptized the year before the editor of "The Texas Baptist" was born. Soon after that I went to the Seminary, then to Alabama, where I commenced preaching. When I met with brother again it was his time to go to college, and before he left college I hid myself as an Indian missionary. We seldom meet in this world, but we hope to meet at home, in our Father's house on high."

*General Agent.*—As the editor of "The Texas Baptist" was constantly on the field, his brethren determined to make him superintendent of missions. For a good while he turned a deaf ear to every hint and suggestion pointing to that work. But early in 1877 the Board of the General Association came together and elected him, any way. Then was he overcome with affectionate messages such as the following:

"My advice is, accept and go to work. I will sustain you—  
B. H. Carroll."

"I think you ought to take the field. You are the man. The cause of the Master demands it. It will cause you sacrifices, but it is not so hard after all. A life of love and a death of peace await a work like this.—J. M. Myers." (Veteran Missionary.)

"I write to express my approbation, and offer my prayers,

sympathy and coöperation.—W. O. Bailey.” (Pastor at Jefferson.)

“Take the work for the General Association, and do good.—S. J. Anderson.” (Pastor at Sulphur Springs.)

“I write to urge you to take the field. By all means take the field, and come to see us.—J. C. Gee.” (Layman and financier, Greenville.)

“I heartily approve. This is the way to effectually reach the churches. Many pastors need stirring up.—Professor W. J. Brown.” (Cleburne Institute.)

Dr. Buckner accepted and went to work. An editorial in an issue of “The Texas Baptist,” March, 1877, runs thus: “Necessity is laid upon me. From the time we began the publication of this paper, it has been understood that, as before, the preaching of the gospel was to occupy much of our time. Much of it has been spent among the churches in protracted meetings. But we are now called to a work we had not anticipated. The board has voted us the appointment as General Agent. But so numerous have been the letters and requests urging us to accept that we recognize a call also from the brethren.

“The old Ladonia Board (1868-1870) stood by us and approved the work. We donated our time during that seventeen months. Had we not done so, the Association would have been involved in debt. We could not support a reasonable number of missionaries and pay for agency work. For the same reason we decline accepting salary, as we did then. A reasonable salary has been offered, but “The Texas Baptist” is supporting us. We decline salary, not as a precedent for future operations, but considering the fact that our missionaries need every dollar that can be raised.” He also paid his own traveling expenses, and made the work a success, continuing till January, 1882.

“*The Texas Baptist, Its On-Going.*—Shall we trail the footsteps of “The Texas Baptist”? The walk would be too long.

Only at intervals and distances can we view its going, or hear its voice. And then briefly. At the closing of Volume III (1876) we read this editorial note: "There has been a great rallying to 'The Texas Baptist,' which has even astonished its originators."

Then in the opening of Volume IV (1877) this editorial:

"The paper has lost but few friends, and has gained many. One good pastor said at the beginning, 'I have no sympathy for the enterprise.' But now he says, 'God bless you, I shall do all I can for it.' Said a brother, 'No, I will not subscribe. I see your financial ruin.' Next year, 'I thought you were going downhill, but I see you are climbing. Take my name and this \$2.50.' Then a year later, 'You are safe now. I have \$25 to spare—here it is. Keep my name on your list.' The paper is paying its way and supplying us with food and raiment, and we remember the New Testament injunction, 'Be content.'"

What of the paper's tone five years later? Listen: "This year is 1882, and with it 'The Texas Baptist' begins its ninth year. The sea is calm. The right to sail is no longer disputed. No man-of-war now turns its broadside with open portholes, nor recklessly approaches with black flag in its own created storm. Ours is no war vessel, but its right to the sea must be respected and its crew of passengers protected."

*B. H. Carroll, Associate, Fourth Year.*—This excerpt is taken from his "Salutatory": "With this number, August 30, 1877, my name appears as associate editor. The motive is to do the most good in my power. I believe the editor, Elder R. C. Buckner, to be a good man, a praying man, humble as a laborer. I regard his paper as a success, financially and otherwise, sound in doctrine, Baptistic."

As a doctrinal trumpet "The Texas Baptist" gave no uncertain sound. Volumes were spoken. Some brief condensations are here preserved.

"*New Testament Church.*"—"A New Testament Church is a voluntary society of baptized believers in Christ, associated to-

gether for worship, recognizing Christ as their only lawgiver, and keeping the ordinances as they were delivered."

Following this definition, the paper gives seven syllogistic deductions: "The New Testament Church is composed of members voluntarily associated for the worship of God; infants are neither capable of entering into a voluntary society nor of worshipping of God; therefore, societies composed, even in part, of infants are not New Testament Churches.

"The New Testament Church is composed of baptized believers. None are baptized but those who are immersed; therefore, no society is a New Testament Church, even if composed of believers, unless they have been immersed.

"A New Testament Church is composed of persons who have been immersed upon a profession of faith in Christ. ('Who-soever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.') Therefore, no society is a gospel church, even if its members have been immersed, unless they were 'born again' before their baptism.

"No one has a right to administer church ordinances who is not himself a church officer; no man is a church officer who is not a church member; therefore, those who do not belong to a voluntary society of immersed believers can have no right to administer church ordinances.

"None are properly baptized except those who are immersed by the authority of a New Testament Church. No one has the right to administer baptism unless he be a church member. Therefore, they are not properly baptized who are immersed by persons not themselves members of a society of immersed believers.

"Baptism is prerequisite to communion at the Lord's table; nothing is baptism but the immersion of a believer; therefore, none but immersed believers have the right to commune at the Lord's table.

"Church membership is prerequisite to communion at the Lord's table. The immersion of a believer by a proper adminis-

trator is prerequisite to church membership; therefore, none have a right to communion at the Lord's table who have not been immersed upon a confession of faith by a proper administrator."

"A converted membership is so essential that all other forms and requirements are worthless without it."—March 13, 1876.

"We need more than a correct system of faith and the proper forms of worship. We need heartfelt religion." April 6, 1876.

*Queries and Answers.*—This was a regular department in the paper, and the answers were by the editor himself. A few of these taken at random.

"Can an excluded minister assist in ordaining a preacher?"  
"He cannot."

"When a brother calls for a letter, has any member a right to call for his reason?" "He has, but the church must judge of the reasons."

"If depravity produces sin, are we not by nature only partially depraved, advancing further in depravity as we advance in sin?" "If depravity produces sin, then we are totally depraved, as sure as the tree is known by its fruit."

"We have some dancing members. What ought the church to do?" "Distribute a few dozen copies of B. H. Carroll's sermon on Dancing."

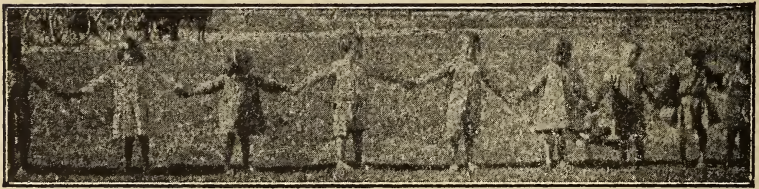
"Should a church furnish amusements?" "Should a church dig mud holes for washed swine?"

"Some of our members have joined the sanctified band. What must we do? "Forbid them using the Lord's prayer, lest they bring themselves into self-condemnation, as they repeat, 'forgive us our trespasses.'"

*Communications and Striking Paragraphs.*—Every issue of the paper for ten years carried historical or doctrinal or exegetical contributions of priceless value from our ablest brethren. Editor Buckner invented the head, "News and Views," which stood over a column of refined gold. Every library would be

richer if it contained the bound volumes of "The Texas Baptist." Priceless treasures they are in the Buckner Home Library.

"The Texas Baptist" made every variety of human experience pass before the eye of its readers. If one preacher spun a rope and hanged himself, or another wove garments and clothed himself with honor, the paper pointed him out.





## CHAPTER XV

### ORIGIN OF BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME

*Origin of Buckner Orphans Home.*—Dr. Buckner had scarcely begun publishing his paper in 1874, when he began thinking about the Orphans Home. He thought it all out, and saw it, farms, buildings, matrons, swarms of happy children, schools and teachers; with an eye of faith he saw it all. He communed with God and with his own spirit many days. Will his dream come to pass?

The times were not propitious. The people were still weeping for fathers and sons fallen on a hundred battle-fields. Property was gone. The State was thinly populated. The City of Dallas was a frontier village, and a few miles further west was the home of the wild Indians. The Baptists in Texas were a feeble folk, much divided, while every Baptist interest was paralyzed for want of support.

But then words fitly spoken turn to gold. They are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. Buckner knew this. He appealed to the deacons in every church through many editorials. He preached to them in their meeting houses. He visited, talked and prayed in their homes. He drew them to him. He pointed to the orphan child in cruel hands: "Suppose, Brother Deacon, that had been your child and you dead." (Texas Baptist, Dec. 14, 1876.) He gained over to his enterprise preachers and parents. He moved the deacons to call a convention. The call was made by Dr. W. H. Trollinger of Whitesboro, at his written request.

*Deacons' Convention.*—The Deacons' Convention met in Paris, July 17, 1877. Deacon Rice Maxey, father of United

States Senator, S. B. Maxey, presided, and Deacon J. R. Rogers of Melissa served as clerk. Many preachers and other brethren present were by resolution invited to seats. Deacon J. R. Rogers offered a resolution "to establish an Orphans Home in North Texas." The preachers and all others were asked to vote. There were about 100 Baptists in the room, from many towns and counties. The vote was unanimous.

Immediately, R. C. Buckner was elected "General Superintendent and Correspondent, to canvass, enlist the sympathy and coöperation of the denomination, solicit subscriptions in cash, bonds and lands, and conduct the general correspondence."

R. C. Buckner, B. H. Carroll and J. R. Rogers were appointed a committee on "Plan," and recommended that an average of one dollar per member be asked of every church within the bounds of the General Association, and when \$2,000 is in hand, the Home be located. This was adopted, and an Executive Board appointed with Major E. F. Brown of McKinney as chairman.

*"Just to Give This a Start."*—The Deacons' Convention was on Wednesday. It was followed by the Sunday School Convention, and by the meeting of the General Association. R. C. Buckner was now 44 years old, in the prime of his young manhood. His vision was clear and pierced to the end of the century and beyond. Already he had gained the hearts of the people, but was unwilling for the brethren to leave Paris till a start was made.

On Sunday at one o'clock, he sat down under the shade of a great oak not far from the meeting house. It was yet an hour till service. Several preachers gathered about him. Then he took out a paper "greenback" bill and, laying it on his knee, said: "Brethren, just to give this thing a start, here is my dollar." "Amen," said B. H. Carroll, and put down his dollar. "Amen," said J. W. Connelly, and he followed with several others. One brother, S. J. Anderson, stood and looked on with doubt. He

thought the whole procedure a big joke. But he was finally convinced and placed his dollar. Instantly Carroll said: "Thomas, because thou hast seen thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." This contribution by the preachers under the oak amounted to \$27.

The reader is doubtless surprised to note how completely Dr. Buckner turned the attention of all the people at the Paris meetings favorably to his Orphans Home enterprise. Well, he had been working at it a good while. But now he employed a new scheme that took them by their hands and led them his way. Every day he issued a neat little "Daily Texas Baptist Extra" and distributed it gratuitously among all the people. This little daily sparkled with the golden grains of thought as they were dropped by the brethren in public utterances and in social conversation. But it also especially glowed with words and sentiments favorable to the Home, and with suggestive gems from the Holy Book.

*Opposition?*—At the Paris meetings there was no opposition to establishing the Orphans Home. But after a little while some had fears. Dr. B. F. Riley, in his "History of Texas Baptists," tells it thus: "Friends importuned him (Dr. Buckner) to desist from an undertaking so hazardous, among whom was a United States Senator, all of whom were solicitous about an enterprise which carried with it predictions of failure, because violative of all principles of business. But the founder had counted the cost, the conception of the enterprise was in his great heart, and, staying himself on God, he persisted. It was soon evident that the proposed orphanage was not to be without a home, for an offer came from Tarrant County, of a bonus of 1,200 acres of land, another from another quarter of 300 acres, while an offer of \$1,000 cash came from Eastern Texas."

If there were some discouragements, there were encouragements, many. From every direction came money and pledges. Dr. W. H. Trollinger of Whitesboro pledged one-seventh of the

earnings from his professional services. Deacon F. H. Oglevie of Melissa gave the proceeds of one acre of wheat, \$15.65. Money coming every week was a mighty encouragement. Then came also many approving messages. We give a word from two or three. "The Orphans Home enterprise is a part of our holy religion."—W. M. Gaugh, Pastor, Ft. Worth. "Waco Association will adopt plan for raising funds for the Orphans Home."—Cortez Stubblefield, Secretary of Board, Waco Association. "I am deeply interested in the enthusiasm you have awakened for a Texas Baptist Orphans Home."—R. C. Burleson, President of Waco University. "You must carry out the Orphans Home idea."—W. D. Powell, Mineola.

There was steady advancement. Money kept coming and friends seemed to be multiplying.

*The Home Opened.*—During the year 1879 there was a growing demand for the Home to be opened. Something more than \$1,000 was in the treasury, and part of it had been there for two years. Orphan children were knocking for admission, but the board had voted not to open till \$2,000 should be on hand.

Then it was that Dr. Buckner executed his personal note for \$800. This made good the \$2,000 and was approved by his board. He at once rented a three-room cottage with two acres of land on what is now the northeast corner of Junius street and Haskell avenue, Dallas. Here the Home was opened, December 2, 1879, with only three children. Two of them were John Cruse and Alice Cruse from McKinney and the third was John Jones from Ellis County. All these grew up to be honorable and useful citizens.

The first superintendent and matron were Deacon L. H. Tillman and his wife from Corsicana. They continued to the end of the year 1880. They were succeeded by T. J. Reese and wife, Mrs. S. A. Reese. This lady was very capable, having had experience as an infant class teacher in both Chicago and New Orleans. Likewise, also, was her husband a man of strength

and worth. The children were grateful and happy. "God gave us this Home"—that is what a little orphan boy was heard to say while the children were still in their rented home in Dallas.

*Naming Buckner Orphans Home.*—A meeting of the Executive Board was held in McKinney, Saturday, December 22, 1879. The day was cold. The brethren sat about the stove in the new meeting-house, not yet completed, and discussed the Orphans Home enterprise with the keenest interest. Already the Home was in operation and was taking care of three children. There was no doubt in their minds as to what was the Lord's will. Solemn prayer was offered.

Then arose Major E. F. Brown, deacon of McKinney church, and moved that the Home be named "Buckner Orphans Home," that R. C. Buckner and James R. Rogers be appointed to receive bids looking to locating the Home, and that R. C. Buckner be appointed General Manager. This was unanimously adopted. Deacon Brown was a lawyer of ability and was a partner of Governor Throckmorton.

*The First Charter.*—The original charter of Buckner Orphans Home was written by Major E. F. Brown. It was approved by Senator S. B. Maxey, Judge John L. Henry and by the Secretary of the State, at Austin, and then placed upon record. The new charter was written by R. C. Buckner himself.

By the first charter the Home was put on the broad platform of receiving and caring for any and all dependent white orphan children, without partiality and without regard to section or sectarian bounds. It has always continued on that platform. It especially provided that no child shall be excluded on account of the religious views of his or her parents. In the By-Laws it was further provided: "Under some circumstances a child not literally an orphan might be received. For instance, the father may have long since abandoned and neglected the mother and she may be a lunatic or an invalid, and the child left penniless to the cold charities of the world."

Before being placed on record, this charter was adopted by the Board at a meeting in McKinney, April 10, 1879. Dr. Buckner was supply pastor of McKinney Baptist Church in those days.

Dr. Buckner had been supply pastor at McKinney, resigning in August, 1877, that he might give himself more fully to his work as superintendent of missions and of raising funds for the Orphans' Home. The church at McKinney loved him dearly, and of them he said: "We never parted from better brethren." It was their joy to encourage him in his Orphans Home enterprise. More than a third of a century afterwards Dr. E. E. King, pastor of the church in its golden days, said: "We praise the Lord that the First Baptist Church of McKinney encouraged its retiring pastor, and had some little part in opening the sheltering home for the homeless."

*Site Purchased.*—On September 25, 1880, the general manager of the Orphans Home, R. C. Buckner, took the Texas and Pacific train for Scyene Switch, ten miles east of Dallas. From this point he walked three miles to the home of Elder J. T. Pinson with the purpose of buying from him the ground on which to erect the Home buildings. He spent the evening pleasantly with Brother Pinson. Then just as he was leaving he stated his wish to buy the block of land containing 44 acres, seven miles east of Dallas. "What is your price?" "Seventeen dollars per acre." "I will take it."

He communicated with the members of his Board and asked them to meet him on the ground, September 27. The following met: R. C. Buckner, E. F. Brown, J. R. Rogers, J. M. Graves, Sam Smith, L. H. Tillman. These brethren approved the transaction, the money was paid and the deed made. The land had on it a cedar log house and a cotton crop. There was a family in the house, but the brethren went in and held dedicatory services. A song was sung, then Dr. Buckner read the Scriptures and offered prayer.

The site chosen is on a broad fertile prairie, and on the highest ridge in Dallas County. It overlooks the city, and the health of the children from the first and through all the years has been marvelous.

*Historic Log House.*—The house in which the home was dedicated first stood on the southeast corner of the courthouse square, Dallas. It was built of cedar logs in 1841 by John Neely Bryan. But there was no Dallas then. Dallas County was a part of Nacogdoches County, and this log house was the only building within 100 miles of where the city now stands. It served as the first postoffice building and the first courthouse in Dallas. As the great city built up, the humble cedar log house began moving out. It first moved two miles east to Buzzard Springs (now in the city). Then it moved still farther east to the top of White Rock hill, where, with some other buildings, it was called "Shake Rag Town." From there later on it fled to the site purchased for Buckner Orphans Home, where it still stands, honored as the "Dedication Cottage" of the home. From the great bricks in Dallas it fled. But now aged, silent and alone it stands between the imposing Boys' building and the large classic chapel. It is content, the plaything of orphan children, and an object of the deepest interest to thousands of visitors.

## CHAPTER XVI

### AMONG THE BRETHREN

*Among the Brethren.*—Unfold "The Texas Baptist," any issue from January, 1874, to June, 1883, and you will likely catch the headline, "*Among the Brethren.*" We believe the editor originated this head as he did "News and Views," and others.

"Among the Brethren" he did some other things beside edit the paper and establish the Orphans' Home. Eat chicken? Probably. Some of his friends were so thoughtless as to say, "Two things made him supremely happy—chicken and money for the Orphans Home."

*Meeting at Fairfield.*—A good while ago was that meeting in Fairfield. The General Association had been in session there, and a renowned Tennessee Doctor of Divinity, Elder J. R. Graves, had been there and preached a great sermon. (It was considered an honor to any town to have a visit and sermon by Graves.) At the conclusion of this deliverance, R. C. Buckner shook hands with the preacher and complimented him on the gentle spirit of a sermon coming from one who bore the reputation of being a fighting preacher. Graves responded, "I am gentle, Brother Buckner, I am gentle."

But quickly the Association was gone, Graves was gone, and Pastor W. H. Parks retained Buckner for a meeting. The result was good, the church strengthened and forty-five members were added.

After a few annual suns, an unfortunate controversy was on in Dallas and was waxing warm. The brethren were assembled and expressing themselves. Then rose up a fine young man with



sense and religion, Z. J. Anderson, and set forth his views. An elderly preacher replied severely: "Z. J. Anderson is a young man. He will be wiser when he has heard from his more experienced brethren." Anderson responded: "You may call me young, but I am among the saved, am a sound Baptist and have a right to be heard. I was saved at Fairfield in 1871 under the preaching of God's own approved minister, R. C. Buckner." Dr. Buckner held other great meetings at Ennis, Dallas, Meridian, Denison, Sherman, Bonham, Palo Pinto, and many other points.

*Awaking Major Penn.*—Who in Texas, or in the South, has not heard of Major W. E. Penn? The Texas Baptist historian, B. F. Riley, thus refers to him: "He gave up his profession as an attorney, devoted himself to evangelistic work, and became famous throughout the States of the South. For many years he was a conspicuous revivalist and his services were sought far and wide." (Hist., page 231.)

In 1873, Dr. Buckner held a notable meeting in Jefferson, Texas, owned and blessed of God and fruitful of results. He was physically below par. He had just gone through a good meeting at Shreveport, Louisiana, during which he had chills. He missed no service for two weeks, nor did he miss a chill. His landlady threatened to tie him to a bedstead to keep him out of the pulpit, but she did not carry her threat into effect. The meeting did good, uplifting the pastor and church.

But in the condition above described, weak because of chills, and with thick tongue, he came to Jefferson and began the meeting. C. S. McCloud was pastor. Deacon W. E. Penn was Sunday School Superintendent and a member of the Jefferson bar. Deacon Penn was quite well known, was president of the Texas Baptist Sunday School and Colportage Convention in 1873 and 1874. In 1873, he made a great speech before the Southern Baptist Convention at Mobile, Alabama, inviting that body to meet in his home city the next year, and he brought the convention to Jefferson, its first time in Texas.

Jefferson was a town of considerable importance with steam-boat landing and wharf, and enjoying a lucrative trade from the interior. Many families of wealth and refinement had their homes in the city. The Baptist people had just completed their new brick meeting-house.

Interest in the meeting grew from the first, and large crowds attended day and night. Many were saved. Among the saved was a daughter of W. H. Harrison, who had been a large planter on Red River, but at this time was in business in Jefferson. Buckner Orphans Home is now in possession of a very valuable piano given by Mr. Harrison's daughter-in-law.

Deacon Penn became an active worker in the meeting. It was plain to Buckner that God had endowed him with more than ordinary soul-winning powers. And Dr. Buckner was glad to encourage him. Penn and Buckner worked together in this meeting as Spirit-appointed yokefellows. Penn grew bold and made suggestions: "Brother Buckner, you should not preach much tonight, only an exhortation. The meeting is going, and the thing to do now is to work for souls." Buckner took his text, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed." At the close of the discourse Penn said: "I told you not to preach much, and behold you have given us a sermon of logic and power."

The meeting closed and many were baptized. But Major Penn was a new man, a mighty man of faith with a passion for souls. And the Spirit of the Lord was upon him. Later he held a great meeting in Dallas, at the close of which Dr. Buckner had the unusual pleasure of baptizing at the same hour his four daughters. Dr. Buckner has baptized and performed the marriage ceremony for all six of his children.

*The Church at McKinney.*—In those days of his tireless activity, while editing his paper and "among the brethren," R. C. Buckner did a work of priceless value, holding meetings, constituting churches and strengthening foundations.

As an illustration of his strengthening work, we instance his

labors at McKinney. That church had a feeble beginning, August, 1872. But like a weakly infant, no one could tell whether it would live or die. In the summer of 1873, Dr. Buckner, on invitation, visited the church and held a meeting. The Baptists had no house and the meeting was held in the Cumberland Presbyterian house. The Lord showered blessings and several persons were saved. Among the saved was the wife of a young Baptist preacher named T. J. Simms, from Mississippi. Simms was a fine young man, and the brethren felt that he might make them a good pastor.

The new converts were baptized in East Fork, some distance from the town, among them Simms' wife. It was the first time the ordinance had been administered at McKinney, and a large company assembled to see it. Before going into the water, Preacher Buckner delivered an address on "Baptism" that the present pastor (1914), E. E. King, says was remembered by the people forty years afterward. The country was new and no less than nine rattlesnakes were killed there on the banks of East Fork during the baptismal service.

The church was financially weak and was greatly in need of a house of worship. R. C. Buckner accepted the care of the church as supply pastor, without salary, till the brethren could build and grow stronger, with the distinct protestation that as soon as the house was finished and the church able to pay for pastoral service, he would vacate in favor of Brother Simms.

The house was finished January, 1877. On March 4, Dr. Buckner organized the Sunday School, which still lives. The music was indifferent, and he suggested the purchase of an organ. There was opposition, but he procured the organ and placed it in the meeting-house, "just on trial a while." Soon the opposition favored buying it.

Dr. R. C. Burleson was invited to preach the dedicatory sermon. He came, preached, and announced that \$500, one-third the cost of the house, must be raised. As he proceeded to take

the collection, a heavy shower of rain poured down. Said Dr. Burleson: "The Lord has shut us in till we get the money." They soon had it, the rain ceased, and the people went home rejoicing.

In April, 1877, Dr. Buckner held a meeting and the church was greatly strengthened. By August it was on the high road to prosperity, at which time Buckner resigned and T. J. Simms became pastor. During Dr. Buckner's incumbency a well-to-do citizen of McKinney had cast a large bell with the name "R. C. Buckner, Pastor," cast in it, and presented the same to the church.

*Indian Missions.*—For some years Editor Buckner carried an Indian Department in his paper, giving fresh, up-to-date news about missionary progress among the Indians. By means of appeals through his paper and direct personal appeals "among the brethren," he was able to keep Elder Washington Kanard at work in the Creek Nation and Elder John McIntosh at work among the wild tribes west of the civilized tribes and in North-west Texas. He did not collect all the salaries of these two missionaries, but he did collect the bulk of it. His labor was one of love. Once in the paper he referred to it as "our unpaid agency." The following paragraph was kept in type and appeared ever and anon in the paper:

"The editor of this paper, by appointment of the Indian brethren, acts as agent in Texas, receiving and forwarding money and supplies direct to the Board of the Muskogee and Choctaw and Chickasaw Associations, or to the missionaries themselves, as the contributors direct. This is done without salary or commission, and in harmony with the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention."

A resolution of thanks for this service was voted to Dr. Buckner by the Muskogee Association. At the time of its adoption, kind remarks were made referring to his services, and mention was made that "The Texas Baptist" was the only paper

in the United States that contained a special department for Indian Missions. This work he continued till he influenced the General Association of Texas to adopt Indian Missions as a regular department of its work.

*Sunday School Work.*—From the beginning of the General Association to consolidation, Dr. Buckner pressed Sunday School work over North Texas. He kept it before the people in his paper and talked it “among the brethren.” When the Sunday School Convention of the General Association was organized at Longview in 1875, he was chosen its first president, and was re-elected at Waco the following year. With something over \$1,000 in sight at Waco, Buckner had the joy of seeing a Sunday School evangelist in the person of Elder J. T. S. Park, of Mexia, put into the field for full time. For this he had been laboring and praying. But the work grew and was blessed of God till at the end of ten years, July, 1885, there were six of the ablest preachers in Texas traveling over the territory of the General Association as Sunday School evangelists. There were Elders Kit Williams, H. E. Calehan, V. G. Cunningham, R. C. Pender, J. L. Mayes, and H. J. E. Williams. Then at Ennis, July 23, 1885, Dr. Buckner made the motion consolidating this live Sunday School Convention with the “Texas Baptist Sunday School and Colportage Convention.” At the time of the consolidation this Convention in the bounds of the General Association was doing as great a volume of work as the Sunday School and Colportage Convention, although the latter body had been in existence twenty-one years.

*Aged Ministers' Relief.*—In March, 1881, it became known to Dr. Buckner that Elder N. T. Byars, the veteran missionary who had baptized his thousands, who had constituted sixty churches, who had traveled the frontiers of Texas as a missionary for more than forty years, was sick and without money. He was urged by his physician to go to Eureka Springs, Arkansas, as the last hope. “The Texas Baptist” laid his case on the

hearts of its readers and appealed to them for help. The fact of his being without money, Dr. Buckner declared to be "an honor to him rather than a reproach." He made compelling appeals to the deacons who were helping the Orphans Home to provide for the aged ministers also.

There had been other worthy cases earlier than that of Elder Byars, notably that of Elder James Truss, who spent fifty years in the ministry and was faithful to the end. This brother died in 1883, but suffered great poverty in his old days. He was relieved through the efforts of R. C. Buckner.

Through Elder Buckner's calls, help came to Elder Byars, some of it in anonymous letters. Nearly all of it passed through Dr. Buckner's hands. The appeals sent out through "The Texas Baptist" were irresistible. Note the following:

"Like old horses, these veterans are left, as it were, to graze by the roadside, where they look across the fence and see many a fruitful field, opened and cultivated by their labor, but now closed against them." "Shall the State show more honor to its veterans than the church to hers? Shall we not make provision for them? Let the deacons take this matter up."

The deacons heard. Note this from Major E. F. Brown, of McKinney: "Let me urge to make provision for our aged ministers. None more deserving than they. They have fed us on the gospel in the years gone by and now we should not withhold from them our temporal things." ("Texas Baptist," June 30, 1881.)

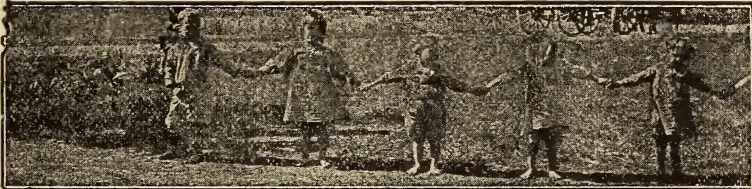
On July 26, 1881, the Deacons' Convention assembled in Waco, when Deacon Overall, of Bethany Church, near Ennis, offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

"Whereas, There appear to be old and indigent ministers within the bounds of the General Association; therefore,

"Resolved, That this convention appoint a committee of five to inaugurate and perfect plans and means for their support."

Then the convention immediately, through its chairman,

appointed the following Board, known as the "Indigent Ministers' Board": W. R. Kellum, S. F. Sparks, S. B. Humphries, W. P. Martin, B. J. Kendrick. These men were leading deacons living at and near Waco. It would have been hard to find an abler Board in the State. The First Baptist Church of Waco was one of the great churches constituted by Elder N. T. Byars, and it was fitting that the first Board in the State for aged ministers' relief should be located in Waco. This was in 1881, and was four years before a similar Board was appointed in the Baptist State Convention. It was the result of Dr. Buckner's appeals. Elder N. T. Byars was still living, and received help from this Board every year till consolidation five years afterwards.



## CHAPTER XVII

### BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME—PROGRESS

The Orphans Home was conducted in the rented cottage in Dallas during 1880 and the earlier months of 1881. Deacon L. H. Tillman and wife were superintendent and matron the first year. Their salaries were \$300 each.

On Saturday, February 12, 1881, the Orphans Home Board met in the law office of Major E. F. Brown and Ex-Governor J. W. Throckmorton, in McKinney, and resolved to build on the Home ground in the country. A two-story frame house was agreed on, with nine rooms and hall and with porch below and above, to be completed by May 1. Besides the members of the Board, the General Manager was present, also George W. Baines, jr., pastor of McKinney Church, and others. Work was begun immediately and hurried. The house was roofed and far enough advanced by April 5 to admit the orphan family moving into it. There were six children at the time of moving.

The Home Sunday School was organized by R. C. Buckner, June 19, 1881, with Deacon L. H. Tillman as superintendent. Deacon Tillman was quite well known, having been at one time moderator of Richland Association and at another vice-president of the Deacons' Convention. He was prominent in the denominational councils, was placed on important committees.

In July, 1881, more children were received into the Home. Good crops were growing. From this time forward the institution grew rapidly.

*More Land.*—Forty-four acres of land was not enough. Dr. Buckner's plans included a bigger home than that. Others felt the same way about it. So the children were scarcely domiciled



in their new home before the orphans' father began looking about for more land. He found it, eighty-three acres, joining the first forty-four acres on the south and east. It was an exceptionally fine tract. He immediately bought it and paid for it out of his own private funds. When this was reported to the Deacons' Convention, assembled in Waco, July 22, 1881, every man was pleased, and that body passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, That the thanks of this body are hereby tendered Brother R. C. Buckner for the steps he has taken to procure for Buckner Orphans Home a valuable tract of land of eighty-three acres," etc. A call was made for funds to reimburse Dr. Buckner, and many friends sent money. In about five months the money was all in hand and Dr. Buckner reimbursed. Also a tract of nineteen acres of timber was purchased and became a part of the Home assets.

Is the reader curious to know how General Manager Buckner got money to pay for that eighty-three acres? He sold his home, receiving some cash and taking as part pay a block of land in the City of Dallas. He then mortgaged the block and borrowed \$1,500. With this and the cash already received for his home he paid for the eighty-three acres. That eighty-three acres is now (1914) worth \$200 per acre, indispensable to the Home and inalienable.

"*God Bless the People.*"—Under this head, "God Bless the People," we read in "The Texas Baptist," January 12, 1882, of abundant supplies sent to the orphans. So much so that General Manager R. C. Buckner calls a halt: "Enough of dry goods for both winter and summer wear, for both boys and girls, is on hand, and of shoes there is an abundant supply for at least twelve months. Of sugar, coffee, tea, and dried fruit there is an abundance for the present. No more dry goods or clothing need be sent this year, and but little else except meat and flour."

Great need was felt for a school and chapel building, and the same was completed June 1, 1883. Also there was need

for more room, and at the meeting of the Deacons' Convention at Sulphur Springs, July, 1882, about \$500 was subscribed. More room was added immediately and a new barn built.

The location of the Orphans Home Board was changed about this time from McKinney to Dallas, with John Overall as Chairman and James Rogers as Secretary. The number of members of the Board was reduced from thirteen to nine.

*Big Picnic.*—In July, 1882, Pleasant View Baptist Church, near Buckner Orphans Home, gave a big reception and a sumptuous dinner to that Institution, Buckner Orphans Home. All the surrounding country was invited. A large multitude attended. Buckner Orphans Home, with its twenty-four children, with Superintendent T. J. Reese and Matron Sarah A. Reese, and with "Father Buckner," were there en masse. Elder J. F. Pinson delivered an inspiring address of welcome, which was said by some of his friends to be the master speech of his life. R. C. Buckner was called on for a speech. He was ready, and told his neighbors of the good work of caring for the orphan children. A spontaneous collection followed, in cash nearly \$40, and in supplies more than \$100 worth. The cash could be used all right in building work then going on. But what about the supplies? General Manager Buckner told them he had a plenty for the present, but they pressed him to take it. He soon found a use for it, as more children kept coming.

*H. F. Buckner Dead.*—On Sunday, December 2, 1882, the brightest light in the Creek Indian Nation sank out of sight. The soul of H. F. Buckner departed to be with Jesus. A sad day, this, to R. C. Buckner. His own report of his brother's death is here condensed from an editorial in "The Texas Baptist":

"A telegram was sent to Dallas, but absence from home and miles from the telegraph office prevented us receiving the summons to the bedside of our only living brother. And our venerable father was too feeble to go. His work cannot be rehearsed

here. When he was gone, a Pedobaptist preacher (white) said: 'The light of the Creek Nation has gone out.'

"The Indians said: 'No one can preach his funeral; it would be like preaching our father's funeral.'

"Said a full-blood Indian: 'Our father loved us. He taught his children well. He set us a good example, but he is gone and we must do the best we can.'

"Many years ago we parted from our brother, as he was returning to the Indians, after a visit to us in Kentucky. In parting, we sang together a hymn to the chorus:

"I am bound to live in the service of my Lord,  
I am bound to die in His army.'

"It was sad but joyful. We have ever since regarded him as God's chosen servant, sent especially as an Indian Missionary. Our last meeting was two years ago on a depot platform, each going to different points.

"A brother will be allowed to say of one so long and well known as a public servant, that a nobler, truer, more prayerful and self-sacrificing man perhaps never lived. He knew his time was drawing nigh. He longed to see the Levering Manual Labor School in operation with Elder A. J. Trenchard at its head, and to see Elder Wesley Smith, a Creek Indian, appointed missionary to the wild tribes. He saw the Levering School doing blessed work. The last long tour he made was a visit to the wild tribes, during which he slept on the cold damp ground at nights. Then the last mail opened by himself contained the news of the appointment of Elder Wesley Smith to the wild tribes by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention."

We add: Elder Wesley Smith made a speech before the Southern Baptist Convention at Waco the following May, 1883, that moved the whole convention. Among other things, he said:

"In the goodness of your hearts you sent us H. F. Buckner,

who has but recently fallen, to teach us the light. His work was blessed till there were thirty ministers of the gospel among my people. Through the influence of that one brother, our membership has grown till it is now something like 2,000, but Buckner is gone. You have appointed me to the wild tribes, and although they are almost as wild to me as to you, yet I go, and trust through your prayers and the blessings of God I may be the humble instrument in doing them good." The speech of Wesley Smith was published in full in "The Texas Baptist."

Why was Buckner away from home when the message came announcing the serious illness of his brother? He was superintendent of missions, giving his time and paying his own traveling expenses. Shortly after this he resigned on account of injuries sustained by his father being struck by a moving train. He said: "Our presence at home is an absolute necessity." During the last quarter of his work as superintendent of missions he collected \$1,204.36, besides \$500 for Buckner Orphans Home. This was considered good.

*Peeps Into the Home, 1883.*—This is the way the Home looked to Elder A. J. Holt, May, 1883: "We were surrounded by swarms of little folks, who did not seem to be orphans, but a merry family of brothers and sisters. There was a thirteen-year-old girl soothing her fretful little 'brother' of four. Here were two sweet little girls, standing arm in arm, waiting to be caressed by their benefactor. They were 'sisters,' though of different parentage. There was no fussing, crying, disputing or pouting. Two or three fleet-footed ones sped away to tell 'Mama Reese' that company had come. She came in with her little ones circling about her. Her face was motherly, her whole appearance was motherly, her heart was motherly."

The following is from "The Good Samaritan": "A small girl came to Buckner Orphans Home with morals badly impaired and language shocking. Mrs. S. A. Reese was matron. The child was dealt with kindly and firmly. One night when Father

Buckner had offered prayer and it was now time to send the children to bed, this little girl threw her arms about her matron's neck, her big brown eyes streaming with tears, and exclaimed: 'O Mamma Reese, if I had not come into this home, what would have become of my soul? I would not have known what it was to love Jesus and my soul would have been lost.'

Another scene, this time concerning a small boy, we quote from "The Good Samaritan": "This boy was a homeless boot-black and newsboy picked up on the streets of Dallas, and disgustingly profane. He had to be watched. At one time he set fire to the building. He knew nothing of prayer or Jesus. When Brother Reese led in prayer, he would sometimes mock and sometimes at close say, 'Amen, Brother Ben.' After some weeks of teaching and discipline, his matron took him into the nursery and asked, 'Do you know that praying is talking to Jesus?' 'Jesus! Who is He?' She replied: 'O my dear child, have you never heard of Jesus or God?' 'Yes, I have heard about God, but don't know about Jesus.' She talked to him a good while about Jesus, His love, His death, His resurrection, and His readiness to save all who trust Him. The boy was intelligent and soon began crying. His heart was touched. He was a better boy after that. Gradually his bad habits were cured. He was at length completely changed."

The foregoing were extreme cases. The Home does not receive a large number of that character.

"The Good Samaritan" referred to was a monthly publication issued by Dr. Buckner, and was continued several years. Its motto was, "Good Will, Good Words, Good Works." In its salutatory was announced: "Especially will it advocate good will, good words, and good works in the interest of orphan children, the dependent poor, the distressed, the incarcerated and the neglected." Volume I, Number 1, appeared in September, 1883.

"Home" Baptist Church Constituted.—As noted elsewhere, the Home Chapel and School Building was completed June 1,

1883. In this chapel the Home Baptist Church was organized, July 15, 1883. Dr. Buckner preached from the text, "And they continued steadfastly in fellowship," using the following sermon notes:

"Definition of Fellowship. It is from 'fellow,' an adherent, one who follows, a companion, an associate. Fellowship means 'mutual association on equal friendly terms.'

"I. The Basis of Christian Fellowship. The evidences of faith and love for Christ, the Spirit of Christ, His image.

"II. The Basis of Church Fellowship. This embraces more. It embraces soundness in the faith, 'the apostles' doctrine,' 'teaching them to observe all things,' etc. This is essential to church organization.

"How is Church Fellowship ascertained? Not by dictation, but by mutual understanding and voluntary agreement, by adopting a confession of faith. This secures permanency. 'They continued steadfastly.'"

While organizing the church the following order of business was observed:

1. State the object of the meeting.
2. Invite to the front seats persons having church letters, and those without letters who will obtain same.
3. Elect moderator and clerk.
4. Read articles of faith and church covenant.
5. Resolution of recognition.
6. Open doors of church.
7. Choose name.
8. Elect officers.
9. Elect messengers to bear petitionary letter to association.
10. Adjourn to dinner and baptize.

R. C. Buckner was chosen pastor and five of the orphan children were baptized.

On September 1, the church was received into coöperation with the Elm Fork Baptist Association.

*Elm Fork and Dallas-Collin Make Peace.*—For some years prior to 1883 there had been friction and discord between Elm Fork and Dallas-Collin Associations. Both occupied the same territory.

Peace and union were brought about between these two bodies through the efforts of R. C. Buckner. He prepared and read a paper before Elm Fork looking to good fellowship and union. This was September 2, 1883, when Elm Fork was in session at Stewart's Creek, in Denton County. The paper set forth:

1. That in former times there had been brotherly correspondence between many of the churches of the two bodies.
2. That Elm Fork Association looked upon the churches of Dallas-Collin as sound in the faith and otherwise worthy.
3. That nothing was needed in order to union, except for messengers from the churches of Dallas-Collin to appear with letters at the next meeting of Elm Fork, and they would be seated as a part of Elm Fork Association.

This paper was unanimously adopted, and a committee appointed to convey it to Dallas-Collin, which was in session in Dallas. Soon the following telegram was received from Dallas-Collin:

"To G. W. Good, Moderator: Your communication and messengers received. Will meet with you next year.—J. C. Bumpas, Moderator."

When this message was received by the Elm Fork brethren there was rejoicing. A hymn was sung, and a prayer of thanksgiving offered "in view of this happy termination of discord," as they expressed it.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### LEADERSHIP

*Leadership.*—The world moves only as led. Leadership is opportunity, but involves the gravest responsibility. Many leaders are wreckers. Much of the path of history is a path through the centuries strewn with wreck and ruin, the result of wrong leadership. Even in the religious world there be blind leaders of the blind. We doubt if wise and safe leaders ever appeared among Baptists save as God raised them up. We believe R. C. Buckner was called of God to build Buckner Orphans Home. But his more than fifty years of growing leadership among his brethren in Texas was no less the appointment of God. Texas Baptists have been blessed with many capable leaders. Among them the eye of the reader has already seen R. C. Buckner. But we have come to a time in his life when his star of leadership ascended to meridian heights. It has remained there, growing in strength and sending forth its light into wider and yet wider zones.

*President of General Association.*—When the General Association met in Ennis, July, 1880, R. C. Buckner was chosen President. This was meant both as a recognition of his ability and a vindication of his uprightness in character.

The good man without his enemies never lived. Dr. Buckner had them. Just a few months before he was made President of the General Association at Ennis, there were some who tried to cast stumbling blocks in his way and seriously and forever cripple his growing influence.

*Sweeping Vindication.*—The attempt to cripple Dr. Buckner was a grave matter and threatened wreck and ruin to all the



great work of the Baptist General Association. The attempt touched to the quick the entire Baptist denomination of North Texas. Dr. Buckner was corresponding secretary and financial agent of the Baptist General Association. He was President of the Sunday School Convention, and he was founder and General Manager of the Buckner Orphans Home. These were among the greatest interests of North Texas Baptists—interests of 75,000 of the Lord's people.

What was to be done? President R. C. Burleson called an extra session of the General Association to meet in Dallas, February 24, 1880, "not to sit in any sense as an ecclesiastical body," as he expressed it in his opening address, but to inquire "are these brethren in good standing with their own church?"

The brethren referred to were R. C. Buckner and certain members of the Mission Board, viz., Thomas A. Webb, J. L. Downs, W. H. Prather, Dr. D. King, and W. H. Thacker, all of Dallas.

The General Association could decide who could be its own members, who could be its officers and who could be on its own boards. All these must be in good standing in regular Baptist churches. Further than to decide the status of its own members, officers and members of its boards it could not go.

There were two parties, each claiming to be the First Baptist Church of Dallas. R. C. Buckner and the members of the Mission Board hereinbefore named belonged, all of them, to one of these parties.

The division to which R. C. Buckner and the members of the Mission Board adhered designated him, W. H. Thacker and A. F. Beddoe as messengers from the First Baptist Church of Dallas to this called session of the General Association, then assembled in the Dallas Baptist meeting-house.

The application of these brethren to be seated as messengers from the First Baptist Church was referred to a committee consisting of W. G. Calloway, B. H. Carroll, William D. Lair,

W. H. Trollinger, L. H. Tillman, J. W. Brice, J. L. Humphries, John Sparkman, W. H. Parks, and W. J. Brown.

The report of the committee was a clear statement of imperishable principles of such worth as should place that document beside the greatest productions of any age. The report concludes:

"These principles, and others equally as important, have been applied to the evidence furnished by both parties in their published authoritative statements, and to the church covenant binding the parties, and to their official records on the church book. Guided by these principles, thus applied to all the evidence as thus set forth, we do unanimously recommend that the applicants for admission in this body, to wit, Elder R. C. Buckner, W. H. Thacker, and A. F. Beddoe, be now recognized as lawful members of this body.

"And we further recommend the Mission Board, as it now stands, be confirmed and all the churches and associations be urged to cooperate with said Board as heretofore.

"And do further recommend that Elder R. C. Buckner be continued as General Superintendent of Missions and as Corresponding Secretary of this body.

"And in the exercise of these official duties that we do commend him to the fraternal regard and cooperation of all our brethren, assuring them that from a patient examination of the facts in the case our confidence in him is unimpaired."

When the report was read a profound impression was made. On whom? Said Dr. R. C. Burlison: "This immense assemblage of the oldest, wisest, and most influential men of our Baptist Israel in Texas." Said Dr. B. H. Carroll: "More messengers (and these from 'more associations and more churches') than ever assembled before on Texas soil."

Plenty of time was taken. There had been placed in the hands of the Association printed matter from each division of the church. Each party had its say in the printed documents scattered everywhere through the building and among the brethren.

All were intensely interested and all read the documents presented by both sides.

The committee to whom was referred the application of Brethren Buckner, Thacker, and Beddoe had worked most of the night following Tuesday, February 24, and their report came Wednesday morning.

The report provoked little discussion, save a speech from Dr. I. B. Kimbrough and a masterly effort by Dr. B. H. Carroll. Discussion was not needed, as all had read the printed statements. Speechmaking was cut off by a call for the previous question.

On Wednesday afternoon, President Burleson called on all in the house to stand who felt they had studied the situation sufficiently to cast an intelligent vote. All stood but one man. The report was then put on its second reading and voted on. Its adoption was practically unanimous, there being but three dissenting votes.

Then on motion it was unanimously voted that the president extend the hand of fellowship to R. C. Buckner, W. H. Thacker, and A. F. Beddoe as messengers from the First Baptist Church of Dallas. This was the most sweeping vindication ever given any Baptist in Texas. The effect was, of course, to give recognition to the Buckner party as constituting the First Baptist Church of Dallas.

Those brethren, though now having denominational recognition as official representatives of the First Baptist Church, were not disposed to be contentious about either the name or property. They quietly went out and constituted themselves into the Live Oak Street Baptist Church. They continued a separate congregation till in 1883. In that year, the Spirit of Peace touched the two congregations and they became one under the wise pastorate of Dr. R. T. Hanks.

Five months after his vindication by the called session of the General Association that body met in regular session at Ennis and elected R. C. Buckner as its president, as already related near

the beginning of this chapter. From that time forward his leadership was given glad recognition, and he was five times elected president of the General Association, and for the twentieth time president of the General Convention.

*Re-appointed Superintendent of Missions.*—At the time of the Ennis meeting, July, 1880, R. C. Buckner had been superintendent of missions two years, and was also president of the Sunday School Convention and general manager of Buckner Orphans Home. And though now elevated to the office of president of the General Association, he was still retained as superintendent of missions.

This year from the fourth Sunday in 1880 to the fourth Sunday in July, 1881, is memorable in the annals of Texas Baptist history as the year of sending out Elder W. B. Bagby and wife as missionaries to Brazil. At the meeting of the General Association in Ennis, in July, 1880, Elder Bagby was recommended for appointment to Brazil. The General Association agreed to see that his expenses should be provided, or, as Brother Bagby expressed it, "hold the rope while he went down into the mine." Bagby and wife were the first foreign missionaries sent out by Texas Baptists. It fell to the task of R. C. Buckner, as superintendent of missions, to provide for sending him out, while the State Convention provided for sending Mrs. Bagby. Dr. Buckner preached the sermon at Brother Bagby's ordination, and he and his wife sailed from Baltimore, January 15, arriving at Rio Janeiro, Brazil, March 2, 1881.

During the year from July, 1880, to July, 1881, R. C. Buckner, as superintendent of missions, preached 132 sermons. All this time he was editor of "The Texas Baptist" and getting his living out of the paper. All his denominational work was donated.

*Rescuing the Fallen.*—Buckner's work was not all denominational work, nor was it all done in sight of the people. Some of his plans called for a strict observance of our Savior's injunction, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

For years he carried on the work of rescuing depraved women and of aiding released convicts. This was done in "strict confidence." The prestige of his leadership made it possible. Here we get the lesson that attainments and successes in Christian work may be, and should be, made stepping-stones to further service.

The following from Dr. Buckner's pen appeared in "The Texas Baptist," October 8, 1885, and in "The Good Samaritan" repeatedly:

"Anyone willing to aid unfortunate women or released convicts, in efforts to reform, by giving them employment, is invited to address R. C. Buckner, Dallas, Texas. Mark 'private' on envelope. Strict confidence will be observed. Certificates of good standing will be required of strangers. Work in the country preferred."

"Any released prisoner or person of either sex desiring to reform and live a pure and industrious life shall have assistance in finding employment by addressing R. C. Buckner, Dallas, Texas. Strict confidence will be observed and the past life of the applicant not be made known, except to parties who will furnish the employment. Address by mail and mark 'private' on envelope."

Many unfortunates were helped and encouraged. We instance one or two cases. The full list is kept in Heaven, and will be published at the proper time. One woman was placed in a home with a good Christian man and his wife. She was soon afterwards converted and joined the Baptist church of the family with whom she was placed. Later she married a fine young man who made her a faithful, loving husband. No family in the community or church stood better. Dr. Buckner and the people who gave the woman a home were all who knew of her former life.

Here is another case: Rev. George W. Baines, pastor at El Paso in 1887, referred to Dr. Buckner's work in an article in

"The Inter-Republics," of El Paso, commending it very highly. His article caught the eye of a woman who was anxious to reform. She wrote Dr. Buckner. A good Baptist preacher and his wife took her into their home. She did well, was converted, was baptized and became a consistent, devout worker in one of the best city churches in Texas.

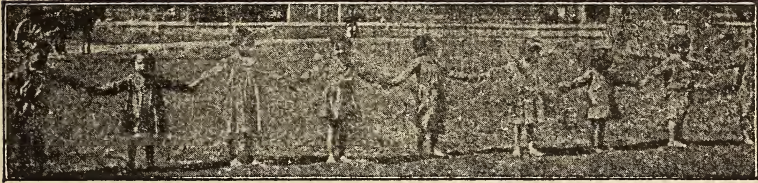
Instances could be multiplied. The compassionate Nazarene who said to a woman, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more," knows all about this work. Others do not need to know.

*Soul-saving Meeting.*—A great meeting was held by Pastor Buckner with Home Baptist Church during August and September, 1885. The meeting continued more than four weeks. It was held under a bush arbor and an immense multitude attended from the City of Dallas and surrounding country, estimated into the thousands. Many were saved and baptized, not only of the seventy orphans then in the Home, but of people all over the country. Among the saved and baptized was Mrs. S. A. Britton, who has been nearly thirty years a matron in Buckner Orphans Home, and has all these years been tenderly known as "Aunt Sallie." She was converted at the "Home," just inside the front yard gate, in the midst of a little group engaged in singing and praying.

*Old Folks Meeting.*—During this series of revival meetings at Buckner Orphans' Home, there was held an "Old Folks' Meeting" on the first Sunday in September, 1885. All the aged people in Dallas County, and even out of the county, if they wished to attend, were invited. The crowd was estimated at 3,000. Dr. Buckner preached from the text, "Cast me not off in the time of mine old age," Psalm 71:9. After the sermon there was an "experience meeting," a season when those aged people grew happy in relating their Christian experiences. It was a precious season, attended by the Spirit of Grace.

This was probably the first meeting of the kind in the State. The example was electrical, and similar meetings were held in

various places. One was held in Smith County, called by Brother M. M. Wadsworth. Brother A. Fitzgerald convened the aged of Hunt County, and in McLennan County, Deacon S. F. Sparks and others got aged saints together when D. R. C. Burleson gave the soul-strengthening discourse.



## CHAPTER XIX

### EXACTLY WHAT GOD WOULD HAVE

*Exactly What God Would Have.*—"I have not so much as a shadow of doubt in regard to the fact that I am doing exactly what God would have me do." So wrote R. C. Buckner, December, 1887, in "Christian Home," Council Bluffs, Iowa, a periodical devoted to charity work. He further says: "Never in my life till God led me into this work did I feel fully satisfied. Continually the Spirit said: 'God has other work for thee.' I was abundantly blessed in my labors. Still, I was not satisfied, and so I groped and groped, not knowing what to do. Often I would say to myself: 'Am I not engaged in the highest work known to men and angels?' The Spirit would answer, 'Aye, you are, but the Master has a special work for you, a work that ought to be done as a part of regular church work, but is not, and therefore must be done by special effort.' These words came to me again and again, as plainly, seemingly, as if they were spoken by a fellow-being standing by. I am satisfied."

These words are the key to Dr. Buckner's life and his success. He never asked, "How may I add to my honors?" but, "How may I best serve God and do good?"

*Well Rounded.*—Thirty years after writing the foregoing paragraph he spoke of "the one-talent investment which God entrusted to me." He seems not to have been conscious of the many gifts that had been developing through the scores of years and which made him the well-rounded man that he is. He could not have stood before the Baptists of Texas and built Buckner Orphans Home had he not had marvelous strength as a preacher, editor, peacemaker, master of assemblies and ability



of leadership, together with spotless reputation and faith. But does he take credit? He declared in "The Texas Baptist," December 5, 1907, that in the growing of Buckner Orphans Home he had done "no more than his plain, reasonable duty, and no man deserves credit for that."

*Put on Salary.*—It has been repeatedly noted on preceding pages that Dr. Buckner did a vast deal of denominational work all at his own charges. He was offered remuneration over and over again, but he declined it. In his orphanage work he was doing "exactly what God would have." But then God would have the laborer receive pay. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." The brethren felt that way about it all over Texas. In 1885 there were sixty-five children in the Home and that number constantly increasing. During 1885 the Board of Directors felt that it was not right for Dr. Buckner to give his time and money to building up the home and receive no remuneration. Then came a letter from Pastor B. H. Carroll, of Waco, saying that the brethren in Waco Association would pay \$400 annually towards providing a salary for the manager of Buckner Orphans Home, provided all the other people in the State would pay an additional sum of \$1,100.

The property of the Home was now worth \$20,000. Dr. Buckner had contributed heavily of his own means towards building up the institution. In a single year he had given \$1,000 of his own funds. Every year he balanced the books, contributing the deficit. At this very time when the proposition came from Waco to contribute annually towards his salary he had an outstanding personal note for \$1,850, given to advance the institution. His salary was at once made \$1,500, and everybody was glad, for all the people believed he was doing exactly what God wanted him to do.

*Was It a Burden?*—Did the manager of Buckner Orphans Home feel his burden? The following is from "The Good Samaritan," October, 1885:

“Brethren, will you allow me to be crushed under too heavy a burden? Last year to secure a farm I paid more than \$850, and within a week or two I have to pay on the same farm \$1,000, the last payment, and interest on it for a whole year. To do this I shall have to make a new note to lift the old one. In all this no one is responsible but myself. The Orphanage is not encumbered and has a clear title to the farm. Besides this, I advanced \$50 yesterday to finish paying for a dozen iron beds. None of this money has been refunded to me, of all of the above, except \$500. When anything is bought for the institution, and I can't pay for it at the time, I take all the risk alone to save it from embarrassment. Will you help to lighten the burden?—R. C. Buckner, General Manager.”

“*Absolute and Without Condition.*”—Since 1886, R. C. Buckner has been free to manage all the affairs of Buckner Orphans Home entirely “on his own judgment.” It was not convenient for the institution's Board of Directors to get together for every important transaction, but being convinced of the interest, tact and ability of the general manager, they gave him full control, “absolute and without condition.”

We quote from the By-Laws, Article 3, Section 6:

“Special.—During the incumbency of R. C. Buckner, the father and founder of the Home, he shall also be regarded as the treasurer, shall pay out money on his own judgment, solicit funds and property, negotiate trades, erect buildings, make improvements, receive and pay out money, receive and make titles to real estate and other property, in the name of the institution, using the seal of the same. He shall have full power to settle with the courts, administrators and executors, and all interested parties, in all cases of bequest to Buckner Orphans Home; to take possession for the institution of all money and property of all kinds, and execute receipts and all necessary papers. He shall be regarded as manager of the institution, as he has been from the beginning; and this shall continue in full force until his

retirement or removal, or until the action of the Board. He shall also be regarded as the president of the corporation and perform all the duties of that office when so chosen by vote of the Board at any annual meeting. But after his retirement, nothing in this section of the By-Laws shall be in force following the word 'Special.'"

While General Manager Buckner had full authority to act on his own judgment; he consulted with his Board on matters of importance, and always submitted detailed reports at their annual meetings. In every instance his annual report was approved, as well as that of the auditing committee.

*The People Believed in Buckner.*—Not only did the institution's Board of Directors believe in Buckner, but the people believed in him. Not only the Baptist people, but all the people. When God calls a man to a place of trust, he usually calls the people to recognize that man as God's man in that place of trust. Happy is the man who believes he is doing exactly what God wants when the people also believe it.

When the Orphans Home was not yet five years old there were many Buckner Orphans Home Aid Societies in different parts of the State. There was one at Ennis, with W. H. Blackman, treasurer, and at Kemp, A. J. Still, treasurer; one at Abilene, J. L. Pegues, treasurer; one at Forney, Birdie Alexander, treasurer; another at Kaufman, Walter Allen, treasurer; another at Mesquite, John H. Cullom, treasurer; another at Temple, Mrs. G. B. Penry, treasurer; another at Cleburne, B. F. Clayton, treasurer. There were many others.

Who belonged to these Buckner Orphans Home Aid Societies? Women and children? Be it said to their praise that they are always in charity organizations. Did the men belong, too? We answer by pointing to some of the names of the Dallas Buckner Orphans Home Aid, each contributing monthly as follows: Sanger Brothers, \$5; Royal A. Ferris, \$5; Schneider & Davis, \$10; C. C. Slaughter, \$10; J. S. Grace, \$2; Miss Laura

Gaston, \$12; E. M. Kahn & Co., \$1; E. M. Reardon, \$1; W. H. Gaston, \$5; M. L. Crawford, \$10; Samie Robertson, \$6; Murphy & Bolanz, \$6; Jones & Fears, \$2.50; Mrs. Barnett Gibbs, \$1; E. Page & Sone, \$1; W. H. Flippen, \$12; Dallas National Bank, \$12; Sizer & Lackey, \$12.

These were people of different religions.

It will be observed that E. M. Kahn & Co. are on the list as contributing \$1 monthly, but that was not the limit of Mr. Kahn's contributions. For instance, during the year 1885 he contributed \$250. Many of the names here given have helped the Home liberally every year for more than thirty years. From the very first the people believed in Buckner. He never betrayed their trust, and as a result he has not only fed and clothed and educated many thousands of children, but has built up a property worth beyond a half-million dollars, and that property unincumbered by any debt.

*Wanted Elsewhere.*—If it is true that the Lord wanted Buckner mainly with orphan children, it is equally true that he also wanted Buckner elsewhere. Dr. Buckner's service as president of the General Association has been referred to, as well as his services in other positions. But when he believed he could accomplish more good on the floor than in the president's chair, he would not be president; or in the ranks than in any official position, he remained in the ranks. This statement finds illustration at the meeting of the General Association at Ennis, July 24, 1885.

Buckner had been president of this body five years. He now believed the time had come for unification of all Baptist interests in Texas. Buckner first suggested unification. (See Fuller's History, page 264.) His son-in-law, A. F. Beddoe, M. D., a short time before the transfer of "The Texas Baptist," declared in that paper that unification was the thing needed. These were his words: "We need to unify all our forces for Christ and make one grand forward movement."

Believing that the time had come for the unification of all

the interests of Texas Baptists, and that he could do more for unification on the floor than in the chair, at the opening he took his place as president, called the body to order, then called Vice-President B. H. Carroll to the chair and said:

"Five years ago you were here four hundred and fifty strong, and made choice of me by unanimous vote as your presiding officer. Since that time you have gone the rounds of your territory and have each year chosen me to the same responsibility. The past two years I have served under protest, though I have at all times appreciated your confidence. I sincerely beg that you will not use my name in the present ballot."

Then, casting his eye over the vast audience, he continued:

"I see in the audience our esteemed young brother, Honorable L. L. Foster, the distinguished speaker of the House of Representatives of our State. I move that he be elected by acclamation as president of this body."

There were seconds, and Mr. Foster endeavored to interpose an objection, but Dr. Carroll put the question, and the whole house stood up.

Dr. Buckner conducted President Foster to the chair, and said:

"It affords me much pleasure, sir, to conduct you to the presidential chair of this great body. I stood by you last spring in the House of Representatives and felt proud of you as a Christian gentleman in a legislative way. I now feel proud of you as speaker of the House, called to occupy the chair of a house where every member is a speaker. I had something to do with bringing about the consolidation of our two Sunday School Conventions, and now I wish to stand aside and see the grand work of uniting all our forces go on, aiding all I can. You will find, Mr. President, that this General Association is a dignified body of zealous workers, and they will second your efforts to conduct the business in a dignified, successful way."

L. L. Foster was a polished Christian gentleman, a prohibi-

tionist, and editor of the "Goesbeck New Era." He accepted his duties with an appropriate speech. There is an allusion in Dr. Buckner's speech to his standing beside L. L. Foster in the legislature. It was during the last of February and the first of March that he visited Austin, and, without asking for it, was tendered the legislative hall for a speech on his orphan work. The result of that speech was \$250 for the orphans.

*City and County Hospital.*—In September, 1885, R. C. Buckner addressed an open letter to Honorable John Henry Brown, mayor of the City of Dallas, and published that open letter in "The Good Samaritan." Following are extracts:

"Dear Sir: The editor of 'The Good Samaritan,' having long and favorably known you, both in official and private life, as a friend of the poor and unfortunate, and as a man of public spirit, desires to call your attention respectfully to a few things. The writer would love to see the county and city of Dallas unite in building a city and county hospital of large proportions, solid material and modern adaptation. At a cost of, say \$10,000.00. This could be done, and everybody would say, 'Well done.'"

The other things to which attention was called in this "open letter" were the need of a reformatory, and Dr. Buckner's work of saving unfortunate women and discharged convicts, already referred to in this memoir.

Following are extracts from Mayor Brown's reply:

"Rev. R. C. Buckner. My Dear Sir: Your open letter addressed to me in the September issue of 'The Good Samaritan' has received my careful consideration. I feel honored by such expressions of confidence and good will coming from one engaged in the noble cause blessed of Heaven, to which you and yours are devoting your time and energies. \* \* \*

"You suggest that the city and county should unite in erecting and maintaining an institution with all the modern appliances for the health and comfort of invalids. As to the union of the two municipal bodies in such an enterprise, its wisdom would depend

upon so arranging the details as to avoid all conflict of authority and insure directness, efficiency and responsibility in its administration. But in any event, this rising city must, the earliest day possible, have such an institution."

On the other two points, reformatory and rescue work, Mayor Brown replied:

"As to the necessity of a reformatory for young offenders, if I were not keenly and painfully alive to the necessity for such an institution, I would be unworthy of the confidence of the good people. \* \* \* As to your rescue work, in so far as may fall to my lot, whether as citizen or official, you shall have my sincere coöperation."

It is worthy of note that when, twenty-seven years afterward, Honorable Ben Cabell was a candidate for re-election to the office of mayor of Dallas, he advocated the same thing commended by Dr. Buckner, namely, the coöperation of city and county in building hospitals, and that such institution is now in operation.

## CHAPTER XX

### FIELDS MULTIPLYING

*Fields Multiplying.*—We have come to the day along the life-journey of R. C. Buckner when new fields of benevolent work opened before him, inviting entrance. "New fields open," did we say? He opened most of them himself. His rescue work has already been referred to.

*Homes for Children.*—For many years Dr. Buckner placed children in good homes. This was done with the greatest caution. He could never bear to see children of the same parents separated. Nor would he for a moment entertain the thought of putting out children in homes to be servants. Occasionally the following brief paragraph appeared in the papers:

"Anyone desiring homes for dependent orphan infants or children in private families instead of an institution may be aided by addressing R. C. Buckner, Dallas, Texas."

When some benevolent ladies organized in Dallas in 1886 "the Woman's Home and Day Nursery," Dr. Buckner wrote them, saying:

"My work has given me excellent opportunity to learn of the importance of your organization. Mothers have been driven to the extremity of giving their babes away because unable while having them to get employment. I have seen this."

*Newsboys' Tea.*—A glad day for the newsboys of Dallas was April 18, 1886. R. C. Buckner gave the boys a tea, all at his own expense. There were about one hundred of them. The good things consisted of coffee, tea, cakes, ice cream, lemonade and sandwiches. "The Dallas Evening Herald" commented thus:



"The entertainment will long live green in the memory of the boys, and Rev. Mr. Buckner will not soon be forgotten. They paraded the streets with the air of a crack military company."

Buckner made the newsboys glad more than once. It was a common diversion with him to do such things. He is supremely happy when he can give his orphans an aristocratic feast. He does that sometimes.

*Newsboys' Evening School.*—In "The Good Samaritan," May, 1886, we read: "For some time we have ceased to write in these columns on the subject of 'Free Evening Schools' for such boys in cities as cannot attend day schools for want of time and money. But we have not been silent in the daily papers of our own city. Now, the possibility is that such school will be permanently established. A lady has tendered a sum of money, and two others as teachers without salary. Besides, two letters are now on our desk from parties asking assistance." Such school was established later by other hands and has since become one of the praiseworthy institutions of Dallas.

*Humane Society.*—The Dallas Humane Society was organized June 30, 1888, with R. C. Buckner as president. "The Dallas News," June 30, 1888, commented:

"The society is now thoroughly organized from among the humane and solid elements of the population and promises to eliminate the more common forms of brutality."

The "Texas Baptist and Herald," August 15, 1888, had this to say: "It is not an infrequent thing to see horses and mules overloaded and beaten till welts stand on their hides. Negroes may be seen driving horses which show unmistakable signs of starvation. God be praised that some of our citizens have sufficient humanity to organize to put a stop to this continued practice of cruelty."

The objects of this humane society were declared to be "to stop cruelty to children, to rescue them from vicious influences and remedy their condition, to stop the beating of animals, to stop

dog fights, to stop the bleeding of calves, to stop the plucking of fowls, the driving of galled and disabled animals, etc."

R. C. Buckner was the leading spirit in this humane society. It was the first in the State, and impressed itself on Dallas and the State. The Dallas city council passed humane ordinances in answer to its petitions. Some of its demands were enacted into laws more than twenty years afterward.

About this time, 1888, R. C. Buckner advocated with great earnestness a system of police matronship, urging it on the city council of Dallas. Whether through his suggestion or not, this system has since been put into operation and is doing untold good. He was probably the first in the State to advocate such system.

*Charities and Correction.*—In 1886, Dr. and Mrs. Buckner attended the thirteenth annual session, at St. Paul, Minnesota, of the "National Conference of Charities and Correction."

It was the custom for representatives to go under the appointment of governors of their respective States. Two years before this, Dr. Buckner was anxious to attend a session of this body at Louisville, Kentucky, but Governor John Ireland declined to make any appointments, saying, "Texas never takes part." The Civil War had been over nearly twenty years, but the Texas governor had not yet become fully "reconstructed." To his thinking, this "National Conference of Charities and Correction" was wholly "northern." He could not brook that. But the governor was a man of good sense and gradually softened and broadened. So that now, during his second term, he cheerfully gave the appointment to Dr. and Mrs. Buckner to go to St. Paul and "take part."

A large number of eminent men and noble women participated in the deliberations and aided in the good work of this organization. Among them were Ex-President Rutherford B. Hayes and Mrs. Hayes, of Ohio, both of whom were present at this meeting in St. Paul. The representation from the South was

small, Dr. and Mrs. Buckner being the only persons present from Texas. Dr. Buckner attended many meetings of the conference during the two or three decades that followed. Two years afterward, 1888, he was at the meeting in Buffalo, New York, as the official delegate from Texas under appointment of Governor L. S. Ross.

At this meeting Dr. Buckner delivered an address on "Prisons, Hospitals and Orphanages in Texas." It was received with marked attention. Texas had a somewhat unsavory reputation abroad, and this assembly of lovers of humanity was very glad to hear a good report. His statements were not guesswork. Said he:

"As to prisons and almshouses, I speak from personal observation. . . . I have visited all of them in the State except a few county farms." He showed that nearly all the jails had been built with a view to sanitation. He told of the hospital at Austin, owned by the city and county, and commended the plan of city and county coöperation in conducting hospitals. The Catholic orphanages at San Antonio and Austin were sketched, also the Bayland at Houston, and that of the Odd Fellows just opened at Corsicana. Then he gave a brief view of Buckner Orphans Home, caring for its sixty children under its own roof.

A good impression was made. Many were glad to give him the hand and cultivate his acquaintance. A warm friendship was formed between him and Mr. F. B. Sanborn, the treasurer of the conference, that abided.

During its years of effort "to obtain and diffuse knowledge" helpful to philanthropists, the conference, among other things, announced the principle "that justice rather than giving relief is the supreme end of philanthropy," and that "justice means the equalizing of opportunity." In other words, "every child has the right to come to its best, and in coming, has the right to all needed assistance." How much of this doctrine the conference learned from Dr. Buckner does not appear, but it was a

principle of his in operation in Buckner Orphans Home before it was published by the conference.

*National Prison Association.*—A few days after the meeting of the “Conference of Charities and Correction” in Buffalo, 1888, just referred to, the “National Prison Association” met in Boston in its seventeenth annual session. Prominent in its councils, and one of its directors, was Mr. F. B. Sanborn, whose home was in Concord, near Boston. Mr. Sanborn gave Dr. Buckner a warm invitation to go with him to Boston and attend the sessions of the “Prison Association.” Dr. Buckner attended this Boston meeting and enrolled as a member, paying the annual membership fee of \$5 for many years.

The “National Prison Association” was quite an aristocratic body of philanthropists. At this Boston meeting, Ex-President R. B. Hayes presided. On the floor was Ex-Governor Rufus B. Bullock, of Georgia; the illustrious educator, Professor Francis Wayland; Professor C. A. Collin, of Cornell University; General Brinkerhoff, of Ohio; and perhaps a hundred others equally distinguished.

Will Buckner make a speech? He listened awhile to some speechmaking on “Theory and Practice” in the management of discharged convicts, then arose to speak.

President Hayes: “Will the gentleman approach the chair and speak from the platform?”

Dr. Buckner: “Yes, sir, I will stand close by you, Mr. President. I am from Texas, and for a Texan to be ‘knocked down’ for speaking too long would never do. A Texan would not submit to that, so I will stand by you; then if I am lengthy you just pull my coat.”

By this time he had attention. He continued: “I have been enlightened on ‘Theory and Practice,’ and I am now quite sure I cannot, from the standpoint of either theory or practice, ‘take a bunghole and construct a barrel about it,’ but I can tell you in three words how to treat a released prisoner. Treat. him

kindly, religiously, justly. Of course, religion includes justness and kindness. A prisoner has served his time out at hard labor and the law says, 'Go free.' Before the law he stands without condemnation, but the people condemn him, deride him, ignore him, ostracise him. Kind treatment would in all probability reclaim him. Treat him kindly, I say. You have seen a dog fight, when the whipped cur ran away yelping. The boy he met let a stone fly at him and he yelped again. At the next corner another stone was fired and away he ran. The probability is he spent the balance of his life killing sheep or sucking eggs. Thus you treat the prisoner, when kindness might reclaim him.

"Some weeks ago a man depressed and cast down, came to my front door. 'My name,' said he, 'is V—. Where are my little boys, Jim and Harry?'

"'They are all right,' I replied.

"'What do I owe you for taking care of them the past two years?'

"'Nothing at all.'

"'Well,' said he, 'I would like to take them with me.'

"'Have you a place to care for them?'

"'No, sir.'

"'Well,' said I, 'do you go, as an honest and industrious man, and provide some means to support them and you shall have them.'

"I handed him a little money, enough to secure provisions for twenty-four hours, and from what I have heard since, I have no reason to fear that he will not earn an honest living. He had just served two years in the State penitentiary." He afterwards married and settled down and was allowed to take his children.

*Had His Head Measured.*—During the sittings of the "Prison Association" in Boston, a "professor" was introduced to measure heads. He professed to be able to tell much of one's predilections to a life of good or evil. Calls were made for volunteers.

Others not responding, Dr. Buckner went up to the platform. All were attentive while the "professor" lectured on Buckner's head, explaining the kinds of heads likely to be criminals. Presently he remarked about "long ears." "Do you mean to say," cried the doctor, "that I belong to the long-eared tribe?" This convulsed the house into laughter and merriment. After that, everybody knew him, and when he rose to speak, everybody listened.

Dr. Buckner and F. B. Sanborn met often in the annual meetings and were fast friends. Four years after this meeting in Boston, when Grover Cleveland was elected President of the United States, Buckner wrote his friend Sanborn: "I am happy to see the Democrats win. Sorry for you Republicans. You have come to think the Presidency belongs to you. I am sorry for you."

To this Mr. Sanborn replied: "Thank you, sir, I am a Democrat myself."

*Family Quarrels Settled.*—Dr. Buckner was a peacemaker and all along found occasions to use his good offices. The case here, instanced, was in 1884. He was residing then on Race street in Dallas, and was passing a house in a sparsely settled section. He recognized Mr. — in the front yard, face flushed with excitement; three little children in tears on the porch; their mother in great rage, standing in the front door talking to her husband. He was making for the exit gate, and talking back vociferously.

Dr. Buckner knew him well, stopped him and asked for an explanation. The husband and wife had separated and he was leaving for parts unknown. Dr. Buckner detained him, reasoned with him, and pleaded with the wife, urging them to reconsider.

"No," they both protested. "I'll never live with her again." "I'll never live with him again." "This is the last of it," both avowed. Buckner continued to plead, apparently with no avail.

At last, he said: "You are both responsible for these dependent little children. God will hold you accountable. They need their father's support and their mother's care. I plead with you in the interest of your own children."

A reconciliation was effected, then and there. The family moved to Houston, Texas. Several years afterward when Dr. Buckner was presiding over the great Baptist Convention in Houston, he was accosted, as the crowd was passing out after an evening adjournment, by this same Mr. —, with smiling face and hearty grip of the hand, "I want to thank you, Dr. Buckner, for the reconciliation you effected between me and my wife. Our children are larger now, doing well in school, and my wife and I are happy and doing well. We have lived here ever since soon after you settled our trouble."

*A Deserted Wife Helped.*—When Dallas was but a village, without paved streets and without police regulations, Dr. Buckner, one drizzly night, was passing along Main street, near where the St. George Hotel has since been built. A two-horse wagon was passing in the middle of the muddy street. The driver, a poorly clad white man, pulled the reins suddenly and called, "Whoa!" Then he roughly put out a woman in the rain and mud, drove hurriedly away and disappeared in the darkness.

If such a thing were to occur in Dallas today, a faithful policeman would promptly take the matter in hand. But the poor deserted woman, who proved to be the wife of the heartless wretch, stood alone weeping. Immediately Dr. Buckner went to her assistance. In the midst of her sobs, she told him of the only family she knew in the town, "living out in the cedars," and she was not sure that they were still there. Buckner then walked with her through the rain and mud about a mile south to a scattered settlement and there found the family. The distressed woman was given a welcome in the cottage and Dr. Buckner found his way back to Main street, and at a late hour to his own home. This was about 1878.

*Books for Prisoners.*—The following excerpts are interesting: “A library of newspapers and other reading matter, secular, religious, scientific, historical, should be provided for every jail or other place where the wicked or unfortunate are confined. The worst men need such influences and the good deserve such attention.”—Good Samaritan, October, 1883.

“Visit your county jails and talk with the prisoners, and if you find any who really want and would appreciate copies of the New Testament, and are not able to buy for themselves, write to the ‘Good Samaritan’ and you shall be supplied free of charge. Present them to the prisoners with such suggestions as you think proper.”—Good Samaritan, May, 1884.

“We are in receipt of a letter from a prisoner in Houston county asking us to send him a Bible to the care of the sheriff. The request is answered by mailing a Bible free of charge. We will donate a Bible or Testament to every prisoner in Texas who wants one and is not able to pay for it. If any who read this article desire to share in the work, they may send us whatever amount they would like to give. Forty cents will pay for a Bible.”—Good Samaritan, June, 1884.

This work grew and broadened, and helpful reading was supplied to many prisoners. Dr. Buckner gave a library to the county jail in Lamar County.

*Charity for Colored People.*—At an early day, most of the colored people in Dallas were dependent on their daily earnings for a support. They were cooks, housekeepers, gardeners, etc., and their wages were small. When sick, their earnings ceased and sometimes they needed charity.

Dr. Buckner observing this, set on foot a system of help, which proved a great blessing to many needy ones. He called a meeting of the colored people, impressed on them the importance of economy and of saving a part of their earnings, and called on them to provide a fund to help their own needy sick, when unable to work. The negroes responded liberally. Then



he asked help of benevolent white people and these also contributed.

This fund was put into the hands of Rev. S. P. Smith, a colored preacher, and his deacons. It was administered wisely and gave timely assistance to many.



## CHAPTER XXI

### EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE

*Epistolary Correspondence.*—During the twenty-five years from 1888 to 1913, the volume of work carried on every day by R. C. Buckner was astounding. At the beginning of this period, he was fifty-five years old, and at the end of it, eighty.

During the twenty-five years preceding this period, he turned out more work than many busy men turn out in a lifetime. Nor did he stop work at eighty. His strength remained and he continues in his eighty-second year, active and accomplishing an astounding volume of work.

For many years he has exchanged letters with valued correspondents in all parts of America. Words of counsel were sent to hundreds of young people, and messages of condolence and encouragement to uncounted sick, bereaved and unfortunate. People in the shadows, hundreds and thousands of miles away, sought his comfort and advice. Preachers wrote him about their disappointments and successes, their sorrows and joys, and it was no small part of his religion to “weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that do rejoice.” Statesmen counted him their friend and wrote him about the affairs of State. The young man or young woman, with eye on the far-off mission field, appealed to him for sympathy and support. Fathers and mothers opened to him their hearts concerning their wayward children. Philanthropists craved the benefit of his wide study and ripe experience. They were never turned away empty.

Besides numberless letters that have been lost or destroyed, he has a large zinc trunk packed full of treasured messages. They are assorted, classified and held sacred. Every one of

them he answered himself. If published, the letters in that zinc trunk would make ten volumes as large as this. Then again, enough other letters to make a second ten volumes are preserved elsewhere in files, carefully indexed, and are equally sacred.

An explanation is found in the fact that the people everywhere loved and confided in Buckner. Hear Dr. W. W. Landrum, Louisville, Ky.: "For years at the meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention, when Dr. Buckner would rise to speak, the brethren would whisper: 'That is R. C. Buckner of Texas, the best man, they say, in all the State. We of Virginia, or Georgia, or Kentucky, were led to believe that Dr. Buckner was the best loved man in all Texas.'"—From a letter to the author, October 14, 1912.

*Some Interesting Excerpts.*—"Brother Buckner: Let me tell you when and how I began preaching. Away back in 1838, I moved to Bastrop. At that time, I was serving Congress as sergeant at arms in the Senate, holding that position five years. In 1839, I moved to the frontier, when my impressions to preach returned with ten-fold weight. In the fall of 1841, I was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, on the call of Macedonia Church, eight miles below Austin on the Colorado river; presbytery Elders Z. N. Morrell and John Woodruff.—N. T. Byars, Brownwood, May, 1889."

"Dear Brother Buckner: They told me a preacher was preaching in Pleasant View neighborhood who could make people shout. That was in 1877. I went to hear him. You preached from Matt. 12:30, 'He that is not with me is against me.' You pictured my life; it was vile. Then you held up the bleeding Christ and I saw the way of salvation. I went to the altar, and then went home. I did not sleep. As the first rays of approaching day kissed the eastern hills, I said 'Yes,' to my Savior. Then came peace to my soul, a peace that passeth understanding, and joy unspeakable."—Elder A. J. Benson, Austin.

"My dear Brother Buckner: Your favor enclosing \$100 for

Mexican church at San Antonio, to hand and passed to credit with many thanks."—J. B. Cranfill. (Corresponding Secretary.)

From Honorable S. B. Maxey: "I am enclosing you memorandum on prison work and send documents, as I know you appreciate such data and statistics."

From Rev. Frank Kiefer: "I send you greeting from Rochester, N. Y. I am the guest of Rev. J. S. Gubbleman, the best German preacher in the United States. I am preaching for him and many are being saved, though the snow is 18 inches deep." February, 1889.

Rev. D. C. Hardin: "Dear Brother Buckner—A letter from you is like a cup of cold water on a July day, and I am now the happy recipient of one."

From Rev. B. F. Riley, Birmingham, Ala.: "When I feel discouraged I think of you, and a certain sense of exhilaration and of rehabilitation, and of rejuvenation, and of stimulation, and of all else that is good, comes like a wooing breath of summertide to my jaded sensibilities."

Dr. B. T. Blewett (Buckner's old preceptor of 1851), December 18, 1913: "Dr. R. C. Buckner. My esteemed Brother—Your most welcome favor gave me great comfort in the assurance that you still remember me fondly. My first introduction to you by your venerated father on the campus at Georgetown College, Kentucky, is fresh in my memory. Time and separation have not chilled my interest in you. I am glad that advancing years have not weakened your zeal. God bless you and be with you to the end. My two sons are married and live in this city (St. Louis) and are a great comfort to me. My two daughters, unmarried, and I, live in our delightful home in the suburbs. I am now running rapidly into my ninety-fourth year. General health is good, hearing subdued. I enjoy life. My books and our large place keep me fully employed. The plan of salvation is increasingly brighter, and my trust in my Savior strengthens. Could I see you, I would tell you how much I

love you. I offer to Sister Buckner my fond remembrance, and to you the assurance of my abiding affection."

Rev. W. A. Whittle, Pastor, Birmingham, Ala., 1891: "There is an outer circle and an inner circle of friends. You are of the inner circle, you, my dear Dr. Buckner."

From an inmate in the penitentiary at Rusk, Texas, whose time was about up, 1897: "Dear Mr. Buckner—Your letter received. I am grateful for your kind promise to use your efforts in obtaining me employment. I will accept any kind of work, no matter how hard, just so I can make an honest start in life. It will be at your discretion, whether my employer shall know of my present condition."

Miss Clara Barton, September 5, 1903: "Rev. R. C. Buckner. My dear Doctor—You will be interested to know that my labor in connection with the formation of a great National Advisory Board of the Red Cross is drawing to a conclusion, and that we shall have one of the most distinguished and influential committees that have perhaps ever been organized in the United States."

Miss Clara Barton, December 29, 1903: "I want you to accept my warmest thanks, my dear doctor, for your good offices in procuring the acceptance of your State Treasurer of a place on the National Finance Committee (Red Cross). With reference to your nomination of Hon. George W. Carroll of Beaumont to serve on the Finance Committee in conjunction with Mr. Robins, I desire to say that, although the Finance Committee as at present constituted includes State Treasurers only, I can see no reason why, in a large State like Texas, a man of such eminence as Mr. Carroll, should not be included. Therefore, I purpose extending the invitation to Mr. Carroll, in which I shall take the liberty of mentioning your very warm recommendation. With high regards.—Clara Barton."

We could quote entertaining extracts from letters written by Governor L. S. Ross, and many Texas governors, by college

presidents, by congressmen, by eminent jurists, by army chaplains, by philanthropists, by mission secretaries and by missionaries, by authors and by men and women in all the walks of life, till the reader would tire and quit. All through this work are examples in abundance.

*Charming Letter Writer.*—Letter writing belongs to the fine arts. More than music, or poetry does the well-written letter find its way to the heart. To write a charming, soulful letter is an accomplishment calling for chair and professorship in every college. One of the secrets of Dr. Buckner's success has been his power as a letter writer. Heart-whispers have been his letters, and his reward is the throne.

Hear the testimony of Deacon Will Dyer of Gilmer, Texas. Deacon Dyer has known Dr. Buckner a long, long time and has volunteered the tribute here quoted. Please remember as you read that the last official work of the immortal Z. N. Morrell was to ordain Will Dyer and W. S. Allen to the deaconship. Morrell went to Heaven December 19, 1883. Hear Brother Dyer:

“Brother Buckner's letters have made hundreds happy. I believe I would be safe in saying thousands. They have made glad the home on the farm, the home of the mechanic, and of every occupation that human beings follow. His letters have lifted hundreds of feet from the pathway of sorrow, and placed them on the highway of good cheer. His pen has helped the foreigner to feel at home and be a good citizen. I heard a Jew say that Buckner was the very best man in this country of ours. Dr. Buckner writes on the heart and I do not believe there is a man on this earth that can erase it. Some have attempted to blur it, but failed. His epistles are indelibly inscribed on the hearts of his orphan children, and of those in sympathy with them. In its last analysis Buckner's work is all heart-work. Jesus sits by his side while he is engaged in this heart-work.”

Some lives set the heart of their friends singing, others set them aching.

Said Elder J. J. Pipkin of Bryan, Texas, 1912: "Father Buckner lives in the hearts of more people than any other man in the world."

B. H. Carroll one time introduced R. C. Buckner to Elder C. C. Smith as "the very best man in Texas."

Geo. W. Truett of Dallas relates this incident: Several business men were at dinner in a Dallas hotel. It was during the trying days when there was division in the ranks of Texas Baptists, and when one man was suing his brethren in the courts. Conversation turned on the Baptist troubles. A gentleman asked, "Which side is Dr. Buckner on?" "On the side of the Convention," came the reply. "Then that settles it," said the other. "The man who built that orphanage would not be on the wrong side of any question." That did settle it. All seemed agreed.

*Excerpts from Buckner's Letters.*—A tender letter from H. C. Risner, Knoxville, Tenn., September, 1912, asks: "How is the dearest man on earth?" Dr. Risner, one of the most brilliant Chautauqua lecturers and one of the best preachers in the world, had passed under the shadows, but had come out in the clear sunlight. Keeping this in view, the reader will appreciate Dr. Buckner's reply:

"My dear Brother Risner: The Lord is good to me always. I am well and grateful, but I am thinking. They cast the jewel to the ground, hoping it would never be seen again. They covered it deep with earth. But behold, it is above ground again and sparkles with brilliancy unobscured."

"Dallas, Texas, October 10, 1913. Miss Fay Davis, Cisco, Texas. My dear Friend—I am rejoiced to hear from you. When I wrote you from Manila, P. I., I could give you no idea of where you could reach me by mail. \* \* \* It had been so arranged that I could keep fairly well in touch with my Orphans

Home by having letters follow me across the land and over the seas.

"While on shipboard, I often thought of my many friends by name, and could look them over easily, as I did the Davis home in Cisco. The fact is, whether at home or abroad, I think of you, your parents and your home very often. Since I have grown to be an octogenarian, I realize early friendships by a stretch of memory, but later friendships by an immediate realization of the heart. Most of my old friends have passed away, and a new crop has only come in since the multitudinous duties belonging to the responsibilities and accumulating opportunities of age have become so numerous that not much time is allowed for the enjoyment of them.

"The friendship between you and myself began in connection with your young school days, when my duties were so great that I forced myself to seek the benefit of company and correspondence with young minds and hearts not yet acquainted with the responsibilities of life. I value such friendships beyond measure. \* \* \*

"Samuel Johnson says: 'If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life, he will find himself left alone.' But we should not seek friends and friendship simply for our own enjoyment. J. R. Miller had a better appreciation of redeemed humanity when he said: 'A true friendship is entirely unselfish. It loves not for what one may receive, but for what he may give.' \* \* \* Right in this connection let me charge you to tell your dear father and mother that they must never drop my name from their list of friends."

The following is from a letter written to Rev. J. H. Franklin, D. D., and bears the same date of the preceding:

"Rev. J. H. Franklin, Boston, Mass. My dear Brother Franklin: I have before me your pleasant letter written at Hong Kong, China, February 7. It came too late for me to reply before leaving for San Francisco, and when once there I



expected to see you in person. But before I reached China you had left for the United States. \* \* \* Then upon reaching home, I found myself not merely sprinkled or poured upon but absolutely immersed in a volume of letters and other obligations, from which I am just beginning to be raised again. I want you to know that I appreciate your kind greetings and the thrill of Christian fellowship that seemed to guide the dictation of your brief letter."

When Rev. S. G. Mullins of Corsicana, Texas, went home to Glory in 1912, Dr. Buckner wrote a tender letter to Brother Mullins' grief-stricken son, President E. Y. Mullins, Louisville, Ky. Following is that son's reply: "Dear Dr. Buckner: Thank you very much for your beautiful and comforting letter. I have not received a letter which I appreciate more. Coming from your warm heart, it is full of the kind of strength one needs in suffering a great bereavement. You have meant a great deal to me in my life, more than you yourself realize. The Lord's richest blessings be upon you and your work always. Cordially yours, E. Y. Mullins."

We will not add others. All through this book are letters and excerpts taken from Dr. Buckner's correspondents.

## CHAPTER XXII

### WHERE IS THE LIMIT?

*Where is the Limit?*—Where is the limit to what a man can do? It varies, of course. But please, dear Reader, do not follow with doubts and interrogation points in your mind. Try to walk by faith.

“Worked to the limit,” is a common saying among busy people. The writer has been very close to Dr. Buckner, but has never heard him use that expression, or words of similar import. But he has seen the Doctor turn out volumes and volumes of work, and then run out and play with the orphan children without complaining. Even after he was an octogenarian, has seen him put in some solid hours, and then run out and jump with the boys of fifteen, and outjump them, too!

But where is the limit to what a man can do? Let us look back into 1885. In that year R. C. Buckner wrote in round numbers 1,000 personal letters, 200 newspaper articles, distributed 120,000 pages of printed matter, conducted a Sunday school through the whole year, held many prayer meetings and delivered sermons and lectures at various points.

The life of the Man of Galilee is pictured to us as a Life “going about doing good and healing.” That Life was R. C. Buckner’s model, and to follow copy his aim. So full was that Life that had it all been written the world itself had not contained the books, but it was never too much occupied to hear the cry of distress, nor was His disciple, R. C. Buckner, ever too busy to hear that cry.

*A Touching Incident.*—Let Dr. Buckner tell it: “It was during the earlier years of Buckner Orphans Home. We were

about ready to retire for the night when a timid knock was heard at the door. The nine o'clock train had just passed and we supposed the knock that of a friend, as the orphans usually came on the morning train, but it was a bright-faced little boy of eight. His clothes were ragged, but his faith was great. He did not know who I was, but supposing I might have some influence at the Home, he said: 'Mister, I want to get into the Orphans Home.'

"Who sent you?"

"I have no papa or mamma, but others sent me here. I do want to get into the home so bad,' and the tears gathered in his eyes. 'If you will let me in, Mister, I will give you all my money,' and pulling out thirty-five cents, he handed it to me.

"By this time, my own eyes were filled with tears and I took the little orphan by the hand and said: 'My boy, you shall have a place and food and clothing as long as God's blessings continue to rest on us. And I will seal up your money in an envelope and keep it for you.'

"I assigned him a place and he was a happy boy. I had heard about him before he came, and all necessary arrangements for caring for him had been made."

*Ladies' Aid Society.*—Wide awake to every interest of the Kingdom, R. C. Buckner was often in advance of his brethren. And, though busy to the limit, if he saw where a forward step could be taken or a new interest started, his hands were never too full to take hold, and also move his brethren to take hold.

It was he who moved the sisters in the bounds of the General Association to form a General Aid Society, the object of which was to aid the General Association by raising funds for "missions, education and Orphans Home." R. C. Buckner was president of the General Association, and was also its general financial agent. This gave him prestige and he easily led the sisters to organize.

This Ladies' General Aid Society extended from Cleburne

to Paris and from Waco to Eufaula, Indian Territory. It was organized at Paris, July 27, 1884. The opening prayer was led by R. C. Buckner. Talks on the objects and aims of the organization were made by R. C. Buckner, R. C. Burleson and others. There were twenty-six names enrolled, with Mrs. C. E. W. Priest of Greenville as president and Mrs. W. J. Brown of Cleburne as secretary-treasurer.

Mrs. C. E. W. Priest was a returned missionary from Africa, where she and her husband, Elder R. W. Priest, did a holy work. Both were consecrated workers after their return. Some of their children were born in Africa.

Previous to this there were local organizations of sisters in various churches doing good work. Also in South Texas, in the territory of the Baptist State Convention, there were societies, and a general organization, called the Woman's Missionary Union, with Mrs. F. B. Davis as president. The South Texas Woman's Missionary Union aided the State, Home and Foreign Missions. Among other worthy objects, they supported Mrs. W. B. Bagby in Brazil.

In 1886, at Waco, the Ladies' General Aid Society and the Woman's Missionary Union consolidated, with the result that the State-wide Baptist Women Mission Workers was organized.

*Orphans Home Aid Societies.*—The Orphans Home General Manager, R. C. Buckner, did not wait till the "Ladies' General Aid" was formed (July, 1884) to lay his orphan work on the hearts of the sisters. He encouraged and moved them to organize orphans home aids in many churches.

As an illustration of the beautiful spirit and work of these societies, we give space to the following letter, written to "Aunt Vi":

"Kaufman, Texas, April 20, 1884.—Dear Aunt Vi: I have been appointed by the Buckner Orphans Home Society to write and let you know how our society is getting along. Well, splen-

didly. Everybody seems to take an interest in it. We have about sixteen members. We would send the money we have in our treasury now, but will wait till we get a little more. We meet every Saturday afternoon at three o'clock, and have a nice time. (Miss) Lela Erwin."

Who is "Aunt Vi"? The orphan children from the very first have always called Mrs. R. C. Buckner, "Aunt Vi," and gradually that endearing name has come to be applied to her all over Texas. If you were at the Home and speak of her as "Mrs. Buckner," the children would not know to whom you referred. "Aunt Vi" in the early days captivated the hearts of the little ones all over Texas. They wrote her many letters and to all she replied so sweetly that they were completely won over.

A lady at Weatherford, Mrs. K. E. Hewett, who visited the Home in 1884, said: "Since my return I have had to answer many questions about 'Aunt Vi.' The little girls want to know if she is pretty. Of course, they think a woman who writes such nice letters to them must be very pretty. I was particularly struck by a question from a little boy: 'Did you see Aunt Vi?' 'Yes.' 'Well, is she as good as she sounds?'"

Aunt Vi conducted the children's department in the "Good Samaritan," always signing the communication "Aunt Vi." This accounts largely for the name being state-wide.

At an early day, whole Sunday schools turned to be Buckner Orphans Home Aid Societies. For instance, the Home was scarce four years old, when Ladonia Sunday school was donating to it the collections taken the first Sunday in every month. The encouraging of schools to donate to the Home the offerings of one Sunday in each month has been kept up through all the years, and now (1914) the Home has a list of 178 schools giving each one Sunday. The list is called the Buckner Orphans Home Sunday School Honor Roll.

After the founding of the Ladies' General Aid Society (1884), and after the consolidation of all the Baptist interests (1886),

Dr. Buckner went right on encouraging the forming of Buckner Home Aid Societies, both in church and in associations.

As an example, we point to Red Fork Association. When Buckner Orphans Home was not yet eight years old, there was in Red Fork a standing associational committee consisting of one sister in every church. The association at that time extended from Harold to Childress, and from Seymour to Mangum, Okla.—100 miles north and south and 100 miles east and west. Mrs. A. C. Evans, of New Hope church near Vernon, was for some years superintendent of the orphans home work in the association, and the sisters in eighteen churches made quarterly reports to her. What was done to enlist Red Fork Association was done to enlist others, and they were enlisted. This immense volume of work Dr. Buckner did through extensive correspondence and by personal visits to all parts of North Texas.

*Saloons and Jails.*—Jail work, finding homes for the fallen, and many other things have been mentioned. Dr. Buckner offered a year's subscription to the "Good Samaritan" to people in every county who would send him answers to the following questions:

"Who is your sheriff? Your jailer?"

"What is the name and address of every saloon keeper in your county?"

"Has your county a poor farm? If so, how many paupers in it?"

"How many prisoners in your county jail?"

"Is there any Christian worker visiting your jail? Give his address."

"Do you know any one you could recommend to visit your jail, carrying books and other reading matter?"

There were a few other questions. The extensive correspondence and heavy sacrificial work of Dr. Buckner, carried on for many years, in connection with his efforts to uplift and

better the condition of the fallen and unfortunate, will not be known until the last day.

*Royal Welcome to E. E. King.*—It belongs to the fine arts to know how to catch a new brother on his first arrival, and “tie him on.” Buckner knew just how to do that. Didn’t he thus catch and tie on W. S. Huff, J. H. Curry, T. N. Coleman, R. T. Hanks, W. H. McGee, A. W. McGaha, B. F. Riley, W. D. Powell, and on down to Henry Alford Porter?

Let Dr. E. E. King tell how it was in his case: “When I came to Texas in 1890, Dr. Buckner was among the first to extend me a royal welcome. He came to San Antonio to visit me and the good church of which I had the honor to be the pastor. Soon after this, his sister moved to the Alamo City, identified herself with the First Church, and I was her pastor for some years. I now saw and learned more of her distinguished brother.” This has all along been an element of Buckner’s success, this meeting of the brethren, making them at home and tying them on.

*Pays Miss Barton’s Teacher.*—In 1890, Miss Laura G. Barton was a missionary in the Pingtu Country, China. While she was learning the language, Dr. Buckner wrote her, offering to pay the salary of a Bible woman, but she preferred that he would pay the salary of her teacher. She wrote him: “Why not pay the salary of my teacher, about \$3.15 a month? If you will do this, you will be aiding the work and myself individually.” Miss Barton was a physician. In the same letter from which the above is quoted, she says: “I devote the afternoons to the sick entirely. I have been visited by hundreds of patients since I have been here. So many come to me for medicine that I will have to flee to Tung Chow in self-defense.” From letter to Dr. Buckner, May 22, 1890.

Glad he was to comply with Miss Barton’s request, and so he wrote Dr. J. M. Carroll, foreign agent for Texas. The following is an excerpt from Dr. Carroll’s reply:

"Lampasas, Texas, July 29, 1890. Dear Brother Buckner: Your kind favor, together with Miss Laura's and your reply, are before me. They made my heart burn within me. May the Lord graciously bless you. I thought your hands and heart were already full. It seems to me that any other hands and heart would be. I sincerely believe the Lord will supply the oil and meal that they waste not. Your letter has stirred my heart. I have thought for a long time that no man in Texas had a bigger contract on hand for the Lord than yourself, and I still see no reason for changing my opinion. Well, if you can find a way to help other things, why cannot I? I will write immediately to the board about Miss Laura's teacher. God bless you and the Orphans Home."

Dr. Buckner paid Miss Barton's teacher for two years.

*Good Meeting in Home Baptist Church.*—In September, 1890, there was held in Home Baptist Church one of the most precious meetings in all of Dr. Buckner's life. Writing to the "Texas Baptist and Herald," he says:

"I preached in the chapel of Buckner Orphans Home twenty consecutive nights. A great many professed religion. Didn't count. But I baptized twenty-five last week and have to administer the sacred ordinance to several others."

Among the baptized was his youngest son, Hal F. Buckner, afterwards missionary to China. There were four other children of preachers baptized. One of them, Miss Anita Westrup, daughter of Missionary Westrup, who was assassinated on his field in Mexico a few years previously. Said Dr. Buckner: "Oh how glad Bro. W. D. Powell and Anita's mother will be when the news reaches them. When I baptized her, I wanted to telegraph it to Mexico about the same time the news reached the angels in glory."

*Pledging and not Paying.*—It was rare that complaint or criticism of his brethren was ever heard from R. C. Buckner. What is here related is an exception to his rule. Texas Baptists



in 1889 and 1890 were raising money to build a meeting house in San Antonio for Mexicans. There had been frequent calls for the money. At a mass meeting at Kyle in 1889, the Mexican house was brought forward and all the money subscribed. Dr. Buckner subscribed \$100 and sent it promptly to Dr. J. B. Cranfill, secretary of missions.

Sometime after this Cranfill made another call through the papers for money to finish the Mexican house. Seeing this call, Buckner wrote Cranfill: "What mean these continued calls to build the Mexican house? I left Kyle under the impression that the entire amount was made up. Have those pledges not all been paid? If not, then I think the appeals for more money ought to be based on that fact. I am tired of Baptists saying, 'I go, sir,' and then not budging. A Baptist should regard his pledge to missionaries, pastor's salary, or anything else, as binding on his conscience, on his exchequer, on his real estate and in law, as his note of hand with a trust deed on his real estate to secure it."

This letter Dr. Cranfill published with the remark: "I do not suppose any thoughtful Baptist in the State or nation will dissent from this view." The publishing of Dr. Buckner's letter had a good effect in spurring the brethren forward to meet their obligations.

*Helping Baylor University.*—"I thought your hands and heart already full," said J. M. Carroll. But the eye of J. M. Carroll did not see it all. At that very time when R. C. Buckner arranged to pay Miss Barton's teacher, J. M. Carroll's brother, B. H. Carroll, president of the Board of Trustees of Baylor University, held Buckner's note for \$100 to Baylor University. Three months later, he paid the note and at the same time sent Dr. Carroll a very fine "two-story" hat. Here is Dr. Carroll's letter:

"Waco, Texas, October, 1890. Dear Brother Buckner: Your kind favor received. The \$100 welcome indeed, but still more your good words and loving spirit. Enclosed find note.

"The hat arrived all right. It was a surprise, but a most welcome one. It suits in every respect. It is a token that our old regard and friendship have never been impaired. Send to Brother M. H. Standifer, Orphans Home collector in our church, all needed literature on the Home. With very much love. B. H. Carroll."

That hat! It stood up in dignified silk-hat style, or if the owner wished, he could press down on the crown, and its walls folded, and it came down low like a cap. Then it could be again pushed back into a tall dress hat. Carroll prized it very highly, and wore it to the great Baptist Conventions. In May, 1892, when the great Texas Baptist train was speeding eastward to the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention at Atlanta, Ga., Dr. Carroll was aboard with the hat on his head, and the hat standing up full height. A brother, who knew its tricks, stepped cautiously near and struck it on the crown. Down it came to the proportions of a cap, greatly to the amusement of many brethren. Evidently embarrassed, "You sinner, you," was all the good doctor was heard to articulate amid a loud uproar of Baptist laughter.

About the same time Dr. Buckner paid off his \$100 note to Baylor University, he sent this paragraph to the papers: "Think of the many valuable men given us by Baylor University, men prominent at the bar, in the pulpit, in official State position and in social life. All Texas has felt their power for good, and Mexico and Brazil are benefited. The Baylor buildings should be better, and endowment should be carried up to at least \$500,000."

"*Hands and Heart Full.*"—"Hands and heart full," is the way J. M. Carroll put it. During the busy years herein sketched, Dr. Buckner was caring for his orphans, enlarging and receiving more orphans, forming orphans aids, helping the fallen, ameliorating the condition of inmates of jails, bidding welcome to newcomers, holding meetings, helping build meeting houses, giving

the great national councils the benefit of wide observation and experience, aiding Baylor with pen and money, and aiding missionary enterprises to the remotest corners of the earth.

Well, what else? He was for a while a member of the Board of Examiners to examine teachers for the Dallas Public Schools; and was petitioned to allow his name voted on for mayor of East Dallas, but declined.

Well, what else? Intensely absorbed in planning and financing the enterprise of putting up the elegant, stately brick building for girls at Buckner Orphans Home, and of reaching deep down into the earth for pure artesian water on the Home Campus.

Well, what else? Complimenting and encouraging his brethren on any good thing done. Witness the following:

“January 29, 1890. Dear Brother Buckner: Your very kind letter to hand. I thank you deep down in my heart for the very nice things you say about my new song, ‘That Beautiful Dream.’ My wife says, ‘Mr. Penn, you are not the author of the song—it is of God.’ The Lord bless and guide you.—W. E. Penn.”

Well, what else? Many things, as will appear as this work advances. And we will bear in mind that the question, “Where is the limit?” is not yet answered.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THIRTY YEARS AS PRESIDENT

Thirty years is about the average life of a generation. It is a matter of gratulation to Texas Baptists that Dr. Buckner, president of their general bodies the lifetime of a generation, still abides (1914) their trusted and capable president. Does history furnish another example where the Baptists of any State called one man to serve them so long as president? He was five years—1875 to 1880—president of the Sunday School Convention of the General Association; five years—1880 to 1885—president of the Baptist General Association; and twenty years—1894 to 1914—president of the Baptist General Convention.

When he was first called to preside over their convocations, there were less than 75,000 Baptists in all the State. But sitting in 1914 on the highest seat, his eye sweeping the great State, President Buckner finds unspeakable joy in viewing the Baptist army increased nearly ten fold.

*President of Sunday School Convention.*—Early in its history the Sunday School Convention took high ground in favor of Baptist schools and Baptist literature. Back in the eighth and ninth decades of the nineteenth century, there were many advocates of union schools and union literature. The Sunday School Convention covered a vast territory, being commensurate with the General Association, and its recommendations had the effect to change schools by scores into Baptist schools. The Convention unanimously recommended the lessons published in "Kind Words" (Macon, Ga.), and that publication was everywhere introduced. President Buckner was the great moving spirit in forwarding these steps.

*Sunday School Evangelism.*—From the beginning of the Convention at Longview in 1875, to its consolidation with the South Texas body, the Sunday and Colportage Convention in 1885, its main work proceeded along the lines of evangelism and house to house colportage work. All these years, and even earlier, President Buckner himself did extensive work planting and training schools and sowing down the territory with Bibles and religious literature. Much of this work was never reported and none of it paid for.

Preparatory to a great campaign of evangelism was the work of gathering statistics, dividing the entire field into seven districts and awakening a compelling, denominational Sunday school conscience.

In 1883, Elder L. W. Coleman was general superintendent, and secured from the American Baptist Publication Society a donation of \$2,000 in Bibles and other books. Besides himself, he put twelve other evangelists to work. His health failing, he was succeeded by Elder Kit Williams, who, counting himself, had six men on the field at the time of consolidation in 1885. When the committee, appointed for that purpose, reported at the meeting in Ennis a basis of consolidation with the Sunday School and Colportage Convention, Dr. Buckner offered the motion for the adoption of the report. It was unanimously carried.

*President of General Association.*—R. C. Buckner was elected president of the General Association at its thirteenth annual session, held in Ennis, July, 1880. He had been three years its corresponding secretary at the time of his election, and had served the association faithfully at different periods as general financial agent.

Dr. Buckner's election at Ennis was a vindication of his standing as a leader, as well as an expression of appreciation of his many unselfish services. His sweeping vindication at the called session in Dallas, a few months previously, against the

schemes of some who sought to checkmate his influence, has been referred to in a former chapter.

At this Ennis meeting were messengers from seventeen associations and from ninety-eight churches. The five years of President Buckner's incumbency were the golden years of the Baptist General Association. Counting the money for education and coöperative work, the total raised and paid out for advancing the Kingdom during that half decade was far beyond \$50,000. During that period, the association's missionaries baptized about 2,000, received nearly 3,000 by letter, organized 220 Sunday schools and 110 churches. Brilliant showing, this, for that day.

*Buckner and Unification.*—The eagle eye of B. H. Carroll in 1883 swept all Texas, noting the general bodies with their annual harvests, the institutions of learning with their shining output and the denominational papers with their unmeasured power for good or evil. Also, that searching sweep discovered "associations divided," "churches torn," and "brethren alienated." Then his great heart yearned for "peace."

Carroll went to the General Association at Cleburne in 1883 and read a report on "Relations to Other Bodies," looking to "unification." That was the attainment Buckner had proposed, and had been working for. Carroll said at Cleburne, "The supreme object desired is peace with all our brethren and fraternal coöperation in the work of Christ." That note struck a responsive chord in the heart of President Buckner and in the hearts of hundreds of others. This sentiment grew and gained momentum, so that before the meeting of the General Association at Ennis in July, 1885, all eyes were searching the horizon for gleams of a new day of "peace with all our brethren and fraternal coöperation in the work of Christ."

At the Ennis meeting, stood T. S. Potts, and offered this Resolution: "That it is the sense of this association that, under existing circumstances, the interests of the denomination in the State would be best conserved by existence of one general body,"

etc. This was adopted, and also was adopted another resolution looking to the consolidation of Baylor University with Waco University.

These resolutions were sent to the Baptist State Convention at Lampasas by L. L. Foster, S. L. Morris and Henry Furman.

The Convention responded favorably, declared for consolidation and appointed a committee to have the matter in hand. Soon the General Association in called session in Dallas, November 19, 1885, appointed its committee to assist, and named Temple as the place, and December 9 as the time for the two committees to meet. The result was the General Association and the State Convention became one body, with the name of the "Baptist General Convention," and Baylor and Waco became one school, with the name of "Baylor University."

Dr. Buckner was "among his brethren" all this time, working with might and main to the extent of his influence to bring about these desired results. One of his suggestions adopted was the new name, "The Baptist General Convention."

He labored with the editors of the two papers, endeavoring to bring them together, for all believed that with two denominational papers, unification in Texas would be a failure, and it was his joy, along with the whole Baptist General Convention, when, at its first meeting in Waco, July, 1886, J. B. Link announced that he had sold the "Texas Baptist Herald" to S. A. Hayden. This seemed to be the end of a troublesome matter and the whole Convention arose and sang "Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow."

Unification was effected. All the Baptists in Texas were one host. The outlook for the Orphans Home, for missions and for education was now as bright as a springtime morning. Dr. Buckner was happy.

*Nine Years Retirement.*—After retiring from the presidency of the General Association in 1885, Dr. Buckner had an inter-

regnum of nine years. But when the Convention did get hold of him again, it held him for twenty years.

During the nine years consolidation was perfected and it now looked like the golden era of peace and prosperity had come. But no! Quickly came a tempest of discord and dissension lasting many years. Much we shall cover with the mantle of charity. It was in the early rise of those stormy days that Dr. Buckner was again called to the front, as we shall see further on.

*Stately Building for Girls.*—During the years immediately following consolidation, Dr. Buckner would not allow himself to be brought to the front in the General Convention or its work. He attended the annual meetings, and stood with his money and influence for all its laudable aims. He was sometimes on important committees, and in 1889 wrote the report "On Attitude of Baptists Toward the Liquor Traffic," which was as follows: "The attitude of Baptists toward the liquor traffic is one of well-defined, emphatic and persistent antagonism."

But why not in the front in Convention work during those years? To say his hands were full, tells but a part of the story. One great vision rose up before his eye, remained, and overshadowed all else. That was the vision of a superb brick building that might house the girls of his great growing family of two hundred, then three hundred, and up. But those were years of a paralyzing financial crisis beyond anything known since the Civil War, and with no gleam of light of a better day. Could the money be found to put up the building and at the same time feed the children? In 1889, with the imperial B. H. Carroll as president of the Board of Directors, with its indomitable A. J. Holt as corresponding secretary on the field, and nearly one thousand pastors and missionaries assisting, the total sum raised among the Baptists in all Texas for missions, education and aged ministers, was less than \$45,000. It would require \$60,000 to put up the building, and it was this year, 1889, that plans were laid to put it up.



No man could set bounds to Dr. Buckner's plans. The preceding year, October 6, 1888, the Board of Directors of Buckner Orphans Home passed the following:

"Whereas, we believe it to be for the general interest of the Home, and at the same time it is only rendering honor to whom honor is due, therefore, be it

"Resolved, That we, as a just compliment to R. C. Buckner, for whom we have already named the Home, do hereby confer on him the general title of General Manager, A. U. C., *absque ulla conditione* (without any condition).

"Resolved, That after his retirement this title, with the extraordinary duties and privileges implied in it, shall never be conferred on, or exercised by, any of his successors or future officials of this institution."

Many of Dr. Buckner's friends trembled, but he himself went ahead, proceeding along the line of his principle, "Faith and Works," and contracted for 750,000 bricks on his own responsibility.

How did he get on? In August, 1890, he put this paragraph in the "Texas Baptist and Herald": "We have money enough belonging to the fund for the main building, to pay for the 750,000 brick necessary to its construction, but several thousand more dollars are necessary to purchase other material for construction."

How about funds for current expenses at this time? In July, 1890, Dr. Buckner sent this paragraph to the papers: "We have been out of flour for months, only as I have bought it on my own account, never less than 3,000 pounds a month. Last week, I bought on a credit, 1,500 pounds of flour, 500 pounds of bacon and 40 gallons of syrup."

How did he come out? In "The Baptist Standard" of June 17, 1895, appeared this announcement: "The home-stretch has been accomplished. The Orphans Home \$60,000 brick house has been finished and I hold receipts in full against all carpen-

ters, metallic roofers, plaster and cement men, who did the work, and for all material used. The property of the Home is now worth \$100,000, and there is no debt to be paid. I have never borrowed money for it, except in my own name, and every dollar borrowed has been paid. Join me in thanking God for all of this. I wish also to thank all who have given anything, and all who have been so kind as not to hinder. During all this time of building, a large family has been maintained, now approximately 350.—R. C. Buckner.”

What did business men think? The following excerpt is from a letter to Dr. Buckner by Col. W. L. Williams of Dallas: “Dear Brother Buckner: I feel thankful to God for the completion of the new building. I rejoice at your truly wonderful success in carrying through that great work, and that in the midst of the greatest financial panic the world has known in many ages. I herewith enclose my check for \$25.”

This paragraph is from the “Dallas Daily Times Herald”: “Dr. Buckner, the originator and manager of the Orphans Home, has the admiration and confidence of our business men in his business management, in which capacity, as well as in religious circles, he has been long and favorably known in Dallas.”

This imposing “Girls’ Building” presents one hundred and thirty feet front by one hundred and ten feet deep, has four floors and is forty-four feet from the ground floor to the top ceiling. It would have been an ornament to any city in the State, and would be yet. It is now the Home of three hundred and seventy-five happy girls. On a marble slab in the front wall is carved:

“Buckner Orphans Home,  
Founded by R. C. Buckner, 1880.  
Erected, 1891.  
Designed by the Founder.”

We insert here Dr. Buckner’s description of the building, 1894, sublime in its very brevity:

"Pressed brick building with four floors, giving room for four hundred girls, besides cook and store rooms, play rooms, dining hall for the entire institution, executive departments, and an observatory overlooking Dallas and all the railroads approaching it, also fourteen surrounding towns; steam heat and water service for this building and for all other houses and premises supplied by its own artesian well."

*Visits North Carolina Orphanage.*—The splendid brick for girls was progressing satisfactorily, so Dr. Buckner took a run into North Carolina to visit the Baptist Orphanage at Thomasville. The children enjoyed his speech. A little girl wrote: "Whiskers cover his face, but you can see man in his eyes. He is not proud, but he says he is proud—proud of the boys and girls placed under his care. He told us some of his boys and girls were not always good, and had to be punished. He said one little boy was sent to look for a cow and climbed up a tree. Then he asked the boys if they would go cow-hunting up a tree, and we had a laugh. But there was a sad ending to his story. The little fellow lost his hold and fell to the ground, breaking his arms, which was caused by disobedience."

*Artesian Well.*—It was while the stately brick for girls was being erected that Foreign Mission Agent J. M. Carroll sent Dr. Buckner this excerpt: "I thought no man in Texas had a bigger contract on his hand for the Lord than yourself." And yet before that brick for girls was all paid for, this same J. M. Carroll printed in his paper, "The Missionary Journal" (September, 1893), the following announcement:

"The artesian well committee turned the well over to Dr. Buckner with over \$500 unpaid, which he assumed. Four days thereafter it was demonstrated that an abundance of water had been reached, but no flow. He bought a steam pump at an additional cost of \$355. He had already fallen behind \$700 on the grocery bill, but Dr. Buckner is full of hope. He says: 'There is nothing blue about me.'"

The well was a necessity. It is more than 2,200 feet deep and now, after twenty years, it is still furnishing the Home with an abundance of pure water. With plenty of water, it was not long before a modern light and heating plant was installed. The plant was, and is, operated by the "power-house boys," enabling them to learn a good trade and secure good positions.

*Prosperous Condition, 1894.*—That Buckner Orphans Home was in a prosperous condition at the time its general manager accepted the presidency of the General Convention in 1894, will appear from this paragraph taken from his report:

"More than 500 acres of land, forty cattle, eight mules, four horses, a large young orchard, an excellent barn with iron roof, a well-furnished schoolhouse, a good sanitorium, two stories high, no sick, wooden buildings for more than one hundred boys, new pressed-brick building with four floors, giving room for four hundred girls."

*In the Interests of Peace.*—The election of Dr. Buckner at Marshall as president of the Baptist General Convention was a peace measure. The Convention met October 12, 1894. On motion of Dr. W. H. Parks, President Buckner was chosen. On Saturday, October 14, the following paragraph appeared in "The Dallas News":

"The supporters of the board claim that the board will be sustained, and say, in support of that claim, that the vote for president, in which Dr. Buckner was elected over Dr. Burleson, by a vote of 232 to 92, was a test vote of the comparative strength of the two sides."

In view of the foregoing paragraph, Dr. W. H. Parks offered, and the Convention adopted, the following:

"Whereas, In putting Dr. Buckner in nomination it was distinctly stated that it was because he was not identified with either party to our unfortunate troubles, and he was voted for with that understanding clearly in the minds of the members; therefore,

“Resolved, That the aforesaid publication does great injustice to Dr. Buckner and to all parties concerned.

“2. That the election of Dr. Buckner is regarded as an expression of peace,” etc.

“3. That the appointments and rulings of our president, Dr. Buckner, so far, fully justify the expectations of the Convention in electing him as a nonpartisan.

“4. That ‘The Dallas News’ be requested to publish this paper.”

“The Dallas News” published the paper as above. The Convention sustained its board.

*Elected While Writing a Hymn.*—While the General Convention at Marshall was balloting for president, Dr. Buckner was out of the house, under a tree writing the beautiful hymn, entitled, “Following Jesus.” The hymn afterwards appeared in a very popular collection of hymns and tunes, called “Bells of Heaven,” published by Elder J. C. F. Kyger. Buckner had scarcely completed the hymn when a committee from the Convention came and notified him of his election.

The choosing of officers did not take place until in the afternoon. In the forenoon, Dr. Buckner was busy among the people about the meeting house, collecting money for some of his charitable enterprises. In the afternoon, while the Convention was balloting, he was writing the hymn. He was witness to very little that was said or done before his election. The hymn is reproduced here:

“I have heard my Saviour’s warning,  
And it filled my soul with yearning,  
Then I heard him gently calling,  
‘Come, poor soul, and follow, follow me.’  
I will turn from sin and sorrow,  
Seek relief from sin and sorrow,  
Waiting not until tomorrow,  
For He calls me, bids me turn today.

Chorus:—Jesus leads and I will follow,  
 Jesus leads and I will follow,  
 Jesus leads me and I'll follow,  
 And be faithful, faithful all the way."

"I will go with Him to Jordan,  
 With Him down into the Jordan,  
 And be buried in its waters,  
 Having died to, turned from every sin.  
 Then I'll rise and still go with Him,  
 I'll arise and still go with Him,  
 And declare His resurrection,  
 And will walk, will walk with Him always."

Chorus.

"I will eat the sacred supper,  
 Till He comes, I will remember  
 How He gave His broken body,  
 Pierced and bleeding, bleeding for my soul.  
 I will go down to Bethesda,  
 And will help the maimed and sick ones,  
 To the glory, glory of His name.

Chorus.

"I'll go to the house of mourning,  
 With Him to the house of mourning;  
 I will seek the broken-hearted,  
 And will cheer them, help them on the way.  
 When He calls me from earth judgment,  
 Saints and sinners up to judgment,  
 I will gladly heed the summons,  
 Having followed, followed all the way."

Chorus.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### SOME STORMY CONVENTIONS

*Some Stormy Conventions.*—The saddest chapter in Texas Baptist history then, and in the years following, was the strange, inexcusable opposition to the Convention's Board of Directors and to its heroic, unselfish work. Volumes are hid in this short sentence, taken from the Board's report, 1894: "Divisions have hurt us."

*Unpaid Services.*—The president of the Convention gives his time and services without money and without price, as do all the thirty-five brethren who composed the Board of Directors, of which he was also, ex-officio, a member, save the corresponding secretary. He only receives pay.

During the first two years of President Buckner's incumbency the Board was located at Waco. When Dr. Buckner was chosen, J. M. Carroll was corresponding secretary, but soon afterwards on account of sickness in his family, was obliged to resign, when M. D. Early, who had been serving as general missionary, was chosen, beginning January, 1896. Dr. Early continued a year and was succeeded in January, 1897, by J. B. Gambrell. Dr. Gambrell continued in office till 1910, when he was succeeded by F. M. McConnell.

The early frequent changes in the corresponding secretary's office were a hindrance to collections. But more serious were the criticisms on the Board and its methods, and repeated, and printed many times. The tendency was to discredit the chosen servants of the denomination and lessen contributions. But a great work was done nevertheless. The first year of President Buckner's incumbency ninety-three missionaries were kept in

the field, averaging 266 days each, baptizing 1,516 converts and organizing seventy-seven churches; the next year sixty-six missionaries, averaging 242 days, baptizing 898 and organizing nineteen churches.

At the San Antonio convention, 1897, on motion of Deacon (Judge) W. H. Jenkins of Waco, the location of the Board of Directors was changed from Waco to Dallas, where it has remained ever since. This action was taken in the vain hope that criticism would be less antagonistic.

*Belton Convention, 1895.*—Some principles were defined and declared at Belton in 1895 that have served to guide the Convention and its president. A type of teaching which declared that "perfect and full assurance of salvation comes with regeneration" was disturbing the denomination in the State, as was also another, that "Christ is not the believer's substitute."

The Convention took important action respecting messengers in sympathy with either of these views, and at the same time declared: "The Convention is composed of persons chosen by churches, associations and missionary societies as their messengers; and when said persons are convened, they, and not the churches, are the Convention." The setting in full view this principle, that the "Convention is composed of persons \* \* \* etc." was a powerful weapon in President Buckner's hand three years later.

*Houston Convention, 1896.*—At Houston the patience of the Baptist General Convention was sorely tried. The Board declared that it had been charged "directly and indirectly, and by various methods of innuendo and insinuation, with misappropriation, wanton extravagance and reckless waste of public funds. \* \* \* To all these things the Board, in the interest of peace, has answered nothing, quietly giving of our means without stint, and of our time and labor without compensation, to the holy cause of missions entrusted to us."

The Convention, on hearing this read, was grieved that any



man would thus embarrass its agents or their work. Feeling was tense, and the Convention passed resolutions asking the brother, who had so long and persistently accused the Board, "that he refrain and desist in the future from such attacks upon said Board of Directors, as a Board, or upon its members as such."

At times during the sittings there was much confusion. Many rose at the same moment to speak, others were calling points of order, and yet others demanding the floor on ground of personal privilege. There were motions to table, to postpone, to reconsider, objections to consider, calls for previous question, and so on. President Buckner recently referred to it as a "rapid firing to be compared with that of a modern military machine gun."

*Impartial and Unbiased Rulings.*—There were some exciting scenes during this Houston Convention, testing the ability of the presiding officer. At the evening session of the fifth and last day, Pastor A. B. Miller of Bonham offered the following, which was adopted:

"Whereas, This session of the Baptist General Convention has been such an one as to thoroughly test the wisdom of any presiding officer; therefore,

"Resolved, That to R. C. Buckner, president, are due the thanks of this body for his calm, cool, deliberate, impartial and unbiased rulings during the deliberations of this Convention."

*San Antonio Convention, 1897.*—The Convention was scarcely called together in session, and not yet organized, when a telegram from Dr. B. H. Carroll to Judge W. H. Jenkins was read as follows: "Wife is dying."

At the request of the president, all "joined Geo. W. Truett in prayer that God's grace might be vouchsafed to the grief-stricken family."

This meeting at San Antonio was no less stormy than had been the last at Houston. The right of certain individuals to seats in the Convention was challenged. There was speech-

making and a strained situation. The wisdom and ability of the presiding officer was again put to the test. But all were pleased. There is no record in the proceedings of any appeal from his rulings.

The outlook was brighter. The report of the Board was on a cheerful key. We quote: "The organized workers are more solidly together than ever before. \* \* \* All centers are united and aggressive for higher denominational life."

*Waco Convention, 1898.*—This paragraph is from "The Baptist Argus," published in Louisville, Kentucky:

"Because of the issues and incidents of previous sessions of the Convention, the interest that centered in this Waco meeting was intense to a marked degree. What would be sprung upon the Convention no one seemed to know; but that something surprising would be sprung upon the body seemed to be the expectation of all."

It was thus it looked to an editor from another State. He viewed correctly. The meeting was held in the great Baptist tabernacle, seating easily 3,000 people, but there was an overflow of about 1,000. President Buckner called the house to order. Because of the overflow and scramble for seats, Dr. R. J. Wiltingham of Richmond, Virginia, was requested to repair to the meeting-house and preach to the overflow crowd.

*Historic Ruling.*—Again we quote from "The Baptist Argus":

"It was commonly expected and freely rumored that challenges would be offered in the body against different persons. It was particularly rumored and expected that the messengers from the First Church of Dallas would be challenged. The challenge came, but to the surprise of all, it was against the church itself, and not against the individual messengers of the church. When this challenge was announced, quick as the lightning flash came another surprise on the body in President Buckner's ruling out the challenge. His ruling was that such a challenge was out of order because the Convention is composed, not of churches,

but of individual messengers. The effect of the ruling was instantaneous. No appeal was made from it. The invaluable time of the vast body was conserved, and in a moment the body was proceeding earnestly with its legitimate business. All this happened in less time than it has taken the reader to read this brief account."

Instantly a motion was made and carried that all unchallenged messengers be seated. This seated the brethren from the First Baptist Church of Dallas and two other churches, challenges having been lodged against those churches and not against their messengers.

Then arose B. H. Carroll and placed in nomination R. C. Buckner for president, who was elected with enthusiasm. "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" was sung. President Buckner spoke with great tenderness, calling on the brethren to assist him by observing that decorum becoming a great body of followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. Again the Convention stood and sang "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

The "Word and Way," published at Kansas City, Missouri, commented as follows: "Dr. Carroll, in terms of the strongest praise, presented the name of Dr. R. C. Buckner for moderator. The motion was made that he be elected by a rising vote. Almost everyone in the house stood up. This evidence of enthusiastic and unanimous confidence moved Dr. Buckner to tears, and there was tenderness, humility and gratitude in his speech of acceptance. \* \* \* It was the largest body of Baptists that had ever come together in the world."

Hear also the editorial from "The Baptist Beacon," published at Ardmore, Indian Territory (Oklahoma): "Dr. Buckner was re-elected president. For promptness and decisiveness in ruling, I never saw anything like it. Dr. Buckner came out with nerve and decision."

Soon after this there was a lawsuit, an appeal to the courts. The suit went through the courts from the lowest to the Supreme

Court of the State. That high tribunal decided that the Baptist General Convention had a right to determine its own membership. Thus was the ruling of President Buckner vindicated.

*Dallas Convention, 1899.*—The reader will recall that at the Houston Convention in 1896, President Buckner was tendered a vote of thanks “for his calm, cool, deliberate, impartial and unbiassed rulings,” declaring that that session had been “such an one as to thoroughly test the wisdom of any presiding officer.” The session at San Antonio had been equally sensational. At Waco in the midst of intense feeling came the famous ruling that the Convention is composed, not of churches, but of individual messengers. And this ruling sent a thrill to every great representative deliberative body throughout the world. But the wisdom of the Convention’s president was to be tested again. This Dallas Convention was held in the great Music Hall Auditorium of the Texas State Fair Association, with capacity for seating about 4,000 persons.

*Avalanche of Challenges.*—The Convention was scarcely opened for business when it was overwhelmed with challenges. The seat of the president was challenged, and that of every member of the Board of Directors, besides the seats of many brethren. It was clear to the great body of the Convention that much of this challenging was in a captious spirit, rather than with a view of upholding some fundamental Convention principle.

The echo of the reading of the list of challenges was scarcely hushed when R. T. Hanks was on his feet and objected to considering the challenge against the president of the Convention. The objection was sustained by vote of the body. Now came rapid firing, calling for rulings from the chair. A brother objected to considering any of the challenges. Objection not sustained by the body, and so announced. Division called for. Ruled out of order on ground that call came too late—after vote had been taken and announced by the chair. A motion was made

to lay on the table. Ruled out of order, as no motion had been made to adopt.

A brother moved that five messengers from "the church party" be added to the committee on credentials, stating that the brethren already on the committee belonged to "the board party." The point was raised that the motion was out of order, since there was no such thing known to the Convention as "the church party" or "the board party." The point was sustained.

There were many such rulings, all of them satisfactory to the majority. The disposing of challenges, together with some filibustering, kept the body from selecting its officers till the afternoon of the second day, when R. C. Buckner was again chosen. "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" was sung. President Buckner was not in the hall when the vote was taken for president, but a moment later he came in and passed down the aisle, followed by about two hundred orphan children. The children were conducted to the platform, and there Dr. Buckner explained that the children had been waiting outside for an hour, but under no consideration would he have permitted them to enter while his name was being voted on for president. They sang a beautiful hymn, and J. M. Gaddy took pledges for the Home amounting to \$4,000. At the evening session President Buckner made a touching speech of acceptance, of which the following is an excerpt:

"Brethren of the Baptist General Convention of Texas: There are few words that I shall utter at this time. If I were master of the most expressive words belonging to any language, they would afford but a poor vehicle through which to convey to you the appreciation that I feel in my heart of the vote by which I have been again, for the sixth consecutive time, chosen as your president. \* \* \* Now, not to dwell upon these remarks, so intensely personal to myself, I want to say that looking back over the forty-nine years of my ministry, whether with reference to a pastorate, the leadership of a district association, the presi-

dency of a State convention, or any other general body, I have never sought nor invited position. I never went candidating for a pulpit, nor did I ever ask or intimate to a friend that I wanted his support. I take it that the united voice of this, the greatest Baptist Convention known to history as having ever assembled on the face of the earth—I take it that the unanimous rising vote today calling me to this position is the voice of God, whom you serve. And although I have not coveted the responsibilities of this charge, I accept them with all the warmth of my heart, whose pulsations beat on together with your own in the direction of everything that may be blessed of God to the interests that this grand body may have in their hearts. And may God's blessings rest upon every member of this body."

*Waco Convention, 1900.*—It was evident to the Waco meeting that the storm was abating. There was a great coming together of the workers. Some challenges were disposed of in short order, and quickly the body was giving itself to its great tasks of missions and education.

A pleasing incident at the evening session of the first day was the joining in holy matrimony of Elder C. B. Hukill and Miss Jean Goff. They were introduced to the platform by Elder A. J. Harris, and many pleasant words were spoken concerning the sterling worth and untiring zeal of Brother Hukill as a minister, and of the beautiful character and devout consecration of Miss Goff. Then President Buckner in earnest fashion pronounced the words that made them husband and wife. Among the gifts was a large red apple. Dr. Buckner took the apple and handed it to the bride with these words: "Eve, give this apple to Adam." She handed it to her husband, which was immensely enjoyed by 2,000 people.

The Waco meeting was the last "stormy Convention." The next, in Forth Worth in 1901, was characterized by "harmony of feeling and concert of action that made all happy." Fellowship rose like a wave, and the Convention was soon on the moun-

tain-top. The Board of Directors had been located in Dallas in 1897, and the work of the Convention went steadily forward. The reader will welcome the following paragraph from the Board's report, 1904:

"From 1897 onward to the present auspicious hour there has been steady progress in all the work of this Convention. The report of 1897 showed sixty-six missionaries; this shows 267. That showed nineteen churches constituted; this, 128. That showed 1,348 brought into the churches; this shows 11,682. Then strife and confusion well-nigh covered the field; now, only here and there is the peace of the brotherhood marred. The growth has not been spasmodic, but steady. Year by year the work has enlarged. The forces have advanced like a disciplined army, never going backward, always going forward. When this body met in 1897, our schools, all except one, were on the brink of financial ruin. They have all been relieved of debt. The Convention forces have raised more than \$650,000 for education."

## CHAPTER XXV

### SPEECH BEFORE NATIONAL PRISON ASSOCIATION

*National Prison Association.*—Dr. Buckner's main work was humanitarian. Hence, as already observed, we find him year by year attending the national meetings.

The National Prison Association, which was organized as far back as 1870, was composed of the wisest philanthropists and some of the most eminent statesmen of the American nation. In October, 1898, this association held a session at Indianapolis, Indiana. Then three months later, January, 1899, an enthusiastic adjourned meeting was held in New Orleans, Louisiana. It was the custom of Dr. Buckner to attend its meetings, whether in Boston or New Orleans or elsewhere.

The meeting in New Orleans was opened Saturday, January 21. R. W. McClaughry of Joliet, Illinois, was president. Each yearly meeting was commonly known as the "National Prison Congress."

Dr. Buckner's address was on "Preventive Work." It was praised by his hearers as a speech on "Child Saving," and indeed it could be so named. It impressed the Prison Congress profoundly. The Association had it printed and sent it to every State, to Canada and to Europe. It is worthy to be reproduced here.

*Address on Preventive Work.*—"The distinguished president of the National Prison Congress said of preventive work in his opening address last evening: 'It is the most important work laid upon those who would purify society.' I prefer to make Preventive Work my theme rather than to consider reformatory work in connection with it at this time. If preventive work could be successful in all cases, there would be no call for reformatory work. All possible reasons for reformatory work



and all the difficulties connected with it afford so many arguments in favor of preventive work.

*Take Care of the Children.*—"If all sickness could be avoided, the time of nurses and physicians and the cost of medicines would be saved; and, moreover, the enjoyment of health would be perpetual instead of the suffering and inconvenience of being ill. Even so, if the minds, bodies and morals of the children were promptly cared for by protecting them against evil influences and by developing them throughout the years of youth, the men and women of our country would be mentally and physically vigorous, sound in morals and capable of a high degree of happiness and usefulness. But if the child be neglected as to its mental, moral and physical being, it will be comparatively an intellectual dwarf and a physical and moral wreck. As, therefore, we would have a nation of healthy, vigorous men and women, great in intellect, correct in morals and noble in purposes and achievements, we should take care of the children. We should cultivate the capacities with which the Creator has endowed them, fortify them against evil, that they may not form habits of neglect as to good, nor be led into practices that would call for reformatory work, with all the cost of time, tact, talent and treasure involved, and yet often expended in vain.

"From these remarks it will be understood that I am profoundly convinced that preventive work should be undertaken with very young children—aye, with infancy itself. It is then that channels are marked out for the flow of the affections, habits of thought and the exercise of taste; and as to physical development, all know it is then progressing. A babe lay in his cradle, over which a mosquito bar had been spread just above the reach of his tiny hands. Every day a picture, first one and then another, in attractive colors was placed face down on the mosquito bar where the child could gaze upon its form and colors. He soon learned to expect a picture when laid in his cradle, and thus fretfulness and restlessness were in a measure

prevented and his admiration for the beautiful was also cultivated. A little older and in his mother's arms one day, he saw a picture on the wall and, reaching out his chubby hand, exclaimed: 'Dookee, dookee, dookee, dar!' These were the first words that ever came from his infant lips, and they expressed his admiration for the beautiful. He is now a strong man, has charge of a steam and electric light plant, keeps the machinery bright and clean, the engine-room as clean as a parlor and decorated with a variety of growing plants and flowers; and as you would expect, pictures hanging on the white plastered walls. (The babe referred to was Dr. Buckner's own son, Joe Dudley Buckner. The steam and electric light plant, operated in after life, was the plant at Buckner Orphans Home.)

"Point out to the children all that is beautiful in nature and art, and especially hold up before them the loveliness of honesty, truth, temperance, purity and industry. Teach them to understand the beauty and worth of such things, and they will learn to love them, talk and read about them, and practice them; and then they will not so likely need to be reformed. Teach them to love mother and home, and to hope for heaven, and they will not seek unholy companions, look for amusement in evil places and hasten hellward.

*Begin in the Family.*—"Preventive work should begin in the family and should be conducted by those upon whom God has placed the fearful responsibility of parentage. The family is God's own and first institution, and the most powerful to prevent the formation of evil habits by children. 'He that findeth a wife findeth a good thing.' 'A good wife is above the price of rubies.' 'A good husband is a strong wall of defense.' Mothers that are 'keepers at home' and train their children properly reign as queens over their households. Worthy fathers, who provide home and comforts for those who rightfully depend on them, are princes in their families. The children of such parents grow up around them like olive plants. They 'rise up to call them

blessed;’ they live to love and honor them, and very naturally become good, law-abiding citizens. Parents have access to the minds and hearts of their children before evil persons can reach them. They can enter right into their children’s hearts through the open doors of confidence and love, and give directions to their thoughts, affections and lives at the very outset, but to make these lessons effectual they must be impressed by example. Parents themselves must live in daily practice of the virtues they teach by precept.

“Children are apt to fall into the practices of their parents, and especially into their vices, whatever they may be, great or small.

“Yes, preventive work should begin in the family.

“Give us a nation composed of virtuous, intelligent, refined and industrious parents, who by precept and example teach these principles to their children, and we shall have little use for criminal courts, prisons and reformatories. The streams that supply such institutions would be dammed, or rather dried up in a large degree.

*Orphans.*—“But to say nothing of children of unworthy families, there are many who have been cast out upon the world— orphaned ones, waifs on the streets of our cities, who wander without aim or desire to avoid evil. What is to be done to prevent these from going wrong, even into criminal lives?

“To save such children from suffering and from criminal practices, some suggest adoption into good families, and all agree that this is good as far as practicable. Indenture and apprenticeships are also suggested and largely practiced with good results. Orphanages under various kinds of management are likewise fruitful of vast good. I earnestly commend each and every plan that will protect, educate and prepare for good citizenship children of this class. But I abhor, detest, despise and denounce the practice of confining orphan children in alms houses and on county farms, or working them in factories.

“Give the little fellows good companionship, decent, comfortable quarters, clean beds and wholesome food. Smile on them, speak gently to them, and let sunshine into their souls. Teach them to have self-respect, hope and ambition. The family or the orphanage that fails to do these things is not worthy of either name. It is a stench and a nuisance in any community, not only failing to forestall an evil life on the part of the children, but actually preparing them for it. An orphanage should be made as near as possible like the very best regulated family; and in fact, should give the children better advantages in some things than the majority of families give their own children. They should blend with other good things the advantages of the best, appropriate schools, and fail not to include training in various trades and industries. Properly conducted literary and technological schools for all classes of youths are potent factors in preventive work. But many have passed the years of youth without proper training. As Dr. B. M. Palmer touchingly expressed in his opening prayer last evening, ‘There are many whose characters were not formed under the same influences that made us comparatively virtuous and good.’

“We must do preventive work among the homeless wanderers, the grossly ignorant, the unemployed and the discouraged of older years. Many such there be who have not gone into criminal lives, but are on the very verge. Hope has well-nigh fled them. Dark clouds of despair are gathering about them. They feel that opportunities are almost closed against them. Some are suffering from one or more of these terrible realities. Others from others of them, and under these circumstances efforts are made to lure them into sin against God and society. Can nothing be done to protect them?”

Dr. Buckner further argued against allowing food to be given or cheap luncheons served in saloons on the theory that such luncheons tempted men to drink. “Would the saloon set up a free luncheon for any other purpose than to tempt men to drink?”

## CHAPTER XXVI

### BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME

*Sunshine, Shadow, Sunshine.*—When we saw Buckner Orphans Home last in 1894, it stood stately and erect in the sunshine of prosperity. There were more than five hundred acres of the best quality of Texas black land, plenty of live stock, good barn, schoolhouse, sanitorium, wooden buildings for more than one hundred boys, new pressed-brick building with four floors, giving room for four hundred girls, artesian well, and no debt. The Home's General Manager could never for a moment content himself to stand still. His ideals are summed up in that one word, "Forward."

*Forward.*—After installing the artesian well, it was not a year till a model steam power and electric light plant was installed at a cost of \$6,000. Also at about this time the A. J. Holt museum of more than one thousand valuable specimens became the property of the Home. It was presented to the Home by Dr. Holt and was valued at more than \$5,000. Rare specimens they were, gathered in the Orient and elsewhere. It has since been added to and is now (1914) worth above \$8,000.

*Sunshine Family.*—Along in those golden days Mrs. A. F. Beddoe was mother to more than two hundred happy girls. They were being trained in classes—a class in housekeeping and lawn adornment, another in the science and arts belonging to the culinary department, another in the cutting, fitting and making of garments, another in laundry work and in ironing, and so on.

A nursery department of about thirty small children was under the eye and motherly hand of Mrs. M. A. Black.

The boys were occupying wooden buildings on their own lawn, and had for their mother good "Aunt Sallie" Britton.

Aunt Sallie taught them to make their own beds, scrub their own floors, keep their own rooms, wash their own clothes, and aid in the making and mending of them. The boys, in addition, had field work and shop work. Good "Aunt Sallie" is still (1914) a matron in the Home. She now has charge of the nursery department. She has helped in the rearing of more than five thousand orphan children.

Mrs. R. B. Dallas was matron in the sanitorium department in those days. She had not many sick, sometimes none.

There was a department of pharmacy under the supervision of Dr. A. F. Beddoe, the Home physician. Dr. Beddoe had a small class of boys in training to be pharmacists.

The farm work with its "field boys" was under the supervision of Mr. E. W. McKnight.

The machinery, including the great 140-horsepower boiler and 64-horsepower engine, deep well pump, electric light plant and other valuable machinery, was under the care of Mr. Joe D. Buckner, assisted by a class of boys.

This paragraph is from Dr. Buckner's report in 1896: "The question is sometimes asked, do the children never suffer for food or clothing? The question is an offense, though doubtless asked in kindness. Suffer? No! How could we allow them to suffer? Everything needed to keep them from suffering we buy, whether there is a dollar, or the promise of a dollar, and buy in a way not to embarrass the Board or encumber the property." "There will never be anything but sunshine on Buckner Orphans Home," prophesied Deacon S. F. Sparks of Waco, who gave of his own means and gave free of charge much time traveling in the interest of the Home in those days. All the people believed as did Brother Sparks.

*To Celebrate Sixty-fourth Birthday.*—"To celebrate the sixty-fourth anniversary of my birthday (January 3, 1897), then fast approaching, I bargained for the place I had rented years previous for the opening of the orphan work with three children.

I bargained for it at the very moderate price of \$6,000, and assumed personally the entire responsibility of paying for it, so as to embarrass neither the Board nor any person whomsoever. The transfer was made on the fourth of January, as the third fell on Sunday. I collected \$500, borrowed \$2,500 on my personal assets, and paid \$3,000 cash, executing a note to the vendors for \$3,000 and received a deed to the property made to Buckner Orphans Home, retaining no sort of claim to protect myself. At the end of six months all was paid."—Dr. Buckner's report, 1897. This is the property known for many years as the "Buckner Home Annex," where all children are detained ten days before bringing to the Home proper in the country.

*Shadow.*—Deep as a pall of night, it fell on the Home, January 15, 1897, "a terrible holocaust, consuming the boys' buildings, all their winter clothing, bedding and much other valuable property, amounting in all to \$20,000. But far more deplorable was the death of seventeen children who perished in the flames, and later on, three others as a result of injury received during the fire. When the sad news spread abroad, prompt and liberal contributions for relief came spontaneously, sufficient, except for temporary buildings.

"For some years previously I had been asking for money to build the boys a commodious and safe brick house such as our girls have, and by which they were saved from the ravages of the angry flames. But it seemed to require the great fire to arouse the people to a realization of the necessity for such a building. Then for the first time contributions for this purpose began to come in."—Report, 1897.

*The Awful Hour.*—The following excerpt is taken from Buckner Orphans Home Annual of 1897, written by Dr. Buckner:

"The wires have flashed the sad news of the burnt orphanage all over the continent and across the great waters, and newspapers have published accounts of it, more or less accurate.

"The scene will never fade from my troubled, astonished vision. I could smell the burning flesh of our dear ones before the fire died down sufficiently to reveal their charred remains. Weeping ones were to be comforted. Bereaved mothers were to be strengthened. Mrs. Beddoe, my own daughter, the girls' matron, would first turn to Mrs. Sallie Britton, the boys' matron, then turn to me to see how I was bearing it. Mrs. Britton had three of her own children to perish in the flames. Mrs. Beddoe tried to comfort her. I had no time to sink down or hesitate. To weep I dared not. To Mrs. Beddoe I said: 'Be quiet, my daughter, I am all right. Your father's shoulder's are broad and his heart is stout. He can stand under it. The living are to be cared for.'

"'Father Buckner,' said the broken-hearted Mrs. Britton, 'Nobody can do me any good but God. Kneel down and pray. All you children who are Christians, kneel down and pray, and all who are not Christians, kneel down and pray, too.'

"What a crowd on their knees in tears and sobs and prayers! The outbursts of grief from the mother whose three children had perished were subdued. But in another room was Mrs. M. A. Black, nursery matron, whose son had perished while she was with the little ones in the nursery. Her grief was deep and unutterable. I could not speak to her. To look at her, even the next day, was enough to bear. This is all I can tell. I did not want a bite of food for days, and only ate for strength to perform duty."

The burning of the boys' building cast a shadow over all the South.

*A New Large and Safe Building.*—"For the construction of such a house, I bought 1,000,000 brick, now (November, 1897) nearly all paid for, also the heavy timbers with sand and lime. The outer and partition walls have been built to the first overhead joists. This far the work is all paid for."—Report, 1897.

This boys' building stands the same dimensions of the girls'



building. It was finally completed and all paid for. But, like the girls' building, it was erected in time of great financial stress. Before it was all paid for the great campaign was on to raise \$100,000 for Baylor University; besides, our people were at war with Spain. But by the time the Baptist General Convention in 1900 emerged from its six years of storm, Buckner Orphans Home was fully out of the shadows and in the golden sunlight with property valued at more than \$200,000, and no debt.

*Rev. P. M. Murphy, Preacher.*—Rev. P. M. Murphy was educated at Buckner Orphans Home. His fruitful work in different fields for many years is an open book. During the years 1888-1903 he was the preacher for Buckner Orphans Home in the capacity of assistant pastor. All the readers of this book know that Dr. Buckner was necessarily much afield, but no finer young man in the State could be found than this P. M. Murphy, Pastor Buckner's assistant. Said Pastor Buckner: "The state of morals and religion is fine, far above the average. Here is a wonderful field for mission and Sunday School work, and God's signal blessings rest upon it. We have a fine corps of literary, music and Sunday School teachers. Rev. P. M. Murphy's labors in the pulpit and in the Sunday School have been very fruitful of good. For eighteen years I did all the preaching myself, but the last two years I have been greatly relieved."

*How the Children are Employed, 1901.*—The following graphic picture of what was doing in the Home was written by Miss Lula Mae Whitehead, and was published in "The Western Baptist," May 9, 1901. Miss Whitehead grew up in the Home and was familiar with the details in all the departments. For a term of years she has been Dr. Buckner's bookkeeper and private secretary. Her work is valuable beyond price. Hear what she says:

"All house-cleaning, cooking, sewing and washing is done by the girls, under the supervision of the matrons. There are three matrons—girls' matron, boys' matron, and nursery matron.

"The field work is done by the boys, aided by our farmer, who works with them. They have planted this year, May, 1901, eight acres in garden, seventy in corn, and are planting fifty acres in sorghum, millet, and cotton on land that was in oats, but destroyed by bugs. Besides this, they have plowed our thirty-five acres of orchard and have planted about four acres in muskmelons and watermelons. The hayfield comprises eighty-five acres.

"The girls' work is divided, each having a certain piece of work, and usually keeping it till she is transferred to the kitchen. The kitchen week is filled by six girls, two large ones, two next size, whom we call middle size, and two smaller, who are the 'fire girls.' They all go into the kitchen on Saturday evening and come out the next Saturday. No work is allotted to girls from eight to ten years of age, except by the help of large girls they do the yard-cleaning.

"A day is passed thus: The kitchen girls rise at four o'clock in order to have breakfast prepared in time. A bell rings at five, called the 'rising bell.' At half past five it rings again, called the 'first bell,' which means for all who have work in the dining room (about twenty-five of them) to get the tables prepared for breakfast. At six another bell rings, called the 'last bell,' when all repair to the dining room. At the ringing of this 'last bell' the boys and girls form into lines in their respective corridors, the smallest in the lead, and march in single file to organ music, and fill nine tables.

"Breakfast is over at about seven o'clock, when they leave the dining hall, dividing and going to their special work, some to making beds, some to sweeping corridors, yards and steps. Some clear up the dining room and kitchen, some begin to prepare dinner, while others get the smaller children ready for school.

"At half past eight the house is cleared up. Then those whose day it is to wash begin. It is school time, and all who go on that half day are off, leaving the unfinished work, if any,

to those who do not attend school in the forenoon. Likewise, the forenoon pupils stay at home in the afternoon and attend to whatever needs to be done.

"We have three teachers: the primary teacher, teaching three grades; the intermediate, teaching two, and the principal, four. The half-day attendance at school has proven the more successful because the children do not become so tired and are not absent from school any, unless in cases of emergency. We have a fourth teacher for under ages.

"At half past eleven o'clock, a first bell is rung for all to be prepared for dinner, which comes at twelve. At half past one, we have school again, the morning pupils remaining at home and the evening pupils going to school. School is dismissed at half past four.

"At half past five, a 'first bell' rings, calling all to prepare for supper, which comes at six, in summer at seven. After supper some are engaged in study, some promenading the walks, others talking or singing or swinging. At nine, comes bedtime. The children have as much time for play as any children, enjoy it as much, and are as happy as can be."

*S. C. Bailey's Vision.*—On October 29, 1903, appeared in "The Baptist Standard" the following from the pen of Rev. S. C. Bailey:

"My vision grows, and the more I look the more I discover. I see this man of God gathering the children from all parts of the Union, and as they come and go, placing his hand upon their heads and asking God's richest blessings on them. His name is R. C. Buckner, founder of Buckner Orphans Home, and president of the greatest convention that meets on this earth. Fathers and mothers look down from the City of God and say, 'Blessed he who cares for our little boys and girls while our bodies sleep.'"

*Report of Auditing Committee, 1900.*—We insert the following report in full as it deals with the finances from the beginning.

"Waco, Texas, November 8, 1900.

“To the Board of Directors of Buckner Orphans Home: We, your auditing committee, have examined the annual report, books and vouchers of R. C. Buckner, General Manager of Buckner Orphans Home, for the past year and we find them correct in every particular.

Amount collected .....	\$36,890.61
Amount expended .....	36,090.80
	<hr/>
Leaving balance on hand.....	799.81

“We beg further to state for the information of the Board and the public that we have examined carefully the records of the Board from the beginning, and have also examined the history of the Home (especially with reference to all financial matters) from the origin to the present time, and from the facts prominent in the official records we take pleasure in saying that the Home originated from the suggestions, requests and efforts of Brother R. C. Buckner, the present General Manager.

“The first lands were bought and buildings erected, including schoolhouse, furniture, stock and farming implements, by his own efforts through a number of years. Up to the time there were sixty-five orphan children in the Home, Brother Buckner did all of this without one cent of salary or remuneration whatever.

“We also find from the records that during the earlier years of the institution his personal contributions exceeded the receipts from \$150 to \$350 per year, and that in each instance he squared the books by his own personal contribution. In addition to this, we have seen cancelled notes amounting to \$17,499 that he carried in bank personally for the benefit of the Home. This sum represents money that he borrowed to secure the land now belonging to the Home. He gave at different intervals, personally, of his own means in the early years of the institution, several thousand dollars.

"We have seen the original mortgage on his own private property for \$1,500, which he used in paying for land for the Home. And we have seen from the deeds to the Home that the titles vest in the Home itself, and that Brother Buckner, nor any other mortal man, has a claim on any part of the property, and the charter forbids any mortgage lien being placed on the property of the Home. We find Brother Buckner has always given his personal notes and mortgages on his own private property to cover expenditures made for the Home, and if he had died before the notes were paid, his family would have lost the amounts unless reimbursed by voluntary contributions. They could not touch one cent of the property of the Home.

"In reviewing the history of the Home, we regard the business management of Brother R. C. Buckner as a marvel of accuracy and financial skill. As to accuracy, the records show that the reports, books and vouchers have been audited each year from the very first to the present, and found absolutely correct in every instance. We further state that no man within our knowledge has thrown his life and energy more thoroughly and unselfishly into any work, and there is no living man who has developed the strength and power in the work of providing for homeless orphans that he has. His unselfish work commands our highest respect and commendation. The self-sacrificing spirit he has exhibited all through the management of the Home and the financial obstacles he has had, and still has, to encounter, have been borne with a Christian spirit and with a firm confidence in God to provide for the homeless orphans under his charge.

"We do most earnestly and prayerfully commend the Home to the Baptist brotherhood of Texas and the world at large as well worthy of their coöperative support, and we particularly ask that the Baptist churches of Texas regularly contribute to its support. Brother Buckner has had a load on his shoulders and anxiety in his heart for years, and nothing but his unbounded confidence in God has made 'the yoke easy and the burden light.'

"We implore the Baptists of Texas and other people to wake up to their duty to the Home, and ask them to help Brother Buckner carry this burden. They can do it by regular contributions. It is a most worthy work and God's approving smile is on it.

"Come to the help of the Home. By so doing, you will expand the usefulness of Brother Buckner and bring happiness to the homeless orphans under his charge. May God put it into the hearts of all to do their full duty to this charitable institution is our prayer. (Signed) W. N. Griffith, J. N. Rayzor, Auditing Committee."

"The above report was, on motion, adopted by unanimous vote. W. N. Griffith, Secretary of the Board of Directors."

*"Audited Every Year.*—Every year from the beginning the books and vouchers of Dr. Buckner have been passed under the eye of an auditing committee and by it approved. It would tax our space to publish in full all of these reports. A few of them are here appended.

*Report, 1902.*—"Waco, Texas, November 6, 1902. To the Board of Directors of Buckner Orphans Home: We, your committee appointed to audit the books and vouchers of Dr. R. C. Buckner, General Manager, beg to report that we have gone over the work and found the books and vouchers correct in every particular, and we desire especially to commend Miss Lula Mae Whitehead for the neatness and exactness with which she has kept the books. Respectfully submitted, W. F. Rupard, R. N. Hill, Jno. T. Wofford."

"The above report of the Auditing Committee was adopted by unanimous vote of the Board of Directors. W. N. Griffith, Secretary."

*Report, 1903.*—"Dallas, Texas, November 5, 1903. The report of R. C. Buckner, General Manager of the Home, was read; the books and vouchers were examined by a committee of audit-

ors, and they, with the report, were, on motion, adopted. W. J. Rupard, President; W. N. Griffith, Secretary."

*Statement, 1906.*—"We, the Board of Directors of Buckner Orphans Home, make the following report: We find from the report of Dr. R. C. Buckner, General Manager of the Home, which report was audited by the Auditing Committee, that Dr. R. C. Buckner started the fiscal year with a debt of \$5,689.54. He has received for all purposes \$64,552.54, paid out for all purposes \$60,846.54, leaving a balance on hand of \$3,706.00. This was donated for a particular purpose, and only can be used as specified.

"We find Dr. Buckner is personally responsible for \$23,876.00 consisting of notes, contracts and accounts, which he will have to pay personally unless liberal contributions come in. The needs of the Home are growing larger and larger every year. He has a family of six hundred to be provided for, and nothing but liberal contributions will accomplish it. One hundred thousand dollars should be contributed this year.

"The Board for several years has voted Dr. Buckner an annual salary of \$2,500, but he has never accepted over \$1,500. This year he gave \$1,579.91 to the Home, giving all of his salary with \$79.71 additional. Dr. Buckner's anxiety of mind has been great, and sometimes he has almost been crushed as he struggled with the large financial responsibilities, but his abiding faith in God and the good people of Texas has made him feel that the large family under his charge would be provided for. He has assumed great financial responsibilities with an abiding faith and confidence that the good people of Texas would not see him carry the burden alone. He has prayed and struggled, and at times the future looked gloomy, but a silver lining would be seen through the clouds and he would be encouraged. God has blessed his work. His unselfish and untiring efforts in the management of the Home is sublime.

"He has shown a superior executive ability that cannot be

excelled. The management of the Home in every particular has received the full endorsement of the Board. His pure Christian character is a beacon light leading others to a higher and nobler Christian life.

"Brethren, we lay the Home at the door of your hearts; will you turn back on it? We say no, you will not. We ask you to give to the Home as God has prospered you. We hope to receive many large contributions to the Home. You could not make a better investment. God's approving smile is upon it.

"We thank you for past liberal help, and ask that you double your efforts in behalf of the Home. Take it to your hearts, pray for it, help it, and God will bless you. By helping the Home you will bring joy and gladness to the six hundred who are dependent on you. This cause is worthy of your confidence and help, and we hope that you will not turn a deaf ear to its appeal for help. May God open your hearts and pocket-books is our prayer.—Board of Directors, Buckner Orphans Home. Attested to by W. N. Griffith, Secretary of Board of Directors."

*Report, 1913.*—"We, your Auditing Committee, beg to report that we find the books and vouchers, representing the work as to the finances of Buckner Orphans Home for the fiscal year, November 7, 1912, to November 7, 1913, accurate and correct and correspond with the financial exhibit in the annual report of R. C. Buckner with the receipts and disbursements as itemized upon the books. W. N. Griffith, P. W. Thorsell."

"The Board of Directors of Buckner Orphans Home, November 19, 1913, made the following resolution: Resolved, By the Board of Directors in regular annual session that we adopt the report of the Auditing Committee, and also the report of Dr. Buckner. W. N. Griffith, Secretary."



## CHAPTER XXVII

### IN GALVESTON AFTER THE STORM

"Texas will have greater cause than ever to love and revere Dr. Buckner and his institution when it is known that he has added to his family a hundred helpless victims rescued from the storm. The heart of this State is throbbing towards Galveston now, and whoever renders a good service to this stricken city will be honored by the State."

The foregoing paragraph is copied from the "Galveston News" of September 13, 1900. The storm occurred on Saturday, September 8.

*Communication Cut Off.*—It was two days after the storm before word reached the outside world—two days of trying anxiety to all civilized peoples.

On Monday, September 10, flying rumors began to flash over the wires: "City wiped out," "Dead at least four thousand," "Dead five thousand," "Not less than eight thousand dead," "Eight thousand dead and \$20,000,000 property destroyed." These were reports brought to Houston by messengers who came through fifty miles of mud and water, exhausted and almost paralyzed with terror and grief.

The wires were all down for fifty miles out. There was only one wire leading out from Houston the night of the storm, and it went down shortly after midnight.

*Galveston, Thirty-eight Thousand.*—The population of Galveston before the storm was about thirty-eight thousand. It was cosmopolitan in character. Every State in the Union and many other parts of the globe had relatives or friends there. The world was wild for news. Within the stricken city the anxiety of the

survivors to communicate with outside friends is not to be described. Hours were ages. Fabulous prices were offered to any who would carry messages.

*Two Tugs to Houston.*—On Monday, two days after the storm, two tugs carried a thousand messages to Houston with request that they be forwarded by wire. Hundreds of men had worked all day Sunday straightening posts and repairing wires. By night there was connection by wire between Houston and St. Louis. All night Sunday night and all day Monday ten thousand people all over the United States were trying to send messages to Houston, claiming they had friends in Galveston. It was impossible. Neither was it possible to send out from Houston the messages brought by the tugs. The wires could not do a tithe of the business demanded.

*Rush to Houston.*—There was a wild rush of people to Houston. They were from over Texas and many states. Every train was crowded, and the Bayou City groaned because she could not feed or house her guests.

*Word from Galveston.*—A newspaper man named Richard Spillane from Galveston reached Houston Monday after the storm. He reported:

“The city is in ruins and the dead will probably total 10,000. Galveston has been wrecked by a tempest so terrible that words cannot describe it, and by a flood that turned the city into a raging sea. The weather bureau records show that the wind attained a velocity of eighty-four miles an hour. Then the measuring instruments blew away, so it is impossible to tell what was the maximum. About noon, Saturday, it became evident that the city would be visited with disaster. By three o'clock the waters of the gulf and bay met, and by dark the entire city was submerged. The light plants were flooded and the city was in darkness. To go into the streets was to court death. The wind was at cyclonic velocity. Roofs, cisterns, telegraph poles and walls were falling, and the noise of wind and crashing build-

ings was terrifying in the extreme. It was an experience of agony seldom equalled. When people who escaped death went out at daylight next morning, they were appalled. I looked out and saw eight bodies, four in one yard. Blocks and blocks of the business portion were without a vestige of habitation. Ruins were piled in pyramids."

*Dr. Buckner at Durant.*—Dr. Buckner was at Durant, Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, attending a religious gathering at the time of the Galveston storm. The meeting at Durant had for its object the forming of a basis of coöperation between Northern and Southern Baptists in Indian Territory. In this work it was successful. The weather was ominous. As far north as Durant rain fell in torrents and the wind reached an alarming velocity. A distressing uneasiness lay upon every heart. There was no satisfactory news from the Gulf Coast. On Monday, Dr. Buckner bade the Durant Conference adieu, saying he felt sure there was disaster somewhere. At Dallas he halted and found Dallas distressed for want of news.

*Dr. Buckner at Houston.*—Tuesday flying rumors said that Galveston was wiped out of existence, and very soon Dr. Buckner and his friend, Saunders, were speeding southward. They reached Houston and Galveston that same day, Tuesday. The storm was Saturday and Saturday night preceding.

At Houston they found a train ready to speed toward Galveston. Surging crowds were mad to board the train, and no man could do that without a pass. The mayor of Houston, Hon. S. H. Brashear, had been pressed for passes until he could endure it no longer and had gone home. His secretary did not know what to do with the crowd. Scores and hundreds were clamoring for passes. Men claimed that their families were in the wrecked city. Mothers were wild to search for their sons. Some demanded passes on humanitarian pleas, to help save life.

Dr. Buckner sought a phone and called up the mayor, and was readily granted passes for himself and friend.

*Off for Galveston.*—The train was under the supervision of General Mabry of the United States Army. All went well till within about three miles of the bay. Here was mud, water and debris everywhere. The train halted. The railroad track was covered. General Mabry ordered: "Every man of you, get out of this car and get a spade and work!"

Dr. Buckner and his friend sat still till the coach was empty. Then they stepped out quietly on the opposite side from the crowd. General Mabry was a special friend of Dr. Buckner and, recognizing his mission, made no objection.

At that instant a farm wagon came along, headed towards the bay. Dr. Buckner and his friend boarded it. Instead of a body the wagon had only a frame and a long plank that projected out behind, and on the projecting end of this plank the Doctor seated himself. It could not be called a comfortable seat. The plank sprang down and up at every jolt of the wagon, and his shoes and trousers were soon covered with water and mud beyond recognition. After an hour they were at the bay front. Here was a sea captain in a lighter searching for his lost son, and greatly distressed. The young man had been out in a boat during the storm and was doubtless lost.

"We have not seen him," replied Dr. Buckner.

Sea captain: "Who are you?"

"R. C. Buckner and friend trying to get to Galveston to save life."

Then the sea captain ordered his lighter to carry them to his ship, which was anchored in deep water, and ordered the ship to cross them over to the island. The Dallas "Times-Herald" reporter, who went to Galveston on the same train with Dr. Buckner, wrote to his paper:

"The first arrivals from the mainland were greeted almost as angels from heaven. Men, women and children crowded around and all asked, 'Are efforts being made to assist us?' And what a sight met the gaze of the first visitors! They had anti-

pated a scene of carnage and destruction. But no one expected to see so many dead bodies floating on the waves, lying on the sands and piled in the debris. Every street was congested. The wounded and destitute were crowded in buildings that were still standing, and all seemed to be in a dazed condition."

But Dr. Buckner was in the city before the news reporters. They had to stop and work clearing the railroad of debris. He was present at the first gathering of the relief committee and at its organization.

*Boy Rescued.*—Dr. Buckner found lodging in a hotel that was crowded with storm victims. Walking out, he discovered on driftwood a boy about ten years old, whom he rescued. After giving the child relief, he asked:

"Who are you, my son?"

"My name is Victor Albertson."

"Where are your parents?"

"Dead! The house we were in was a three-story brick. When it fell I jumped out at a window in the third story. It didn't kill me and I got on this raft and floated all night. I just held on to the raft and prayed." (Dr. Buckner sometimes uses this thought as a basis for talks: "I just held on to the raft and prayed.")

"Who taught you to pray? Were your parents praying people?"

"No, sir. They never prayed. I learned to pray in the little Mission Sunday School."

The boy was brought to Buckner Orphans Home and cared for. Many times afterwards has Dr. Buckner remarked on the good being done in the Mission Sunday School. Teaching this child to pray he considered a fine argument in favor of such schools. Later this boy went out into the world to do for himself. For some years he has not been heard from, and it is feared he has passed to his home beyond.

Dr. Buckner found many orphan children. He gathered

them together and saw that they were clad and fed. They crowded about him. They pulled at his hands and garments, and wept, and he wept, and the onlooking public wept. He admitted into Buckner Orphans Home the entire family of the Galveston Rosenberg Orphanage and many others from Galveston at intervals.

*A Woman Helped.*—At the hotel where Dr. Buckner was stopping was an old lady anxious to leave Galveston. She had been there through the flood and had experienced horrors till her nerves could bear no more. She had lost her trunk, which went with the house and family where she was boarding. The family belonged to the "Christian Scientists." This old lady would not remain with them, though they importuned her, telling her to trust God. They were lost and the old lady's trunk with them.

She said to Dr. Buckner that she felt she must go away, and she had nothing but a postoffice money order for \$17. She had tried to collect the order at the postoffice and could not. He went with her from bank to bank. Presently a gentleman in a bank saluted:

"How are you, Dr. Buckner?"

"Well enough myself, but I want to borrow some money so I can pay this lady's board bill and send her to Austin."

"You can have the money, Dr. Buckner."

The hotel bill was paid, the ticket bought and expense money put into her hands. No one could leave without a permit, so he secured one for her. All persons going aboard the ship were required to pass between two lines of soldiers, who stood with bayonets crossed over the passway. The old lady was passed into the steamer, and Dr. Buckner waved her "Goodbye." From the deck of the vessel she cried:

"I can never live long enough to thank you, Dr. Buckner."

"Thank God. It is He who has helped you, not I."

*Grand Old Man.*—The following is from the "Galveston News" of September 13, 1900, five days after the storm:

"No man has been busier comforting the grief-stricken people of Galveston than Dr. R. C. Buckner of Buckner Orphans Home in Dallas County. He leaves Thursday morning for his institution with the homeless orphans of Galveston Orphans Home, which was wrecked by the storm. He has others besides these, and all together he will take one hundred.

"What a grand old man Dr. Buckner is! I will take off my hat to him any day. I have known him for years, and there is not a nobler character alive. He got here Tuesday afternoon and lost no time in reaching his part of the work. And heaven knows there was none more important than that to which he assigned himself. The world ought to know of his work here."

*Returning with the Orphans.*—When Dr. Buckner was returning to Dallas, two men boarded the train at a way station and accosted him:

"We understand that you furnished our mother with a ticket and assisted her to get away from Galveston. We have met you to express our most hearty thanks. We must more than reimburse you, and require that you command us at any time we can serve you."

These gentlemen were among the most valued citizens of Dallas. They had made effort to reach Galveston but could not get passes at Houston.

Referring to Dr. Buckner's work, the "Galveston News" said: "This tender expression of human sympathy is echoed the world over." It was. The editor of the "New York Herald" had a man in Dallas with instructions to take a picture of Dr. Buckner returning with his Galveston orphans. The picture was taken as they entered the annex department of the institution. This picture appeared in the "New York Herald" in connection with a graphic writeup of the tornado.

Two and a half months after the storm, Dr. Buckner visited Galveston and secured other orphans, mention of which was made in the Galveston papers at the time.

*Buckner Home Open Door.*—Buckner Orphans Home ever kept its doors wide open to storm orphans. In the fall of 1886 a destructive coast storm swept Sabine Pass and Johnson's Bayou, in which some were killed, others hurt and some children made orphans. Immediately Dr. Buckner sent a telegram asking that all children made orphans by the storm be sent to Buckner Orphans Home. However, no children were sent. The good people of the storm-swept section cared for all themselves. The "Home and Sunday School," published at Dallas, commented as follows:

"This is a noble and timely offering of help. There could not be found in Texas a better place for those helpless little ones so sadly and suddenly made orphans."

There was a storm at Sherman during the earlier days of that goodly city. One of the first men on the ground was R. C. Buckner, comforting and offering assistance. He told the people that a welcome at Buckner Orphans Home awaited all the orphans.

At Wills Point also a cyclone wrecked the town. When the news reached Dallas, Dr. Buckner took the first train and was quickly there. The first object of human suffering to meet his eyes was a little girl weeping over her dead grandmother. The grandmother was put away and Dr. Buckner took the little girl and cared for her at Buckner Orphans Home. His watchcare over her did not cease till she was fairly well educated, grown and doing for herself.

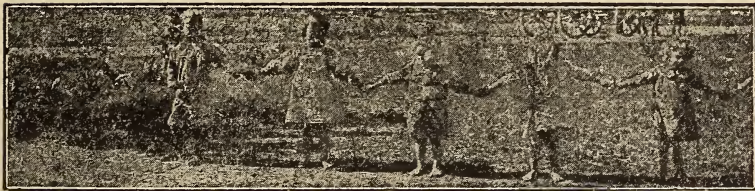
In 1893 occurred the terrible cyclone at Cisco, killing many people. Dr. Buckner wired, offering assistance. Mayor George W. Groves wrote him a nice letter of thanks in reply. But the good people of Texas sent prompt help. Cisco had more than enough, and generously sent Dr. Buckner a nice lot of clothing for his orphans.

When the terrible earthquake destroyed San Francisco in 1906, Dr. Buckner offered to care for the orphans, and one was



sent but never reached Buckner Orphans Home. It was kidnapped en route. Diligent inquiry was made, but the child was never found.

There have been many instances of proffered help by Dr. Buckner to tornado orphans, and many have been cared for in Buckner Orphans Home.



## CHAPTER XXVIII

### ORPHANS HOME BOARD SURPRISED

*Orphans Home Board Surprised.*—In a former chapter the statement has been made that the books and vouchers of R. C. Buckner, General Manager of the Buckner Orphans Home, passed under the eye of an auditing committee every year, receiving its approval and also the approval of the Board of Directors. But on June 7, 1904, when he called this same Board together and presented an exhibit of the Home's assets, the Board declared: "We can but express surprise that the efforts of one man have secured such an amount of property."

This exhibit was presented to the Board on June 7, 1904, which was the fiftieth anniversary of Dr. and Mrs. Buckner's marriage—their golden wedding anniversary. This indeed was the occasion of calling together the Board.

The reader, too, will be "surprised." He will note that the estimates are low as compared with values ten years later, as, for instance, cattle at \$20 a head and land \$65 an acre. All of that land ten years afterwards was worth \$200 per acre, exclusive of improvements.

It will be noted that the grand total is placed at \$279,020. When Dr. and Mrs. Buckner celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary the property of the Home was worth near \$600,000.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### CARING FOR THE SICK ORPHANS

There were not many sick in the earlier years of Buckner Orphans Home. And considering the great numbers reared and educated, there never have been many sick. There is no more remarkable fact connected with Buckner Orphans Home than the continued good health of its inmates. We quote from Dr. Buckner's report for the year ending November 7, 1913:

"The average annual death rate for the past ten years (1903 to 1913) has only been  $2 \frac{1}{6}$  per cent. This low death rate is still the more remarkable from the fact that we passed through one epidemic of measles and one of whooping cough among the twenty-eight to thirty babies. The fearful epidemic of meningitis that slew its scores all around, and even on adjoining farms, did not touch the Home. It appears that a special Providence watched over Buckner Orphans Home."

The fact of the good health of the Home is accounted for by the fact of the location of the Home on a high, healthy prairie ridge, almost highest in Dallas County; pure artesian water, plain, wholesome diet, careful regard for the laws of health, and, as Dr. Buckner suggests, the special Providence of God.

But of course there have been some sick all along. To segregate these was an increasing necessity, both the safety of the well ones and the better care of the sick demanding it. At first rooms were set apart for the sick called the "sick rooms." But as early as 1891 a modern two-story frame cottage was built, which was later divided into seven rooms. The General Manager named this cottage "Bethshan" (the House of Rest). It was named in honor of the pleasant city Bethshan, near the River of Jordan, in ancient Palestine. The original Buckner Home "Bethshan" was afterwards destroyed by fire, but the name "Bethshan"

is still kept up. The one-story cottage, the home of the matron in charge of the aged and also the building in which the aged take their meals, is now (1914) "Little Bethshan," though all of the family speak of it simply as "Bethshan."

The original Buckner Bethshan was built with a view to hospital work and future growth. It was then felt that the hospital problem was solved, at least for a term of years, and in his annual, 1892, the General Manager sent out this word:

"Bethshan cottage, the hospital building, will afford enough room for the sick and convalescent after the family shall have increased to six hundred. At present two rooms are kept in readiness for the sick. All others are occupied as sleeping apartments."

But a year later the entire building was set apart for the sick, and was fitted up with cooking and dining apartments and with bath room. The physician had his office on the Home premises, but he depended in the main on practice in the community for his support. The Home had its own pharmacy. The larger children served as nurses and some of them became quite skilled.

*The Buckner Home Annex.*—On January 4, 1897, Dr. Buckner bought for \$6,000 a very fine property in Dallas and had it deeded to Buckner Orphans Home. He became personally responsible for the payments until it was paid for. This property has since been known as the "Buckner Home Annex" and as "The Children's Hospital." It was the same property on which the Home in its beginning was opened with three children. Its location is the southeast corner of Junius Street and Haskell Avenue.

It was immediately improved and set apart as a "Children's Hospital," "open to afflicted orphans at Buckner Orphans Home, and of other orphanages, and to all destitute children needing medical treatment." Physicians were permitted to place their private patients and destitute emergency patients there, subject

to the approval of the management. No discrimination was made on account of church or creed. Spiritual advisers of patients chosen by parents or guardians were shown equal courtesy, as were competent members of the medical profession. If a patient on arrival, was not in proper condition respecting person or apparel, such condition was immediately corrected. After a patient was discharged, the room was disinfected and supplied with fresh bedding.

The first child treated was Willie Hogan, who had not walked for eight years, but after a few months walked and was permanently cured. The first matron in charge of the Annex was Mrs. J. D. Robnett, widow of the founder of Howard Payne College. Eminent physicians, who, at the beginning, and some of them for many years, rendered professional services free of charge, were Drs. J. M. Pace, E. J. Reeves, M. M. Newsome, S. E. Milliken, C. M. Rosser, A. F. Beddoe, J. B. Shelmire, R. H. Chilton, Scurry Terrell, G. W. M. Swain, E. J. Cary, G. M. Hackler, T. L. Westerfield (D.D.S.), J. M. Holden (dentist), William Thomas (dentist) and others.

The Annex was under the same general management with the Home in the country. It was conducted as two separate departments, the Transfer Department and the Hospital Department. The Transfer Department received all children coming to the Home and kept them ten days and then transferred them to the Home proper in the country. This was done as a precautionary measure to protect the large family against diseases, the wisdom of which has been many times justified. The Hospital Department was unique, being exclusively for deformed, maimed and chronically afflicted orphans, where they received board, professional treatment and every needed care, free.

Said Dr. Buckner (Annual, 1898): "There is no institution like it so far as I know." Within a few weeks after its opening, an average of thirteen patients were receiving treatment. This average grew to forty and more. At one time as many as sixty-

five were receiving treatment. Orphan children were sent to this children's hospital from Juliette Fowler Orphans Home at Grand Prairie, St. Matthews Children's Home at Dallas, the Methodist Orphans Home at Waco, and others. Hundreds of afflicted and destitute orphans were treated and many permanently cured. After this hospital had been opened more than five years, Dr. Buckner could say:

"Many surgical operations have been performed here, some of them of a very serious character, but all of them successful. As many as three have been on the operator's table on the same day. The services rendered by surgeons and other skilled specialists during the past year would have cost at regular fee rates possibly \$2,000."—Annual Report, 1904.

Again: "Many a case of eye, ear and nose trouble has been successfully treated, hair lip relieved, club foot, crooked limb and other deformities corrected. Some little patients now lie there helpless on their beds, their little limbs encased in plaster of Paris, and are under constant treatment and nursing."—Annual Report, 1904.

*The Ministry of Healing.*—In "The Baptist Standard," November 7, 1907, appeared a communication written by Dr. Buckner, of which the following is an excerpt:

"Our Lord, who shows His love for little children, is honored in the healing art as practiced in the Children's Hospital. Hundreds have been treated here for many afflictions that required gentle nursing and the skill of our best surgeons and specialists. It has always been open to all children who need such treatment, whether of Dallas, Fort Worth, Bonham, Beaumont, Whitewright, or other places from which it has admitted patients. The past two years, 122 patients have been treated, 47 of them surgical patients. One was the child of one of our best and most popular preachers, who said he would not take \$15,000 for the benefit conferred on his child. Another was a boy whose mother could not pay hospital charges. (Many others

were cited.) The Children's Hospital property is now (1907) worth \$40,000. The rooms are well furnished. The operating room has the most modern table, and other splendid furniture. There are bath rooms, ward and private rooms, and the building is well furnished.

"The Hospital grew till it had to be separated from the Annex, and the latter moved to its new quarters. It has been advertised all over Texas for years, and has been announced in the Southern Baptist Convention as the only Baptist hospital in America for children."

We are not surprised that both the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Southern Baptist Convention passed resolutions commendatory of this work.

The year closing November 4, 1908, saw 86 cases treated in the Children's Hospital, the year following 86 cases. Shortly after this the Children's Hospital was temporarily closed, much to Dr. Buckner's regret, to give place to a contemplated better building. It is in his plans to build at an early day a modern fire-proof structure at the country site of the Institution.

*Tuberculosis Sanitorium.*—Said Dr. Buckner in his Annual Report, 1910: "We sympathize with the sick but have tried to keep rid of the 'white plague.' Yet, after all, several cases of tuberculosis developed among the children, and the doctors were as emphatic in their demand as we were in our determination to protect the hundreds of healthy orphans by segregating the few. So one mile from this village of buildings (where the orphans and aged are cared for) we have opened a sanitorium for the better care, treatment and health of consumptives. The place is not beyond the two miles, inside of which no land the Home owns, or may hereafter acquire, can ever be sold or encumbered by debt. It is in plain view, on elevated ground, rolling and sodded with Bermuda grass. There stands a frame building of three rooms, a little barn, garden, poultry yard, a well, and six modern army hospital tents. And self-sacrificing is there.

"The dear afflicted ones live principally an outdoor life. They care for a hundred laying hens, a few turkeys, and milk two cows. The principal diet of the children is fresh milk and fresh eggs, though other suitable articles are added. They now occupy six tents, one sleeping in a tent. But each tent has an extra bed for others, as necessity may require."

The tents were afterwards replaced by six new wooden shacks. The doctors took in the Sanitorium in their rounds and the children did well. At this writing (1914) the Sanitorium is closed. We have no tuberculosis children now, but all the buildings and shacks stand ready for use, should cases develop.

The following excerpt is copied from the Annual, 1912:

"We challenge the world to show a better record. This record is the more remarkable when the fact is considered that we admit the sick and afflicted, and the aged, and the enfeebled. In the Cottage Homes for the aged, we have preachers and widows between 80 and 86 years old, some so feeble that their meals have to be taken regularly to their rooms. As to the children, we admit to our Relief Sanitorium some with tuberculosis in their blood and bones. Be it remembered, however, that this department is a mile from where the children and aged ones live. It would be inhuman to have it otherwise.

"Though examinations have been made by experts, there is not a case of pelagra, or hookworm, in any of the departments of Buckner Home, and there has not been, except in the Children's Hospital in the city, before its temporary suspension."

At the time of this writing (1914) special rooms in the Boys' House and special rooms in the Girls' House are fitted up and kept in readiness for the sick. The local physician, Dr. J. H. Ryon, lives in one of the cottages of Buckner Home Village and within five minutes' walk of either the Boys' House or the Girls' House, or any of the cottages for the aged.

"*The Orphans Burying Ground.*—The cemetery is one mile distant, in our own beautiful Vienna Park. The gravelly earth



is deep, drained by the constructive hand of nature, and always dry. It is bordered on three sides by forest trees and smaller growth. Grapevines and rattan, held up by bough of tree and bush or shrub, display graceful entwinings, luscious fruit and red and brown berries. The black haw and the red, the sumach with its cone-shaped red clusters and variegated foliage, the fragrance of fresh, wild flowers in spring and summer, and the sweet notes of many birds that perch or flit about, make it a cheery spot. The grounds are enclosed by a substantial rude fence, and a graveled driveway and walks add to the convenience of getting about. White marble marked simply with the names of the little sleepers distinguish the graves. Little brothers, sisters and comrades, go at times and linger about. They often place dolls, toys, vases and flowers, shells and bits of broken ware, with childlike innocence, simplicity and love on the graves of their loved ones at rest. On Decoration Day, former inmates come with tokens of sweet memories and decorate the graves.

"In the same enclosure rest the wornout bodies of aged preachers and widows who spent their last days in the Cottage Homes at this Institution of many departments of benevolence. In the forest about is a fitting lesson of all—a picture of the age and lives of those who lie buried there. The opening forest buds at springtime, the growing and maturing leaves in midsummer, the sear leaf in the fall and the dry and fallen leaves in midwinter (returning to the dust from which they came), speak inaudibly but touchingly of the birth of the babes, the young lives that follow and fading, decrepit age that ends the earthly life of all. All these ages are represented in this sacred enclosure.

"A sylvan park, a still retreat,  
Where guardian angels oft may meet  
And watch with tender, loving care,  
Dear orphan children buried there."

—*Annual Report, 1914.*

## CHAPTER XXX

### CARING FOR THE AGED

From the beginning of Buckner Orphans Home, surprises at intervals have all along been sprung by the management on the Board of Directors and on the public. It was a purchase of land, a valuable improvement or a colossal building, or mayhap it was an entirely new charity. The new charity features multiplied till Buckner Orphans Home came to be styled "An Institution of Affiliated Charities and Benevolence." It was so styled "because of the variety of its relief work and its many departments." These were the great Institution proper for orphan children, the Buckner Half-Orphanage for children with one parent living and able and willing to pay a moderate sum for caring for the children, the Mothers' Building for motherless babies, the cottages for the aged, the Buckner Home Annex in the city for temporary detention of all children coming to the Home, the Children's Hospital and the Relief Sanitorium for tuberculosis children, besides many helps morally, educationally and industrially given all children. All of these departments were under one management, in recognition of which the Board of Directors, November 19, 1905, on motion of W. J. Rupard, "unanimously elected R. C. Buckner to the combined office of President and General Manager."

The first cottages for the aged were built in 1905. There were four of them built during that year. A great joy it was to Dr. Buckner when a good sister, Mrs. P. S. Ramsuer, of Paris, Texas, gave \$3,000 in cash with which to begin this Christly work. For a long time Dr. Buckner had this work on his heart and had been praying to God about it.

In an article that appeared in the "Dallas Times Herald," February 23, 1906, Dr. Buckner called this good work of caring

for the aged "A New Department at Buckner Orphans Home." Following we give an excerpt from that article:

"*Cottage Homes for the Aged.*"—Is a new department at Buckner Orphans Home, and yet it is authorized by its charter and has already been inaugurated by the appropriation of funds contributed for that specific purpose. There are now in readiness four neat, modern cottages just across the public road from the great buildings occupied by the orphans themselves. They have each a fifty-one-barrel cistern. The buildings are lighted with electricity, and each yard has its young shade trees, peach and plum trees, small garden, poultry yard, cow barn, etc. All these outside improvements are not completed as yet, but are under way. A widow with her son and daughter occupy a room in one of the cottages and will aid in planting and in other matters to get things ready.

"A preacher who is 84 years old, and his wife, about 60 years, occupy one of the cottages, and an excellent homeless, dependent veteran of 82 is to occupy a room in the same building.

"The cottages are far enough away not to be disturbed by the orphan children, yet the children are near enough to cheer the aged by visits under proper restrictions and also to alternate by detail and be really helpful to the old folks without interfering with their own school privileges and other benefits of the orphanage. As both are under the same management, they can be conducted without serious friction.

"Two more cottages are ready to gratify some sweetly inclined to deeds of philanthropy by furnishing a cottage. We can tell them what is needed. If anyone wants to add a cottage at a cost of \$700 or \$800, it shall be his or her blessed privilege. There is room for many such cottages and there are many dependent aged people. You know we must not take the children's bread and give them. The great apostle Paul said: 'As we therefore have opportunity let us do good unto all men.' And it is delightful to help the homeless aged as well as dependent

orphans. My countrymen, let us not live for self alone.—R. C. Buckner.”

The quotation following is from Dr. Buckner's Annual Report, 1905: “Four excellent cottages as homes for the aged people are nearing completion. The first will shelter Elder E. B. Eakin and his wife. He is one of our veteran preachers, 83 years of age. The Cottage Homes are not exclusively for preachers. \* \* \* A few orphan children will be cared for in each cottage to cheer and help care for the aged. \* \* \* Only the providence of God will set a limit to this work—Cottage Homes for the Aged.”

The distributing of some of the orphan children among the aged, and in other departments, proved to be a wise and very excellent arrangement. Note this excerpt from the Annual Report, 1906:

“Several children are distributed among the Cottages for the Aged, to love and wait on them, some in ‘Little Bethshan,’ where the convalescent are cared for, and several are in City Annex and Children's Hospital.”

The Cottage Department for the Aged grew and greatly rejoiced the heart of the Institution's President and General Manager. The cottages filled up and others, knocking for admittance, had to be declined. Very sad indeed was it to decline any. What could Dr. Buckner do? He sent out this word to the thousands of God's people all over Texas and beyond:

“There is room on the ground for many others, who desire to do so, to put up cottages for other lonely persons.”

And again, “More cottages are needed and there are grounds, water, electric lights and other conveniences in abundance. Some of the most pathetic letters in our files are from dear, homeless, old people whose applications were necessarily declined for want of room. Hear the voice of God in the mouth of the aged: ‘Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.’ How can the hearts of people turn from

the homeless, sorrowing, suffering condition of afflicted, aged preachers and widows?"

"*Ye Did It Unto Me.*"—What worth have been those age-worn lives? The scribe in the Golden City has the record. We will not retrace. Their ministries are known to the King and they sit at the King's table. And they wait on Jordan's bank till their High Priest shall dip his feet in the flood, then will they pass over.

Do you see that very old man, lame, tall, with blue eyes and with silver hair and with long silver beard? That is Dr. J. M. Holden. He is a dentist and a crippled Confederate soldier. Fifteen years, while living at Wills Point, he did most all of the dental work in Buckner Orphans Home. Each annual visit required some weeks to go over the teeth of all the orphan children and all the matrons, extracting, cleaning, filling and doing plate work. This good work he did joyfully year by year without charge. When quite old, a home was offered him and a room in one of the cottages, with room for his dental chair and instruments, which he gladly accepted. He had food and raiment and good cheer. At length he fell asleep and his body was shipped to his daughter, Mrs. Dr. Belotte, at Wills Point, where it finds sepulture and rest.

*Contentment.*—"Having food and raiment, be therewith content," is a Pauline injunction, but it is not universally observed among either old or young. We especially make a wide margin of allowance to aged people. Large numbers of them are not wholly themselves because of nervous or other ailments. And yet, after the Cottage Homes had been in operation more than seven years, Dr. Buckner could send out this remarkable statement in his Annual Report for 1912:

"Every one who has lived here has been well enough satisfied to return, if away for a while, or to express a desire to come back whenever circumstances should be auspicious. The wife of one who went back to die among her friends, often visits us. A

letter was received from her the other day full of pleasant expressions as to their satisfaction and happiness while here. There has not been an exception to our knowledge."

In every case, before an aged man or woman is received, an application blank must be filled out, returned and passed on by the management. The application blank, when filled out, gives specific information on the following points: Name, age, connubial relations, health, moral character, church relations, use of profanity, quarrelsome disposition, use of opiates or intoxicants, fondness for children, nervousness, past occupation, strength to keep room or do light garden work. The application blank is accompanied by a physician's certificate as to health and by other testimonials as to character. One regulation is, "if he drinks whiskey or uses profanity, he cannot get in."

After years of trial, Dr. Buckner published in 1912 the following statement:

"The Department for the Aged is a gratifying success. All the rooms of six cottages (three rooms each) are full. Some of the aged are more or less 'cranky,' but each is permitted to turn his own crank without anybody furnishing oil for it or grist for it to grind. Several of the old people who have been here have died. One was a preacher, another a preacher's wife. One was a worn-down, homeless deacon and four were old Christian women."

*Cottage Prayer Meetings.*—The writer will always recall with joy the many occasions when he has been permitted to be with those aged saints in their mid-week prayer meetings. They were held on Thursday afternoons, sometimes in one sister's room and sometimes in that of another. The Holy Spirit delighted to come into these meetings. There were songs, readings from the Scriptures, prayers and soulful talks. Oh, those talks, those words of cheer, those homilies on sustaining grace, on faith and on unflinching love! There were two aged preachers with long records of service behind them.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### BAPTIST WOMEN'S MISSIONARY TRAINING SCHOOL

The Baptist Women's Missionary Training School came into existence in answer to a desire on the part of Christian girls in Buckner Orphans Home to take training. It was organized October 3, 1904, in Buckner Home Annex, Dallas, Texas. R. C. Buckner was its founder and first president. At the time of its organization there was no other similar school in the entire South. Some three years later, when the Baptist Women's Missionary Union Training School was organized at Louisville, Ky., Dr. Buckner was glad to encourage it by the gift of \$100. The Baptist Women's Missionary Training School of Texas "was born in the great, loving head and heart of R. C. Buckner," wrote L. R. Scarborough of the Fort Worth Seminary.

The Training School found welcome and shelter in the Buckner Home Annex in Dallas, without money and without price.

The purpose to establish such school was first announced in a full meeting of the Dallas Baptist Pastors' Conference, September, 1904. Dr. Buckner made the announcement and the same was heard with joy. Pastor George W. McDaniel of Gaston Avenue Church (later of Richmond, Va.) moved the approval of the Conference. The motion was carried unanimously. The devotional "Amen!" was heard in different parts of the room. Evangelist Doc. Pegues started the Doxology, "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow." All joined and instantly the whole Conference was on the Mount of Transfiguration.

*Organization Services.*—There were present at the Training School organization services, R. C. Buckner, J. B. Gambrell, George W. McDaniel, George W. Truett, T. J. Walne, A. N. Hall, B. A. Copass, L. W. Coleman, Mrs. Joel H. Gambrell, Mrs. R. C. Buckner, Mrs. George W. McDaniel and others.

Dr. Buckner called the meeting to order and read Romans 16:1-4: "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, who is servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you, for she hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also.

"Greet Priscilla and Aquilla, my helpers in Christ Jesus, who have for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles."

After reading, Dr. Buckner offered the following well-chosen remarks: "Paul would not have women chosen to preach, neither would we. But he regarded them as valuable witnesses for Christ and useful helpers in missionary work and the great work of the churches. He entrusted his epistle to the Romans to Phebe, a sister, and servant of the church at Cenchrea, and sent her with it into the great city of Rome. Truly this was a daring and fruitful missionary journey. But she went and risked her own life, as other Christian women did, and as others are now doing in heathen lands. Women were unselfish, heroic workers in church and on mission fields in the days of the apostles, and still are. But they have not had the encouragement and favorable opportunities they so richly deserve. Paul encouraged and commended them, and so should we. We should give them better facilities and opportunities for becoming trained workers. We send our young preachers to theological seminaries. Why not have good training schools for Bible women, missionaries' wives and women missionary workers? I am glad there are such schools, and that we are here to organize another. I am glad of the enthusiasm of these brethren and sisters, who



become members of the faculty. I am glad that three or four of our orphan daughters from the 'Home' are here as the first matriculants, and I suggest that we now proceed to organize."

The principle here announced by Dr. Buckner that women, though not ordained preachers, must be recognized as helpers in all gospel work and must be made efficient, remains the great foundation pillar of the Training School.

Dr. T. J. Walne led in fervent prayer, invoking the perpetual presence and leadership of the Holy Spirit in the coming work of the Training School, and in the lives of all the holy women to be trained.

After the prayer, Dr. Buckner was elected president of the Training School and Miss Viola Weaver was appointed to act as secretary and keep the records.

As nominated by the president, a faculty was chosen as follows: George W. McDaniel, A. N. Hall, T. J. Walne, J. B. Gambrell, George W. Truett, L. W. Coleman, Mrs. Joel H. Gambrell, Mrs. R. C. Buckner, Mrs. George W. McDaniel, Miss M. Bridges. By unanimous vote, Dr. Buckner was made one of the faculty. Later on there were some changes in the faculty. But there never was a time when it was not first-class in piety and efficiency. Among the instructors added within the next year or two were Mrs. M. J. Nelson, E. P. Aldridge, R. L. Cole, W. E. Brittain, J. W. English, W. A. Jarrel, J. W. Gillon, J. Frank Norris, W. A. Hamlett.

After the Training School became a department of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at Fort Worth, it found shelter in one wing of the Seminary building, sojourning in that wing until its own magnificent new home was completed.

Mrs. A. H. Newman was the first principal after the opening at Fort Worth. She was succeeded by Mrs. J. S. Cheek and Miss Christine Coffee, who conjointly looked after the welfare of the school.

In 1913 Miss Mary C. Tupper became principal. Miss

Tupper is a daughter of the distinguished Dr. H. A. Tupper, many years corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and sister to Dr. H. A. Tupper, Jr., secretary of the American Peace Forum. Miss Tupper is assisted by several devout lady specialists and by the able Seminary faculty.

It is a pleasure to chronicle her estimate of the founder and first president of the Training School: "I revered Dr. Buckner's name before coming to Texas, and to reverence have added love and admiration since my adoption by this great state."

*Wide Welcome.*—Throughout the South, and especially in Texas, the coming of the Baptist Women's Missionary Training School met with welcome. At the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City, May 15, 1905, on motion of M. P. Hunt of Missouri, the following endorsement was unanimously adopted:

"Resolved, That in view of the work being done in the Baptist Women's Missionary Training School, located at Dallas, Texas, and now in successful operation, this Convention welcomes its coming, and sees in it the providence of God for forwarding the Kingdom. The increasing opportunities and demands for trained women in missionary activities, at home and abroad, make this work imperative."

It was known in the great Convention that Dr. Buckner was the founder and president of this school. It was also known that he was a pillar under the Texas Baptist Memorial Sanitarium, then being planted at Dallas. How could he look after these important interests, when the great Buckner Orphans Home filled his head and heart? This question lingered in the minds of many.

Some time after this, George W. Truett, of Dallas, was in Kansas City, assisting Pastor F. C. McConnell of Calvary Church in evangelist meetings. During his sojourn in that city, Dr. Truett was interviewed by the editor of the "Word and

Way" concerning Baptist activity in Texas, when he made this statement:

"The orphanage work led by Dr. Buckner has grown to tremendous proportions. Over 600 children are now being trained, and to this splendid property lands and buildings are being added every year. Tremendously engaged as he is, yet he finds time to give his heartiest and noblest help to every good work in the land."

The wide welcome accorded the Training School by Texas Baptists deserves especial mention. The Southern Baptist Convention saw in it "the providence of God for forwarding the kingdom." What did Texas see? When the school had been in operation only about six weeks, the Baptist General Convention at Waco passed the following:

"Whereas, There has been established in Dallas, Texas, the Women's Baptist Missionary Training School for the training of young women who feel called of God to give their lives to mission work at home or abroad, and,

"Whereas, This school is now in successful operation with an earnest and capable faculty, with seven consecrated young women in attendance and others coming; therefore,

"Resolved (1), That this Convention heartily recommends that our people pray for the success of this Training School.

"Resolved (2), That we recommend to our Godly young women wishing to give their lives for special work for Christ along missionary lines, if it is possible for them to do so, to come to the Women's Baptist Missionary Training School at Dallas."

At succeeding sessions of the Convention, warm endorsements were voted. Note this excerpt from report written by W. A. Hamlett, 1905, and adopted by the Convention at Dallas:

"A little more than a year ago, Providence thrust upon the Baptists of Texas the Women's Baptist Missionary Training School, located in Dallas. \* \* \* Any woman who loves God's

work may enter, regardless of denomination, or whether she is to give her life to foreign work or stay in the home land. The committee especially urges the Convention to seriously take this matter to heart, recognizing its worth."

A committee consisting of J. H. Taylor, B. A. Copass, T. A. Moore, Mrs. J. H. Gambrell, F. M. Masters and Mrs. C. H. Briggs, presented a glowing report to the Convention in Waco in 1906. It was unanimously adopted. An epitome is here presented:

"This institution for doing good has come to us at an opportune time. Though only two years old, the school has sent out efficient workers, among them one missionary to China and another to Mexico. The question of a domicile for the school has been solved by the benevolent department of Buckner Orphans Home. It has tendered the school a permanent home near Gaston Avenue Baptist Church and near the great Baptist Sanitarium. The course of instruction is open to the trained nurses free of cost. The Dallas Pastors' Conference, equal to the best among us, furnishes the faculty."

The missionaries mentioned in the foregoing report as having gone out from the school were Miss Ida Taylor, Teng Chow, Shentung, China, and Mrs. May, who went as an independent missionary to Mexico. Others are filling good positions. One of them, Miss Kate Lacy, reared in Buckner Orphans Home, is teacher in the Government Industrial School at Middleton, Okla.

*Women Ardent Supporters.*—The warm endorsement given the Training School by the Baptist Women Mission Workers of Texas calls for roseate eulogy. Witness this excerpt adopted by the sisters in annual session in Waco, 1904:

"Means of preparation have been provided in the Baptist Women's Missionary Training School, recently opened in Dallas by that noble pioneer in every good work, our beloved and honored Dr. Buckner. While others hesitated and doubted whether the time was ripe for the launching of this form of Christian

training, he heard the plea of noble young women, anxious to better prepare for Christly service, and gave shelter and the prestige of his name and fame for benevolence to this new enterprise."

The foregoing paragraph, adopted by the sisters, was written by Mrs. J. B. Gambrell. At this same meeting, the women arranged for one woman in each association in the State to give attention to furthering the interests of the Training School.

At a meeting of the Baptist Women Mission Workers in Waco, 1906, a collection was taken for the Training School, and the following resolution offered by Mrs. R. F. Stokes of San Antonio was unanimously adopted:

"Whereas, The call for trained women mission workers comes from foreign fields and home fields and from the most opulent and prosperous of our city churches; therefore, let it be

Resolved, That we affirm and renew our pledge of sympathy, our prayers and our financial support to this most worthy institution."

The devotion of the sisters to the Training School continues till this day. In a letter to the writer, June 25, 1914, Dr. L. R. Scarborough says:

"The Baptist Women Mission Workers have been most faithful to the Training School. They have made it possible for a beautiful new house to be erected, which will accommodate 112 students. They have cheered the hearts and strengthened the hands of many a 'little sister,' who, because of their aid, has been enabled to fit herself for the service her heart longed to do. With gratitude to our Heavenly Father who impressed His servant, the noble father of our school, with the importance of this great work, and with thankful hearts for the cordial cooperation of our sisterhood, we take heart and go forward."

*Given to Southwestern Seminary.*—After two years of creditable work in Dallas it was thought wise that the Training School be given over to the Southwestern Baptist Theological Semi-

nary. Accordingly at a later meeting, with President R. C. Buckner in the chair, it was voted to offer the school to the Seminary.

"It was only that this enterprise of matchless usefulness might come speedily into its own, that it was aligned with the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary," wrote Mrs. F. S. Davis, president of the Baptist Women Mission Workers of Texas.

The school was accepted by the Seminary. Dr. Scarborough soon thereafter began planning for enlargement. At his suggestion, the women in session at Houston, 1910, undertook the erection of a suitable building on Seminary Hill at Fort Worth, the Seminary having already moved from Waco to its new quarters on Seminary Hill. Mrs. R. F. Stokes was appointed to supervise the raising of funds for same. And at this writing an imposing building, costing near \$120,000, is nearing completion.

*Speech at Breaking Dirt.*—In September, 1913, just after Dr. Buckner's return from the Orient, he received the following from Dr. Scarborough:

"Dear Brother: I rejoice in your successful trip and safe return, and write to convey request of Committee of Baptist Women Mission Workers for our Training School, and of our Seminary faculty, that you deliver the address at Breaking Dirt Exercises, October 1, 1913. The occasion will be the beginning of the Woman's Building for the Missionary Training School. We all want you to do this because of your connection with the Training School. The exercises will be at three o'clock in the chapel, and following the exercises the Breaking Dirt Service. Mrs. W. L. Williams will hold the plow, breaking dirt. Come and take dinner with our Seminary folks."

Dr. Buckner stood erect. In his hand he held a large bouquet of beautiful American roses. Before him sat the Seminary professors and students, city pastors, J. C. Hardy, many ladies and

laymen. His address was heard with the keenest interest. An epitome follows:

"Were I a Burbank of wide experience and successful effort in developing and improving flowers and plants, I would say of this large bouquet of American roses, LaFrance and the American Beauty: These flowers of unsurpassed beauty and charming fragrance have been developed from the old wild cabbage, red rose.

"Were I a Thomas Alva Edison, I would point to homes and palaces and parks brilliantly lighted with electricity and say: Development is shown by the steps from the old tallow candle to the kerosene lamp, and then higher to the beautiful incandescent lights that turn darkness into daylight in home, palace, park and city.

"Were I a Waterman, I would take in my hand an elegant fountain pen and would call attention to the old, old, goose quill that my teacher, skilled in pen making, pointed for me, then to the steel pen that followed, then to the easy gliding gold pen, and then to the elegant, convenient fountain pen now in use, and would say: This is development.

"Were I a Robert Fulton, I would point to the Clearmont on the Hudson a century ago, then to the inviting steamboats on every navigable river and lake a few decades later, then to the great steamships on every sea, and then to the grand old Shinyo Maru, on which wife, daughter Robbie and I sailed across the Pacific. I would say to my wife: Darling, we sail across this great Pacific Ocean to the Orient, gliding smoothly over its waters, resting sweetly at night, sheltered in our luxurious stateroom from sunshine and storm; and would then point to the almost impotent Clearmont and say: This is development.

"What I have said illustrates the development of our fine young people, as they advance step by step into higher and still higher types, with trained heads and hearts, vessels of honor fit for the Master's use.

"It illustrates the development of this Women's Training School from its beginning in Dallas in 1904, and transferred from its humble domicile in that city to the Seminary, and becoming a part of that great plant.

"One of the first heroines to take training in the Training School was Miss Ida Taylor, who went from its inspiring precincts to the great Chinese mission field. Recently back in this country on her first vacation, she went before her old church, and in one appeal raised enough to support another missionary in China for three years, and enough besides to pay that missionary's way to the field. This also was development. Others have taken training and gone out for the Master.

"And now we are here to break dirt for a magnificent building to be the permanent home of the institution and to cost \$120,000. This is the sort of development that lifts up the world and glorifies God."

*Fruits.*—Mention has already been made of Christian women who were trained in the early life of the Training School, some of them filling positions on foreign fields. Among others who have gone out in later years are Mrs. J. R. Saunders and Miss Christine Coffee, both of whom are at Ying-Tak, China, and also Miss Maudie Albritton, China. Many others are rendering efficient service in the home land as Sunday school teachers, pastors' assistants, city and home missionaries. During the 1913-1914 session, there were 85 students enrolled, most of them wives of ministerial students, though there were many young ladies unmarried. There were eleven graduates in 1914.

"That our daughters may be as corner stones, polished."—  
Psalms 144:12.



## CHAPTER XXXII

### TEXAS BAPTIST MEMORIAL SANITARIUM

Ten years old, but stalwart as if it had been a century growing, the Sanitarium at Dallas stands a monument to Texas Baptist enterprise and benevolence. Counting its patients up near 5,000 a year and increasing that number annually fifty per cent, the day approaches when the count will be 10,000 and beyond.

The need of such an institution was keenly felt by R. C. Buckner for years before the Baptists of Texas gave it a serious thought. The Children's Hospital opened his eyes to the need of the larger institution, and for two years before the Sanitarium was organized he advocated its establishment in the public prints.

*The Beginning.*—"Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost?" The counting of the cost and forming of plans occupied some months in 1903. For quite a while, Dr. Buckner had been advocating the opening of a Sanitarium, and sentiment in its favor was growing. In 1903 a clarion call for a Baptist Sanitarium appeared in "The Baptist Standard," of which J. B. Cranfill was then the editor. At length came the transfer of the Medical Department of the University of Dallas to Baylor University. When this College of Medicine came to the Baptists, then came the conviction that the times were ripe for the Sanitarium.

Soon the physicians and surgeons of the College of Medicine gave a banquet, which was attended by preachers and other prominent citizens. At this banquet Pastor George W. Truett asked: "Why might we not now begin the work of establishing the Sanitarium?" The question went home to every heart.

Pastor Truett at once began the raising of funds for this great enterprise, and through his heroic efforts, seconded by many liberal hearts, the movement was carried to success. In the autumn of 1903 the Dallas Pastors' Association (undenominational) voted the following endorsement:

"We, the members of the Dallas Pastors' Association, have learned with pleasure of the plans and purpose of our Baptist brethren to erect in Dallas a commodious and thoroughly equipped Sanitarium on broad humanitarian principles. We recognize the need and great benefit of such an institution, not only to our city, but to all Protestantism of the entire Southwest. We hereby express our appreciation, our sympathy and our good will for this enterprise, and pledge our hearty coöperation as far as we shall be able to promote the interests of such an institution.

"Robert Hill, Methodist,

"President of Dallas Pastors' Association,

"James O. Reavis,

"Pastor First Presbyterian Church,

"John M. Moore,

"First Methodist Church,

"Committee."

At the session of the Baptist General Convention held in Dallas, 1903, it was voted, "That we most heartily approve the timely movement recently inaugurated to establish in the City of Dallas the Texas Baptist Memorial Sanitarium, and we pledge to the movement our cordial sympathy and substantial support. We believe the completion of this momentous movement will work a distinct advance in the denominational life and growth of our people." Further, "That this Convention accepts the privilege of selecting the directors of the Sanitarium."

The brethren most active in promoting the enterprise were R. C. Buckner, George W. Truett, J. B. Gambrell, C. C. Slaugh-

ter and E. T. Lewis. Organization was effected in February, 1904, by electing R. C. Buckner, president; George W. Truett, secretary, and E. T. Lewis, superintendent. A home for the institution was purchased, the identical spot where, with additions acquired later, the Sanitarium now stands. A two-story brick of 14 rooms stood on this site, and in this brick the Sanitarium was opened March 1, 1914.

In their report to the General Convention, 1904, the directors make mention that "they were especially fortunate in securing a plat of ground in the heart of the city, beautiful, every way ample, and adapted to the needs of the institution."

The work of the Sanitarium was carried on the first year in the original two-story brick. The directors reported concerning the work of this period: "The experiment has more than justified our most sanguine hopes. The building has been usually overtaxed and the good results of the work are manifest in many ways."

*Dr. Buckner's Help.*—A letter to the writer from Deacon E. T. Lewis, of Muskogee, Okla., dated January 28, 1914, says:

"I was elected superintendent of the Sanitarium and served the first year. While I was superintendent, Brother Buckner was my principal counsellor and helper. We saw each other almost every day, and talked matters over. It was his pleasure to advise with me. He was the main stay of the institution the first year. But for his financial help during that year, we could not have kept it open and running. He advanced, first and last, about \$3,000 to keep everything in creditable shape. Besides he gave during the year \$1,000 to the institution. He was never too busy with the great Orphans Home to give some of his time to the Sanitarium. During the year, Brother Buckner and I went to St. Louis and at our own expense secured two trained nurses for the Sanitarium."

It should be recorded to the credit of both Dr. Buckner and Deacon Lewis that they donated their time and services, as did

Dr. Truett, Dr. Gambrell, Colonel C. C. Slaughter and others. The Sanitarium paid its way the first year in addition to the purchase of fixtures. There were from ten to twenty patients all the time.

*New Building.*—As the demands on the Sanitarium grew, it became clear that a new building of size and adaptation to the wants of patients and physicians must be erected. Estimates were made calling for an outlay of \$250,000, or more. It was proposed to erect first a large, central, fireproof building with more than 100 choice rooms, with several large wards and a beautiful chapel at cost of over \$100,000, then later add wings. This was reported to the General Convention in session at Waco in 1905, and met with the hearty approval of that body.

*Dirt Breaking.*—The formal beginning for the new building was made November 5, 1904, when a multitude of people attended the dirt-breaking ceremonies. It was at a time when the Tri-State Medical Association was holding sessions in Dallas and many of that Association attended the exercises. Dr. Buckner presided and delivered the opening address, which was as follows:

“Ladies and Gentlemen, Brethren and Fellow Citizens: You have been invited here to witness and participate in the ceremonies of breaking dirt for the great Sanitarium that is to grace this beautiful lawn. We have just awakened from sleep, yawned a little, rubbed our eyes and are about to get to work. My friend and brother, Colonel C. C. Slaughter, who knows how to work, is here with spade in hand, and will give us an ocular demonstration of how deep he can drive that instrument into the yielding bosom of Mother Earth at a single stroke. That will depend more upon his splendid muscular development than the size and weight of his foot, for it is evident that that appendage is easily accommodated inside of a number five kid shoe.

“We are beginning to realize the fulfillment of a long cherished dream; not so long as Rip Van Winkle’s far-famed nap,

but long enough for us to learn that hope deferred makes the heart sick. But we feel better now, and is it not well that we should feel convalescent, as we are in the midst of so many skillful surgeons and eminent physicians here attending the Tri-State Medical Society?

“Ten years ago my eyes rested with admiration, as they do today, on this beautiful lawn, dotted with forest oaks, as a suitable site for a great sanitarium, and commented on it to friends and indulged the hope that here or elsewhere in our splendid city would ere long be erected such a building.

“Later on money was offered for the building of a Baptist hospital in Dallas. The first offer was made by my lamented friend, Dr. Everett, an alumnus of Baylor University, from which go out so many men of enterprise, learning and liberality. Dr. Everett now rests in the cemetery at Weatherford. Nothing was done. Later on other gifts were offered, but they were not large enough to create any particular alarm, and nothing was done beyond a few conversations and newspaper articles.

“Coming events are often preceded by light from the rear, throwing them to the front. About a year ago there was in this city a banquet given in honor of the celebrated bloodless surgeon, Dr. Lorenz. Learned doctors, distinguished surgeons and the elite of the city were present. My bosom friend, Rev. George W. Truett, was requested to reply to a toast, which he did in splendid style, suggesting that the occasion be followed by an effort at once to build in Dallas a sanitarium on the broadest humanitarian principles. A long-felt want was realized, and by his splendid arguments and impassioned eloquence, a fire was kindled in the hearts of all, and it found vent in the throwing of hats into the air, the clapping of hands, and hearty ‘Amens.’

“Later some of us effected an organization, procured a charter and purchased these grounds. (Holding up the architect’s sketch.) Look at this picture? Isn’t it a beauty? And we

hope it will be a joy forever. The building is to front on Junius Street, and is to extend back parallel with College Avenue. The middle part is to be four stories high, the wings three stories. In all our undertakings we should recognize God, and seek His blessing and guidance."

Other roseate talks and speeches were made by Mayor Bryan T. Barry, George W. Truett, J. M. Moore, pastor First Methodist church; C. I. Scofield, pastor First Congregational church; C. M. Rosser, M. D., Dallas; Colonel C. C. Slaughter, Dallas; Dr. F. E. Daniels, San Antonio, president State Medical Association; and Doctors I. D. Chase of Fort Worth; J. R. Crabill, McAlester, Okla., and Paul Y. Tupper of St. Louis.

The great crowd was electrified when announcement was made that contributions to the amount of \$35,000 had been received without any canvass. There were cheers when Colonel Slaughter drove the spade into the soil and turned the turf.

The directors now faced the problem of moving the original brick to get it out of the way of the new building. Many said it could not be done without taking it down. Dr. Buckner assured them he had seen brick buildings moved without damage back in Kentucky when he was a boy, and larger buildings than this were moved every year in other cities. A gentleman, supposed to be posted, said it could be moved for about \$700. Dr. Buckner quickly replied, "I accept that proposition right now!" He was sure it would cost four times that sum, and it did.

When the two-story brick was moved, the Sanitarium was necessarily suspended till such date as the new building could be occupied. It required time to erect the new building. It was expected to stand many decades. The material and workmanship could not be otherwise than first-class. It was built on solid rock foundation with no combustible material in its construction. By November, 1906, the main building was under cover, and the interior work progressing. No campaign was made for funds. Voluntary contributions running beyond

\$100,000 cheered the hearts of the Building Committee. Colonel C. C. Slaughter advanced \$100,000.

The Science building was also in process of construction, to which Dr. Buckner gave \$100. It contained 16 large rooms and became the home of the Training School for Nurses. Before it was ready, applications for admission into the Training School were received from more than 100 worthy women.

*Dr. Buckner Resigns.*—After serving as president of the Board of Directors for about five years, Dr. Buckner resigned in favor of Colonel C. C. Slaughter. His resignation came November 21, 1908, a few days after the meeting of the General Convention in Fort Worth, where, under the leadership of Dr. Truett, \$140,000 was subscribed towards completing the entire building. Of this amount, Colonel C. C. Slaughter gave \$50,000. He had previously given \$25,000. Dr. Buckner's resignation, read before his board, contained valuable data and is worthy of being reproduced here:

"Dallas, Texas, November 21, 1908.—To the Board of Directors of the Texas Baptist Memorial Sanitarium. Dear Brethren: I have been with you joyfully in this work from the beginning. I now see nearly accomplished the great work of benevolence that I advocated in print fully two years before our organization was effected, and a magnificent Sanitarium on the identical ground I admired and suggested several years before we purchased it.

"I had the honor of writing our charter and of having it recorded in Austin at my own charge. You have put my name on every working committee but one, and have honored me with the presidency all the years since our organization was effected. It has been my great joy to help with my time, little means and earnest effort to the extent of my ability. I have allowed no interest or other thing to prevent me from being present at the meetings. I have been with you shoulder to shoulder and heart to heart in all our struggles. The great building is now nearly

complete, and money enough has been secured to insure its early completion and opening full-equipped. Really, you need me no longer, especially in the president's chair. I, therefore, with the most fraternal spirit, tender my resignation as president, and at the same time nominate for the office our beloved brother, Colonel C. C. Slaughter, who, from the consideration of his liberal contributions, and other considerations, richly deserves the honor. He will make us a good president. His heart is in the work, as well as my own. He is zealous and every way worthy. I, therefore, bespeak the immediate acceptance of my resignation and his prompt election by unanimous vote.

"In these, my last words as president, let me assure you that I am most heartily with you in the interest of the Sanitarium, and that you will find me ever ready, in a quiet, retired way, to help you in this great work, and you must not hesitate to command me. Fraternaly,

R. C. BUCKNER."

The directors, after having read Dr. Buckner's resignation, unanimously adopted the following resolutions:

"Resolved (1), That we have just heard with deep regret the letter of our beloved president, Dr. R. C. Buckner, in which he tenders his resignation as president of this board.

"Resolved (2), That we record our heartfelt gratitude to him for the faithful and tireless service he has rendered us as our leader in the great work that has been committed to our hands. From the inception of the Sanitarium enterprise, he has been unflagging in his energy and zeal in its behalf, and his noble work as president of this board has been one of the most potent factors in the success with which our interests have been crowned."

Following this action, Dr. Buckner's resignation was accepted and Colonel Slaughter was unanimously chosen president. In fitting words he accepted.

This institution was the beginning of Baptist sanitarium work



in the Southwest. It is on the broadest humanitarian principles. The charter provides that the sick and dying within its walls shall be respected in their religious convictions, and have at their bedsides such religious advisers and comforters as they may desire. And here is exemplified the Baptist principle of absolute liberty of conscience in matters of religion.

During the first month after the new opening, 137 patients were received; the first year, 1,673. This number has increased into thousands. In its conception it was in the Sanitarium plan that close affiliations be maintained with the Baylor University College of Medicine. Accordingly, by mutual agreement, the College of Medicine occupies parts of the Sanitarium Ramsuer Science Building, and in turn all the scientific laboratories and apparatus of the College of Medicine are constantly used in the interest of every patient in the Sanitarium.

The sky is clear, and a bright sun mounts to meridian splendor. A thrill swept the great Baptist General Convention at its meeting in 1913. It came when Pastor George W. Truett read a proposition from Colonel C. C. Slaughter, offering to give to the Sanatorium two dollars for every three dollars received from all other sources up to \$200,000 on his part, the same to be paid by January 1, 1918.

This institution is of God. And, as declared by R. C. Buckner and his board in 1907, "We expect it to stand to the glory of Christ and the honor of our Baptist people to the end of time."

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### BUCKNER AS PEACEMAKER

*Buckner as Peacemaker.*—Away back in 1875, on March 28, appeared an editorial in "The Texas Baptist," entitled "Peace, Peace." General J. E. Harrison, of Waco, read it and then sent Dr. Buckner this note: "I thank you for that editorial, 'Peace, Peace.' I extend my hand of Christian fellowship to you and take you into my arms for that editorial."

A little later, January 28, 1878, an article appeared in "The Texas Baptist," written by Dr. B. H. Carroll, from which we quote: "If ever a man, in conducting a religious journal, pursued a peace policy, Brother Buckner is that man. The general complaint against him is that he is too conciliatory and too modest. I think, however, we had better let him alone."

The passing years have witnessed no small number of instances in which Dr. Buckner was the accepted daysman in bringing about reconciliation between opposing factions of his brethren.

During the early years of Texarkana Baptists, a division was healed through his efforts, resulting in one strong, united church. Another division arose later in the same church. A sister whose husband kept a saloon offered, on a certain occasion, a liberal contribution. "We cannot receive it," said some, "it is tainted money." Others said, "Receive it." There was disagreement and contention. Dr. Buckner counseled the church to receive it. He said, "While the lady's husband keeps a saloon, he also deals extensively in real estate, and you cannot tell whether the sister's money was made selling liquor or selling real estate. His advice was heeded, the breach healed and the money put into the Lord's

treasury. Later Dr. Buckner visited this saloon man when he was sick and prayed for him. His heart was melted.

At Denison in its early days, some country brethren tried to keep up a little church outside the town. It was a hopeless task. Dr. Buckner preached to them some days, visited in their homes, and influenced them to go into the town and unite with the town brethren. The result was a strong church and years of spiritual prosperity.

At Palo Pinto, when that church was very young, it was divided into two factions. The cause was suffering. Dr. Buckner was soon on the ground. He assembled the brethren day by day in the court house, preaching to them for two weeks, and left them united, strengthened and revived. The venerable missionary, G. W. Slaughter, father of C. C. Slaughter, and others were happy and expressed themselves as well pleased with the results.

During the closing years of the nineteenth century a division arose in the First Baptist church at Paris, Texas. Dr. Buckner went to the rescue. He found a considerable number following the new preacher and claiming and holding the meeting-house. He hired another house and preached several days, saving many to the truth. The company gathered by Dr. Buckner, being sound on the atonement, was the true Paris Baptist church. The other party still held the house, but were willing to sell. Dr. Buckner counseled to buy it and set the brethren to work raising the money. He came away and went to New Orleans to the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, which met in May, 1901. While there he received a message from Paris that the brethren had done their best and still lacked \$1,500. He wired that he would see it paid, and he did pay \$1,200 of it out of his own pocket. But the cause in Paris was saved and a grateful people went on keeping house for God.

At Highland Church, in Collin County, estrangement grew up between the pastor, T. B. McComb, and a large part of his

flock. Buckner went to their assistance. But when he got there the brethren said: "Brother Buckner himself is the man for our pastor." He saw his opportunity, accepted and worked for the restoration of the old pastor. It was the work of only a few months. Then he stepped down and out, and the flock followed the old shepherd, T. B. McComb. Later, when the church moved to Anna and erected a new house, Dr. Buckner was invited to preach the dedicatory sermon, which he did with joy.

In the early years of the twentieth century, a suit was pending in the courts, in which one man was plaintiff and a large number of prominent brethren were defendants. The suit did not turn out to the plaintiff's profit, but did sorely try the patience of the Lord's people. An opportunity came to Dr. J. B. Cranfill, one of the defendants, to stop the proceedings in an honorable way. As others besides himself were involved, he sought the advice of Dr. Buckner. Dr. Buckner advised the ending of the suits. Following is Dr. Cranfill's statement, copied from the Dallas Times-Herald, May 3, 1905:

"I wish in this connection to thank Dr. Buckner, who for more than twenty years has been one of my dearest friends, for his counsel and advice in settling these cases (law suits). He has never at any time been connected with them."

*Settling Associational Troubles.*—At a meeting of Sister Grove Association with Antioch Church in Grayson County, Texas, 1877, there was threatened division, growing out of lack of discipline on the part of one or two churches. Some thought as the churches would not take hold of the cases, the association should do it. Dr. Buckner was appealed to. He advised that it was "the duty of local churches to enforce discipline in all cases requiring it, and that the association must decline. The association could and must drop from its correspondence churches unsound in faith and practice, or for unscripturally receiving and retaining excluded members. Further than this, she has nothing to do with matters of discipline."—Texas Baptist, August

30, 1877. This counsel was heard and Sister Grove Association went on with its legitimate business.

In 1883 there was an unhappy state of affairs in North Texas, in which two associations were trying to occupy the same territory. They were Elm Fork Association and Dallas-Collin Association.

Elm Fork had been in existence ever since 1849, and behind her was brilliant history. Dallas-Collin was a split-off from Elm Fork, and had been in existence only one or two years. At the time the split occurred, Elm Fork was holding a session in the open air under a bush arbor on White Rock Creek, near Dallas. Dr. Buckner was moderator. Some brethren were out of harmony, boisterous, walking and disturbing with loud talk. Moderator Buckner brought down the gavel with force, saying: "Brethren, you must not disturb. Officers are here and it is their duty to stop this disturbance." An officer said, "Yes, sir, I will arrest any man that disturbs further." They took their seats and were quiet. But they soon gathered their following and went out. This was the origin of Dallas-Collin.

In September, 1883, Elm Fork was in session at Stewart's Creek, Denton County, and Dallas-Collin in the City of Dallas. Dr. Buckner, at the meeting of Elm Fork, asked that the regular business be suspended while he read a paper looking to peace and union with Dallas-Collin. Following is an excerpt:

"To the Dallas-Collin Association the Elm Fork Association sendeth Christian salutation. Dear Brethren: Desiring to forget all unpleasantness, and to labor for the Master and the things that make for peace, we address you this communication in humility and love.

"So far as we know, most of the churches of your Association formerly corresponded with our Association and have not in any formal way been dropped from our list.

"2. We recognize them and other churches you may have received as sound in the faith and worthy of our fellowship.

"3. We desire the history of Elm Fork Association to be perpetuated, as it is the oldest Association in this part of Texas, and we believe its history is equally cherished by yourselves.

"We therefore express the brotherly wish that we all may meet together in annual session, Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1884, with Big Springs Church in Dallas County. No petitionary letters will be expected on your part. The simple presentation of letter and messengers is all that will be asked."

This was adopted and hurriedly sent by messengers to the Dallas-Collin body.

The reply came by telegram: "Your communication and messengers received. Will meet with you next year."

A resolution of "profound gratitude to the God of peace" was voted when the telegram was read, and a hymn of praise sung.

*Embarrassing but Praiseworthy.*—In 1883 R. C. Buckner was president of the Baptist General Association, and was sent by that body, with other brethren, as corresponding messenger to the Baptist State Convention, which met that year in Belton. When he arrived, he found there were two or three leading brethren opposed to his being seated as a corresponding messenger. He was approached by brethren of kingdom standing, such as W. C. Crane, J. H. Stribling and the Convention's president, C. C. Chaplin, who assured him that he would be instantly seated, but that two or three men would leave. He replied, "I will consider what is best to do."

He was being entertained in the home of Capt. B. N. Boren and went there for dinner. But his heart was heavy. He wept. After dinner he returned to the Convention. When a call was made for corresponding messengers, he arose and thus addressed President Chaplin:

"Brother President, I am here as corresponding messenger from the Baptist General Association. But I have learned that two or three brethren will retire if I am seated. I will not,

therefore, ask the honor of a seat. But I have a list of other brethren appointed by the General Association to represent that body in your Convention." He read the list, leaving out his own name. The names read were seated.

As soon as opportunity presented, many brethren sought Dr. Buckner, shaking his hand and expressing their admiration for his peace-loving spirit.

A few years after that (1895), the great consolidated Baptist General Convention assembled in the same meeting-house at Belton and elected Dr. Buckner as its president.

*Elimination of "Ninth Article."*—The original constitution of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, adopted in 1836, contained but eight articles. But in 1899 a Ninth Article was adopted, the object of which was to prevent persons from taking part in the Convention, who "were in continued hostility to the work and purposes of the Convention, or an impediment to its work." Enemies made war on this Ninth Article and some friends of the Convention thought it unwise. But it served a good purpose at the first. After a few years there seemed to be no further need of it, and in 1913 the Convention eliminated it from the constitution. But five years before this was done, Dr. Buckner suggested in "The Baptist Standard": "Now, without discussion or apology, I respectfully suggest that the Ninth Article, no longer needed by the Baptist General Convention of Texas, be removed from its constitution at its next session."—Baptist Standard, September 10, 1908.

No one can doubt that this suggestion by the president of the Convention influenced the thinking of the denomination in Texas, or that it contributed to the final removal of the Ninth Article.

*Louisville Paper Trouble.*—In 1908, and for some time previous, there was serious disagreement and contention in Louisville, Ky., involving directly and indirectly the two Louisville Baptist papers, editors and friends, and involving questions of

vital interest to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and to Baptist affairs in Kentucky and the entire South. Unpleasant things were published and discussion became so sharp, if not bitter, that attorneys were employed and threats made to go into the courts. Distinguished brethren in other states looked on with dismay.

Such was the situation when the Southern Baptist Convention met in Hot Springs, Ark., May, 1908. While others could see no hope of settlement by any sort of careful and brotherly mediation, a deep conviction moved R. C. Buckner to take steps to that end. This was perhaps the most difficult and delicate task ever undertaken by Dr. Buckner in all the years of his long life. The brethren to be reconciled were princes in the Baptist denomination, of finished education, of the highest repute and standing throughout the Southern Baptist Convention and the world. Their friends, counted by the hundreds, were men of affairs, of sterling worth and above reproach. Moreover, each party was firm in the belief that its own cause was pre-eminently the cause of righteousness.

Without consulting with anyone save the Prince of Peace, Dr. Buckner retired to his hotel in Hot Springs and drew up a basis of agreement, which, if signed by the brethren connected with the Louisville periodicals, the "Western Recorder" and the "Baptist World," he hoped would end the strife. But not a man of them was willing to sign it.

Then Dr. Buckner drew up a petition addressed to those same gentlemen, and secured to it the signatures of more than fifty leading men, who were in attendance on the Convention, kingdom brethren from all parts of the South, eminent pastors, school men and Convention officers. In that petition were these words: "We do, as your friends and brethren, most respectfully and earnestly advise you and entreat you to enter into such agreement." This petition was presented to them and they expressed their appreciation of the same.



But it was no easy task to get these Louisville men to sign any peace agreement. The long list of names to the petition was not sufficient. It was not signed at Hot Springs, and Dr. Buckner returned to Dallas.

But he quickly received a letter from Dr. M. P. Hunt, pastor of Twenty-second and Walnut Street Church, Louisville, suggesting that the quicker the trouble was settled the better.

Following is an excerpt from that letter: "I write at the instance of some of us who are deeply interested to know your plans for straightening our tangle here in Louisville. Do you think best for you to come here? On June 9 the General Association of Kentucky Baptists will be in session in my church in this city, and what is done ought, if possible, be done before that body convenes." This letter was written May 23. Three days later Dr. Buckner was in Louisville. Engaging rooms at a hotel, he drew up a new document entitled "An Agreement," elegantly and carefully worded, and comparing favorably with the best prepared legal productions. He then sent for the brethren, one by one, and labored with them individually, with some of them in the dead hours of the night. It took two days to get all their names. The agreement was signed in triplicate, each party holding a copy and Dr. Buckner retaining one. Following is a copy of the original just as it was signed:

*"An agreement.*—We, the undersigned, regret that we, or any of us, have published the statement of any fact or facts, opinion or opinions, that have reflected, or appear to have reflected, on the motives, veracity or integrity of any one person, or persons, connected with this matter, and we request our brethren and all others to regard these things as if they were never published. We feel that we have no moral right to disturb our brethren or the public by the publication of personal grievances, or other things calculated to disturb the peace and good fellowship of our Baptist brethren, or others. If we could, we would blot the things referred to from our memory, each for himself, and we request

our brethren to erase them from the tablets of their memory, so far as possible. We will publish this agreement in our respective papers, without note or comment, and in the first issue after appending our signatures hereunto. Further, and as a part of this agreement, also to be published, we obligate ourselves and pledge our honor that this shall be the end of the whole matter, and that hereafter these things shall not be brought up, directly or indirectly, by us in any publication whatever, nor by others with our consent. (Signed) Wm. D. Nowlin, J. G. Bow, W. P. Harvey."

The settlement was permanent. "A deplorable and widening breach was healed, the cause of peace conserved and no man's honor or business interest was compromised."

*Great Rejoicing.*—The settlement of the Louisville troubles was hailed with joy over the entire South, and the success of Buckner's undertaking followed by a shower of congratulatory letters. We take the following excerpts:

"I rejoice. You have doubtless saved the cause of Christ much disturbance."—A. J. Holt, Knoxville, Tennessee.

"I congratulate you on your success in that difficult and delicate undertaking. The beatitude of the peacemaker is yours."—E. C. Dargan, Pastor, Macon, Georgia; later President of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"I deeply appreciate your kindly offices in bringing peace out of the complicated situation in Louisville. I do not know anyone else whose words would have such weight with all Baptists."—Henry Alford Porter, Pastor, Walnut Street, Louisville.

"I surely congratulate you on the good work done. The blessings of the peacemaker are on you. It is worth all your time and trouble, and I hope its fruits will run through many years. It is all so much like you."—J. M. Frost, Corresponding Secretary Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tennessee.

"I rejoice in the success you had in Louisville. God's hand was in the effort. God prolong your life to do many other noble

deeds for His cause.”—R. M. Inlow, Pastor, Joplin, Missouri.

“You are to be congratulated by everyone cognizant of the facts for your great and successful work. Surely you were guided and aided by the Holy Spirit.”—Joshua Levering, Late President Southern Baptist Convention, Baltimore, Maryland.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.’ This is your high reward for the part you have beautifully filled in this unfortunate affair. I always loved you, but now I love you more for this, assisting brethren to act as brethren.”—J. A. French, Pastor First Baptist Church, Austin, Texas.

“The settlement of that trouble is worth half of a man’s lifetime. May the blessing of the Father be on you and the blessing of the peacemaker abide with you.”—J. B. Gambrell, Corresponding Secretary Baptist General Convention, Dallas, Texas.

“I am greatly rejoiced that you have handled the situation at Louisville so splendidly. I was really afraid when we left Hot Springs that we were going to have trouble with the situation in Kentucky. The brotherhood of the South owes you a debt of gratitude.”—B. W. Spillman, Field Secretary Sunday School Board, Winston, North Carolina.

“I congratulate you on the good offices you have rendered in bringing things to this issue. ‘Blessed are the peacemakers.’ That beatitude belongs to you pre-eminently just now.”—B. D. Gray, Corresponding Secretary Home Mission Board, Atlanta, Georgia.

“I have just learned of the great service you have rendered our common Christianity. You have set a new pace for Baptists. And never was anything more opportune. I shudder to think what the results might have been if this strife had come to a head.”—S. M. Provence, Pastor, Wynne, Arkansas.

“The Lord in His sermon on the mount passed an encomium on you. Remember that I love you. May you live long to continue to exercise great influence among the brethren.”—R. J.

Willingham, Corresponding Secretary Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Virginia.

The following is from the "Baptist Standard," June 18, 1908:  
"That signed agreement, published in both the "Recorder" and the "Baptist World," is a masterpiece of thought, diction and reconciliation. Let the young men who think the old men cannot do things sit up and take notice that the senior father in Israel has wrought his mightiest work at seventy-five. This was the work of a statesman. Peacemakers like Gladstone and Roosevelt could well add this garland of peace to their crowns of glory."

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### HELPING THE COLORED PEOPLE

In the days of R. C. Buckner's boyhood, negro Baptists held membership in the same church with the whites, and one pastor was pastor of both whites and blacks. Both races assembled for worship in the same meeting-house and at the same hour. In some instances seats were designated for the blacks on the same floor with the whites, in other cases the blacks occupied seats in the gallery.

When Elder Daniel Buckner, father of R. C. Buckner, was pastor at Somerset, Kentucky, a part of his flock was colored and occupied their own seats in the northwest corner of the auditorium on the same floor with the whites.

In those good days spiritual gifts among the negroes were recognized the same as among the whites. Pious blacks were sometimes made deacons to administer to their own color. Others with gifts and graces were ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry.

During R. C. Buckner's first pastorate at Albany, Kentucky, a negro preacher, a slave, held membership in the Albany church. He was known as "Uncle Charley Denton," and enjoyed the esteem and confidence of whites and blacks. Buckner was his pastor, but he was permitted to have "his preaching day" and fill his pastor's pulpit, preaching to his own color. Whites attended occasionally.

On one occasion, in the old Baptist meeting-house at Somerset, a black man belonging to Judge Prather made a profession of faith in Christ, and instantly the Judge met his black servant in the church aisle, and the two men threw their arms about each other and wept for joy. They were brethren. The boy, R. C. Buckner, saw this and was deeply impressed.

Those early pictures never faded from his memory. They fixed in his mind a profound conviction of the immortality of the soul of both white and black, and also a conviction of the responsibility of the white race respecting the salvation of the black.

When the war closed, the ignorance and spiritual destitution among the thousands of colored people in Texas and elsewhere were appalling. Buckner, then pastor at Paris, saw their need of help. There was opportunity to do them good, and opportunity is obligation.

*First North Texas Negro Association.*—Says A. R. Griggs, colored preacher, Dallas: "Dr. Buckner was among the first white preachers in Texas to administer to the spiritual advancement of the colored race. He was often among them, preaching to them and instructing them how to conduct prayer-meetings and Sunday Schools. He led in the organization of the first negro Baptist association in North Texas. It was organized in Bowie County. Dr. Buckner acted as moderator and asked another white brother to serve as secretary. After the enrolling of names and other preliminaries, Dr. Buckner said:

"It is now necessary that some one make a motion that we do here and now constitute ourselves into a district association.' No one understood. He again said: 'Some one move that we organize an association.' An old brother rose, left his seat, went across the room to another seat, and said, 'Now I have moved for de 'sociation!'

"Dr. Buckner was patient, instructed them, carried them through the formalities, and the association was formed and called 'Zion.' Forest Hooks, elected moderator that day, continued moderator thirty years."

*First North Texas Negro High School.*—In August, 1877, the Sister Grove Association of white Baptists was in its twenty-fifth annual session with Antioch Church, in Grayson County. Dr. Buckner was present, and while there declared it to be the duty of the whites to help support missionaries among the col-

ored, and also help them establish high schools. The Association so voted. Then he took a collection to found a colored Baptist high school in Dallas, and started the collection with his own money. This was the first money put into that school. It greatly encouraged the negroes. They immediately started out Elder A. R. Griggs canvassing among their own people and within four months had \$1,000. The school was then opened. See "Texas Baptist," August 30, 1877. This school prospered in Dallas many years, taught by Professor S. H. Smothers. Later it was transferred to Brazoria County for the colored in that section.

*A Lively Meeting.*—Let us look in on an early day negro meeting. It is in Dallas in the church of Pastor A. R. Griggs, February 6, 1881. R. C. Buckner and a white deacon, S. B. Penry, are present. There are two candidates to be baptized, and Dr. Buckner gives the congregation a word-picture of the baptism by Philip of the Ethiopian eunuch. (But the pastor, being a wise man, will, of course, catch the purses of the visiting white brethren, and of the large crowd of curious blacks who are present to witness the baptism.) So he announces that there must be a collection before there is any baptizing, and Buckner and Penry both "throw in."

The pastor at the same time standing in the pulpit: "Come right along. Put in your small change for current expenses, and your big money to ceil the meeting-house. The Lord might blow the top off this house if you don't ceil it! Many thanks to all of you, both white and black, for liberal offering."

The pulpit is removed and the large baptistry exposed. As preacher and candidates go down into the water, the people sing with great spirit:

"I must do the work required of me—  
Religion is so sweet!  
I undertake and must go through—  
Religion is so sweet!"

Now perfect silence, save the preacher's voice and the deeply impressive voice of the baptismal waters.

Again, as they come up out of the water:

"I have done the work required of me—  
Religion is so sweet!  
I undertook and did go through—  
Religion is so sweet!"

—"Texas Baptist," February 10, 1881.

*Baptizing and Marrying.*—In the earlier days, numbers of colored people solicited Dr. Buckner to baptize, and others solicited him to marry them. All this he was glad to do. Some of them were very ignorant and understood little of the laws concerning matrimony. But they had learned that they could not get married without a marriage license. One day after Dr. Buckner had married a dusky pair, another young gentleman of color, tired of single loneliness, came to him and asked if it would be all right to borrow the marriage license of the newly wedded couple, bring his sweetheart and get married without further bother!

*A. R. Griggs Assisted.*—Elder Griggs was born a slave in Navarro County, and came to Dallas a young preacher in 1875. His only training up to that time was a few lessons in a night school. In July of that year he became pastor of New Hope Colored Baptist Church with about twenty-five members. Dr. Buckner was publishing the Texas Baptist, and gave Griggs counsel and sold him valuable books. He was a good student, and within three years was publishing the "Baptist Journal," the first negro paper in Texas. Dr. Buckner and Rev. L. W. Coleman assisted him. Buckner went out with him on the field and aided him in establishing churches and doing other work. In 1885, on Dr. Buckner's recommendation, the Baptist General Association employed Elder Griggs as missionary to the colored people at a salary of \$1,200 a year. But Griggs reduced it to



\$1,000. This help from the whites was a great encouragement to the colored people. To quote Elder Griggs: "Money flowed into the mission treasury by hundreds and thousands of dollars. Churches caught the fire of the Holy Ghost, and sometimes thousands were baptized in a day. Every association in the State fell into line and missionaries were sent out in every direction."

Assisted by Dr. Buckner and a wealthy lady, Elder Griggs in 1886 and 1887 attended the Richmond Institute and Theological Seminary (Virginia). Griggs soon gained a national reputation. In 1890 to 1893 he was president of the National Baptist Convention. In 1896 he was General Agent for Bishop College and Hearne Institute. In 1905 he was made a messenger from Texas to the World's Baptist Congress, London, England, later known as the World's Baptist Alliance. While in London, he visited and addressed Spurgeon's Orphanage. During the same year he attended the French National Baptist Convention at Paris, France, and addressed that body. He has held many other important positions, as National Baptist Foreign Mission Field Secretary for Africa and other fields, and National Field Missionary Secretary for ministerial student funds.

It is seen that early help given Elder Griggs meant help to the negro race in America and other parts of the world. Dr. Buckner's early deep and abiding interest in Elder Griggs is seen from a letter written Griggs December 1, 1886, from which we quote: "I have watched closely for a longer time than any other friend you have probably your progress in knowledge and your growth in the ministry. I feel thankful to God our Father for the degree of success with which He has blessed you."

*Dickson Colored Orphanage.*—For a good while R. C. Buckner was anxious to see a colored orphanage founded, and for years held correspondence with A. R. Griggs and others looking to that end. This led to the calling of a convention of colored Baptists for its establishment. The meeting was held in New

Hope Baptist Church, Dallas. Buckner's address at that meeting inspired the negroes with purpose and zeal. Citizens of Upshur County proposed to give a plat of ground near Gilmer on which to locate the Home. The charter was copied largely from the charter of Buckner Orphans Home, and Dr. Buckner had it recorded at his own charges.

The first meeting, at which a Board of Directors was elected, was held at Gilmer, Texas, July 25, 1900. It was called by Dr. Buckner and held in the courthouse. Elder W. L. Dickson, colored pastor at Gilmer, led in singing the hymn commencing, "Alas! and did my Savior bleed."

After the singing, Dr. Buckner read James, second chapter, commenting especially on the following: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and hath not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone. \* \* \* Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show you my faith by my works." Then he led in prayer. After prayer he explained the object of the meeting.

The charter was adopted and Board of Directors chosen as follows: R. C. Buckner, president; A. R. Griggs, D. A. Scott and G. W. Hood, first, second and third vice-presidents; N. A. Seale (white), secretary; W. Boyd (white), treasurer; W. L. Dickson (colored), superintendent; John Marshall (colored), L. W. Williams (white), proxy for J. M. Darrah; Henry Greenwall (colored), A. Hudson (colored), J. W. Bussey (white).

Mr. F. S. Everett, an attorney, arose and expressed deep interest in the Orphanage and presented a deed to seventy acres of land, more or less, paid for by the citizens of Gilmer. The land was near the town with several houses and thirty acres in

cultivation. A collection for the Orphanage followed, amounting to \$306.

The Orphanage was dedicated on its own property, January 4, 1901, with six children. Dr. Buckner agreed to serve as president four years to help get the Orphanage well started. But he held that position five years. There were added to the original site during his incumbency eighty-seven acres of land. The property was worth \$14,000, and 1,120 children had been cared for at the time of his resignation. Dr. Buckner encouraged the Orphanage in many ways. He gave it groceries at one time to the amount of nearly \$100, and sent money to the management repeatedly. He presided at the regular and all the called Board meetings for five years, always paying his own expenses. Through his influence the management was given a hearing before the Baptist General Convention for years, which greatly helped to create sentiment in favor of the Orphanage. After Dr. Buckner's retirement, the institution passed through several ordeals, but survived, and in less than ten years had property worth \$40,000, an elegant "R. C. Buckner Hall," and was caring for more than 150 children annually.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### CHILDREN'S BUREAU BILL

*Two Doctrines.*—For a long time there have been two views among philanthropists as to the better way to handle the orphan problem. One view is, that, as a rule, it is better to rear the children in well-regulated institutions, and there train them for this life and that which is to come. The other view is, that it is better to find homes for them in private families.

*A Darkened Sky.*—For many years a sunny sky had smiled on the orphan institutions, but at length, in the year 1909, the sky was suddenly overcast, and a desolating tempest threatened to sweep every home for orphans and carry the motherless little ones on its bosom like autumn leaves. The storm was gathering in the nation's capital and in halls of the nation's lawmakers.

*Washington Conference.*—On January 25, 1909, in the city of Washington was convened a "Conference" to deliberate on the best way to deal with dependent orphan children. The conference was called by Colonel Roosevelt, President of the United States. This gave its findings tremendous prestige. But it was called mainly in the interest of the "home-finding" theory, and recommended that homes for orphan children be found in families rather than in institutions. Dr. Buckner was not invited to the Conference, though he had been for thirty years at the head of one of the greatest and best orphanages in the world.

Hear Rev. A. J. Jamison, Superintendent of the Connie Maxwell Orphanage, Greenwood, South Carolina: "I attended the Conference called by President Roosevelt at Washington, and feel that the half-dozen or so of institution men who were there must have been invited accidentally. It was evident to me that

only the home-finding people were meant to compose the conference. I delivered a short address, which I thought temperate enough, but the great ones pounced upon me and wiped me off the face of the earth."—From letter to Dr. Buckner, February 11, 1909.

Mr. Roosevelt immediately recommended Congressional legislation, having for its end the carrying out of the findings of the Conference, and in less time than a week after the Conference adjourned he sent a copy of its conclusions to the governor of every State in the Union, together with a personal letter heartily endorsing its recommendations. A bill was brought before Congress called the "Children's Bureau Bill," which was intended to help the cause of "home-finding." Its friends bestirred themselves with great zeal to secure its passage. They sent out a "hurried call" February 16, 1909, giving directions, "How You Can Help."

*The Bill Passed.*—The bill passed Congress, though without the help of the senators from Texas. Dr. Buckner received a letter from Senator Joseph W. Bailey, bearing date February 10, 1909, from which we quote: "I value your opinion in respect to the matter even above that of President Roosevelt. No man in Texas or elsewhere has devoted himself so unselfishly to the problem of helping orphan children, and your experience, combined with your ability and sound democracy, entitles what you say on the subject to peculiar weight."

Senator Charles A. Culberson also wrote to Dr. Buckner on the same date, February 10, 1909, "I agree with you."

Dr. Buckner was opposed to the wholesale scattering of children that were being cared for in good institutions. The Texas senators "agreed with him." He has all along placed some children in homes where childless parents yearned for children to love, adopt and educate. But this has always been done with caution.

*The Popular Side.*—Many people there are who fly to the

popular side. And now the "child-placing" doctrine loomed up as the popular thing. At once sharp criticisms like polished shafts began to be hurled at orphan institutions and their advocates. A popular New York magazine was already on the field full-armed against institutions and in favor of "child-placing." Skilled literary chefs were found by that publication, and fancy dishes served up to the public. Following are juicy bits:

"Superintendents and matrons and boards of managers, please stand aside." "The institution bars development." "Institutions have a great part to play, but the most important institution is the home." "The world is full of misfits, which it is our business to set right if we can. The worst of all is that which sets the child and home apart." "It is the home, not the public institution, that lifts." "The family home is the best institution \* \* \* for the care of homeless, neglected children." "Who can say which is the most pitiful, a homeless child or a childless home?"

The foregoing are samples, and by such criticisms institutions were shaded through months and years, while "child-placing" was ever kept in the golden sunlight.

*The Sky Cleared Again.*—The Children's Bureau Bill and all the child-placing eloquence were insufficient to turn the great American nation against well-regulated institutions. Whether those sharp shafts of rhetoric proved to be boomerangs or not, the storm abated without damage, the sky cleared again and orphan institutions continued increasing in favor with God and men.

*All Eyes on Dr. Buckner.*—While the Washington storm was roaring, the eyes of philanthropic people in every State turned to Texas. One question was on their lips: "Where does R. C. Buckner stand?" And when it was known that he stood for the properly conducted institution, they stood with him. And with them stood the nation.

*Buckner and Institutions.*—Pastor S. C. Ohrum, D. D., Indianapolis, Indiana, while in Dallas, Texas, October, 1913, remarked:

"Buckner Orphans Home is a beacon light all over the United States." Of like tenor is the testimony of men who have visited orphanages in America and Europe.

The remarkable health and marvelously low death rate in Buckner Orphans Home argue that Dr. Buckner has solved the health problem of institutional life. How? By locating the Home on one of the highest ridges in Dallas County, by an abundant supply of pure artesian water lifted from more than 2,000 feet in the earth, by attention to sanitary conditions and by supplying plain, wholesome food. And he has solved the problems of industrial, educational, moral and religious training of children of which we do not now speak. Is it any marvel that the world has come to look upon his opinions as of "peculiar weight," as Senator Bailey expressed it?

A "new movement" was proposed, with the president of the United States, Congress and millions of money behind it. The New York magazine referred to in a preceding paragraph had hopes that "institutions everywhere would be compelled to recognize institutional life for the child as a necessary evil." Dr. Buckner could not remain silent. We quote from his Annual, 1907-1908, page 12:

"He (editor of New York magazine) seeks to correct the 'evil' and sets up his magazine for the pulling down of strongholds of orphan homes and the scattering of their children here and there through his agencies and agents."

But even the redoubtable New York editor himself, after working at it a while, found "child-placing" very difficult business and soon came out with this good confession:

"The wise placement of a child in a strange home is the most difficult and delicate of all charitable problems." Then the rearing of children in good institutions is less "difficult and delicate" than placing them in strange families.

The question on many lips was, "Where does Dr. Buckner stand?" The Annual herein quoted was sent to institutional men

and many others all over America, and brought a feeling of relief.

It was shown in this Annual by stubborn facts that "orphans' homes have a right to exist, Christian people have a right to establish Christian institutions for the care and education of their own children and others properly committed to them, and not even a State or National government will dare interfere, lest some constitutional law be infringed."

Dr. W. W. Landrum, Louisville, Kentucky, in a letter to the author of this book, says the people of the other States looked on Dr. Buckner as the "best man in Texas." This fact, coupled with that other fact that the Buckner Home was a success, gave to his opinion "peculiar weight."

*A Grateful Company.*—We insert some extracts from letters received by Dr. Buckner:

"You surely ought to know whereof you speak."—D. S. Case, Superintendent, Gilbert Home, Winsted, Connecticut.

"I agree with you that a well-regulated institution is preferable to the majority of private homes."—Mrs. G. B. Miles, Children's Home Association, San Diego, California.

"Report of your Home has been received. I thank you. \* \* \* Orphans' homes have a right to exist."—R. P. Gardner, Superintendent, New Hampshire Orphans' Home.

"The position you take and the reply you make I consider absolutely correct."—H. Mauser, Pacific Hebrew Orphan Asylum, San Francisco.

"We must be aggressive, and can afford to be, as your report demonstrates."—R. A. Sonn, Hebrew Orphans' Home, Atlanta, Georgia.

"I cannot express my indignation over the move in regard to tearing apart and tearing down the institutions doing the noble work of your (Buckner) Orphans Home."—J. A. Smith, Secretary, Orphan Asylum, Newark, New Jersey.

Dr. Buckner was the recipient of such a shower of letters



of like tenor as the foregoing as was amazing. Among those who wrote him and stood with him in the early months of 1909 were Rev. J. R. Carter, Baptist Orphanage, Jackson, Mississippi; Dr. L. B. Bernstein, Hebrew Sheltering Society, New York City; Mrs. Jennie Clark, Bell Haven Home, Luling, Texas; C. E. McGhee, Colored Orphans' Home, Huntington, Virginia; Th. Gunderson, Lutheran Orphans' Home, Beloit, Iowa; Rev. C. J. Gramer, Bethlehem Orphan Asylum, College Point, New York; Rev. E. Knappe, Lutheran Orphan Home, Waverly, Iowa; Mrs. J. M. Moffett, Children's Home, Bay City, Michigan; M. L. Kesler, Baptist Orphanage, Thomasville, North Carolina.

Without question, Dr. Buckner's stand and his vigorous defense of well-regulated institutions, covering twenty pages of his Annual, made a deep impression on philanthropic workers and the public generally. And institutions survived, moving prosperously on in the sunlight of God's approving smiles.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### AN ADDRESS—DEFINITIONS AND ADVOCACY OF ORPHANS' HOMES AS INSTITUTIONS

(Congress passed the Children's Bureau Bill early in 1909. There were home-finding advocates active, holding meetings and forming societies. A Home-finding State Conference was held in Fort Worth, Texas, attended by able men from other States. Dr. Buckner's address which follows was delivered before the Conference, November 11, and which was requested for publication by the body, received the endorsement of such valued citizens as Judge John C. West of Waco, and George A. Jackson of Dallas. Stenographically reported by Miss Eva Claude, a ward of Buckner Orphans Home.)

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am here at the initiative of excellent Christian men, workers for the cause of charity, with whose special convictions and plan of work my own views are not in harmony, and this they well know. Until over the telephone yesterday I told my friend, Dr. H. H. Hart of New York, who was visiting Buckner Orphans Home in my absence, that I would make earnest efforts to get here, I had not seen how I might come. I do not know that Dr. Hart is in the room. (Dr. Hart, rising: "I am here.") Glad to see you, Dr. Wines. ("Hart, if you please.") Excuse the mistake. I met Dr. Hart and Dr. Fred Wines some years ago at the same great national charity convention, and I sometimes get their names mixed. But I must be careful and not get wines too near the heart. (Laughter.)

I wanted to see Dr. Hart in person. But until about dark last night I was engaged with some gentlemen arranging for the publication of a great religious newspaper, as a missionary enter-

prise. We have put our money into it with the understanding that no dividends will ever be declared. The people who know me understand that at this stage of life I am not engaging in anything secular. (Applause.) It has been a long time since I have handled a dollar except to pass it on. All of my real estate is my burial lot in the cemetery.

*Orphans' Homes.*—Asylums for orphans, or houses where they are to be kept temporarily, are not orphans' homes. An orphans' home proper is no more an asylum than is the building in which your wife and children live and are protected. I will proceed further and say, as the result of thirty-three years of observation and experience in this work, the majority of private homes into which we can place orphan children are not equal, by great odds, to the right kind of orphans' homes. I could give you scores of demonstrations from my own observation, and from facts narrated in numerous letters I have on file from the managers of institutions and benevolent workers in nearly all the States of America.

*The Right to Exist.*—An orphans' home has the right to exist and attend to its own business in its own way, subject always and only to the police regulations of the State and to the inspection of health officers; as much right to exist and manage its own business as has a private family. The State of Texas has established an orphans' home at Corsicana, and no other State or Government or nation has the right to bid her nay. And the State has a right to conduct this home in her own way, and is fully competent to do so. The Masonic Orphans' Home near Fort Worth, the Odd Fellows' Home near Corsicana, the Presbyterian Home in a neighboring county, the Methodist Home at Waco and the Juliett-Fowler of Dallas County, and every other properly organized and conducted orphans' home has each the right to exist and attend to its own affairs; the natural right, the social right, the political right and the legal right, each under its own rules and regulations, and its own everything else.

*Buckner Orphans Home.*—I judge you would not regard it as out of place if I dwell on some particular things with reference to the Buckner Home, its origin, the foundations on which it stands and claims to have a right to stand, and the work and principles that characterize it.

It was founded right. It did not set out haphazard. The first meeting to start it a-going was a convention of Baptist deacons. They gave the proposition an emphatic endorsement and resolved that it ought to be. (By the way, this home makes no distinction among orphan children, whether their parents were Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics, Jews, Gentiles, Infidels or what not. And it knows no boundary lines.) Our people regard it as the duty of deacons of the churches to look after the poor, none of whom are more dependent than orphan children and widows. In the meeting of deacons referred to, they thought it right to put their heads and hearts together in a practical way and care for a larger number of children and with better economy than to hand out to them, scattered here and there, scanty provisions, half-worn clothes, as it were, with a kind of kid-glove charity.

These deacons did for years keep up an annual meeting called the Deacons' Convention. But now for several years it has not been regarded as necessary to meet annually, except as to the Board of Directors. Before anything was done in regard to opening the Orphans Home, we obtained a charter from the State of Texas, and now we stand upon the rights given by the State in that charter. The charter gives us the legal right to exist and defines the main purposes, privileges, duties and obligations assumed and authorized. Until we violate that charter, no man or government has any right to interfere by any kind of organization, agency or individual effort. We like to be visited, our doors are open. As to the visit of my friend, Dr. Hart, my only regret is that I could not be with him in person.

*How Children Enter.*—I will tell something about whence they

come and whither they go. For example, we have children sent to us by the Woodmen of the World and by other fraternal orders. And children have been laid at our door by the hand of Providence with the voice of God saying, "Take this child and nurse it for me." God has provided that "the destitute shall be put in an house." We have them in several houses. Some we have by the expressed will of the last dying parent: "Send my child to Buckner Orphans Home and have it reared and educated there." Several have said this in their last conscious moment. Some go so far as to say, "Until it reaches its majority." A girl was sent to us that way, and a woman said: "Kate has a right to better surroundings and education than she will get there." I replied: "How do you know that, madam?" We reared and educated her to young womanhood. Then she went two years to a missionary training school, and choosing to do missionary work in the Home where she was raised, she fills an important position. No sparkling diamond on the richest woman's brooch is purer than she is, giving her life in mission work to 600 orphan children. (Note.—This refers to Miss Kate Lacy, who has since been engaged as a teacher in a United States industrial school for full-blood Indian girls in Oklahoma.)

*Churches Send Them To Us.*—I mention a case. A church in East Texas expressed a desire that we would take some dependent children from her community. We accepted them. The church had a right to ask us to take them, and we had the right to accept them.

*Juvenile Courts Send Them To Us.*—Children are now in Buckner Orphans Home by action of the courts that exercised their legal right. They did what they thought best. The proper courts can demand such children back, if thought best, when proper development and other good effects shall so suggest.

*Governments Place Them With Us.*—Two children were sent from the City of Mexico by Mexican authorities, acting in conjunction with the United States Consul. Did not the govern-

ment of Mexico and the United States Consul have the right to ask us to take them? And did not we have the right to accept them? They reached Dallas wearing badges plainly lettered "Buckner Orphans Home," but were hidden away twenty-eight hours. We searched for them in vain. I went to the mayor. He failed to locate them. Then I said: "Those children were sent to us by the Mexican government and by the United States Consul and they must be found." They were found.

*Guardians Send Them.*—Sometimes I am myself asked to become a child's guardian. But this Home with its charter is guardian enough. A boy ran away, and the courts appointed a man his "guardian." I understood the case and the people in the neighborhood from whence the boy came understood it. I brought suit against that "guardian" and demanded the return of the child. The matter was investigated before the same judge. He reversed his own decision, and I got the child.

A seventeen-year-old girl came, bringing her younger brothers and sisters. This was three years after the death of the parents. We had agreed to admit them all but the oldest girl herself. Sunday came and the children were getting ready for Sunday School, but she was found crying. Some one asked, "What is the matter?" She replied, "I have no suitable clothes for Sunday School." The other girls divide their scanty wardrobe with her, and with a brighter face she goes to Sunday School. She was afterward admitted as a ward and the younger children are not separated from their older sister. She could not read nor write. But she could when she left later, and filled the position of matron in another orphans' home, filling it well. (Cries, "Amen! Amen! Amen!") I believe not in orphan brothers and sisters being scattered, one here, another there, and another yonder.

A little boy came from New York in a carload of orphans who were given to families in Texas. The family taking this boy tired of him and asked to place him in Buckner Orphans

Home. After his arrival the little fellow queried: "What kind of a place is this?" I said, "An Orphans Home." Then he asked, "Do they treat a fellow well?" I told him we did. Then said he: "I will tell you how they treated me. When my mamma and papa died, they took my little sister off and gave her to a family. I can never find her. Oh, I wish I could find my sister! They sent me one way and my sister another." We have never learned of his sister's whereabouts.

*What Do We Do for Them?*—Protect them. If there is anything an orphan child needs it is protection. ("Amen!") I have known policemen in this city to exercise vigorously their authority in protecting orphan girls from iniquitous surroundings. I withhold names, but have them on my books. Orphans need protection. ("Amen! Amen!") My brothers, while we have never had a social scandal in the Home, I know of some who have "gone to the bad" from private families. A girl from Indiana was given to a private family and afterwards sent to an orphanage in Texas. It was too late. She drifted into a life of iniquity. Another case: A girl was given to a private family. Her surroundings were bad. The neighbors rose up and appealed to us to admit her in Buckner Orphans Home. The appeal was declined. We have children in Fort Worth, in Dallas, in Chicago, in New York, in Mexico City who were protected in Buckner Orphans Home, now worthy people.

*We Feed Them and Clothe Them.*—These are important, but not supreme. Food and raiment are trivial compared with character, noble character, pure, vigorous manhood and womanhood. It is true that we feed and clothe them, but it is also true that we educate them. Our graded school is as good as any in Dallas. Our superintendent was once superintendent of the schools in Dallas. We teach them music, typewriting, stenography, social correspondence, various industries, and have eight teachers devoted to literary instruction. A trinity of obligations impels us to train our children in mind, morals and industries. We teach

them almost everything. Everything about housekeeping, sewing, cooking, farming, stock-raising, electricity, steam plant and heat system. There is not a family in sixteen States that could or would teach them all the things they learn at Buckner Orphans Home. We furnished another orphans' home with a boy whom they paid \$75 a month to manage their electric and heating plant. He got every bit of his education in Buckner Orphans Home.

*Where Do They Go?*—Last night my little stenographer copied the following list of professions and industries in which our former wards are now engaged: "School teachers, music teachers, preachers, doctors, stenographers and typewriters, graduate nurses, teachers of stenography, teachers of social correspondence, electricians, civil engineers, firemen on railroads, locomotive engineers, railway bridge foremen, railroad office secretaries, railroad ticket agents, conductors, bookkeepers, telephone line constructors, operators of telephone systems, United States civil service employees, soldiers in the army and navy, navy electricians, sailors, postmasters, money order clerks, foremen in factories, express agents, nickelplaters, harnessmakers, photographers, blacksmiths, plumbers, hotelkeepers, sailboat captains, salesmen in mercantile establishments, cotton ginner, matrons in institutions, Sunday School teachers, farmers, stock-raisers."

The main effort of an orphan institution should be to make well-trained men and women out of their boys and girls, well trained in mind, morals and industries. One of our girls gets \$75 a month working right here in Fort Worth because she is qualified.

As to getting rid of our wards, I will say that we dispose of many of our girls at the marriage altar. On a rug in the girls' parlor have stood many of our orphan daughters beside their accepted ones, and the two, before God and their associates, have pledged themselves to live together until death shall separate them.



Now my brethren in the cause of charity, from the depths of my heart I wish your every institution Godspeed. I wish each of you happiness in life and reward in heaven. (A voice: "Great will be your reward, old brother.") But we have rewards here, and whatever additional reward God may see fit to give us will be all of grace and not of debt. ("Amen! Amen!")

The children gather round me sometimes, and I say I am richer than Rockefeller, richer than Carnegie, rich in orphan children. I remarked the other day that I had outlived nearly all my old friends. "But," said one of my orphan daughters, "you have not outlived your young friends, Father Buckner." That brought tears.

But I must desist. (Voices: "Go on, we love to hear you." "Go on." "Go on.") Thank you. Let us have no jars or discords. Let us compare notes honorably and fairly as upright, conscientious men, working in the cause of charity, and let us lift together. I have many a load that I could not carry alone. Sometimes a little money helps, sometimes a "God bless you," and sometimes a handshake.

I was reared on a farm, and often go back there for illustrations. I learned at old-fashioned log-rollings what it is to lift together. Let us lift together in the work of helping orphans. Oh, this problem of child-saving, this work of stepping into the shoes, as it were, of the dead father and mother and taking care of their children. Oh, the problem as to how to do it best for the children themselves and for the community. It is a grave problem. Let us lift together. Let none be contrary. I have been in this work thirty-three years and have some convictions of my own on which I feel to be as solid as the rock Gibraltar. Yet I am open to conviction. One might drill into the rock Gibraltar, insert dynamite and at least burst off some particles. You may drill into my convictions and insert dynamite enough to somewhat scatter them. But I stand on my convictions. (The president: "You are a grand old man.") If so, then like

an old grand piano, the polish rubbed off by repeated careless touch of many children's fingers, the strings rusty and the keys discolored by age. I don't talk much of my age. On the third of next January I will be 77, and ten years further on I will be 87. But God being my helper, I will still be active in the work. My shoulders are not tired of the burden, my heart is not faint, my faith does not waver, and no clouds shall dim the light of hope that cheers my spirit. God bless you all.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### FAITH AND WORKS

Faith sees the tree and its fruit before the hand plants, and then bids the hand plant. And God, too, commands, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." It is a sin not to multiply talents. The one-talent man was "wicked and slothful." R. C. Buckner saw the great Orphans Home, tree and fruit, before he planted, and then to the planting and cultivating he linked his life. "Can you think of Buckner without thinking of orphan children?" This is the question of President S. P. Brooks. But then R. C. Buckner is by no means a one-talent man.

In 1908, President S. P. Brooks, who was such a warm friend of Dr. Buckner that he would walk across the State to do him a favor, ventured into print with the suggestion that the Doctor was "absorbed in orphan work," and with the hint that he had not given careful attention to education and other things. This stirred R. C. Buckner to the depths and he came out in the open:

"Now as to my being 'too much absorbed in orphan work to give any particular attention to education,' I will be excused in some statements that might otherwise be regarded as self-praise.

"I have been, and am still, in active sympathy and coöperation with all our schools. I have often made donations to them in the names of others, and have given \$100 in response to each of many appeals. I have always in some way seconded every special effort set on foot for their support and betterment. I am not so 'absorbed in orphan work' as to shut myself in to it, or be willing that anybody should so circumscribe me.

"I was among the most active in originating Baylor Medical

College, and was the first to give as much as \$100 to the science building where it was to domicile. I stood for the money to run the Baptist Memorial Sanitarium during its first year, and several times during the progress of the building I furnished the money, \$1,000, \$2,000, without interest, to bridge over and keep the work going. I was the first to place in the hands of the Medical College a hospital for clinics—the Children's Hospital. I have never faltered or stood back from any of our enterprises. To the limit of my means I have given.

"I have given to the erection of many houses of worship in Texas, over \$1,200 in one instance, to help our people hold a house, the loss of which would have been disastrous. Orphan work is my meat and my drink. But it does not shrivel me, dry me up, or narrow me down. Nor does it swell me up.

"For many years I have been the active state secretary of the National Conference of Charities and Correction and an active member of the National Prison Congress. I am fairly active in the Southern Baptist Convention and in the Baptist General Convention. I pull, but never kick."—"Baptist Standard," September 10, 1908.

*The Mrs. M. B. Roots Cottage.*—A number of commendable deeds stand to the credit of Dr. Buckner that have never come before the eye of the public. Not a few have come to the knowledge of his biographer, with some such restrictions as, "See thou tell no man."

A self-explanatory document is here permitted that will be appreciated by the friends of Buckner Orphans Home:

"Dallas, Texas, September 20, 1907.—To the Board of Directors of Buckner Orphans Home and all others whom it may concern: The fourth cottage north in the row of cottages for the aged, on the west side of Home Avenue, and about opposite the concrete building occupied by the Providence Nursery Department, was paid for from my own personal funds as a home for my sister, Mrs. M. B. Roots, during her natural life. For that

time it is her own property, to be occupied and controlled by herself without interference; but after that it is to be, and to be so regarded and used, the property of Buckner Orphans Home, as one of the system of cottages for aged people. R. C. Buckner.”

“Witness: Miss Lula Mae Whitehead.”

Mrs. Root has since gone to her Eden Home and the cottage is the property of Buckner Orphans Home. She donated to the Home the furniture, which was her own private property.

*Faith In God and Men.*—God and good men coöperate. As the leaders of world activity believe this, and show their faith by their works, the world moves Godward. Faith in God and in religious people, coupled with increasing work, built Buckner Orphans Home. Belief in God, who said, “They that are sick need a physician,” as well as in medical science and medical men, moved Dr. Buckner to join himself with some 400 physicians of America and the world in “the National Association for the Study of Epilepsy and the Care and Treatment of Epileptics.” In this association in 1905 were forty-nine Southern men and four Southern women. The association had six members in Texas. They were R. C. Buckner, Buckner Orphans Home; Dr. A. B. Gardner, President Texas State Medical Association, Bellville; Dr. H. A. West, Secretary Texas State Medical Association, Galveston; Dr. B. M. Worsham, Superintendent Lunatic Asylum, Austin; Dr. S. S. White, Terrell, and Dr. John Preston, Abilene. In 1905, when this Association was doing a work of world interest, R. C. Buckner, G. W. Cutler, M.D., Arlington, Massachusetts, and Chaplains J. A. Mosley and Alfred F. Pratt, Craig Colony for Epileptics, in the State of New York, were the only preachers on the entire membership roll.

*American Baptist Hospital Association.*—The first “Baptist Hospital Association” in the world came into being in 1884 in St. Louis, Missouri, and consisted of Dr. W. H. Mayfield, Mrs. Mayfield, and their little son Willie. And to sanitarium work Dr. Mayfield has given his life. Another pioneer in sanitarium

work was the founder of the Buckner Home Children's Hospital. Those two men, R. C. Buckner and W. H. Mayfield, demonstrated that the healing of diseases through medical science, if done by praying men, is a God-appointed means of bringing souls to Christ, and should go hand in hand with the preaching of the gospel. They became fast friends. Together they talked on these things and planned a nation-wide association, which began life at the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1906. Nearly 100 brethren, every man of them a pillar in Zion, became members. R. C. Buckner was elected president; M. P. Hunt, Louisville, Kentucky, vice-president; W. H. Mayfield, St. Louis, secretary; Rev. T. W. Tate, St. Louis, assistant secretary; and M. J. Breaker, St. Louis, treasurer. The immediate effect of the forming of this Association was to give a new impetus to the great wave of sentiment for building sanitarium. Soon there was a Baptist hospital at Jackson, Mississippi, and another at Muskogee, Oklahoma. Friends of Texas Baptist Memorial Sanitarium at Dallas having already decided to build, went forward and put up their imposing, well-appointed fireproof buildings. At Houston, Texas, was erected a sanitarium, which became the pride of South Texas. They have been built in other States and beyond the seas at Laichow Fu, China, and Huchow, China. The aim is "to lift up the eyes and tongues on all lands and belt the earth with these houses of love and mercy," and more than a half-hundred of them have been built.

Dr. J. M. Oxner, member of this Association and medical missionary at Ping Tu, North China, had a vision that lifted him into the heavenlies: "The American Baptist Hospital Association, organized out of the hearts of two great men, Dr. Buckner of Texas and Dr. Mayfield of Missouri, I believe to be the foundation work in the hands of God for the beginning of great things. My neighboring city here in China (Laichow Fu) is soon to be blessed with a hospital through its work. Also one is to be built

in India. We must expect hospitals to be built for God all over the mission fields in heathen lands and in the papal world. I must expect to see scores of millions of souls go up to heaven from the four quarters of the earth through the Christian influence of sanitarium work. Under God and through Christ nothing is impossible."—"Baptist Standard," April 25, 1907. It was a vision on Mount Nebo, and Dr. Oxner was not, for God took him.

*The R. C. Buckner Knob.*—Dr. Buckner is appreciated by his brethren all over the South as few men are. This will be seen when we read the story of the naming of five mountain peaks at Ridgecrest, North Carolina. Ridgecrest is among the most delightful summer resorts in America, a little paradise, high up in the picturesque Blue Ridge mountains. On the grounds are five charming peaks named for five princes among modern Baptists. During the past 100 years the names of Baptist leaders have been legion. It is therefore no small compliment that one of those peaks should bear the name of R. C. Buckner.

Dr. B. W. Spilman, known over American as among the best Sunday school evangelists of his generation, general secretary of Ridgecrest Assembly, in a letter dated July 28, 1912, thus writes to the author of this biography: "We named for Dr. Buckner in our grounds here at Ridgecrest one of the small mountain peaks. There are five of them. We named one for Rev. Columbus H. Durham, as being the man who typified as well as any man in the world the propagation of the gospel in our home land. Another of the peaks is named for John A. Broadus, the Baptist educator. Another is for C. H. Spurgeon, the great preacher. Another for William Carey, the foreign missionary. When we wish to tell visitors the story of Baptist philanthropy we point them to the Buckner Knob and tell the story. It may be of interest to know that Dr. Buckner was the first man to make a direct donation to the endowment work of our Assembly. He paid \$100 into my hands some three years ago, which was the first donation to our grounds." There is a well-kept children's

playground called the Buckner playground at the base of the R. C. Buckner Knob, where happy children play and sing every summer. The fact of this children's playground under the shadow of the Buckner Knob is to Dr. Buckner a great joy.

*Tri-State Conference.*—During 1909, Dr. Buckner attended the Tri-State Conference of Orphan Workers at Atlanta, Georgia. His visit was taken note of by the "Christian Sun" as follows: "Texas was represented by perhaps the oldest man in service in the South. 'Dear Father Buckner,' as he is lovingly called, is seventy-six years old and has been at the head of Buckner Orphans Home since its beginning about thirty years ago. From his long experience and deeply religious character we learned many useful lessons that will qualify us in this responsible work of saving orphan children. His orphanage is now accommodating 600 children. They have a veritable village and 1,000 acres of land." Dr. Buckner had profound attention while he addressed this conference on "Thirty-three Years in Orphan Work."

*On the Lookout for Orphans.*—Here is a good place to emphasize that Dr. Buckner was always on the lookout for orphan children. When his Home was too much crowded to receive another child, he has been heard to say that he would give up a corner in his own room before a dependent child without father or mother should be turned away. He said this in a letter to that very excellent pastor, R. B. Morgan, of Memphis, Texas, August, 1914. He has said it in his correspondence with others.

Always on the lookout, he let no opportunity pass to offer home and bread to all children orphaned by public calamities, such as cyclones, conflagrations and earthquakes. Reference has been made to this in other parts of this book. In his files are many letters received in response to persons to care for such orphans. This letter is taken at random from among the others:

"The Citizens' Bank, Redwater, Texas, May 8, 1914. Dr. R. C. Buckner, Dallas, Texas. Dear Sir: Your telegram re-



ceived. We are almost wiped from the face of the earth. But am thankful to state that there were no fatalities. Consequently there is no need in the capacity occupied by you. However, the appreciation of your kind offer is without bounds.—R. W. Hanks, Cashier.” The town had suffered from a cyclone.

*Faith Does Not Easily Give Up.*—It is sad that any child reared in Buckner Orphans Home should, after going away, give its benefactor the gravest concern. But among thousands, all of them given the best training possible, some may not do right. The following excerpt from a letter lifts the curtain and shows how faith follows on and continues to work:

“Dear E——: My heart is deeply pained. I love you. Twice before I have felt it my duty to warn you and put you on your guard. I do not see that it has benefited you. I do not accuse you of sin. But your imprudence is causing much talk. I need not mention the imprudent things, whether in dress, conversation, telephoning, writing, buggy-riding or other things. Giddy, gay, unrestrained liberties are leading you too far. Just a step further and the orphan child will plunge into a vortex of ruin. I beg to say in tearful tenderness, yet in manly firmness, that you have cut yourself off from visiting the Home or writing to anyone here save to me. My ears and heart are ever open to you. If you shall see your error, amend and establish your reputation as a modest, consistent young lady, I shall again be glad to extend you these privileges. This letter pains me as if its words were written with my own heart’s blood instead of ink. Ask God about it. Your same old affectionate Father Buckner.”

Later came a communication telling “Father Buckner” of her marriage, coupled with an invitation to visit her in her happy home.

*Buckner Home Academy.*—Faith hungers for more faith, and prays, “Lord, increase our faith.” As when the vine of many years, with branches reaching out in all directions, yields more abundant fruit than was possible in its baby days, so it is with

faith. The Pauline hope of entering the "regions beyond" was based on increased faith at Corinth, and Pauline encomium was called forth by "work of faith" at Thessalonica. Increased faith of the management of Buckner Orphans Home peered into the regions beyond year by year, and entered, as the reader knows. Then, after a while, stood before the eye of faith a spacious, magnificent Buckner Home Academy with rooms for the Academy superintendent and the different grades, music rooms, large rooms for library and museum, rooms for office and with elegant chapel seating 2,000 people. The children in the Home were made to see it, and months before dirt was broken they met and "Resolved, That an Academy is needed. The boys need the rooms now occupied by the school and school needs more suitable quarters."

Presently, December, 1907, we see in the "Baptist Standard": "Necessity is laid upon me. Woe is me if I delay longer. So now I beg that all who can spare \$100 for the Academy Building send it along at once. For building money, my son, Hal F. Buckner, is traveling. Please receive him and hear him, for his cause is worthy."—R. C. Buckner. After a while, late in the year of our Lord, 1908, we read in the "Dallas News": "The best building on the hill is now in process of construction. The walls of the first story are of reinforced monolithic concrete and are equal to any building in the city. This, the first story, is divided into school rooms, well lighted, steam heated and fireproof. The second story, of easy approach, is for chapel and Sunday school purposes. It is of brick and trimmed with blocks of concrete. The building is 85 by 105 feet, inside measurements." It is worth \$60,000. An ornament to the Home and the county, it was dedicated, free of debt, January 3, 1909.

*Manna Hall.*—There is always "territory beyond." Faith sees it, and then it is the duty of the hand to stretch forth and take it. Sure there was rejoicing and thanksgiving, and should have been, when the stately Buckner Home Academy was dedi-

cated. But the builder was not satisfied. There was no comfortable place for the children to eat their meals. Their dining room was in a long, narrow basement, where they were crowded almost to suffocation in warm weather.

The best dining room in the world for orphans was planned, 96 by 126 feet, convenient to both the Boys' Building and the Girls' Building. It was built and was named "Manna Hall" at the suggestion of Rev. Hal F. Buckner, now Baptist missionary in Canton, China. It is on a solid concrete foundation, deep in the earth, and is built of reinforced concrete and brick. All columns, beams, girders, joists and the entire framework are of steel. The floor is concrete. Also a large balcony overhead on the west side, stretching full length of the building from north to south. It has 105 windows, is warmed by twenty-nine radiators, cooled by electric fans and lighted by thirty-four electric lights. It was dedicated January 3, 1913, on Dr. Buckner's eightieth birthday.

As the day of dedication approached, former inmates and their friends proposed to prepare and bring abundant table supplies, decorate Manna Hall and load all tables. Then the following card was sent to many hundreds of friends:

"A Card Peculiar, in Advance—Eightieth Birthday Greetings of R. C. Buckner, January 3, 1913.

"Jehovah hath abundantly blessed me all the years of my pilgrimage up to this, my eightieth natal day, and the world has been good to me all the while. Friends of the dependent have stood faithfully by me for the last thirty-five years in founding, sustaining and enlarging Buckner Orphans Home. This work, in addition to other things, has kept me busy, but has filled my heart with joy and hath strewn life's pathway with sunshine. More than 6,600 dependents have been cared for.

"I enter upon my eighty-first year, hale, hearty and hopeful, and this must be my busiest and most successful year in orphan work unless other years to come shall exceed it.

“Manna Hall, than which there is not a prettier or more commodious dining hall in the world for orphan children, is to be dedicated on that day, and YOU are invited to be with the thousands of friends who promise their presence. Valuable personal presents have been offered me for that day, but I respectfully and positively decline any and all personal gifts. Help the orphans! Many have promised to aid by check or otherwise in advance in a special effort already set on foot by others to secure to the credit of that day at least \$80,000, to be used for the exclusive benefit of the Orphans Home, whether on endowment, the payment of debts or current expenses, as donors may direct.

“But the main thing in this advanced birthday greeting is to invite you personally to visit Buckner Orphans Home, January 3, 1913, at any hour between 9 a. m. and 5 p. m., and to be with us all day if possible. I shall be rejoiced to greet you. Distinguished speakers will be present and friends say there will be an abundance of supplies on the tables of their own sending or bringing. Room and comfort for thousands of visitors. Many are coming from all over Texas and some from beyond.

“It is impossible to reach each friend by special card. I beg that you consider yourself personally invited. Arrangements are being made for excursion rates over the railroads.”

*Dedication of Manna Hall.*—The third day of January, 1913, was high day at Buckner Orphans Home. Dr. Buckner kept open house all day. The day was perfect. The mid-winter sun rose with springtime warmth and suffered not a cloud to cast shadow on hilltop or dale. Too, the Southern gulf sent warmth on the wings of breezes, and during the entire golden day winter was wholly suspended.

By ten o'clock visitors were arriving in automobiles and on trains, and multitudes of the finest people in the State and beyond were swarming about the beautiful lawns. Their ranks swelled to 2,000. They were full of good cheer, and to them Buckner Orphans Home seemed a charmed spot. And indeed they were

in paradise, everywhere greeting one another and greeting the 650 neatly-attired Buckner orphans.

"Where is Dr. Buckner?" This was the question on many lips. "We must see Dr. Buckner—bless his soul—and shake his hand." They found him. At eleven o'clock the spacious chapel accommodating 2,250 worshippers was full and overflowing. The Home Chorus Class of 100 trained orphans sang hymns of praise to God, and the great assembly joined in. R. H. Coleman of the "Baptist Standard" called on George W. McCall of Oklahoma to lead in prayer. Then stood George W. Truett and read from the Book of God: "And Moses was 120 years old when he died; his eye was not dimmed nor his natural force abated." Pointing to Dr. Buckner, Pastor Truett said: "This is the Moses of Texas. Three springs of influence made the life of Moses endless; he lived under God's ruling companionship, linked his life with one great cause and linked it to the future. If we would be always young, the way is here pointed out—a life surrendered to God, a life linked to a great cause or institution, a life for the future. Such was the life of Moses, and such is the life of R. C. Buckner. And now we are to dedicate 'Beautiful Manna Hall,' where 1,200 people can eat bread from heaven at one sitting. There is just one man among us fit to offer the dedicatory prayer, and that man is R. C. Buckner."

The assembly stood with bowed heads while the patriarch of orphan children gave Manna Hall back to God. To the appeal, "Oh, that Manna Hall may be never without bread!" 2,000 hearts responded, "Amen!"

A cablegram, "Boundless Love," from the "Buckner Colony" in China was read. A shower of congratulatory letters was announced and some of them were read.

Then straightway the princely company repaired to Manna Hall. And Manna Hall groaned under the weight of good things. The great dinner—bread, turkey, chicken, ham, cake, pies, fruit, hot coffee and pure milk—had been prepared largely by Dallas

County Baptist Association. It was served by former inmates of Buckner Orphans Home. The happy orphan family was arranged about long, appetizing spreads, while their guests were similarly disposed by fifties and hundreds. There was the sound of the organ in the balcony, and a praise-song. Thanks was given. Like unto occasions when Jesus fed the multitudes, all were filled. But instead of twelve baskets full, there was enough left to feed the orphans three days.

A call had been made to give suitable recognition to Dr. Buckner's eightieth birthday by contributing \$80,000 towards his Orphans Home work. The response was liberal, coming in along through several months. Though the donors did not always so state, it is believed that of the \$108,000 received during the year, the amount intended to go to the credit of that day reached \$80,000. Many thousands were left by the visitors at the dedication. And after a day of soul communion, they bade us "Good-bye" and departed to their own homes. Their benedictions and benefactions abide.

#### PERENNIAL YOUTH

By Elder W. P. Meroney, Bellevue, Texas

The men who for the future live,  
 In hope, in purpose strong,  
 Some deed of service yet to give;  
 Those men are young.

The men who in the silent past  
 Their hope, their all enfold,  
 No service give unto the last;  
 Those men are old.

'Tis not grey hairs or weakn'd form,  
 The line 'tween age and youth;  
 When purpose from the breast is torn,  
 You're old in truth.

While cause to live and work to do,  
In visions still you see,  
And faith makes deeds of love so true,  
You young shall be.

To. R. C. Buckner, who, on his eightieth birthday, is still young in service for the fatherless and motherless child.

*The Dairy Farm.*—Opportunities are obligations. The opportunity came in 1912 to secure a well-improved dairy farm of 314 acres, located right by the Home and on the great country pike leading into the city, so located as to be of priceless value, even as if created for Buckner Orphans Home. Dr. Buckner said: "I believe it was so created." It was purchased. A year earlier it could not have been purchased, and two hours later it would have been out of the Home's reach forever. The morning after its purchase it could have been sold at an advance of \$3,000. It is worth \$75,000 and is rapidly growing in value. It is paid for.

Then in 1912 was erected an imposing two-story Buckner Home Supply House, through which all supplies for the Home are handled. In size it is 32 by 90 feet, and is fireproof.

Also added in 1912 were 1,875 linear feet of cement walks; a large cement court east of the Girls' House, and covering the entire space between that building and Manna Hall, and, dividing the beautiful acreage lawns on the west front of all the stately buildings, 1,000 feet of gracefully curved, vibrolithic driveways.

In 1913 was added a cozy cottage, the home of Academy teachers, and in 1914 a large cement and brick addition to the Academy building. Adjacent to this new addition, and to the main Academy building at its east end is a spacious cement school court, where the assembled children form, preparatory to entering their various rooms for study and recitation.

Elevated, majestic and self-confident, Buckner Orphans Home voices in silent eloquence the noblest sermon on Faith and Works ever preached to Texas Baptists.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### ONE BUSY LORD'S DAY—HOW IT PASSED

The pastor of Home Baptist Church is Dr. R. C. Buckner. He is in his eightieth year, hale and hearty. His head is crowned with silver, while "his youth is renewed like the eagle's."

This is July 28, 1912. It is the day for the regular monthly meeting of Home Baptist Church, the fourth Lord's day in the month. The church is composed of orphan children, matrons, employees and a few others. How will Dr. Buckner spend this day? We will keep eye on him all day through. We will see what he does and hear what he says.

*Rises at Daybreak.*—Pastor Buckner's bedroom is in the "Boys' Building" of Buckner Orphans Home. A window opens on the front lawn, admitting fresh air. In this room he has passed the night in quiet rest. The angel of Him who said, "Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling," has kept vigil.

At early dawn sleep is dismissed and his shepherd heart turns to his orphan family and to his spiritual flock. The on-coming hours, full of faith and effort, rise up before his mental vision. At 5 o'clock he is out of bed and pacing the grassy lawns with the elastic trip of youth. The eye looks up to God for approval and direction.

During these moments vigor is inhaled with the fresh morning air. And now comes the kiss of the new-born sun; while the eastern horizon is gold and glory, as it were, a glimpse of the ethereal world where God dwells. And assurance comes that God is near.

*In the Culinary Department.*—The great family of 650 chil-



dren are already out of bed, jubilant, swarming, shouting, singing, as happy as any children anywhere. They are finding their appetites. They must have a Lord's Day breakfast. And now we view their "Father Buckner" about the buildings, assisting the matrons, counseling the children and adjusting a score of problems. In his footstep is power and in his voice fatherly authority.

Now he is in the kitchen giving directions, and in the great storehouse where supplies are given out to the young kitchen queens. They are baking, attending meats and other requirements of the culinary science. Some are spreading the dining hall boards, while the morning air is laden with appetizing savor.

*Breakfast.*—The breakfast bell calls, and hundreds of little children descend into the dining halls. (Manna Hall is not yet finished.) A beautiful praise song ascends to the Giver of "every good and perfect gift," one of the larger girls offers thanks, and all the happy family eat their morning meal with keenest relish.

And likewise "Father Buckner" enjoys to the fullest extent his breakfast of fried chicken, toasted bread and a cup of coffee.

*Assembling in "Home" Chapel.*—Breakfast is over and all are busy putting the rooms in order and getting ready for Sunday school and service. "Father Buckner" has found some dear children deeply concerned about their souls, and others happy in the Savior's love and anxious to join the church. A brief time with these anxious ones he labors. Then apart with God, for another brief period he is in meditation and prayer. It is holy time and the thoughts of hundreds turn to "Home" Chapel, where they have an appointment to meet God. The Chapel door is open at ten o'clock. We look in. We enter. A stately chair, gift of matrons and employees, sets near the sacred desk. Engraved on the chair are the words "Our Father Buckner." And in this chair "Our Father Buckner" is seated. He is using his small field glasses, viewing with unspeakable pleasure the coming

into the Chapel of hundreds of orphans with their matrons and Sunday school teachers. A long, beautiful column of girls, and another of boys file into the large open auditorium. About 500 are gathered and the auditorium is but one-fourth full. Tidy and clean they are, with sparkling eyes and rosy cheeks, and the shepherd heart of "Father Buckner" is supremely happy.

*Family Talk.*—Charming hymns, rendered as only the skilled voices of these trained orphans can render, resound throughout the great Chapel, while one seems to see the listening ear of God bending low. Now every head is bowed and the beloved orphans' Father offers prayer, full of praise and thanksgiving. On the wings of that prayer every orphan in the institution is borne aloft and presented before the Throne. And during that prayer some of them trust their Savior.

A Family Talk, full of tenderness, follows. Orderly conduct of the past week is mentioned and commended. Matrons and employees come in for their meed of praise. Rare privileges coming often to the family are noted, among them a visit and speech from Governor O. B. Colquit, and visit and speech from ex-Governor T. M. Campbell, both in the very recent past. Also rare spiritual blessings are named. Good counsel concludes the talk.

*Sunday School.*—Sunday school is opened by the pastor. He reads with brief comment the parable of the wheat and the tares. Now the Sunday school army of near 500 repair in 26 classes to their accustomed rooms with their teachers for recitation. After thirty minutes the Chapel piano calls them to reassemble in the auditorium.

*Church Session and Preaching.*—Without singing or any sort of preliminaries, Pastor Buckner rises from his chair and calls "Home" Church into church conference for business. A letter of dismission is granted a young lady, former ward, to unite with the First Baptist Church at Galveston. Other letters are granted.

Now the invitation to unite with the church is given, and

several respond, six for baptism. They relate their Christian experiences in language clear and simple. Some date their convictions to a sermon preached by the Home Chaplain on the "Unpardonable Sin." They have been saved in the preaching services, in the Sunday school and in their rooms.

The sermon is preached from the text, "The law of the Lord is perfect," while the pastor's heart is full of love for God and His law.

"Perfection belongs to God. All his works from the tiniest blade of grass to the stateliest oak, from the smallest pebble to the sublimest mountain peak, are the perfection of beauty.

"His laws are perfect. And the nearer the laws of men approach God's standard the nearer they are to perfection.

"God's laws are perfect both as a rule of conduct and as a rule of worship.

"Sin is the transgression of these laws. And sin is the cause of all woe, sorrow, bloodshed and death.

"The ten commandments given by Moses lie at the basis of all good laws and of all good government. They were engraved on tables of stone by the finger of God. The human government that copies closely after these laws is the best government and has the happiest people.

"The Bible teaching about worship is plain. It teaches that the immersion of believers in Christ is baptism, and nothing else is. It teaches that all who are thus baptized, and no others, should belong to the church and take the Lord's Supper.

"This teaching is God's law. It is perfect. Changing this perfect law of the Lord is responsible for all the unhappy divisions among God's people. And they will never be a unit till all come together on God's law.

"The perfect gospel order is, first hearing, then repentance, then faith, then baptism, then church membership with its privileges and duties."

This is a brief report of a very fine sermon.

It is twelve o'clock. The service concludes with brief, appealing benediction.

*Dinner.*—The plain, Lord's Day dinner is spread. With beautiful step, lines of children move in graceful order into the dining halls and to their accustomed plates at the long tables. Look, everyone is still and silent. Now a praise-song. Now thanksgiving, while every head is bowed. Dinner is relished.

But no child enjoys his dinner more than "Father Buckner" does his of "chicken and dumplings." Something extra this, complimentary and unexpected.

*Afternoon.*—Will Dr. Buckner take an afternoon nap? Not he. Every Lord's Day is too full of activities for that. And so is every other day.

Some of these dear children are in darkness and sin and seeking salvation. He is pointing them to the Lamb of God. Others, newborn babes in Christ, are shown the path of obedience and service.

*Bible School.*—Now the pastor repairs to the Chapel, where the "Home" Chaplain is conducting a Bible School, made up of Sunday school teachers and advanced pupils. The study is the Parables of the Kingdom, Matt. 13:44-53. To have the pastor take his seat and listen for a time with marked attention and approval makes glad every heart.

It is supper time. The usual signal is calling.

*Supper.*—Similar beautiful order and ceremonies to those observed at breakfast and dinner hours are now again observed. The children have their plain, wholesome food. And Father Buckner enjoys it with them.

*Evening Service, Baptizing.*—The elegant "Home" Chapel is brilliantly lighted with two hundred large, globular, electric lights. Nearly all connected with Buckner Orphans Home are assembled and singing hallelujah songs. Pastor Buckner is standing in the church baptistry, which is filled with pure artesian water. He is ready to immerse the waiting candidates.

But he gives the invitation to other young converts to follow their Lord in the holy ordinance. They come. They are examined by the "Home" Chaplain, as to their faith and hope, and eight of them approved by "Home" church. And now the venerable pastor buries with their Lord in holy immersion fourteen new-born souls. They are all a part of his beloved orphan family. And behold, while still standing in the baptismal font he brings a gospel message, a sermon of thirty minutes, full of tenderness and power.

*Text.*—"Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."  
Subject: "The Fountain and the Famishing."

Following is a brief statement of the discourse:

"God has provided the fountain. All the race of men in sin are the famishing.

"Water quenches thirst and nothing else in all the world will do it.

"The souls of the people are thirsting for the water of salvation. The fountain for quenching soul-thirst is the fountain opened in Calvary. Let the thirsty soul come straight to Jesus, just as thirsty lips come to a flowing fountain. Come to Him and drink by trusting Him, drink till all the thirst is gone. Will not some of you, my orphan boys and girls, come this very night and drink?"

A closing prayer and this Lord's Day, full of faith and works, passes into history, bearing its report up to God who gave it.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

FROM LITERARY PRODUCTIONS, SERMONS, PUBLIC ADDRESSES, ETC.

The selections here given are from Dr. Buckner's writings, sermons and addresses. It is believed his thousands of friends will be glad to have them preserved. Not a selection can be read without profit.

### ADDRESS OF WELCOME

To the Baptist General Convention of Texas, in Session in Fair Park Auditorium, Dallas, Texas, November 16, 1913.

A distinguished honor has been unexpectedly forced upon me by the local committee. They have requested that I say words of welcome to you. I shall say but little, but every statement shall have a meaning to it. The fact that this spacious, beautiful hall has been thrown open to you, with the attractive Fair Park at your disposal, proclaims more eloquently than could my tongue the welcome the city of Dallas extends to you.

The Commercial Club invites you here. It is composed of solid, sober citizens. There is another club called the "One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Club." It is composed of the ambitious, earnest, wide-awake young bloods of the city. I have the honor of being a member of that club (laughter) and can more appropriately say that the young men's club of "One Hundred and Fifty Thousand" bids you welcome.

The First Baptist Church, the Gaston Avenue Church, South Park Church, McKinney Avenue Church, the German Baptist Church, Lancaster Avenue Church, and Ervay Street Church, seven Baptist Churches, and scriptural in number, all bid you welcome. Then the pastors of the other churches in the city bid you welcome, throwing open their doors and vacating their pulpits to the convention.

The ladies of the city, the Baptist ladies especially, offer you a big welcome. Nor is this all. As you pass along the streets and into the places of worship, you will meet the sparkling eyes of our swarms of boys and girls. The eyes and smiles of these young people bespeak to you a glad welcome. And if I only had my family from a little bit out in the country, my family of 550, they would say "Welcome."

This report of Dr. Buckner's Address of Welcome is condensed.

#### COLONEL HENRY EXALL, LOVER OF THE PEOPLE

(Memorial Address before the Texas Industrial Congress, assembled in Dallas, of which Colonel Exall was the founder and president. He died in 1913.)

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, beloved Fellow Citizens: I address you as noble comrades in a heroic warfare, being led by our Texas Industrial Congress, against waste, against misdirected energies in the cultivation of the soil and in other industries. The subject assigned me is "Colonel Exall, a Lover of the People."

An intelligent lover he was. An intelligent lover of the people thinks for their happiness and welfare, and is active to promote all interest and enterprises that tend to their betterment.

Life should be invested for the outgrowth of all its possibilities. It is God's gift, and whether with one talent or ten talents, should be faithfully used in God's service, and unselfishly among the people he created.

When our friend was born, when Heaven's light of love first sparkled from his infant eyes, he came with a heart to love his race, with a soul to yearn for the welfare of the people, and with a hand open to all whom he might be able to help. These gifts and capabilities needed to be cultivated, and this work was undertaken at once by a faithful mother and noble father. The atmosphere he breathed was love, and his entire being, body, mind and

soul, grew and expanded for the benevolent words and work soon to enlist his energies.

In boyhood he was schooled in the cultivation of the soil, and in caring for useful, domestic animals. The cultured brain and skilled hand of his doting father led him along the delightful ways of industry in country life. All these things in his early youth prepared him for the greatest activities that in later life made him a benefactor in the realm of industry.

His patient, untiring father also taught him to be patient, thoughtful and hopeful. He learned thus early that,

This world is full of beauty,  
That life is full of duty,  
That he enjoys it best,  
Who with hopeful heart is willing,  
Both in sowing and in tilling,  
First to labor, then to rest.

He took no little pleasure in talking to me about these things.

Colonel Exall was also a school man, a lover of literature, skilled in the science of mathematics, in chemistry, and whatever else that led him to an intelligent acquaintance with climatic conditions and the cultivation of the soil.

At the beginning of my acquaintance with him he was engaged in raising and training fine stock in Bosque County. Later he settled in Dallas and very soon impressed me as few men have done, in a logical and eloquent appeal before an assembly of our best citizens, an appeal for a sufficient bonus to secure one of the great trunk railroads through our city. That road, from its beginning to this day, has been bringing to us multitudes of citizens and countless tons of merchandise. This, too, gave employment to many mechanics and laborers.

From the day he came to be a citizen of Dallas he commanded the confidence and respect of all professional and business men, and the love and esteem of all the people. Soon all came to look on him as their friend and patron.



In the growth of our city, in the building of factories and industries, giving employment and homes to thousands, Colonel Exall has been both a factor and an inspiration. He has not worked for pay, position or praise, but for peace, plenty and prosperity to all the people. When the Industrial Congress was organized he at once gave himself intently and intelligently to such investigations and plans as conserved its time and guided its developments along lines helpful to farming, stock raising and other industries. The country people were as much in his thoughts as business and professional men. He was a lover of all the people.

His wisdom, intelligence and activity, as president of the Texas Industrial Congress, secured for him the attention and esteem of enterprising people in all the State and beyond. His newspaper articles and public addresses pulsated with life and moved the multitudes to more careful and thorough study of soil and climate. The result was the yield of a single acre in many instances came to be in excess of what had previously been gathered from two or more acres. Farmers came to supply their families better with the necessaries of life, and to afford some of its real luxuries. On these intensely interesting subjects he was as gladly heard at such places as Madison Square, New York, as in farming districts in his own beloved Texas. Invariably he grew eloquent in pleading for homes and farms and for peace and prosperity. The grip of the strong hand of the farmer, the "thank you" of the farmer's wife, and the happy faces of the farmer's children always lighted up his benevolent face with joy. He loved the people and by the people he was loved.

#### BURYING A DEAD HORSE

(Letter to children in Baptist Standard, May 11, 1905)

I don't mean, dear children, that I ever buried a dead horse, or refused to bury one, nor do I want to tell you how to do such

a disagreeable job; but I heard a story about a thing of the sort that I want you to hear. I heard it from President Roosevelt, in a big speech he made lately in Dallas, when he was on his tour through Texas. You know he was Colonel Roosevelt in our war with Spain over the sinking of the battleship Maine. The great battle cry those days was, "Remember the Maine." I want you to remember the story about burying the dead horse, because it has a good lesson in it. A while before the battle at San Juan Hill an injured looking, crestfallen soldier went to Mr. Roosevelt and said: "Colonel Roosevelt, I came all the way down here to fight the battles of my country, and now I'm ordered to go and bury an old dead horse."

"You were ordered to do it by a proper officer, were you?" said the Colonel.

"Yes, Colonel," said the humiliated soldier. "Yes, Colonel."

"Well," said Roosevelt, "go and bury the horse; you must obey orders; good soldiers must not choose for themselves, but will obey orders as well in small things as in great things."

"So the man buried the dead horse," said the President in his speech, with a peculiar nod of his head.

Yes, there is a good lesson in this—a lesson for children as to how to obey their parents; a lesson for Christians as to how to obey God. God once commanded Moses to cast a rod upon the ground—a small thing, but he did it, and it became a serpent. He then said to him: "Put forth thy hand and take it by the tail"—also a small and rather dangerous thing it appeared. But Moses obeyed, took the serpent by the tail and it became a rod again. Afterwards Moses stretched it out over the Red Sea and the waters divided so that the Israelites marched through and escaped death.

To take that snake by the tail looked like it would be as disagreeable a thing as to bury a dead horse, but it was right for Moses to do the one and the soldier to do the other. To that soldier it looked like a very little thing to bury a dead horse,

compared with the deeds of a great, brave soldier on the battle field, but if he had refused he would not have made a good soldier. The Bible teaches us that we must not neglect the little things—not the very “least commandment.” In one of the parables it is said: “Well done good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, and I will make thee ruler over many things.”

We are not to choose between little and great things in matters of obedience. The preacher said in the book of Ecclesiastes, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” “Whatsoever,” whether it be great or small, hard or easy, pleasant or disagreeable. The soldier buried the dead horse because he was commanded to do it, and it was his duty. Remember the President’s story about the dead horse, and remember the good lesson in it.

Yesterday an orphan girl stopped at the Children’s Hospital in Dallas on her way to Buckner Orphans Home, and they telephoned out to the Home that she would help about the washing the next day, and then they would send her on to the country home. One of the girls, who had not heard why she had not come out to the Home in the country, asked about it in the presence of another bright orphan girl, who understood it, and who had heard the President’s story as above: “She is burying a dead horse at the Children’s Hospital,” replied the other.

Dr. Buckner saw a picture of an aged doctor on his horse going to see a patient, and exclaimed:

If it’s old age you are pursuing,  
You should be always up and doing.

ADDRESS AT LAYMEN’S BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION, FT. WORTH,  
FEBRUARY 12, 1914

Brother Chairman: I have been present in this convention only at irregular intervals and but a little while at any time. But

when present I have enjoyed it, and realized an increasing interest in the discussions. But I am glad of the opportunity to address this great body of Baptist laymen, notwithstanding the word "layman" is a misnomer among Baptists. What we most need is to get rid of all our laymen. They are a hindrance, a clog and a blockade in the way of progress. I speak of the word in its real meaning. A layman is an uninformed person. And the want of proper information is the cause of inactivity. The word in its ecclesiastical signification is of Roman Catholic origin and was used to differentiate between the clergy and the laity. The priests and other dignitaries assumed the right to read and interpret the scriptures and to dictate and domineer over the masses who were not only required to be silent, but were then kept in ignorance in all Catholic countries. It was under these conditions that the words laity and laymen came into use. These facts may be found in their own literature.

Among Baptists we want no laymen in this sense. All church members should be informed, and in the possession of proper information they should be active. I offer no criticism on the name of this convention, but insist that it is only used in an appropriated sense.

You now understand what I mean when I say that the Baptists need to get rid of all our laymen. This has been done already in a large measure. Our laymen generally are informed people, and some of them very thoroughly informed. Hence many of them are active, as is very evident in this Convention of 1,000 members. In fact, if some of our preachers do not get a move on themselves they will be left in the rear and laymen will become their leaders.

Baptists are very much like a hive of bees. Bees are embraced in three classes, official bees, working bees and drones. I have sometimes thought that official bees were too officious and this may be so with Baptist ministers. Drones are of no use as honey gatherers in a bee-hive. Neither are they of any account

among Baptists. All Baptists should be working honey-gatherers. Let us get rid of our laymen. Let them become informed. Let them be given promotion cards.

Information begets inspiration, inspiration leads to effort and effort is essential to success. Now let all Baptists, whether preachers, deacons or what we have come to call laymen, seek to become better informed, to cherish and cultivate greater zeal and to work enthusiastically and industriously for the conversion of the world and the bringing in of the Kingdom.

SOME RIMES ON PROVERBS OF SOLOMON

- Prov. 8:9. "The scorner hateth his reprover."  
The wise regardeth him a lover.
- Prov. 11:24. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty."  
There is that scattereth far and near,  
But yieldeth large increase;  
There is that keepeth back through fear  
Yet groweth surely less.
- Prov. 12:22. "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord,  
But they that deal truly are His delight."  
All lying lips displease the Lord,  
And men will soon despise their word.  
Then speak the truth; 'tis surely right,  
And in you God will take delight.
- Prov. 14:16. "A wise man feareth and departeth from evil:  
But the fool rageth and is in conflict."  
A wise man feareth and departeth from evil:  
A fool will embrace it and go to the devil.
- Prov. 14:11. "The homes of the wicked shall be overthrown;  
But the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish."  
The home of the wicked shall be overthrown,

- The devil shall catch him and call him his own;  
 The tent of the righteous shall surely flourish,  
 And peace and abundance his heart shall nourish.
- Prov. 16:24. "Pleasant words are as honeycomb,"  
 And should be used in every home.
- Prov. 18:15. "The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge,"  
 Whether in or out of school or college.
- Prov. 17:13. "Whoso rewardeth evil for good,"  
 Does the opposite of what he should.
- Prov. 17:17. "A true friend loveth at all times,"  
 Let it be told in prose and rimes.
- Prov. 3:5. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart,"  
 And from all evil ways depart.
- Prov. 15:4. "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life,"  
 But the upas is a tongue of strife.

(Written on an envelope while at church, on hearing Pastor George W. Truett exclaim, "Duty is beautiful always.")

Whatever is dutiful,  
 Is always beautiful,  
 No matter what people may say;  
 And the voice of the Lord  
 May be heard in His word,  
 By all who are glad to obey.

#### CARING FOR THE DEPENDENT

(November 10, 1910)

While all the shepherds feed their sheep,  
 It gives me joy the lambs to keep;  
 The feeble and the lame shall find  
 A resting place and treatment kind;  
 The aged ones shall also share  
 Most tender, gentle, patient care.

WHO HAS A RIGHT TO EAT?

It's eat, eat, eat, three times a day,  
Whether we work or whether we play;  
Not caring what objectors say,  
We'll eat, eat, eat, three times a day,  
And for our daily bread we'll pray.

The men who raise the crop don't care,  
And those who buy and sell declare  
That all should eat three times a day,  
Whether they work, or whether they play,  
"Just so we all can get our pay."

But men who foot the bills all say,  
And cooks who cook the meals each day,  
With unequivocal words still say,  
That none should eat three times a day,  
Excepting those who work and pay.

And this is what the Bible teaches,  
And every candid preacher preaches  
To men of low and high estate,  
That he who works not shall not eat.

"BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER."—PAUL

Gentle words from hearts of love  
May other hearts to kindness move,  
But stouter spirits may be broken  
By cruel words unkindly spoken.

(February 2, 1911)

The road to heaven starts in the beautiful valley of humility  
and is upgrade all the way. Its terminus is on the banks of the

sparkling river that proceeds from beneath the great white throne and flows out through the Paradise of God, watering the flowers and fruits of immortal life.

MY SOUL SHALL BE JOYFUL IN THE LORD (Ps. 35:9)

Why should the Lord's redeemed be sad?  
 Why should they sing in plaintive strain?  
 Why should they not be always glad?  
 Why not rejoice? The Lord doth reign.

Why not trust and never grieve?  
 Why not each day have hope and cheer?  
 Why not with happy hearts believe?  
 Why not rejoice? The Lord is near.

SLEEPING ORPHANS IN THEIR WHITE BEDS

O Father, from yon bright blue sky  
 Let guardian angels softly fly,  
 And hover o'er the clean, white beds  
 On which these orphans rest their heads.  
 No mothers near their cheeks to kiss,  
 And yet they rest in peaceful bliss,  
 Objects of love and tender prayers—  
 May dreams of home and heaven be theirs.

THE BOY SAVED

(February 23, 1911)

An old hut in the country had but two occupants, an aged grandmother and a little grandson. The only piece of furniture was a pine box, used for a table. The provisions consisted of only a small quantity of cornmeal and a little piece of bacon.



The old woman made a fire of the box, cooked the meal and bacon on the coals and shared it with the hungry boy. Then she sent him to Buckner Orphans Home with a statement of these sad facts, and went herself out into the world, not knowing whither she went. We have not heard from her since, but the boy is with us.

NO CLOUDS

(April 15, 1911)

I've seldom felt in all my years  
A lingering sense of sorrow;  
I've seldom felt distressing cares,  
That lasted till tomorrow.

The sorrows that to me have come,  
The shadows flitting by,  
Ne'er gather like a pall of gloom,  
Nor hide the star-lit sky.

The sunshine of each coming day  
Hath beamed down from above,  
And driven every cloud away  
And warmed my heart with love.

Tears of penitence water the garden of the heart and promote the growth of righteousness.

WERE I A BUD

Were I a bud I would expand  
And seek a flower to be,  
The largest blossom in the land  
On stem, or shrub, or tree.

Would like to grow by open door,  
And smile on each dear face  
Inside the cottage of the poor,  
And sweeten all the place.

## RESCUE THE DRIFTING

(Good Samaritan, 1884)

"Drifting, come to the rescue! Drifting, come to the rescue!" disturbed my dreams last night, and upon awaking from a restless sleep multitudes of human beings of every age and sex, moving forward in ignorance and vice, were contemplated.

Oh, it was worse than to have seen scores of people, old and young, floating rapidly down a murky, turbulent stream, without plan, purpose or power to save themselves, and with none to deliver them—as much worse as morality is more to be esteemed than mortality, and as souls are worth more than flesh, blood and bones.

I sat up in bed and recalled the scenes of boyhood, when I often stood near the banks of overflowing creeks, and on the cliffs of the Cumberland river, beholding its waters dashing through the hills and valleys of Kentucky, bearing on its rapid current, after torrents of rain had fallen, timber from forests and fencing from fields and farms, with force irresistible in wild confusion. Downward drifting, onward rushing with the raging, roaring river, now swallowed by a whirlpool, now heaved up again, only to be driven madly forward and dashed against the rugged, rocky ribs of limestone cliffs at some sudden river bend.

But this was not the rest-disturbing picture, as I heard the town clock strike one, and two, and on. It was but the scene of by-gone years, that came at memory's call in the darkness and stillness of the night, to represent a drifting more exciting and far more terrible to contemplate.

I thought of the dreadful drifting of human beings with immortal souls—thousands of our own race, aye of our own countrymen—who are drifting in a moral sense, drifting, downward drifting, borne by the force of depraved propensities and perverted passions, onward and downward, and nearing the final destruction. Now they are swallowed up in the whirlpools of greed and guilt and tried by undercurrents strong, now thrown to the surface and carried forward by iniquity at full tide, yielding to its force and having neither purpose nor power to oppose the current nor pull for the shore—drifting, downward drifting, gone beyond reach and rescue.

Oh, to think that not only the larger timber but even the sprigs and flowers, not only the rough criminals from the wiles of reckless society but the buds of hope from the bosom of cultured and refined society, noble boys and sweet girls from the pleasant homes of happy families are thus drifting to destruction.

“Come to the rescue!” What do we hear? A husband, once brave and true, is drifting to destruction. He is ruined in property and wrecked in mind and morals. The wife weeps and the children gather their tattered garments about them and cry for bread. The woman calls for help to save her husband from a death of shame and her children from want and wretchedness. She calls to her sisters in sorrow and suffering from the same cause—their husbands are drifting too—and from all over the land, with other hearts less unfortunate, comes the response: “We will to the rescue! We will to the rescue!”

But what can they do unless the men of the country respond? Hence, they call to the rescue ministers, deacons and church members, voters, office-holders, lawyers, judges and jurors. How many will respond?

“Drifting, come to the rescue! Drifting, come to the rescue!” should be caught up and reverberated from every American pulpit and platform, and from every hall of legislation and justice. And it should be ringing in the hearts and consciences of

all the people of this great nation with the solemnity of a funeral knell and with the inspiring power of a call to arms to stay death and devastation at the murderous hands of an invading army.

“Drifting?” Yes, drifting. “Drifting whither?” Drifting into squalid poverty and despair, into scenes of scandal and social shame, into family feuds and wretchedness, into foul guilt and filthy gutters, into judgment halls and within prison walls, into the gallowsway to the grave and the gangway to gehenna, *and not a few go in thereat.*

What swells the mighty current of evil that sweeps over the land, bearing death and destruction on its angry tide? ALCOHOL.

What are some of the whirlpools ready to swallow up those that are drifting on this murky current? Only three shall be mentioned.

*First, the Gambling Hell.*—This ugly name, well stereotyped, refers, we may suppose, to the low, dark, dirty dens, where sneaking dishonesty and gaming of the lowest kinds are practiced. But it is the tastefully constructed, neatly carpeted, gilded and brilliantly lighted gambling hall that is the more dangerous whirlpool. Near to these the innocent young man may venture, and into them the unexperienced drift.

The mother goes to the bedchamber of her “dear boy” at 9 o’clock p. m., but he is not there. The wife waits till a late hour for the return of “husband dear” from the society or clubroom, but he has drifted in a different direction, and returning takes his nap while she prepares breakfast. Her suspicions are aroused. For months her fears grow greater. At last he is a confirmed gambler and she knows it. It is so with the son, too! Oh who can come to the rescue?

*Next, the Brothel.*—There is many a “dear boy,” many a “darling daughter,” many a “sweet, pure sister,” many a once “husband dear,” and once “darling wife”—as those who have

drifted into this shameful whirlpool were called by their former "dear ones" in happy homes in the days of their innocency—who now revel in wickedness. O terrible whirlpool of madness, into which they have drifted, ere long to end a miserable existence, mayhap by suicide—it matters little how—unless they can be rescued. O God! is there no redemption? And hast thou no servants on earth, who will seek to rescue these drifting mortals? Mary Magdalene was pardoned, and now can none of these be encouraged to "go and sin no more"?

Whether or not any who have drifted into this whirlpool are calling, or even willing to be rescued, there are broken hearts that would give worlds for their redemption, and they are calling upon all who love God and humanity, "To the rescue! To the rescue!"

*Last, the Prison.*—Oh, how many have been drifting, downward drifting, till they occupy cells in county jails and state prisons. Many of them may be beyond redemption and neither fit to live or die, yet the feelings of humanity should not be forgotten. The death penalty will doubtless be justly executed upon numbers of them. But while life prolongs but for a few days they should be pointed to Christ and commended in prayer to the grace of God.

Others, as the result of legal investigation, or of serving out the time prescribed by the jury, will be set at liberty. Shall they be ostracized even from sympathy, and driven to utter despair, or would it not be better to instruct and encourage in reference to better lives?

Look through the bars. Some of them are young men. Their mothers are yet living. Their sisters' hearts are yet tender. Oh, may you not help them to encourage the poor boys to yet make life a success?

"But some," you say, "are hardened in sin and blackened in crime." Yes, but they are human beings, and they may not have had a kind word for years except from pals in wickedness. They

may not have heard a Christian hymn since their mothers died when they were boys, and may not have heard a Christian pray since in youth they kneeled in the old meeting house. Go, Christian sister, and sing for them through the iron grate. It might remind them of their mother's voice, and bring back the tender memories of more innocent days. Go, brother Christian, and pray for them. It might call up the prayers the old pastor offered for them when they went up with father and mother, now dead, to the house of God. Who knows but the fallow ground of their hard hearts might be broken till the melting rays of truth might enter.

"Down in the human heart,  
Crushed by the tempter,  
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore.  
Touched by a loving heart,  
Watered by kindness,  
Chords that were broken may vibrate once more."

The undercurrents in prison life, the influence of the reckless over those not so far gone, must be powerful as they now feel that they are about shut out from confidence and even from the sympathies of the world. There is great reason to fear that when such men come out again into society they will drift even more rapidly and recklessly downward and clear beyond the possibility of rescue.

Come now to the rescue, O philanthropist! Come, O Christian laborers!

The motives of the philanthropist are good and commendable, as he endeavors to reclaim any who are in any of the whirlpools mentioned, or drifting in any way. But the motives of the Christian are equally so, and then they reach further, desiring poor, drifting souls to be saved in Christ. Then to your work, brother, sister. Duty calls you, love prompts you and God will give you strength.

'Rescue the perishing,  
Duty demands it,  
Strength for the labor the Lord will provide.  
Back to the narrow way  
Patiently win them,  
Tell the poor wanderer a Savior has died.'

## REUNION SERMON, 1903

(It has been the custom of former inmates of Buckner Orphans Home to come together at the Home in Annual Reunion in October, and on such occasions hear a Reunion Sermon from their benefactor, Father Buckner. We present the sermon of 1903. The occasion was memorable. There was no place where the visiting orphans, or the present inmates could be seated. The spacious veranda and the corridors of the Girls' Building were utilized as standing room. The sermon was stenographically reported by several of the orphan girls.)

What I say may be zigzag and disjointed. I do not know that I shall be able to say what I would like. Your presence and the occasion bring to my mind a thousand vivid memories, and they are struggling for utterance. My thoughts are revolving so rapidly that the governor may lose its control. My heart is so full that I must guard the valve. To my few neighbors who have gathered I must say that this is a reunion of former inmates of the Home, numbers of whom we have not seen for years. They have been coming at intervals for 24 hours. A crowd came last night from the depot, singing as they entered:

"Home, home, sweet, sweet home,  
There is no place like home."

Some have brought their wives, and the children God has given them since we last saw them. You are welcome with us here today, my neighbors. I am interested in this community,

the home of our great institution; interested in the value of its farms and stock; in its financial, educational, social and moral development. Command me, my neighbors, at any time I can be of service to you or to the community. It is near the close of the first quarter of a century of this institution, and the twenty-seventh year of my orphan work. But this occasion is not to celebrate that event.

### THE SERMON

Paul said: "Though ye have ten thousand instructors yet have ye not many fathers." 1 Cor. 4:15. And John said: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth." 3 John 4.

These were marvelous words of the heroic Paul, who, after his wonderful conversion, devoted his life to preaching the gospel of the Son of God, who counted not his own life dear unto himself, and who placed no kind of valuation on personal ease or pleasure, so he might win souls to Christ. Paul suffered much, was sorely misrepresented, was beaten with many stripes, and finally put to death. But in the midst of most cruel persecutions and under the greatest misrepresentations, he appealed to his work as his vindication. Addressing his disciples he said, with exultant joy: "Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men."

*Ye are Our Epistle.*—I may be indulged in saying in your presence that every great institution has to suffer criticism, and so has every public man, especially if he be a preacher. I ignore every misrepresentation and every unkind criticism, that has been made on me personally, on my work, or on this institution. The results of the work as here manifest speak for the work itself. Nor do I appeal to these magnificent buildings, nor to these broad acres of land, that belong to the orphans in a way that no man can rob them. But rather as a vindication I wave



my hand above the heads of these splendid young men and women, who were reared here, and point to these pretty, brown-eyed, blue-eyed, gray-eyed children and tell the world that they, and many hundreds like them, yes, thousands, have gone out from this institution. They "are our epistles, written in our hearts, known and read of all men." Here are John, Charley, Jesse, Henry, Cynthia, Vallie, Elmo, Daisy and Mamie, with their wives and husbands, and this multitude of young men, women and children, just as good and worthy. God bless them all! I would not be partial. In these you behold the splendid results of this work. And to you, my dear ones, I gladly say that "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth." I have baptized many of you. Many of you, along the past years, have told me of your faith in the blessed Christ. And messages have been received from and concerning others of my scattered children, and all over Texas and beyond, have melted my heart as few things have done. I recall a letter from one of our dear boys, John Henderson, now a young preacher, who has brothers and sisters visiting us today, a long letter filled with expressions of religion, love, faith and desire for the salvation of others, scarcely equaled by anything I ever read. Another, not here because of a delayed train, gave my heart joy in a distant town, as I heard her talk to an old man so gently, earnestly, sensibly and pathetically, about what a consistent Christian faith and life will do for a child of God. And how proud I was to hear the pastor say that she is honored by the whole town. As I look in your faces, it gives me delight. I know so much of your young lives, and have heard so many good things concerning you since you left us, that it fills my soul. None of us have sprouted angels' wings. We cannot yet soar aloft and fly like the angels far above all sin and care. But we can walk, and I rejoice that so many of my children walk in the truth.

This is not a reunion of my own family. But I do rejoice

in having received into Christian fellowship all of my own children, Mary, Maggie, Addie, Bobbie, Joel, Dudley and Hal, and quite a number of my grandchildren. My great grandchildren are all yet too young, but I hope to see them walking in the truth also. No, this is a reunion of my orphan children, and I apply to them the words of my text, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth."

*What is Truth?*—God is the author of truth, of all truth and all good things. The devil is the author of all evil and is "the father of lies." Those who walk in truth turn their backs on the devil, with all of his evil suggestions, temptations and machinations, and walk in the light of God's truth.

*Truth is Beautiful.*—The "human form divine," the physical structure and facial features of mankind are painted by artists and sung by poets, as superior in loveliness and attractiveness to all the objects formed by the inimitable skill of the plastic hand of God. But there is nothing so beautiful as truth. A beautiful spirit, a beautiful character, a beautiful life, make a beautiful face; and to walk in truth is a beautiful walk. The old grandmother in homespun dress and calico sunbonnet, with sunken eyes, thin, pale lips, gray hair and faltering steps, is beautiful, because she has been "faithful, true and kind," as you sang a while ago. She has walked in the truth. An old man with stooped shoulders, wrinkled face, leaning on his staff, is beautiful, no matter how uncertain his footstep, or faltering his tongue. And he is admired, and tenderly loved, if he has walked in the beautiful light of God's word of truth. On one occasion a girl's clothing was in flames, and for a moment it looked as if it would be all over with her soon. But the old father rushed to her rescue and saved her life, though at the cost of severe burns to himself. One hand was terribly scarred and drawn. Later he died, and the thoughtful ones, preparing him for burial, crossed his hands over his breast and covered the scarred hand with the other. But the daughter, who had

been saved, approached, reversed the position of the hands, placing the scarred hand over the other, and said: "This is the beautiful hand." It is what one is and does, it is the life that makes one beautiful.

*Truth is Uplifting.*—It brightens the countenance, emboldens the spirit and gives strength and courage to meet difficulties and accomplish great purposes. I remember one of our dear boys, sitting years ago on the gravel walk near the well, with dejected look and fallen countenance. He had no words at command. He had gone into the path of disobedience to his matron, and tried to cover it with a falsehood. But I approached him kindly, persuaded him that truth was better than falsehood and he soon told me all, looking me in the eye and feeling better and stronger. It was his last falsehood, so far as I have learned. He is now a man, a Christian man, and has a Christian wife. They both walk in the truth. He is successful in business and is the pride of his brothers and sisters, who were also of this orphan family. He has self-respect and self-confidence, and does not think of failure. That which is false is low and mean, is humiliating. It is a heavy load. Under such a load one cannot climb up the hills of God, but will be crushed before he reaches the sunlit crest of honor. Yes, truth is uplifting.

*Truth is a Great Weapon.*—When you fight against the devil, when you make battle against the many forms of sin and temptation, keep truth on your side and victory will be easy. Otherwise, defeat is certain. God's truth is a sword, a shield, a complete armor. In the great battle of life millions have fallen because they have not honored the truth. "Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," the truth itself, and God will see that you conquer. Oh, I do rejoice that so many of my children walk in the truth. Let me beg of those who do not, to turn, to turn now from all sin and darkness into the light of God. Take the word of God, each one of you, as "a lamp to thy footsteps and a light to thy path."

*God's Truth is a Lamp.*—You carry a lamp in your hand and its light falls upon your very footsteps. You then walk in confidence. The lamp is not to throw light a great distance. It is for your immediate footsteps. I am now stepping carefully among these barefoot boys crowded close together on this floor space. I look not out over the lawns, I do not want to step on my boys' feet. Take the truth of God's word as a lamp to your feet and step carefully in its light. It will give you confidence and safety.

But the Bible is not merely a lamp. It is a great, bright flame, a light to your pathway. It shines ahead, warns of pitfalls, rough places and thorny places, and reveals the sparkling waters and tempting flowers of peace, purity, love and life. God's book is the very embodiment of truth and light.

*The Bible is a Microscope.*—With the microscope you see the smallest atoms, things the natural eye cannot discern. Many little sins are scarcely seen, if seen at all, by the natural man. Moral evils may not be detected. One's own thoughts and desires may not be realized as evil by himself. But throw the microscope of God's word upon them, and their hideous forms magnify before the astonished gaze, and Paul's words are better understood: "I was once alive without the law, but when the commandment came sin revived and I died." He died to the love of sin when he looked upon his life through the microscope of God's book.

*God's Book as an X-Ray.*—More powerful than the microscope, it reveals what is on the very inside of the secret recesses of the heart. One of our orphan daughters broke a needle in her finger the other day. Not a particle of it was visible, not even the opening where it entered. We took her to our Children's Hospital, the City Annex, and the next morning when the X-Ray was applied the half needle was easily seen, a dark object lying close to the bone. Apply the light of the Divine Book to your very inmost soul and you will be so awakened to the things easily discerned therein that you will want them taken

away, and will be moved to repentance and prayer and to an earnest purpose to walk in the truth.

*God's Book as a Great Headlight.*—We are traveling through a wilderness of sin and darkness, and going at a mighty speed. There are unseen dangers ahead all along the way and enemies abound in the land. We desire to steer clear of them all. Sometimes we are at a loss what to do, and are like the children of Israel when they were fleeing from Egypt and came to the Red Sea. They could see no way to escape from the enemy in pursuit. For a spell they felt the force of Moses' command, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord!" But God divided the waters and they obeyed marching orders. The light of the Divine Presence went before them and led them through. It was a cloud in the day and a pillar of fire by night.

Throw the unerring light of truth before you when you would go right and in safety. God's truth is a great headlight. When clouds are lowering and winds blowing, storms descending and thunder roaring, it will make your pathway clear and inviting.

*God's Truth is a Telescope.*—Through it you can see beyond the stars, gazing upward and heavenward, the eye guided by the unerring word of God. You can see through the gates of pearl, standing ajar. You can see beyond the jasper walls into the golden city, lighted by the word of God, and can see the glory and honor of the nations, the redeemed of the Lord, the saints of God, entering into it. You can see that there are no tears there, no shrouds, no tombstones, no graves. You can see the "pure river of the water of life," and all the beauties of the Paradise of God, the throne of God in the midst of it, and the saints casting their glittering crowns at the feet of Jesus. You can behold the faces of the angels, if you cannot hear their happy voices nor the sweet strains of music floating out from their golden harps. As these beauties dazzle before your enraptured vision, you can know that you are not guided by astrono-

mers, who by the aid of their most powerful instruments have never seen even all the stars, nor followed the comets to the end of their flight. You can know that you are not guided by the suggestions of navigators of land, or sea, or air; that you are not sailing in an airship, but guided upward by God's unerring truth. I commend to you the Bible as your great telescope. It is God's truth. It offers you all you need to know about sin and salvation, heaven and eternity.

*What Is It to Walk in the Truth?*—Christians must not sit in idleness. The feet belong to God as well as the heart. All the energies and capacities of our nature belong to Him. We must not expect to float through life on a tide of divine grace, and be welcomed into heaven as good and faithful servants. We must walk in the ways of the Lord, make progress, go forward in every good work. Jesus, our great exemplar, "went about doing good." We must do likewise, must "walk" after His example.

Oh my dear ones, I want that you shall be practical Christians, active in the service of God in being helpful to suffering, dependent humanity. I want the power of your words and example to tell for good everywhere you go. Our children have gone over all Texas, and as far north as Chicago and Nebraska, east to New York, south to Galveston, Central Mexico and Cuba, and west to Arizona and the Philippine Islands. If all of them were walking in the truth and active in Christian work, what a power for good! Many of them are walking in the truth. They are over the land and on the sea. Others will go, and the world should be blessed by them. I believe that soon or late your active walking in the truth will bless China, darkest Africa and the islands of the sea. Why should not some of you, as the years pass by, go as foreign missionaries, as teachers and artisans? Religion is not restricted as to its field, or as to souls. It has to do with education, the arts and sciences, and temporal as well as spiritual things.

When the time comes for me to close my eyes in death, I

think I shall pass on better satisfied under the consciousness of having had something to do in the support, education and training of orphan children for God's service and in the active, practical walks of life. If any of you shall stand around the grave of your old "Father Buckner," you must not grieve over any trouble you may have given him. You must not think of his faults and shortcomings, nor of the sacrifices, toils and hardships he has endured. Only think what a blessed privilege and a blessing all these things have been to him, and of the lessons you have learned, and how good God has been to you. Think of your obligations to walk in the truth, and to work for the glory of God and the good of the world.

*Joy.*—Paul endured hardships and yet had joy. His hardships were greater than mine, but my joy may have been greater than his. I was a joyful young Christian before I was twelve years old. I was a happy preacher when I was but seventeen, and have been blessed in my ministry for 53 years. I have had sorrow. But all my grief has come from my own heart and the errors and shortcomings of my own life. God and the world, my brethren and my enemies have been better to me than I deserved. But withal, I have had much joy. It has come through rifted clouds as bright sunlight. It has played over my soul as pleasant breezes freighted with the perfume of flowers. It has been as the singing of birds to my heart. The most joyful part of my life has been in the work of founding and conducting this blessed Home for orphan children, and has come sweetly in seeing my children walk in the truth.

*Children.*—Children walking in the truth. What is prettier than a child? What more innocent? "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." The benedictions of Heaven abide with children walking in the truth. The other day more than 40 of these were baptized, within three weeks more than 60. They came to me at different times and places and told of their conversion. No revival meeting, no evangelist, nothing but songs, Sunday

school and a sermon each Sunday morning. No death-bed stories, no appeal to sympathy, only heart repentance for sin, simple faith in Christ and a desire to walk in the truth.

*My children.* Is there selfishness in this emphasis? I was more than ordinarily glad when I baptized the last of my own sons and daughters. Those who have not had such an experience know nothing about it. It is better felt than told. But how would any preacher feel over having baptized, as I have done, hundreds of orphan children for whom he had cared, as if he were their own father?

I do not know how the appellation, "Father Buckner," came into use among you, but it originated early in the Home. I have never been ashamed of it. Really it gratifies me for you to address me thus affectionately, and in return to call you *my children*. God bless you, my sons, my daughters! My sons-in-law, my daughters-in-law, my grandchildren! My children walking in the truth. Your Father Buckner's children walking in the truth.

You are welcome here today as you are welcome to the arms of Jesus Christ. Is there one here who is not a Christian? I want you to know that Jesus will make you welcome if you will but come to Him. Come, and walk in the truth and be free from sin. "If the truth shall make you free you shall be free indeed."

#### INSPIRING ORDINATION CHARGE

(The following charge by R. C. Buckner was delivered to his son, Reverend Hal F. Buckner, on the occasion of the latter's ordination to the ministry at the First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, December 23, 1903.)

It seldom falls to the lot of a father to deliver the charge on the occasion of the ordination of his own son to the Christian ministry. But it is the will of the ordaining Church and Presbytery that I charge you, my son according to the flesh, my son



in the gospel and my brother in Christ Jesus, to be courageous, conscientious and faithful in all things pertaining to the sacred office upon which you now enter, an office than which none is higher, than whose duties and responsibilities none can be more sacred or important.

To me this is a very pleasant privilege, as well as serious duty, and it brings to my heart an unusual degree of solemnity, solicitude and tenderness, on account of which I will be excused in not trusting my emotions to extemporaneous remarks. Because of the special relationships and surroundings, I shall exercise the privilege of giving a charge somewhat unusual in some of its features. My son, you are the last born of your doting parents. Since they first looked into your face, October 13, 1878, they have been affectionately solicitous for your happiness and general welfare. Since you were "born again" your growth and prosperity in spiritual life has been a matter of deep concern and hopeful anxiety. On August 23, 1890, it was my happy privilege to baptize you upon a public profession of your faith in Christ, and since that time I have not only desired, but believed, that under the leading of the Holy Spirit you would find your life work in the Christian ministry. You well know how intimately acquainted I was with your struggle of mind, heart and conscience, when you were endeavoring to throw off your impressions and inclinations to preach the gospel, and to engage in secular pursuits; and yet how careful I was not to persuade you the one way or the other; and how I aided you in seeking secular employment, while you knew my convictions. You have not forgotten the memorable night, on which, of all the family, you and I alone were awake, and when you came to me from an adjoining room and notified me of your final decision. Since that hour your reading, studies and prayers have been directed toward the great calling, upon which you now enter as an ordained preacher.

You are the youngest representative of a line of numerous

preachers coming down through past generations on both sides of your father's family. On your grandmother Buckner's side you can look back to that remarkable North Carolinian, Reverend Elias Dotson, and still back of him to Elder Billie Dotson, himself not unknown to Baptist history. On your grandfather Buckner's side of the house you are, so far as I recall, the seventh Baptist preacher of his name, extending back to the birth of the century just closing.

The First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, and this presbytery, their servants on this occasion, have examined your call and qualifications for the ministry, and have declared themselves satisfied, and now I approach this charge with an inexpressible degree of gratification, solemnity and reverence. This ordination service is being conducted by a Church upon whose request and in whose baptistery I administered to your four sisters at the same time the ordinance of holy baptism, which also I administered to your only brother, later on, not remote from this place. This service is being conducted within a few hundred yards of your place of birth, and in the presence of the people with whom you have lived all your life, and with the coöperation of your oldest and most intimate friends. Colonel W. L. Williams, the senior deacon who formally presented you, in the name of the Church, to this ordaining council, was a door neighbor when you were born. If we had all been Episcopalians, his wife would have been your "god-mother." You now sit within a few hundred yards of where your grandfather, Elder Daniel Buckner, fell asleep after nearly sixty years of faithful service as a Baptist preacher, and you are in the presence and under the voice of your own father, who himself has entered upon his fifty-third year of preaching the same gospel. Only the Red River and breadth of prairie are between you and the grave of the uncle for whom you are named, H. F. Buckner, who lies buried among the Indians after an eventful life of more than thirty years as a missionary among them. If you can only

gather about you recollections of the arduous, faithful, fruitful labors of your ancestors, and recognize the fact that God has placed burdens on your shoulders, and responsibilities that are to be laid down only with the close of your earthly pilgrimage, you will realize even from such considerations that there is a solemnity about this occasion. O my son, to me it seems that these very facts and surroundings should themselves admonish you to enter upon your work with fear and trembling and yet with heroic boldness and determination to discharge your whole duty.

But the things thus far mentioned, suggestive and encouraging as they are, sink into insignificance when compared with the marvelous fact that God hath "counted you worthy" and called you into His service by the Holy Spirit, that "He hath committed unto you the ministry of reconciliation." It would seem scarcely needful that I admonish and exhort you to be faithful to such a trust, and yet it is the more important that I do so in this presence, in the midst of these pleasant and impressive surroundings, and because of the very sacredness of the God-appointed office upon which you enter. Heed the callings of God. Remember His authority over His spiritual kingdom and the whole universe, and recognize the responsibility of the office to which He hath called you. Your great duty is to "preach the word." The gospel is the power of God. "It hath pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," not "foolish preaching," but what foolish philosophers call foolish. "Go preach my gospel," is a divine command. "Shun not to declare the whole counsel of God." Preach the whole gospel, not merely what you may find to be the most popular, nor what you might regard as the most important part of it. Preach a complete Bible. It is God's book, all of it, and man must neither add to nor subtract from it. Mortals dare not trifle with it. In it God says just what He means and means just what He says, not more, not less. Everything in this

blessed book hath its place and importance. All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for reproof, for doctrine, for instruction in righteousness, that the man God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Study it all, preach all of it. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Give proper place and importance to each and every part of the Bible, historical, prophetic, ceremonial, typical, poetical, proverbial; its moral law, its statutes; every point of doctrine, every command, every promise; each duty in its proper place. Call Bible things by Bible names. "Hold fast the form of sound words," but strive not about words to no profit. "Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife. Shun profane and babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness." Take heed unto thyself, and unto doctrines, continue in them, for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. "I charge thee, therefore, before God and our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing, preach the word, be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." Paul said to Timothy, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts will heap up to themselves teachers having itching ears." Are we not now in the midst of just such times? Are there not many who, to gratify itching ears, find subjects for their sermons and their texts outside the Bible, sensational, political, social? Do they not take their texts from newspapers, political platforms, anywhere, anything, rather than the plain, old Bible, the "old, old story," repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, salvation by grace through faith? My son, my brother, let the Bible be your textbook, Christ and the apostles your examples, their subjects your themes, the glory of God and the salvation of souls your great object.

“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity. Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them.”

Many other duties than preaching devolve upon you as an elder, a bishop, an overseer, a shepherd, that the want of time will not allow me to discuss, not even to sum them up by name. But as the presentation of the Bible on this occasion also devolves upon me, I hand you this volume of God’s word, which should be regarded as your only book of authority in regard to your religious duties and official obligations. Take it as the book of all books. It is not a sealed volume, but is open to all who would look therein. Take it as your guide and counselor. It is a storehouse of divine wisdom. It is a garner of golden grain, no chaff about it.

Men’s books with heaps of chaff are stored,  
 God’s book doth golden grains afford;  
 Beware of chaff and spend thy pains  
 In gathering up the golden grains.

May God, the Father, bless and keep you, the Holy Spirit comfort and strengthen you, and Christ, the Son, be ever present with you in the fulfillment of this declaration in the great commission under which you go forth, “Lo, I am with you alway, Amen.”

#### WESTERN BAPTIST PREACHERS AND PRAIRIE DOGS

(From Good Samaritan, April, 1885)

When trains temporarily tarry at Texas towns, tired travelers are truly tempted, if not sorely tried, by the vehement voices of venders of victuals vociferously vying with each other:

"Fresh fruit pies?" "Sandwiches, ten cents!" "Hot coffee and lunch!" "Apples, five cents each, three for a dime!"

Well used to the like o' this, this wayfaring wanderer in his wearisome work, having wended his way Westward, seriously sighed to have such sweet sounds salute his sensibilities as the train turned on to a side switch when the sun was slowly sinking and when the burly brakeman cried the station—"Sweet-water!"

Hunger often sharpens the appetite and tunes the taste, and now the cry of "Fresh fruit pies," or anything else to eat, was what I longed to hear. See, yonder they come! Baskets and bundles and boxes, borne by bouncing boys, who come rushing, running, pushing, pressing passway to the platform.

"Prairie dogs! Prairie dogs for sale! Prairie dogs, two bits apiece, two for a half dollar!"

This dusty, drowsy disciple decided demurely to decline such delicacies, though the supply seemed sufficient for every human being in hearing to eat two dogs apiece. "Peep in and spy them, Mister, buy them, Mister!"

"O my, what are the poor things?" And with this interrogatory a lady from the East tremblingly touched the little prison of two of these Western curiosities of the genus *canis* (so claimed by those who judge them as some do a tree—by its bark only). "Pretty pets, ma'm, pretty pets. Please buy 'em, one dog for a quarter, or two for four bits." "But," queries the gentle reader, "what likeness is there between prairie dogs and Baptist preachers in the West?"

1. Prairie dogs love to congregate, and are numerous in some places, while there are entire counties where they are unknown. So with Baptist preachers.

2. Some people are anxious to rid the country of prairie dogs, but all the same the dogs contend for their right to occupy it. So with the preachers.

3. God has made prairie dogs free to choose and act for

themselves, and they maintain this right at all hazards. So with the preachers of the West, as well as everywhere else.

4. Prairie dogs are not easily captured. It requires the most cunning devices to catch them. So with our Western preachers. If anyone thinks they are not awake and prepared to take care of themselves and keep that which has been committed to them, he will find his hand open and his eagle free.

5. Prairie dogs are not afraid of light or heat, yet they go deep for water and guide others to it. It is said that no matter how deep they have to go they never stop until they reach water, and that Western people are often guided by them in locating wells, knowing that water can be found at some depth where they burrow. So with our Baptist preachers. They go for water and show others the way. And though it is scarce in large districts in the West, they are sure to find enough of it.

6. Prairie dogs have to scratch for their homes. So do our Western preachers (and all others for that matter).

## CHAPTER XL

### OUT OF THE ORDINARY

In his thinking and doing, R. C. Buckner was often out of the ordinary. He delighted at times to make excursions entirely outside the great beaten highway. If we failed to note some of his by-path excursions, this book would not be complete.

*Leaf Like No Other Leaf.*—The writer heard Dr. Buckner say one day in a chapel talk: "If I were a leaf in the forest and should wake up to find that I was exactly like some other leaf, I would want a great wind to come and blow me away to some other part of the world."

*A Midnight Wedding.*—On December 31, 1900, one minute before midnight, Dr. Buckner began pronouncing the wedding ceremony that united in holy matrimony Mr. Henry Jones and Miss Roberta Coleman of Weatherford, Texas. The ceremony was begun in the nineteenth century and closed in the twentieth century." The foregoing is recorded in the county clerk's office in Weatherford.

The bride was a daughter of Rev. and Mrs. L. W. Coleman and a granddaughter of Dr. Buckner. Beautiful notice was made of this unique marriage at the time in "The Baptist Standard" by J. B. Cranfill, editor. It may be the only marriage ceremony in the annals of time that began in one century and finished in the next.

*Gold-headed Cane.*—On the fiftieth anniversary of Doctor and Mrs. R. C. Buckner's marriage, Dr. J. B. Cranfill made Dr. Buckner a present of a beautiful ebony cane with gold head and appropriate inscription. Dr. Buckner valued the cane for its intrinsic worth, but more especially because it was a present from



his friend. But could he use it? He had never walked with a cane. When his son, Rev. Hal F. Buckner, the youngest of his children, was ready to go to China as a missionary, he playfully seized the cane and put it into his traveling trunk. The father, with a merry twinkle of his eye, said, "All right, my son, take it along. You will probably need it before your father will!" When the Doctor, after he was eighty years old, visited his son in China, he found the young man proud in the possession of the cane, counting it of priceless value. But the octogenarian doctor himself made the entire journey around the world without a cane. And when, a year afterwards, he had a cataract removed by surgical operation and was nearly blind for weeks, no one ever saw him walking with a cane.

*What Is a Dictionary?*—Living near Buckner Orphans Home was a most excellent and intelligent young lady whose name was Maggie McNeil. She was a careful student. It came to the knowledge of Dr. Buckner that this young lady in her studies possessed only a small dictionary, which had marks of long and constant use. A few days after this he surprised her with a large unabridged volume, on the flyleaf of which he had written the following:

#### THE DICTIONARY

"A book of words, though not of deeds,  
A book for every one who reads,  
That each may understand each word,  
And speak, not blushing to be heard,  
And write aright in mother tongue,  
In prose prosaic, or in song."

She prized the book above rubies.

*Never Fail on a Child.*—Dr. Buckner was once asked by a committee of ladies to give them some information about Buckner Orphans Home. His reply was laconic and pointedly significant. Note this excerpt:

"We never fail on a child, unless the child is naturally a failure itself or has been practiced on by others who do not know how to train a child until it has been switched off effectually from the right track."

*Baptizing and Marrying.*—It is evening of July 14, 1912. There are present in Buckner Home Chapel over 500 orphan children. A sermon from "Father Buckner" on "Following Jesus" falls like gentle dew into all hearts. The sermon is finished. Six nice girls and a noble boy confess the Good Shepherd and follow Him into the holy ordinance of baptism. And the seven youthful disciples come straightway up out of the water while the Home orchestra leads a hymn of praise to God. Father Buckner, who did the baptizing, remains standing in the baptismal font. Electric lights cast a sheen of splendor throughout the spacious chapel. The hymn is hushed. A young man and young woman approach. Who are they? All eyes in the temple are on them, and behold they are solemnly joined in God's holy institution of matrimony. They are Claude Bishop, a young business man of Dallas, and Essie Belle Anglyn, inmate of Buckner Orphans Home. Mr. Bishop was reared in the Home and now returns for his helpmeet. May their path be lengthened and bordered with flowers, even to sunny Eden.

*Exciting Opossum Hunt.*—For years it was the custom of Mrs. N. H. McNeill and her benign daughter, Miss Maggie, to give Dr. Buckner an "Annual 'Possum Hunt" in their great Tanglewood Parks near Buckner Orphans Home. One of these hunts came when he was eighty years old. He was permitted to have some of his friends, and among them were young attorneys from Dallas. It was night and the hunt a brilliant success. Recalling the vigor and the delight for the chase that belongs to youth, the Doctor climbed trees and either shook or with his own hand pulled from the limbs no less than seven of those wilderness denizens. And not a man of the company enjoyed the feast that followed more than he.

*Nearing Eighty-two, Baptizing Eighty-seven.*—On the evening of August 30, 1914, Dr. Buckner immersed eighty-seven of his children within thirty-five minutes. It was a deeply solemn service and baptizing was in the beautiful baptistery connected with the Home Chapel. For nearly two weeks he had been giving chapel "family talks" and "family sermons" to his children with results as stated. This number, with others approved but not baptized on that occasion, comprised nearly all the Home children old enough to understand and not already members of the church. It is not often that a preacher above eighty baptizes on one occasion more souls that he is years old.

*"Scrapographs."*—For many years Dr. Buckner wrote week by week a number of concise, pithy and often keenly-pointed paragraphs, which he termed "Scrapographs." Reproduced here, they would occupy the space of this volume. Some selections are presented:

#### SCRAPGRAPHS

No apology is offered for casting this word "scrapograph" in the mint. It will pass at par. It will serve its purpose for the introduction of scraps of things without falling into the ruts that old paragraphers have dug. The now popular heading, "News and Views," was cast in the same mint more than twenty years ago. More recently, "It is easier to do a big thing than a little thing anyhow," and "Without work it is impossible to please God." As to paternity, these are all of the same family, clever urchins adrift. "Scrapographs" will get into the later editions of the dictionary.

These Scrapographs are not designed  
To tax or concentrate the mind.  
They mean to skip from thing to thing,  
Sometimes to reason, sometimes to sing,  
And yet on nothing dwell at length,  
For brevity's the soul of strength.

In former times our mothers made  
 Scrapquilts for cold, cold weather,  
 Took scraps of many shapes and shade  
 And stitched them close together.  
 The beauty of those quilts appeared  
 In colors somewhat blended,  
 And if a rent between occurred  
 With ease it soon was mended.

But in these Scrapographs, not so;  
 Each "piece" remains divided;  
 And as to "shade," you can but know  
 No blending is provided.  
 They're meant to ventilate the mind,  
 To turn on rays of light,  
 To help the thoughtful and refined,  
 And guide the heart aright.

Trust in the Lord, but do your level best.

Despise not the day of small men; they may grow to be big men.

Many a school in Texas has failed and sold its property. Buckner Home Academy has been educating children from its incipiency, and yet has no endowment to pay teachers.

If your old age shall be fruitful, what shall the harvest be?

Closing a letter, a writer says, "We belong to the church." Who can tell what he means?

Spare your worst enemy, remembering that "Self-preservation is the first law of nature!"

Some are never satisfied except when dissatisfied, and they find their chief satisfaction in expressing their dissatisfaction.

Necessity is the mother of activity.

A wise head makes a still tongue.

If you would bring in a good bag of game don't go out blindfolded, nor shoot at random.—A lesson for preachers.

## A MIDWINTER ROSEBUSH

(At a Rosebush Reception)

On this small bush no leaves are seen,  
 And yet no root nor stem is dead.  
 When summer comes, midst foliage green,  
 It will display sweet roses red.  
 So, though poor mortals, still shall rest,  
 Like leafless stems in sterile sod,  
 Yet they shall rise and with the blest  
 Bloom in the Paradise of God.

Bury all your troubles and plant flowers over their graves.  
 If you are to engage in the business of "casting out motes"  
 better stand before the looking-glass.

Proper ecclesiastical nomenclature is an important desideratum and should be substituted for a worldly-wise terminology. Paul puts it more laconically, saying, "Hold fast the form of sound words."

Light literature lingers longest with Lilliputians.

An idle brain is the home of discontent.

"I'd marry any man that could pay the bills."—Mary M——.  
 That's the cause of many an unhappy marriage.

Satan loves darkness rather than light,  
 Because his imps assemble there;  
 But oft he robes himself in white,  
 Enters the church and leads the prayer.  
 The hungry donkey brays for bread,  
 And when he's fed no more is said.  
 The earnest Christian prays for bread;  
 Bread is given and thanks are said.

"What has become of the old-fashioned mother who had time to sew for her children?"—"Snap Shots" in "Dallas News."

She is now taking care of three grandchildren while their own mother is at the theatre or the ball.

Some speak thrice before thinking once—loquacity.  
Some think thrice before speaking once—sagacity.

#### THE M. D. AND D. D. IN REPORTEE

“So many fools in the pulpit,” exclaimed an M. D.,  
As he looked round with scorn at a nearby D. D.  
As quick as swift thought came this cutting reply  
From the preacher sedate, with a laugh in his eye,  
“Yes, the pulpit hath fools and so hath the pew,  
Of fools there are many, of wise men but few;  
Some fools wear the ermine, some run the drug store;  
There are fools with the pill-bags, yes M. D.’s galore.”

The strength of a man’s anger is often his greatest weakness.  
He who wastes time is the most reckless spendthrift. It may be poetical, but it is a waste of breath to cry out, “Backward, turn backward, O Time, in thy flight.”

These days the wife is often a man of her own head. In a marriage ceremony my father once said to the bride: “And do you promise to love and obey him in all things you think proper?”

Frances Willard quotes from an author whose name is too long and laborious for a Scrapograph this remarkable pessimistic misconception: “The youth of friendship is better than its old age.” This is not true either in philosophy or in human experience, and I have lived long enough to know it. True friendship grows and ripens with age and is sweeter when ripe.

It is better in the social world, as well as in gardens, to plant roses rather than thorns.

Take care of the body that the dwelling-place of the soul may be without blemish.

## CHAPTER XLI

### AROUND THE WORLD

This tour was made in 1913. The little select company consisted of "Father Buckner," his good wife, "Aunt Vi," and his namesake daughter, "Bobbie" (Mrs. T. L. Westerfield), and they toured by way of the setting sun and the Far East. Dr. Buckner was commissioned by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention to an important missionary conference in Canton, China, and to mission fields in the Orient. They went at their own charges, but were glad of the opportunity afforded to visit Rev. Hal F. Buckner, Th.D., and Robert E. Beddoe, M.D., missionaries in China, all of the "Buckner Colony," which now consists of nine of his children and grandchildren.

*Good-bye Sermon.*—Sunday, March 9, 1913, "Father Buckner" preached a Good-bye Sermon to his orphan children and his helpers on "Sending the Light." Then Rev. L. W. Coleman, Superintendent, Buckner Home Academy, was chosen acting pastor during Dr. Buckner's absence, J. L. Walker retaining his position as chaplain. Sunday evening Pastor Buckner baptized twenty-one of his orphan children, and on Wednesday evening following baptized six others, after which he administered the Lord's Supper. Thursday evening a musical reception was given in his honor by Mrs. L. W. Coleman's trained classes.

*Good-bye Talk in Manna Hall.*—This came Friday morning, March 14, at breakfast. He said: "My Dear Children and Helpers: I am especially pleased. You came into Manna Hall so quietly and orderly that I had to inquire if you were all in. You know I do not see you distinctly. I go away to China,

but I leave you in the hands of as good people as are in the world."

*Shower of Messages.*—On the eve of his departure came such a shower of love messages as to tax Dr. Buckner to read them.

F. M. McConnell, Dallas, corresponding secretary: "Our 3,503 white Baptist churches in Texas believe the cause in China will be benefited by your counsel."

Rev. L. R. Scarborough, Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas: "You go with the unbounded love of the Seminary."

Rev. A. R. Griggs, colored minister, Dallas: "In the name of 2,444,055 colored Baptists of America I send greetings to the people in the Orient." There were many others.

A farewell service in their honor was held in the First Baptist Church, Dallas. Pastor Truett preached a sermon full of pathos and tender reminiscences, and prayers were offered commending them to the grace of God. Then they faced toward the Orient, sending back this message:

"We had a delightful trip from Dallas to San Francisco. Miss Ida Taylor, returning to her mission work in China, had preceded us two days. Telegrams and letters from friends and officials elsewhere brought good cheer. We are under thrilling gratitude to the President of the United States for having taken time in the midst of his pressing duties to dictate and append his own name to a letter of introduction to all diplomatic and consular officers of the Government; to Hon. Wm. Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State, for special favors; Hon. Chas. A. Culberson, Senator from Texas; also Governor Colquitt of Texas, Mayor Holland of Dallas, Masonic fraternities and other orders. Glad to make special mention of Dr. George W. Truett in these matters to Mrs. E. J. Kiest of Dallas, to Dr. and Mrs. G. T. Veal of New Mexico, Mrs. G. G. Wright, Mr. Alex. Sanger, Mrs. Charles Padgitt and Mr. and Mrs. Eli Sanger and many other good friends of Dallas and throughout the State."



*On Board the Shinyo Maru.*—This Japanese ocean palace was called by the people of the Far East “the star ship of all trans-Pacific liners.” It was the ocean home of Dr. Buckner and company for twenty-eight days, where they enjoyed the best modern conveniences, even to a daily newspaper with world news received by wireless telegraphy. On entering this ship at San Francisco they were thrilled to find great baskets and bouquets of flowers, fruits, sweets, books and “bon voyage” letters and telegrams.

*Hawaii.*—From the Golden Gate to Honolulu was seven days. The Buckners were met by friends. Among these were Mrs. Edwards, daughter of Mr. T. J. Oliver of Dallas, the wife and daughter of Mr. A. A. Green of Dallas, and other friends, who made them at home in Hawaii. These friends courteously toured them to interesting points in the Island City, and about its glory-crowned environs. The rule of sentiment here, as in all lands of the setting sun, to encourage one religious denomination, the one in the ascendancy and discourage all others, was looked on with the gravest concern. Returning to their ship, they were regaled by a profusion of floral offerings given by their Hawaiian friends.

*Japan.*—It was a quick skip across the Pacific to Yokohama. Here a halt was made and the city “taken in” by ’rikisha. A trip by rail to Kamakura gave opportunity to visit a big bronze idol, the largest in this heathen country, 50 feet high. Said Dr. Buckner: “I went inside of this Buddha and climbed the stairway in the middle of his body, up to his head, and found he had neither heart nor brains, though he has stood there a thousand years for people to worship.”

On invitation, a run was made to Tokyo, where Dr. Buckner looked in on the famous John R. Mott Missionary Conference, which was then in session. It was also his joy while there to visit the Baptist Theological Seminary. He also visited Kobe and Nagasaki, “where,” said he, “the Japs called me ‘papa’ be-

cause of my white head and beard." The beloved missionary, E. N. Walne of Fukuoka, whose mother lives in Dallas, showed Dr. Buckner many courtesies while in Japan. In a communication in "The Baptist Standard" of October 3, 1913, Dr. Buckner thus gives his impressions of the far-off Island Empire: "Idolatry is waning, but it still has a strong hold on the multitude. With 70,000 Christians there are yet 43,000,000 heathen. Some of the finest buildings I visited were idol temples. One at Nagasaki is approached by a broad flight of stone steps. Here are many pots filled with the bones of ancestors, and people are worshipping. With the Christian religion substituted for idolatry and added to their intelligence, skill, industry and enterprise, this nation would soon become an earthly paradise. Baptists have a responsibility in Japan and in all other fields, which I thus express: World-wide philanthropy, universal Christian fellowship, and loyalty to Christ in all things."

*On East China Sea.*—(Letter to wards and workers of Buckner Orphans Home—Condensed.) "April 15, 1913. Good morning to everybody in Manna Hall. We are out in the middle of East China Sea. I have been sleeping and dreaming of a good breakfast in Manna Hall. The whistle of the fog-horn woke me. The deep ocean fog often shuts out everything from view. The loud steam fog-horn is to warn other vessels lest there be a collision sending everybody to the bottom, where the whales play hide and seek. We enjoy every hour of our journey. There are no little girls in my room to keep me from being lonesome, but the waves sing to me and at night the billows rock me into deep repose.

(Stopped writing because a ship was passing; then for tiffin—see your dictionary.)

"Now we are passing Formosa. Do you recall the kind of tea grown on this celebrated island?"

(Interrupted again to give list of trunks and other baggage to purser for customhouse inspection at Manila.)

"Be good, my children, each to the other and one to all. Your same old affectionate Father Buckner."

At Manila, after spending a day seeing jungle life, Dr. Buckner and party were taken in charge by Lieutenant Beaumont B. Buck, who was raised in Dallas and who showed them Fort McKinley, where he was in command, and toured them to many noted points. Governor Crawford, reared in Philadelphia, also showed them courtesies and proposed to have Dr. Buckner journey with him to Pompeii and other celebrated points in the Orient. He assured Dr. Buckner that the Moros wanted the United States to continue in the Philippines, fearing oppression should the Government be turned over to "Filipinos." The hand of the United States Government in the Philippines was clearly that of a benefactor, feeding, clothing, educating. Of the Protestant faiths, the Episcopal denomination alone had any countenance in Manila. Because sentiment thus enthroned Episcopalianism intelligent Baptists and other Protestant people had their lights under a bushel.

Rev. Hal F. Buckner of Canton met his father, mother and sister at Manila, and together they journeyed to Hong Kong and Canton. Dr. Buckner shall tell it: "I was thrilled with the first sight of the towering hills about Hong Kong. Here stands Victoria Hospital, munificently endowed, where all patients are treated gratis. We move up Pearle River and are in an hour of Canton. Houseboats crowd about us, a city of houseboats. A launch is by our side. On it we see familiar faces, son Hal's wife and their sweet children. Other faces smile with welcome, and now we are with them in the launch. Introductions: 'This is Brother R. E. Chambers of the China Baptist Publication Society, and this is his launch. This is Brother P. H. Anderson, president of the Graves Theological Seminary at Canton.' The launch veers around and we land in front of the China Baptist Publishing House. It is yet a mile to the Baptist Mission Compound by pathway not wide enough for 'rikisha. We walk,

and now presently stop for breakfast in the missionary home of my dear children."

*Mission Compound.*—The Baptist Mission Compound at Canton consists of sixteen brick buildings, a boys' academy, a girls' school, a school for Bible women, a primary school, a school for blind girls, the celebrated Graves Theological Seminary, and the homes of the missionaries. Dr. Buckner visited all the missionaries and teachers, addressed them in their chapel, conducted prayer services in their homes and in all the schools. He visited the orphans' home, and finding it embarrassed with a debt of \$500, wrote an appealing letter to his friend, T. H. Ellett of Richmond, Virginia, who promptly contributed the entire amount, lifting the debt. Dr. Buckner offered prayer at the dedication of the property of the China Baptist Publication Society, while the United States consul at Canton sat as chairman.

Dr. Buckner was delighted with the good work being done by the Graves Theological Seminary. In this school his own son, Hal, holds a professorship, and a graduate of Baylor University, P. H. Anderson, is its president. There were about 100 students. "Seminary Hill," a choice site named for "Seminary Hill," Fort Worth, Texas, had been purchased as the future home of the Seminary. In a tomb found on this hill was unearthed a large bowl, exquisitely embellished, thought to be above 3,000 years old, as the embellishments belong to the "pre-dragon age." The bowl was donated to the "A. J. Holt Museum" at Buckner Orphans Home. It is almost of priceless value. When Dr. Buckner afterwards visited London and the British Museum it was found that there was nothing like it in that colossal collection. The British Museum would have been very glad to add this bowl to its collection.

*Baptist Missionary Conference.*—It was to this Conference that Dr. Buckner was accredited by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Many fields were represented. R. E. Chambers and P. H. Anderson, both of Canton, were elected president

and secretary. Grave matters were considered, such as "Baptist Opportunities," "Organic Church Union" (with others), "Coöperation with Other Denominations." Resolutions were offered, highly flavored with pro-union sentiment, especially as respects evangelistic effort and educational work. Interest became intense. A resolution was offered that meant the hunt for a Chinese word that would translate the Greek word for baptism in a way to suit all denominations. Dr. Buckner suggested this amendment: "But such word must be a correct translation of the word used by our Lord and illustrated by Him in His own baptism in the Jordan." A voice: "Such amendment should be made." After brief discussion, all resolutions were withdrawn. Then other resolutions were passed setting forth love for all Christian people and a willingness to coöperate with them in things practicable, without compromising Baptist principles and without disloyalty to Christ.

*Sightseeing In Canton.*—The city was "taken in" by sedan chairs and 'rikishas. On the way from the Baptist Mission Compound to the heart of the city is a tomb supposed to be 3,000 years old. The tomb of some royal person, possibly. A broad avenue leads to it, guarded on either side by huge stone figures of gigantic size. They are in pairs and face each other across the avenue. First are two lions crouching, then two lions standing, then at some distance two camels kneeling, and again two camels standing, then horses with riders by their sides; further, soldiers with swords, and again two immense turtles with swords thrust through their backs. At the end of the long avenue is the granite tomb. Strange characters are carved on it that no one can decipher. The "City of the Dead," which is an acre enclosed in high walls, was visited, where in a room were many idols. Some were very large with heavy black beards. They were standing guard. The walks between the tombs and buildings were crooked in order that the "devils" seeking the dead might get lost in the crooked ways.

The city of Canton was found to have very narrow, crowded streets, some of the cross streets barely wide enough for people to pass single file. A woman seated flat on the cement street is sewing. She will sew a button on your vest or do other work while you wait. Coolies carry all freight, whether heavy or light. Six women carry a boxed piano. Coolies rush by, uttering a peculiar loud grunt, notifying the multitudes that they must make room for travelers borne on sedan chairs. At market places are offered chickens, pork, live earthworms by the bucketsfull, snakes moving and squirming in glass jars, most anything the appetite might call for. Near the palace of the "scholar" stands a tall pole with circle shelves around it, indicating the number of degrees of his "scholarship," which consists mainly in his ability to recite and explain the wonderful national traditions. Before the scholar's house is a huge picture of the great mythical dragon with his mouth wide open and swallowing the moon. As it is swallowed, the dark of the moon comes on.

*Interior China.*—In company with his son Hal and Dr. R. E. Chambers, Dr. Buckner visited the interior of China as far as Wuchow. The journey to Wuchow was immensely enjoyed. In a letter to his biographer, he says: "Dr. Chambers is owner of the splendid motor boat on which we ride, talk, read, sightsee, eat and sleep. My son looks after the table supplies and I am the highly favored boarder and honored guest. We have Chinese for engineer, cook and pilot. We cast anchor at night and the great North River rocks us to sleep." At Shiu Hing they visited Miss H. F. North's mission, consisting of a large school and church with native pastor. Dr. Buckner preached while Dr. Chambers interpreted. At the close twelve persons rose wishing to become Christians. At Wuchow he preached and delivered addresses. Whenever he preached he entered a plea for the elevation of motherhood, the betterment of child life and the protection of girlhood. This was appreciated. One man was so well pleased that he went away, procured an ancient wooden idol and sent it





R. C. BUCKNER AND HIS WIFE, MRS. VIENNA BUCKNER, TAKEN ON THEIR SIXTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY JUST AFTER THEIR RETURN FROM A WORLD TOUR



by hand 240 miles to Dr. Buckner. That idol is now in the museum at Buckner Orphans Home.

Dr. Buckner was especially gratified with the work of his son as teacher in the Seminary at Canton and of his grandson, Dr. Robert E. Beddoe, in charge of the Mission Medical Dispensary at Yingtak. Native preachers by scores and hundreds are trained in the Seminary to preach the gospel of salvation to their own people. In the dispensary at Yingtak above 1,500 patients are treated annually.

*Homeward.*—After a stay in China of forty-eight days, the Buckner party turned their faces homeward, continuing in the way of the setting sun. Singapore, Peneng, Columbo, Aden, Suez, Port Said, Naples, St. Helena, Genoa, Algiers, Gibraltar, Southampton and London were along the route. They had very pleasant traveling companions, including a number of experienced world tourists. On the wide Indian Ocean, on the Red Sea and the Mediterranean there were missionaries on vacations from Corea, Ceylon, Java, Borneo and other fields. They had songs and prayers and sermons. Dr. Buckner based a sermon on "God's Great Love," and emphasized the point that "the oceans deep and broad illustrate and demonstrate both the depth and breadth of the love of God." He had very marked attention.

On the Red Sea they were interested to meet the governor of Port Said, an Egyptian of high caste. With him was his wife, who was an Arabian princess; their daughter, an English governess, and a Russian valet. The little girl said: "I want to be white. I think I will go to London and get white. I don't want to be black. When I am thirteen I shall have to wear a veil. I don't want to wear a veil." Dr. Buckner said she was bronze.

While on the Red Sea, Dr. Buckner wrote to his orphan children: "We crossed the path along which the Israelites passed through dry-shod, and right over where Pharaoh, his army, his horses and chariots were drowned, though nothing indicated the exact place. We are traveling in sight of the wilderness

where the Lord sent down manna from heaven and fed Israel. Off to our left is the land of Goshen, where the Israelites had plenty of milk and butter. We have passed elephants and camels in full view. I have seen coffee trees, India rubber trees, coconut trees and many other interesting things." Dr. Buckner longed to take side trips into Egypt and Palestine, but it was deemed unwise to do so on account of danger from plague. Experienced travelers and the captain protested.

*London.*—Britain's proud city was seen through and through, above ground and under ground. In Westminster Abbey, Dr. Buckner was profoundly interested as he wandered among the tombs and read the inscriptions. He worshipped at various London churches and met many notable pastors and others of the Lord's saints. He especially kept in memory an evening service at the Welch Baptist Church. It was a communion service. After the communion he was invited to deliver an address. His message was received with hearty "Amens," and at its close many pressed forward to shake his hand. "Do you know," asked a deacon, "who it was that first greeted you? It was the Right Honorable Lloyd George, Lord Chancellor of the Exchequer."

This paragraph appeared in the "British Weekly" of August 14, 1913: "We had a visit on Monday afternoon from Dr. R. C. Buckner, president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. He is in his eighty-first year, is touring the world and has visited many mission fields in China and other countries. He has been a Baptist minister sixty-four years, and during the last thirty-four years has been president of Buckner Orphans Home at Dallas."

Of course, Dr. Buckner saw the Stockwell Orphanage. He says: "A good impression is made on first sight. The buildings, which are of brick, face each other from four sides of a square. Convenient walks are provided, and the plot or square inside is planted between walks with grass, trees, shrubbery and flowers. The beds are plain iron, with slats of this metal for

the support of the bedding and the weight of little bodies. Rooms are lighted with electricity and water is supplied by the city. A steam laundry is run altogether by hired help. What we call a grammar school education is given to all who can and will receive it. I have seldom spent happier hours than at this blessed institution. The Metropolitan Tabernacle makes much of the children of the orphanage. They have them in the Sunday school and give them convenient seats at the other services. Some of them are in the choir. I love Mr. Spurgeon's old church for this." Dr. Buckner worshipped with this Metropolitan Tabernacle congregation and greatly enjoyed it.

*Home.*—A pleasant sail from London to New York, then to Galveston, and presently Dr. Buckner and party are home, hale and happy and exchanging greetings with their friends. He is expected to tell of his trip in the First Baptist Church in Dallas, which he does before a crowded house. And presently "Father Buckner" has a big welcome at Buckner Orphans Home. Then follows a unique baptismal service in which an aged saint of eighty-four years, a blind sister of thirty-five, a lady helper, two young men and two boys were baptized by Dr. Buckner in the Home Chapel baptistery. They were waiting his return.

## CHAPTER XLII

### CLOSING INCIDENTS

Pursuant to the purpose announced at the session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas which met in 1913 at Dallas, Dr. B. C. Buckner declined to allow his name to be presented for re-election to the office of president of the convention when it met at Abilene, November 19, 1914. He called the convention to order in that happy manner which had characterized his administration for more than twenty years, and announced that the election of a president was then in order. Dr. S. P. Brooks, the very capable and much loved president of Baylor University, was nominated by Rev. F. S. Groner, and was unanimously elected to succeed Dr. Buckner.

Following this election, Dr. Buckner placed his hand upon the head of Dr. Brooks and gave him his blessing.

This closed the longest administration of any president of any Texas Baptist general body known in our history. Through all the years, dating from the Marshall Convention in 1894 and closing with the Abilene Convention of 1914, Dr. Buckner had presided with masterful skill, grace and ability. When he finally, and of his own volition, and greatly to the regret of thousands of the brotherhood, laid the gavel down, there passed from the office of president of the great Texas Baptist body one of the choicest spirits ever known among this or any other people.

Immediately following the brief valedictory address of Dr. Buckner, resolutions were introduced by Rev. W. A. Hamlett, of Austin, Texas, and unanimously adopted, as follows:

WHEREAS, Dr. R. C. Buckner has for these many years been our President, and

WHEREAS, during these years, some of which have been the

most crucial in our history, his rulings have been marked by wisdom, equity and Christian consideration, and

WHEREAS, it is at his request that he be relieved from the exacting duties of the presidency of this Convention, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that our unfeigned gratitude be here and now extended him for his faithful service during these past years of his office and that our tenderest love go with him throughout his days.

After the adoption of these resolutions, the great audience, at the suggestion of Dr. J. B. Cranfill, arose and with the heartiest accord gave Dr. Buckner the Chautauqua salute. Rarely in any religious body in Texas has there been witnessed such a scene of good wishes and good cheer as greeted the great Buckner upon this occasion.

On Thursday night of the Convention the order of exercises, as has been the case for many years, was the reading of Dr. R. C. Buckner's report on the Buckner Orphans Home. Before he submitted his report he read the following brief statement to the body:

"It is in my mind as President and General Manager of Buckner Orphans Home to tender its entire property and control to the Baptist General Convention of Texas pending the completion of plans and of improvements for which contributions have been made and are now being formulated.

"This would, of course, have to be done in such satisfactory way as would protect the vital points of the charter and by-laws and in loyalty to all friends who have made donations for specific purposes, stated or clearly understood. And for my part, I do not care how soon such transfer shall be made on the conditions herein expressed. This must not be interpreted as indicating any doubt of the continual and greater growth of this institution nor of any modification of my personal entire satisfaction with the principles, purposes, plans or management under which its wonderful success has been attained. Nor must it be inferred

from this that I am in the least tired of the work or have any disposition to lay it down."

No announcement ever made to a Texas general body created such a sensation as was precipitated by the reading of the foregoing tender of the greatest orphan property in the world.

Immediately following this remarkable offer which the heroic President and General Manager of the Buckner Orphans Home so whole-heartedly presented, he proceeded with the reading of his annual report in which was incorporated an inventory of all of the property owned by the Buckner Orphans Home. A summary of the inventory is herewith given as follows:

Lands at Country Site.....	\$262,800.00
Lands and lots elsewhere.....	100,725.00
Improvements at Country Site.....	310,456.00
Endowment notes (gilt-edge).....	14,683.00
Vendor lien notes (gilt-edge).....	1,133.39
Farm stock .....	9,515.00
Farm machinery .....	1,100.00
	<hr/>
Grand Total .....	\$700,412.39

All paid for, clear titles, and no kind of encumbrance.

The matter of the details covering this offer and its acceptance by the Convention was submitted to a committee, and the committee reported back to the body on Saturday evening. The resolutions which were read by Rev. George W. Truett, were as follows:

"We, your Committee, appointed to make response to the generous and noble proposition, to place in the hands of the Baptist General Convention of Texas the properties and control of Buckner Orphans Home as set forth in the written statement of Dr. R. C. Buckner, read to the Convention and handed to your Committee, submit the following:

"WHEREAS, Buckner Orphans Home, as an institution, has

made a generous tender of its extensive properties, as set forth in the Annual Report of its President and General Manager, R. C. Buckner, made at this Convention, Thursday evening, November 19, 1914, and a tender of its management to the Baptist General Convention of Texas; and

“WHEREAS, this Convention recognizes the unparalleled success of this great institution in its business affairs, and its accumulation and utilization of so much valuable property, always protected by its charter; while at the same time it has provided for and trained, each year, a large family of orphan children and other dependents, under the same charter and the provisions of its By-Laws; be it hereby

“RESOLVED 1. That we would not challenge the wisdom and beneficence of the Divine Providence that has sustained and otherwise blessed this Christly institution, from its very beginning;

“RESOLVED 2. That we would not dare lay hands on God’s own anointed institution in the way of any kind of interference or hindrance; but only to bless, to encourage and to help.

“RESOLVED 3. That we accept that which has been tendered to us, in the same spirit of confidence, loyalty and love with which it has been offered; and that in such acceptance we solemnly pledge that the principles and purposes set forth in its Charter and By-Laws shall ever be held by us as sacred and inviolable.

“RESOLVED 4. That hereafter, as heretofore, all lands, bequests, donations, gifts and contributions of any and every kind, now held or that may be acquired by Buckner Orphans Home, shall be held, appropriated and used for the purposes of the institution and its wards, and in the interest of no other institution, enterprise or person, whatever or whomsoever.

“RESOLVED 5. That from twenty-seven brethren annually nominated by this Convention, a Board of Directors of Buckner Orphans Home shall be selected and authorized, under and ac-

ording to the provisions of its Charter and By-Laws, and shall be recognized, adopted, appointed and authorized by the Convention as its own committee, to look into and after the work, and to make report each year to this Convention at its annual session; the report to be subject to discussion and to be acted on and spread upon our minutes, as any other report that may come before us for our consideration.

“RESOLVED, in conclusion, That the Convention will ever heartily rejoice in every degree of betterment, enlargement, prosperity and efficiency that may come at any and all times to this, our very own Buckner Orphans Home.”

The submission of these resolutions was accompanied by a brief, soulful address by Dr. Truett, who was followed by Hon. O. S. Lattimore, of Fort Worth, and Rev. Forrest Smith, of Sherman. Never in the history of the Texas Baptist General Convention has such a scene been witnessed as followed the final consummation of this new alignment of the Baptist General Convention of Texas with the Buckner Orphans Home. After the speeches by the other brethren, Dr. R. C. Buckner came forward at the call of the Convention and, in his own pathetic eloquence, placed the seal of his personal approval on all that had been done. The grand leader and soldier of the cross never loomed quite so large in all of his life before as he did on that eventful night. Every one present who had ever doubted his monumental greatness was on that evening convinced that he deserved to forever bear the sobriquet of the Texas Baptist Gladstone.

Let it be borne in mind that this vast property, aggregating over seven hundred thousand dollars in value, without a cent of indebtedness and with money to its credit in the bank, thus in a shorter time than is here taken in its recital, became the property of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The inauguration and growth of this wonderful enterprise has hitherto been told in this volume, but no words could adequately portray the



spirit of the historic occasion to which reference has just been made.

All hearts were touched. There were men present who had known and loved R. C. Buckner through many eventful years. It was truthfully said by Geo. W. Truett that R. C. Buckner was the last remaining hero of that immortal trio, composed of Burleson, Carroll and Buckner. The other two have gone home, and now the faithful soldier who has been spared to us crowned his career as General Manager of the Buckner Orphans Home by giving over the great plant to the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Of course, those who are informed know that the Buckner Orphanage has been a Baptist institution from the start, and the steps which had been taken in its creation, maintenance and exploitation have been told in preceding chapters. Now the institution became a child of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The question arose in some of the addresses made as to whether or not the child should be adopted by the convention or married to the convention. On all hands, however, it seemed to be agreed that the Buckner Orphans Home had become the adopted child of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and heir to all the rights, interest, love, sympathy, affection and care of the great Baptist family of Texas.

It is fitting now that this chronicle shall come to a close. The writer and the reader alike take leave of this biography with deepest love and affection. Our hero is now eighty-two years old. He has lived a life of usefulness in its every relation that has never been outstripped in the annals of our Texas citizenship. No man in any walk of life has quite matched R. C. Buckner when all of the factors that have entered into the warp and woof of his great career are sanely measured. As this book ends, we leave him standing at the very pinnacle of his marvelous career, loved by his own denominational brotherhood with a quenchless love, and so deeply entrenched in their hearts that they will cherish and revere his name forever.

Not only is this true of the Baptist brotherhood, but it is true of all the people of the great State of Texas and the South who have had the pleasure of coming into either remote or intimate relationship with this great, good man. All the bankers love him and trust him. All the business men believe in him. All the large-hearted men and women of the state honor him for the wonderful work he has achieved in building up and fostering an institution without a parallel in the Western Hemisphere.

R. C. Buckner, in this closing scene of this biography, has set an example for all his brethren and all men everywhere that they would do well to take deeply to heart. He did not wait to become feeble in mind or body, or to die and leave this Buckner Orphans Home estate unsettled. As to his personal estate, long, long ago, he parted with all of the property he ever had except a lot in Oakland Cemetery. That is all the land he owns and it is all he will ever need, but he has settled up his affairs in connection with Buckner Orphans Home in a wonderfully business-like Christian way and has given that institution to the care of the men whom he had loved and with whom he had labored through his long and eventful life. He took no chances by making a will, as many men do, thus leaving the orphans to unfriendly hands. Many have left to courts and juries the disposition of estates that if they had been administered by the ones who owned them while their hearts beat warm in their bosoms, would have gone directly to the objects for which they were intended. Dr. R. C. Buckner made no such mistake as this, but has now gloriously consummated a relationship that makes for the greatest good and greatest usefulness of the Orphans Home and which augurs its most hopeful expansion.

In one of his books, *David Copperfield*, we believe, Charles Dickens expresses a pathetic regret that on account of the ending of the volume he had to part with those children of his brain who had illumined the pages of his volume. If this great writer of fiction felt sad when he thus laid down his pen and bade

good-bye to these shadowy friends of his heart, the reader hereof will not wonder that this writer closes his task as one of the authors of this volume with most poignant regret. It has been a joy through the unfolding of the life of the great R. C. Buckner, to walk with him, to linger near him, to breathe the incense of his greatness and the fragrance of his love. Now that the last words of this biography are being penned there is a tugging at the heart that we shall be denied the privilege of walking further in these pages in the journey of life with R. C. Buckner.

A great man is he. Back across the track of four-score and two years, his eagle eye can glance with gratitude and joy, and as he looks ahead, there is naught but golden sunshine to light up his pathway. Through all the years that he shall remain on earth he will still be with the great family of orphans who delight to love and honor him. He will still be Father Buckner. They will rejoice at his presence with them, will listen to his voice as he preaches the glorious gospel of the Blessed Christ and will catch the inspiration of his great good life and then, be the time long or short, when his earthly tasks are done he will lay himself down, not to die, but to take leave of time and all the things of earth and wake up in that glory world whither so many of his loved ones and co-workers have gone on before.

Happy man! Golden hearted servant of the Lord! Heroic soldier of the cross! Tenderly eloquent preacher of God's grace! Leonine leader of the hosts of Zion! Great manager and financier of holy funds! Prophet, seer, philanthropist and friend, he has taken the long look and finds himself in the celestial glory of his crowning years, loved, honored, revered and trusted by all.

Such a life as his, dear reader, is one to thrill and inspire us, every one, and as we measure our own poor lives by that of R. C. Buckner, may it be given to each and all of us to strive to emulate his noble deeds and, as best we may, enjoy a part at least of the wonderful usefulness that has been his.

## AFTERWORD

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Our Afterword is a presentation of park views and other views—Buckner Orphans Home.

Here are fifty acres of glades and green woods, cedars and hawthorne, hackberry, persimmon, oak, elm, ash, grapevine, rattan vine and tangle wood. Here are hills, high creek banks, green fields, wild flowers, gravelly knolls, places for sliding and places for wading, everything to make it attractive to the lovers of nature and to gleeful children.

The pictures, with rhythmical descriptions by R. C. Buckner, give a fair view of some of the beauties of the orphans' most lovely playgrounds, and of the substantial improvements.

There is also Crescent Park, equal in acreage and beauty to Vienna Park, and Nursery Park, close in for the wee folks, but not here represented.



IN VIENNA PARK—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME

### INDIAN CREEK.

No crowded street nor dismal den  
Nor dust nor dirt nor fiery drink,  
Where idle boys and reckless men  
Drift downward over ruin's brink ;  
But vines and swings, and hidden nooks,  
Great spreading elms and grass plots green  
Creek banks and bluffs and mighty rocks  
A park as lovely as you've seen.



IN VIENNA PARK—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME

Vienna Park! The children's joy,  
Where every orphan girl and boy  
Delights to wander 'midst the trees,  
And breathe the fragrant passing breeze.  
The odors sweet from sweet wild flow'rs  
And fresh from plum and hawthorne bow'rs.  
They love to slide down steep hillsides,  
And wade, barefoot, where winding glides  
The clear, cool stream o'er smooth white rocks,  
Then scamper through the woods like flocks  
Of sheep and lambs and fleet wild goats,  
In breezes cool where ozone floats.  
God bless the boys! God bless the girls!  
Those shout their joys, these spoil their curls.  
But back at home, they rest that night  
And rise next morn at dawn of light,  
Refresh'd, and feeling new-born joys—  
These hopeful girls, these manly boys.



IN VIENNA PARK—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME

You may sing of the fairies in the dark wood,  
And of frolicsome sprites in the dense wood,  
You may paint magical scenes in the dim wood,  
And flowers and festoons in the damp wood,  
But these orphan girls playing in their own wood,  
Are as cunning as fairies in the wild wood ;  
They are fanciful as sprites in the swamp wood,  
And as flow'rs and festoons in the green wood.



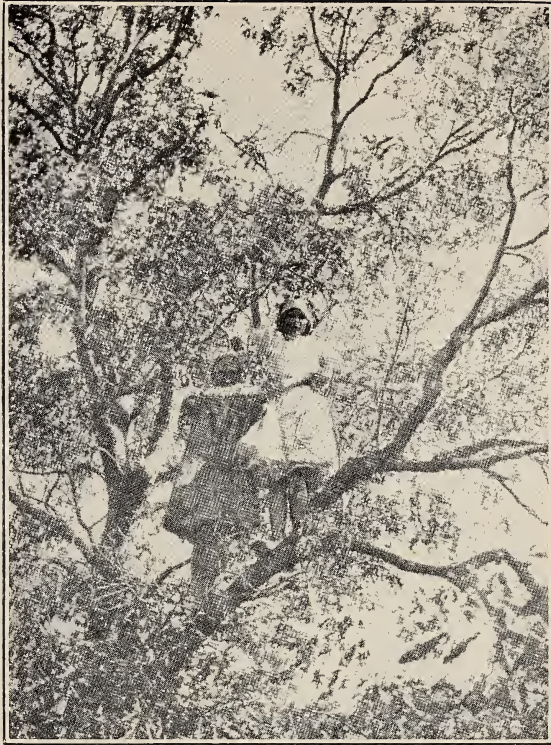
GIRLS AT LUNCH IN VIENNA PARK—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME

They care not for tables with tapestry spread,  
Around which to enjoy their plain meat and bread;  
With forks made of sticks, on coals they broil meat,  
Then with slices of bread they heartily eat.



BOYS AT LUNCH IN VIENNA PARK—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME





BEAUTIFUL VIENNA PARK—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME

### ORPHAN GIRLS CLIMBING TREES.

No fruit forbidden on these trees,  
Else these young girls would not dare climb.  
Up there they catch the fresh, cool breeze,  
While keeping hold of bending limb.

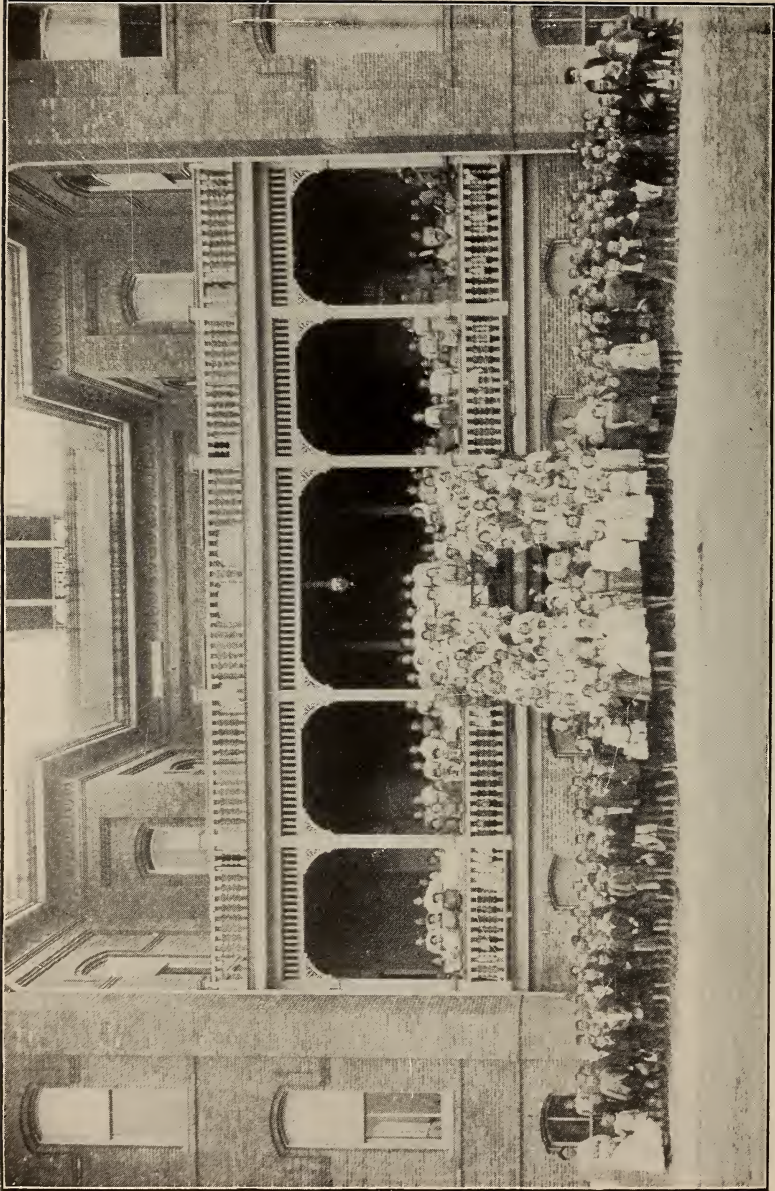
Up there their merry voices ring,  
Remote from critic's gazing eyes,  
As larks themselves more sweetly sing,  
The nearer they approach the skies.



THE BOYS' MAIN BUILDING, 110 BY 130 FEET—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME



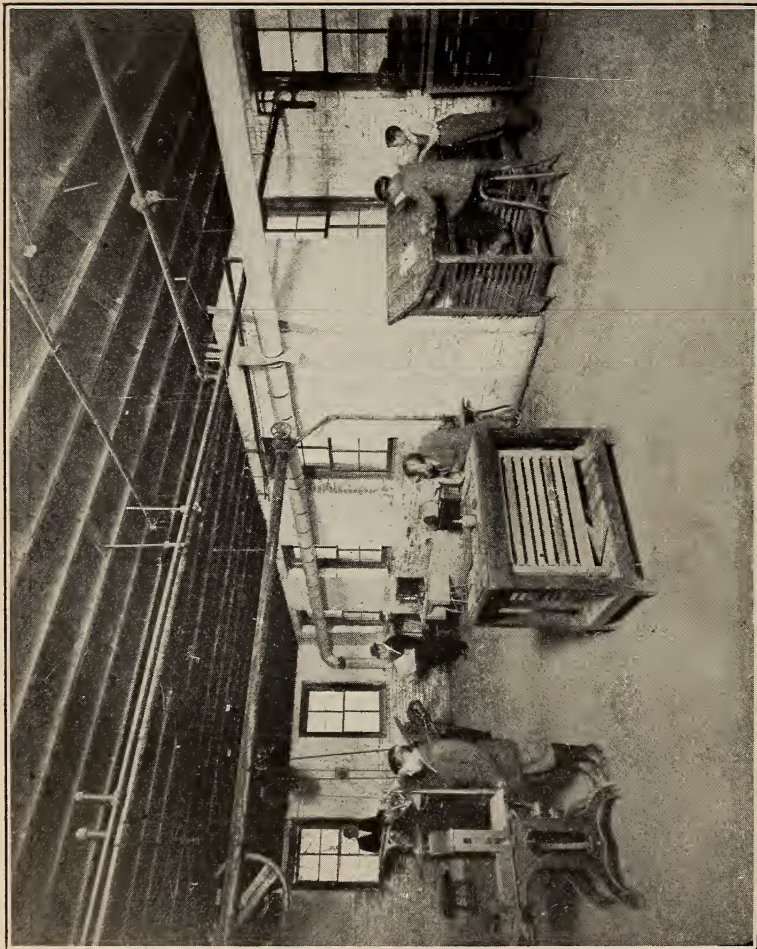
FROM THE SOUTH. THE GIRLS' MAIN BUILDING, ERECTED 1890. THIS TREE WAS PLANTED  
1882—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME.



WEST VIEW, GIRLS' BUILDING—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME



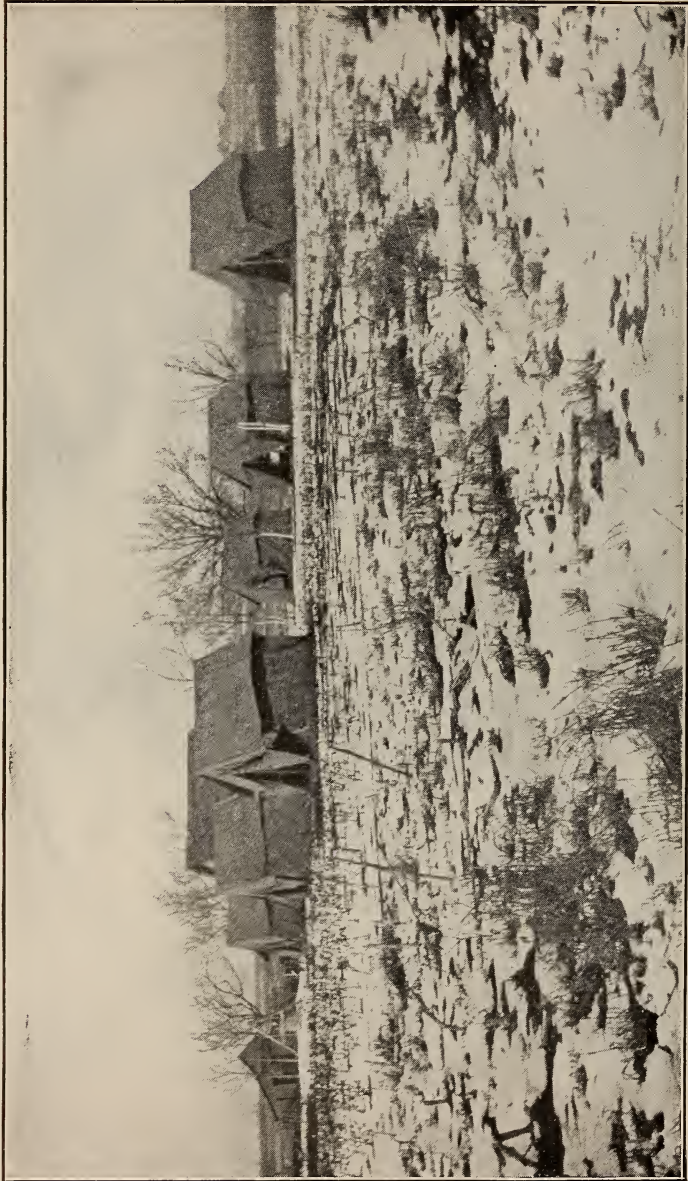
BUCKNER HOME ANNEX—CITY OF DALLAS



ELECTRIC PRINTING OFFICE—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME



ELECTRIC IRONING ROOM—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME

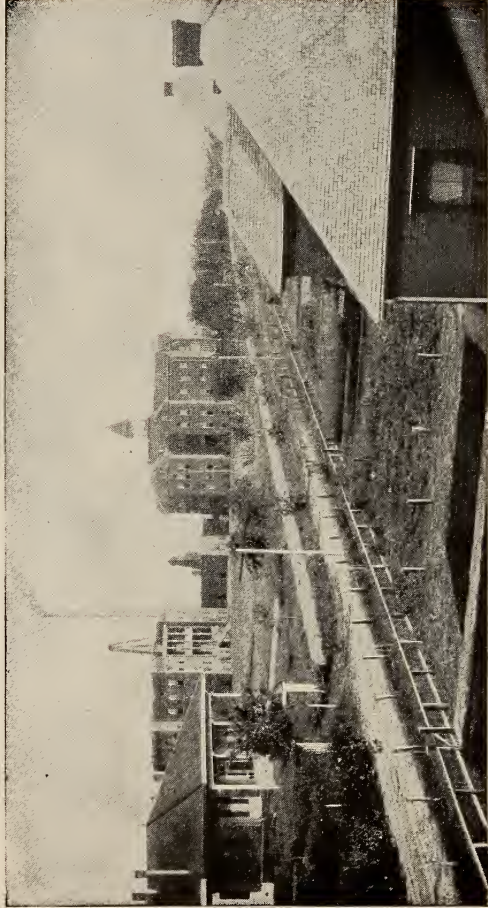


TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM ONE MILE DISTANT — BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME

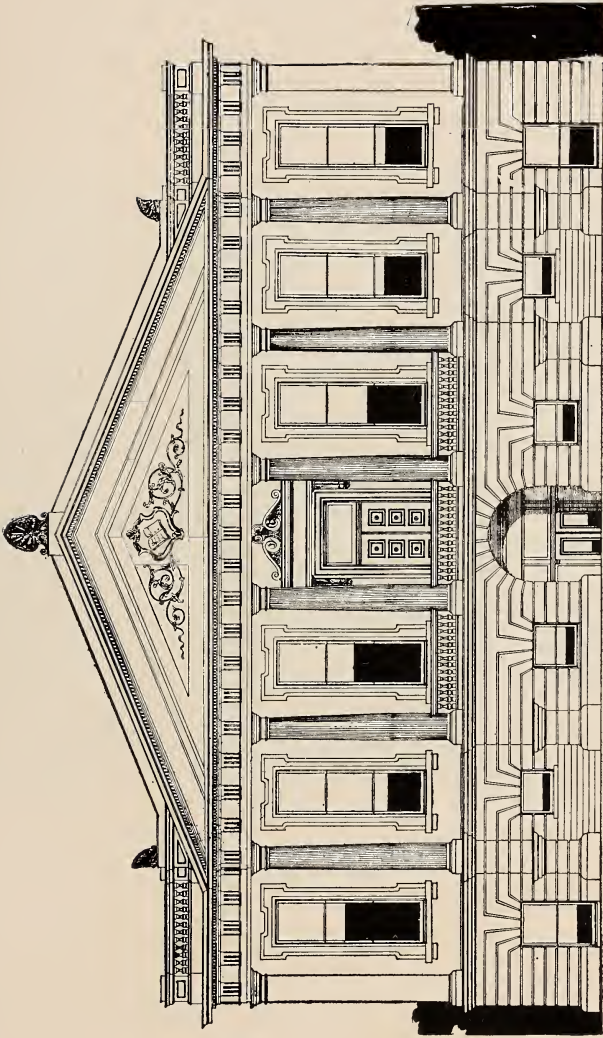




DINING ROOM, MOTHERS' BUILDING—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME



ONE SECTION OF MAIN HEADQUARTERS—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME



ACADEMY AND CHAPEL BUILDING—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME



ONE OF THE DORMITORIES—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME



THE MOTHERS' BUILDING FOR MOTHERLESS BABIES—BUCKNER ORPHANS HOME












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