PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION

OF

NORTH CAROLINA;

HELD IN GREENVILLE, MARCH 1830.

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1830.
TO THE BAPTISTS OF NORTH CAROLINA.

Brethren in Christ;

The annexed Minutes will announce to you the fact, that an Institution has been recently organized, bearing the name of The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. You will also learn from the subjoined Constitution, that the primary objects of this Convention are, the enlargement and intellectual improvement of the Ministry, and the supplying of destitute Churches and sections of country, within the limits of the State.

It is well known to those who have thought on the subject, that the policy of the Baptists of North Carolina has been singularly unfavourable to the interests of the Denomination; that, while other Christian communities have been causing their plans and their resources to take effect among us, and while the Baptists of many of our sister States have been engaged in multiplying the number, and in elevating the character of their Ministers and their Churches, we, the Baptists of this State, have been practising a system, in almost all respects calculated to limit our resources, to paralyze our energies, and to impede our advancement in the progress of literary and evangelical improvement.

As we have had in operation no measures for the instruction of persons called to the Ministry, those whose talents and attainments had been such as to induce a relish and a desire for the advantages of study, have been led to neighbouring States, in order to secure the facilities they sought. And as our Churches have generally wanted the means, and in very many cases the inclination, to afford their Ministers a just and adequate compensation, those whose services were most valuable, have been withdrawn to other sections of country, where they were offered that support which was denied them at home. The natural and necessary tendency of these things has been, not merely to prevent the ingress of valuable men from abroad, but also, to drain the State of the best talents of native growth, and to leave behind only those, whose qualifications were not of sufficient value to command the attention of Churches in sister States. We do not mean to assert, that the operation of these causes has been such as to leave no exceptions; but we mean that, like other efficient causes, their effects have been constant and uniform. And it is confidently believed, that to the agency of these causes, is to be attributed, that depressed state of the Ministry in North Carolina which has made it almost a by-word and term of reproach, throughout the country.

In support of the above reasoning, we appeal, directly and briefly, to facts; facts which the more enlightened and discerning part of Baptists, have long observed and lamented; and in relation to which, we fear no contradiction. Let the history of the Baptist Church in this State, for the last twenty years, be attentively reviewed; let the names of those who grew up amongst us, and who are now occupying important stations in other States,
be recapitulated; let the present condition of our Ministry and our Churches be re-examined; let the enlargement and prosperity of the Denomination in some other States, be observed; let the causes of all these things be carefully and fearlessly looked into; and then let it be said, whether or not our reasoning is conclusive, and whether or not we have referred existing evils to their legitimate origin.

And it is to be borne in mind, that the causes which have hitherto operated, and engendered so much detriment, if not arrested, will still continue to operate, and to propagate their pernicious consequences, in an increased ratio. In proportion as the neighbouring States, by their present enlightened policy, multiply the facilities for improving candidates for the Ministry, and increase the demand among their Churches, for Pastors of superior qualifications, in that same proportion will they augment their liability to extract from us, whatever of talent and attainment may grow up amongst us. And in proportion as society advances in intellectual acquirements, and as other Denominations present their Ministers of cultivated manners and enlightened minds, just in that same proportion, our Ministry, and of course our Churches, must fall behind in power and respectability; and there is nothing short of a miracle, that can avert the threatened mischief, but a reasonable and well directed effort to do away the causes of evil already considered. The Baptists of North Carolina may inveigh against education, and the claims of Ministers, and the employment of Missionaries—and they may go on to persuade themselves, that God's Ministers shall be compelled to preach, whether supported or not; and that God will do his own work, in his own time, independently of human agency; while their brethren of other States are draining away their efficient Ministers, and those of other denominations are coming in and possessing the land; but they have got to learn, at last, that there is no way of preventing the natural effects of efficient causes, but by the application of adequate means. Like the mutinous limbs in the fable, they may blindly resist the natural means of their own support, until the principle of life be past recovery; but they will see, in the end, that others will avail themselves of the opportunities which they refuse, and thus become possessed of the objects, which otherwise, they might easily have acquired.

We are sincerely glad to know, that North Carolinian Baptists have begun to open their eyes to these matters; that they have begun to see, that something must be done; and that some of them are resolved to put forth an humble, but a well directed effort, in behalf of the interests of the Denomination in the State. It is this liberal view of things, and this determined spirit of zealous and benevolent enterprise, that have led to the organization of the Convention, of which it is our present purpose to treat. And although it is now but just begun, and although it behoves its advocates to speak of it in terms of the most measured moderation and humility; yet we do venture to believe, that it promises more to the Baptists of N. Carolina, than any human institution ever yet offered to their consideration; and that it shall exist, and multiply its advantages, when its projectors and present supporters shall rest from their labours, amid "the cloaks of the valley."

In favour of the utility and expediency of this institution, but few things need now be said. It is a truth, at this day almost self-evident—to say the
least, it is one to which observation and experience have so long and so uniformly borne their testimony, that there are few, if any, who doubt it—that, to accomplish any purpose of a general and arduous nature, combined and systematik operations are absolutely necessary. And accordingly, to secure the objects proposed in the Constitution of the Convention, namely: to improve the Ministry, and to enlarge and multiply the Churches of the Baptist Denomination in the State, a general system of united and harmonious movements is indispensable.

To secure that systematik co-operation, which was deemed requisite, no plan seemed so eligible as that which proposed to form the Convention of Delegates or representatives from the several Associations, Churches, and Auxiliary Societies, which might see proper to patronize its objects. By this means, it was believed, that all, who contributed, would be enabled to exert a proportional influence over their respective contributions; and, that, that influence might be so adjusted and combined, that the whole might be concentrated to any given point, and directed to any given object, as the collected wisdom of the whole might dictate. But a small degree of discernment is requisite to perceive the efficacy of a system like this, judiciously directed, and sustained by the aid of even one fourth of the Baptists in the State.

It is almost needless to say, that the expediency of such a system of exertion, is not now to be tested by experiment. Institutions of this kind are known to have been in the most successful operation, in many of the sister States, for years. The experiment has therefore been made, and the expediency of the system has been fully and repeatedly demonstrated. In carrying into effect the measures proposed, therefore, the friends of the Institution risk nothing. They proceed upon ground already gone over; they act upon principles already developed and tested. So that the contemplated result, is just as certain, as is the connexion between a cause and its natural effects.

The only point from which a failure can be apprehended, is a want of prudent and well sustained exertion, conformable to the articles of the Constitution. No work of any sort, can be effected without power. The most luminous policy, the sagst counsels, and the best selected plans, will accomplish nothing without effort; and, of course, it will avail nothing, that the Baptists of this State have given existence to a Convention, and modeled it after the most approved and successful Institutions of the day, unless it receive that support, which is requisite to carry it into effect. Here, then, is the weak place. This is the point, and the only point, where danger is to be apprehended. And this is wholly within the reach of the Baptists of the State. Consequently, if a failure ensue, to them, and to them only it is to be attributed.

We are aware, that many objections will be urged against the Institution now proposed; and we accordingly proceed to anticipate some of the most plausible.

It will, no doubt, be asked, if we have any scriptural authority for the formation of Conventions, or of any such Institutions? To this inquiry our answer is—that we have precisely the same scriptural authority for Conventions, that we have for Associations, for Colleges, for Courts of Justice, and for other similar establishments; and when those who object will shew us their scriptural warrant for the latter, it will be time enough to adduce ours, in support of the former.
It will doubtless be further objected, that the Convention is a 
monied concern. 'By money,' it will be said, 'its operations are to be sustained, 
and by money all its objects are to be acquired!' Indeed! And is the fact 
that money is essential to the successful operation of an Institution, proof 
of its illegality, or of its non-conformity to the Scriptures? Then all 
Churches and Associations, and, in a word, all Institutions, whether civil 
or religious, are illegal and unscriptural; for they are all dependent upon 
the application of money.

But where, pray, is the great sin of applying money to the advancement 
of Religion, and of the interests of the Church of Christ? They who 
object to this, employ money to improve their farms and their houses, 
to educate and accomplish their children, to sustain the various political 
and literary Institutions of their country; and, in instances not a few, to 
gratify their taste, and to minister to their pleasure. Then why not em-
ploy money for the support of Christianity—for aiding the cause of truth 
and morals, and for promoting the welfare of the souls of men? Let those, 
who declaim so loudly and so bitterly against the benevolent Institutions 
of the age, because they require the application of money, proceed to prove, 
from the Scriptures, or from any other legitimate source, that it is unlaw-
ful, or in any way inexpedient, or improper, to apply money to the support 
of Christianity; and when they shall have succeeded in this, their declama-
tion will be less inconsistent, if not more conclusive.

Moreover, we should be glad to be informed, in what age of the world 
the interests of Religion were supported without money. It certainly was 
not in that of the Apostles. At that period, we will venture to affirm, 
money was as much in demand, was as freely given, and was as liberally 
and as efficiently applied to the support of Christianity, in proportion to the 
number and resources of the disciples, as it has been at any subsequent day. 
It was customary with the brethren at Jerusalem, upon becoming members 
of the Church, to dispose of their property, if they had any, and to lay the 
proceeds at the Apostles' feet, for the benefit of the whole. Acts 2. 45— 
4. 32—37. It is said of the Church at Antioch, that when they learned 
the distressed condition of their brethren in Judea, they immediately pro-
cceeded to make up a sum of money for their relief, which they transmitted 
by the “hands of Barnabas and Saul.” Acts, 11. 29. In his epistle to 
the Romans, the Apostle Paul urged it upon them as one of their cardinal 
duties, to “distribute to the necessities of the saints:” and, in the same 
communication, he acquainted them with the fact, that the Churches in 
Macedonia and Achaia had already made up a contribution for the poor 
saints at Jerusalem.—Acts, 12. 25.—15. 26. In his first epistle to the 
Corinthians, the same Apostle laboured to prove, and did successfully and 
conclusively prove, by arguments taken from the natural relations of things, 
from the institutions of the Levitical Economy, and from the express and 
absolute appointments of the Lord Jesus himself, the just claims of every 
teacher of religion to an adequate maintenance for himself and his family. 
1 Cor. 9. 1—15. In the same epistle, he directed the brethren to lay 
by them in store, habitually, on the first day of the week, an amount, pro-
portional to the degree in which God had prospered them, in order to 
make up a sum for the saints at Jerusalem; and at the same time he in-
formed them that he had made a similar request of the Churches in Galatia.—Acts, 16. 1—2. In his second letter to this Church, he resumed
the same subject, and occupied two entire chapters, in setting forth the duty and the advantages of making liberal contributions, to aid in the support of those saints who needed assistance. — 2 Cor. 8. 9. In his epistle to the Galatians, the same Apostle enjoined it upon the members of that Church, as a solemn duty, and as a distinguished privilege, to administer to the comfort and support of their spiritual teachers. — Gal. 6. 6—10. He commended the Philippians, because they had so frequently administered to his support, and that not so much because he needed their aid, as because it shewed the cheerfulness with which they complied with their duty; and because it afforded "fruit which would abound to their account." Phil. 4. 16—18. And to Timothy, the same Apostle gave it in charge, to see that they who faithfully "laboured in word and doctrine," were justly and adequately provided for. — 1 Tim. 5. 17—18. And the Apostle John strongly commended his friend Gaius, because he had so frequently and so liberally aided the necessities of those who had gone to preach the Gospel to the heathen. — 3 John, 5. 10. If those and other similar facts do not shew, that money was applied, and commonly and liberally applied, to the support of Christianity in the Apostles' day, we may despair of finding conclusive evidence in any case. Let those who are so loud and so liberal, in their objections to the application of money to the support of the Gospel, consider well all these and similar cases; and then, let them say, whether or not the practice in view, is a modern innovation. Let them consider, moreover, whether their present objections do not call in question, both the prudence and the integrity, of the inspired Apostles. And let them still farther consider, whether the Apostle John, were he present, would not speak of them, much as he spake of the famous Diotrephes, of whom he made memorable mention in the tenth verse of his third epistle.

It has been said, that Conventions similar to the present, are designed to beget a connexion between Church and State. This is certainly saying a great deal; and much more, we would think, than any conscientious man would permit himself to say, without the proof. But has this ever been attempted? In all that has been said and sung on this subject, has any one ever attempted to shew, by a reference to the principles of these Institutions, by an appeal to facts, or by any thing else in the form of an argument, that State Conventions are designed, or that they have the remotest tendency, to interfere with the government, either of Church or of State? Those who profess so much zeal for civil institutions, and make this a pretext for opposing schemes of benevolence, remind us of the infidels in the Apostles' day, who endeavoured to alarm the fears of the civil authorities, by charging Christianity and its advocates, with a design to subvert the ruling powers of the State.

It will probably be said, as a further objection, that the education of Ministers, one of the leading objects contemplated, is exceptional; inasmuch as it is needless, unscriptural, and contrary to the nature and demands of the Gospel. We know that all this has been asserted over and over; but has the assertion ever been made good by evidence? We may have been told of the ignorance of the Apostles; but has it ever yet been proved that the Apostles were so ignorant as they have been said to have been? We may have been reminded of the usefulness of some men who were without education; but has it ever been shown that these men
would not have been more useful, had they possessed greater literary advantages? We may have been informed, that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty;" but have we ever been referred to the facts? have we ever been shown these mighty men of valour? have we ever been pointed to these giants of ignorance, who make such havoc of the wisdom and the might of this world? We would think that if there were such men, in our day, they ought to be found somewhere; and we would think, moreover, that their marvelous deeds would soon make them manifest.

It has always been a matter of wonder, to us, that men should object to knowledge in the man who ministers at the altar; when they deem it necessary in every other official station in life. Their mechanics must be men who understand their business, and are expert in the use of tools; their school-masters must be men of letters, and well qualified "to teach the young idea how to shoot;" if they need a physician, they must have a man of science, and of professional skill; should they have a civil suit on hand, they are sure to apply to an attorney who understands the law, and who is of some eminence in his profession; but wonderful to be told! the man whom they select to minister "to them in holy things," to expound to them the mysteries of revelation; to lecture them on the lofty and intricate doctrines of morals and religion; and to whom they commit the culture and the keeping of their souls, and of the souls of their children and their servants, must be a man of ignorance!!

Another thing has struck us as very remarkable in this controversy, and we are much surprised that it has never struck the opposers of education; and that is, that while uneducated men are frequently found among the advocates of a well-taught ministry, those who are in the opposition are, without an exception, so far as we know, men who have been denied the advantages of education themselves. Now is it true, that uneducated men, we should rather say, that ignorant men, are or can be proper judges in this case? Is it probable, or is it possible, that men, who in fact know not what education is, can be competent to decide upon its advantages or its disadvantages? To tell the truth, this looks very much like the declaiming of a beggar against the use and advantage of property: and it reminds us forcibly of the owl, that quarrelled with the rays of the sun, because they hurt his eyes.

It will of course be objected, that one of the professed objects of the Convention is the support of Missions. Now, allowing this to be so, has it ever yet been shown, or can it now be shown, why and wherein the support of Missions is objectionable? That many persons loudly affirm this, is not doubted. But there is a wide difference between asserting that a practice is wrong, and shewing that it is so. When men can prove that the practice and support of Missions is contrary to the Scriptures, or in any way incompatible with the genius of Christianity, then there will be an end to the argument. But until that be done, all the declamation that is poured forth on the subject, must be allowed to pass for what it is worth. But further, if the support of Missions is improper, in what, pray, does the impropriety consist? It must be either in preaching the Gospel to sinners, or in being sent to do this, or in being supported in the doing of this, by the voluntary contributions of Christian friends. Beyond this,
we are utterly unable to conceive of any thing that can be made the ground of an objection of any sort; because these three particulars comprise all the acts that are involved in the operation. Now will any man be pleased to inform us which of these items forms the objectionable part? Is it preaching to sinners? Then the Apostles were to be blamed; and so is every other man who faithfully preaches the Gospel. Is it being sent to do this? Then was the conduct of Paul and Barnabas exception-
able, when they suffered themselves to be sent away by the Church at Antioch; and so was that of the twelve, and of the seventy, who per-
mitted themselves to be commissioned and sent forth by Christ himself; and so is that of every Minister who allows himself to be licensed, and
dAINED, and sent forth by the Church of which he is a member. Is it in being supported in this by the willing contributions of the Christian com-
munity? Then the Apostles did wrong, and so does every man who suf-
ers himself to take pay for preaching, whether it come in the form of a charitable donation, or in that of a just recompense for value received.

It may possibly be replied here—it is not to missions, in the abstract,
that we are opposed; but to the manner in which they are conducted.
If this be so, we must confess, that we have very much misunderstood
the nature and the ground of the controversy. But if it be merely
against the manner in which missions have been conducted, that men ob-
ject, then why not make the distinction—why not point out the defective
part of the process—why not shew us another, and a better way—and
why endeavour to arrest the whole movement because of some supposed
deformity in the machinery? Let these questions be answered, and let
them be answered with christian candour and simplicity.

It is to be understood, however, that the Convention does not contem-
plate the support of Missions, in the full and appropriate extent of that
term. It is known that there are some towns, and many sections of
country, in this State, where, either there is no Baptist Church at all, or
if a Church, no regular and effectual Ministry. A wish has prevailed to
some extent, and it is believed to be neither an unreasonable nor an un-
charitable one, to see Baptist Churches in many places where they are not;
and to see all under the superintendence of a faithful and successful
Ministry. It is a plain case, that where there is no Church, there adequate
resources for the immediate support of the Gospel, cannot be expected.
And it is equally plain, that the insufficiency of a very large proportion
of organized Churches in the State, is nearly, if not quite, as great. It is
the grand object of the Convention to supply these deficiencies. And, in
order to effect this, it contemplates securing the services of such persons
as Providence may raise up amongst us, or send to us from other quarters;
furnishing them with a competent education, should they need it, and sta-
tioning them in the most eligible situations, and supporting them there,
either in part or in whole, as circumstances shall require, until an ade-
quate compensation can be procured from the respective fields of their
labour. From this statement it is manifest, that, although the object is
strictly of a missionary nature, yet it differs from Missions in general, in
this, that it is literally a home concern; it is a State enterprise, in which
the welfare and reputation of the Denomination are involved, and in
which many individuals are personally and deeply interested.
It will probably be asked here—does not the Convention contemplate a connexion of some sort, with the Baptist General Convention of the United States? and will not this necessarily lead to the support of foreign Missions? The facts of the case, so far as this question is involved, are briefly these. There are many persons in this State, who have been long desirous of contributing something to the important objects had in view by that Institution. In concerted the plan of the present Convention, it was deemed expedient to make some provision for the liberality of persons of this description. This was accordingly done, as may be learned from the Constitution, by proposing to keep a distinct fund for the purpose, and to pay into the Treasury of the General Convention those monies, and those only, that should be contributed for that special purpose. This explanation is made, not for the purpose of eluding any portion of the hostility, which is usually waged against foreign Missions, for all Missions are substantially the same; but for the purpose of having it distinctly seen, that the primary object of the Convention, at present is, to repair the waste places of our own State.

There is but one more objection of which we can now conceive, which merits attention, and that is one which has often been made to similar institutions, and which will no doubt be brought against this, namely, that it is a pecuniary scheme, got up for the purpose of gulling the simple, and filling the pockets of its projectors and abettors. To this, it is sufficient to reply, that, as the projectors and supporters of this Institution are men, whose moral standing has never yet been called in question, it will be time enough to impeach their motives, when the facts showing their guilt can be produced; and it will be time enough for them to proceed to their vindication, when the charge shall be brought by responsible persons, and attended by at least the semblance of truth. This much, however, may be added, that it has been long proverbial, that they who have the least confidence in their own integrity, are the most liable to suspect that of others. And it may be further stated, that in order that every pretext for demur, may be done away, and that the punctual application of all funds contributed may be clearly and fully demonstrated, an annual report of all collections and disbursements shall be regularly published.

Now, Brethren, Baptists of North Carolina, after having explained the nature and objects of the Institution, which we propose, and stated the reasons why it has been brought into being, and considered the objections most liable to be urged against it, we proceed further to address you, in more direct and explicit terms. And to do this with the more convenience, we shall take the liberty to divide you into two classes, those who are opposed to our measures, and those who are inclined to advocate and support them.

And we would first speak to those who oppose our measures. Brethren, you who are averse to State Conventions, and to Missions, and to Education Societies, and who have carried your hostility so far as even to threaten with excommunication, those of your Church members, who dare to think and act differently from yourselves in these matters, we wish it distinctly understood, that we have no quarrel with you, of any kind. We neither dislike nor envy you, nor do we despise you, nor yet do we fear you. We regard you as Christians, as Baptists, and as
Brethren; but we consider you sadly mistaken, and we sincerely regret the loss of your services in the important and interesting work before us. When we earnestly plead our arguments in favour of what we do, and patiently consider the objections which you urge against us, we do this, not for the purpose of justifying ourselves, nor yet for the purpose of justifying the cause which we advocate, but for the sole purpose of correcting your mistake, of reclaiming you from error, and of enlisting your services in the cause of the Redeemer in general, and in that of the Denomination in particular. And we desire you further to understand, that we shall go on with our undertaking, whether you aid us or oppose us. You may misrepresent our intentions, if you choose, you may impugn our reputations, and you may conflict with our movements; but you cannot injure us, nor can you prevent the accomplishment of our plans. The improvement of the Ministry, and of the Churches of the Baptist Denomination in North Carolina, will be effected, and by the means proposed, either sooner or later. And it now remains for you to say, whether you will take a part in this important and honourable work, or not; whether you will spend your life in extending the knowledge of the Gospel, or in opposing the endeavours of those who do; and whether you will put it into the power of your posterity, perhaps yet unborn, to honour you as their benefactors, or to reproach you as the authors of their privations and misfortunes. We would respectfully offer it as our opinion, that you would do well to consider this matter over again. See if you can get the proof, that the measures which you oppose, are incompatible with the Gospel, and with the spirit of the Christian dispensation; reflect upon the improbability, that nine-tenths of the most enlightened and pious of the Christian community, should be mistaken on this subject; and remind yourselves of the singular responsibility of those who attempt to impede, even from conscientious motives, the spread of the Gospel, the elevation of the Churches, or the efficiency of the Ministry. And should you, after all, consider yourselves scrupulously bound to oppose us, do it decently; do it gentlemanly; and do it with that dignified meekness which becomes Christians, faithfully contending against what they believe to be error. But do not, as you respect the sanctity of the Gospel, as you reverence the dignity of the Christian Church, and as you honour the name of Baptists, do not permit yourselves to indulge in that low and scurrilous abuse, and to shew forth that violent, vindictive, and intolerant temper, which have been but too manifest among some Baptists of this State.

And, secondly, we would address those, who are favourably disposed towards the present, and all similar institutions. Brethren, it is to you, and to you only, that we can now look. We therefore make a direct and solemn appeal to your zeal, your benevolence, your self respect, and your sense of duty. And we call upon you, as disciples of Christ, and as members of the Baptist Church, to put away all indifference, and conscientiously consider what you can do, and what you ought to do, at the present pressing and important crisis.

You have been told already, that the Baptists of other States have been long engaged in enlightening their Ministry, in multiplying their Churches, in augmenting the force of the Denomination, and in enjoying the fruits of their enterprise. You well know, that brethren of other Denominations, more zealous and more deserving than ourselves, are stepping in,
and taking possession of ground which Baptists had long considered their own. In addition to this, many of our Churches are lying waste—the ordinances neglected—the administration of the word neglected—discipline neglected—the rising generation neglected—and all for want of competent teachers. Our Ministers no sooner arise to some degree of eminence and usefulness, than they are either drawn from us, by the commanding inducements of distant Churches, or are forced away from us, by the unkind treatment of those who envy their superiority. Too many of those who are left behind, find it to be their interest, and make it their business, to keep the people in ignorance, to resist the improvement of the Ministry, and to hold the Churches in their present degraded and helpless condition. Antinomian error, with all its kindred absurdities, and all its demoralizing tendencies, is boldly and zealously propagated amongst us. And those who have professed to witness these evils, and to deplore them, have either looked with stupid indifference, or vented their zeal in vain and fruitless complaints. And what is worse than all the rest, multitudes, for whom we are accountable, are hardening themselves in infidelity, sinking in profligacy, or dying in their sins, for want of wiser management and more faithful dealing. These things make it but too plain, that a deadly policy is clogging all our movements, and infecting all our interests; that an odium, but too well merited, is gradually accumulating upon our name; that we are rapidly falling behind in the march of Christian benevolence, and enlightened and efficient godliness; and that the blood of those who are ruined through our neglect, is dying our skirts with crimson, and crying to Heaven for vengeance! And in setting forth this representation, we have given no indulgence to imagination—we have made no offerings to fancy—we have simply and literally detailed facts—facts, which can be sustained by evidence, and facts, which many persons have long beheld with shame and regret.

And we would now solemnly ask you, is it not time that something were done? Is it not time that measures of some sort were in operation, to check the growing mischief, and to bring about a better and more auspicious state of things? Is it not time, that some organized and well sustained system was on foot, to enlighten and enforce our Ministry; to circulate purity, and health, and vigorous action, through our Churches; to wipe the contracted infamy from our name; and to elevate the Baptists of North Carolina at least to a level with those of sister States?

And if so, if the time to favour Zion has come, by whom is the work to be effected? By those of sister States? Certainly not. Although some of them have actually proffered their assistance, surely we have no claim upon their munificence, nor can we, with honour, consent to accept it. By those who are in the opposition? They are content with their lot, they are well pleased with their ignorance, and they ask not, neither are they willing to accept, the advantages we contemplate. To whom, then, can we go, to whom can we appeal, from whom can aid be asked or expected, but from you, Baptists of North Carolina, who have been made to differ from others in the State, and whose eyes begin to be opened to your duties and your necessities?

Do you ask what kind of aid we desire you to render? Our answer is, we desire you to aid us with your prayers, with your influence, and with your money. You need not now be told why your prayers are needed.
Nor need you be reminded of the importance of your influence, and your personal exertions, in carrying into effect the various operations proposed. But you may not be fully apprized of the necessity which there is for your money. Let it be recollected, then, that money is power; and power which is indispensable to the execution of every human enterprise. With money, armies can be raised, navies can be built, fortifications can be erected, and empires can be enlarged and supported: with money, canals can be cut, seas can be drained, mountains can be levelled, and all the different departments of science and of the arts, of commerce and of agriculture, can be sustained and perfected. But without money, no one of these objects can be attained. And money is an agent not less powerful, and not less indispensable, in religious, than in secular operations. With money, Christians can be fed and clothed, places of worship can be erected, Bibles can be printed and circulated; and with money, Ministers may be maintained and educated, and afterwards located and supported, in any given sections of country. And without money, or its equivalent, neither of these things can be accomplished. As has been seen, it was so in the days of the Apostles, and it will ever be so, until those who are engaged in the support of Christianity, shall be exempted from the wants common to human nature. When such exemption shall be effected, when Ministers shall be able to live without eating and drinking, and in a word, without any of the conveniences or necessaries of life, then, and not till then, will there be consistency in exclaiming against demands for money, and expecting the religion of the Gospel to be sustained and propagated without it.

And permit us to say, that with such aid, even in very moderate proportions, we feel assured of the attainment of our object. With prudent measures, the blessing of God, and adequate funds, no reasonable doubt can exist, that the plans proposed will be carried into successful operation. There is now a number of young men waiting to be employed, and reasonable hopes are entertained that others will be raised up as they can be provided for; so that there is nothing now needed, in the whole compass of human agency, but adequate funds, suitably applied. Will you, then, furnish us with those funds, to be appropriated according to the provisions of our Constitution?

And when we thus request the favour of your aid, we wish it distinctly understood, that our expectations are moderate and humble. We contemplate no noisy, impetuous eruption, which shall smoke, and blaze, and thunder for a season, and then dwindle down to the stillness and insignificance of a taper, or become entirely extinct. We want not to awaken in you that imprudent and intemperate zeal, which, in the nature of things, must soon cool; nor is it our wish to see you put forth those premature, disproportioned exertions, which will soon exhaust your strength, and leave you reduced, and languid, and unfit for future service. What you do, we wish to be done by the impulse of those fundamental principles, love towards God, and benevolence towards men, the operation of which is uniform, constant, and enduring. And, accordingly, our desire is, that you should deliberately "count the cost," calculate your own resources, and determine what you can afford to give, and to give annually, without detriment to yourselves, or injustice or inconvenience to your families; and then proceed to the undertaking with that determination which never falters, and with that perseverance which never falls short of its object.
It may not be out of place, perhaps, to specify more particularly some of our calculations. There are, in North Carolina, fourteen Associations, which comprise 272 Churches: and these Churches contain upwards of 15,360 members. Now, let it be supposed, that one half of these Churches will see proper to patronise the Convention. Let it be supposed, also, that one half of the members in these last mentioned Churches, will become contributors to its funds. And let it be supposed, further, that each of these members shall contribute but 25 cents a year, or, which is about the same thing, two cents per month. This, as may be easily seen by calculation, will produce an amount equal to the sum of 966 dollars each year. Should all the members of the patronising Churches pay the above sum, it would increase the aggregate to 1920 dollars; and could all the members, in all the Churches in the State, be induced to do an equal proportion, it would swell the annual amount to 3840 dollars.

It will here probably be said, with a sneer, 'It is much more easy to sit down and make calculations than to pay the money.' If this assertion be intended to apply to the physical power requisite for the undertaking, though it may seem to have the force of an aphorism, we deny its accuracy. Can it be believed that there are many Baptists in North Carolina who cannot appropriate two cents per month to a benevolent object, without the least personal or domestic inconvenience? Then let one-fourth do what all, or nearly all, can do with the utmost ease, and the work is done! If there be any difficulty whatever in the attainment of the proposed result, it is not because the Baptists of the State want the power, but because they want the inclination. That there are many who want the inclination, we do not doubt, but for the sake of the good name of the Denomination, we would hope that we are not too sanguine when we count upon one-fourth!

Thus it has been seen that without taking into the account donations from individuals, and what may be contributed by Associations and Auxiliary Societies, which probably will amount to as much more, an annual amount may be produced of about 1000 dollars. With the half of this, five young men may be supported in their studies, and with the other half, as many more may be materially aided in preaching the Gospel to the destitute.

To carry into effect what we think has been demonstrated to be, not only practicable, but easy of accomplishment, let some active individual in each Church or each neighbourhood, who is desirous of being useful, and who is willing to devote a few hours in each year to the cause of benevolence, take upon himself to see that some simple system of management shall be originated, and kept in operation, for the annual collection, and punctual transmission to the Treasurer of the Convention, of all such contributions as shall be willingly bestowed. In Churches and Associations this can be done by such measures, and in such a manner, as these bodies may see proper to adopt. Out of the Church, this can be effected by means of Auxiliary Societies.

And we would here add, that we look with the most earnest and confident expectation for the aid of our female friends, both in the Church, and out of it. Females have shared eminently in the interests of Christianity ever since its first establishment. The natural ardour of their affections, the acuteness of their sympathy, and their well-known patience
and perseverance in undertakings of every description, have rendered them efficient agents in the support of the Gospel, in every age of its existence. And these qualities, it is believed, are peculiarly adapted to the nature of our Convention, and admirably calculated to subserv its interests. Female benevolence, and female assiduity, extensively and constantly, but modestly and moderately employed, cannot fail to produce important results. We are therefore sanguine in our hopes, that our present appeal shall not be made in vain.

There is one more class in Society, whose co-operation we would gladly bespeak, and that is, those who, though not members of the Church, are nevertheless well-wishers to the Gospel, and decided friends to our Denomination. There are many persons in the State who, though not personal professors of religion, have habitually desired its prosperity, and as regularly administered to its support. Such persons have usually been among the first to lament the depressed state of our Ministry, the languishing condition of our Churches, and the general prostration of the Denomination. Such, we doubt not, will hail the establishment of the present Convention, as the means of introducing a more acceptable order of things, and will cheerfully contribute their assistance to carry its plans into execution. And while we would remind them, that a cup of cold water shall in no wise go unrewarded—we would also assure them, that we will gladly and gratefully receive whatever offerings they shall be pleased to make.

And now—to an earnest and speedy concurrence in all that has been proposed, we have but one single inducement to offer; on that we shall rest our cause, and with that we shall conclude our address. What is done at all, must be done quickly. The hand that now writes shall soon be cold and stiff in the grave. The eye that shall trace these pages shall soon be wrapped in the dark folds of the winding-sheet. The heart that beats warm with benevolence shall soon be as cold and as clammy as the clay by which it shall be pressed. He who now dozes, and deliberates, and delays, shall soon be roused from his spell of sloth, by that summons which shall terminate, at once, both his drowsiness and his opportunities. Our fathers and predecessors, whether faithful or not, have been hurried from the field, and are no more seen. Our co-evals are dropping, one after another, into the grave, leaving their work unfinished, and perhaps untouched. And we ourselves, whether prepared or not, shall soon give up our stewardship, forego all our opportunities of doing good—and enter that lowly, silent dwelling, “appointed for all living.” Our doings shall soon become a subject of inspection to posterity, and be made a matter of praise or of reproach, in proportion, as we shall be found to have been beneficial, or useless to mankind. And what is more than all the rest, our souls shall soon be in the presence of God, to account for the manner in which we shall have improved or neglected the favours of Heaven, and to be rewarded or punished, according as we shall be found to have been diligent or slothful. Men and Brethren! who live in the brightest day the world has ever seen—who are permitted to witness events which would have dazzled the vision, and startled the faith of Prophets and Apostles—who are favoured with opportunities, which no preceding generation was ever permitted to enjoy—who sustain responsibilities more fearful, perhaps, than any which ever before oppressed the consciences
of men—and whose passage through life is swifter than the flight of the 
weaver’s shuttle; consider, we beseech you, who, and where, you are! 
Mark the surprising and momentous peculiarities of your situation! Let 
your own’ hearts speak! and more need not be said. This single advo-
cate will set up a plea within you, more moving than the lofty pathos of 
Isaiah, or all the winning charms of Apollo; and an appeal which surely 
will not, cannot be set up in vain.
PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION.

Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Baptist Benevolent Society, held in Greenville, March 26th, 1830.

At half past eleven o'clock, an introductory sermon was preached in the Baptist Meeting House by Elder S. Wait, from Mat. ix. chap. 36. 37. 38. verses.

At 3 o'clock, the Society convened for business in the Academy.

PRESENT.

Elder P. W. Dowd, R. M. Guffee, Raleigh.
Elder Wm. H. Biddle, Craven County.
Elder Sam'l. Wait, Newbern.
Elder Jno. Armstrong, Newbern.
Elder Thos. Meredith, Edenton.
Chas. W. Skinner, Perquimmons.
Elder J. McDaniel, Cumberland.
H. Austin, Tarboro.
P. P. Lawrence, R. S. Long.
Elder Thos. D. Mason, Greenville.
GEO. Stokes, R. S. Blount.

Elder P. W. Dowd, President, took the chair.
The Meeting was opened by prayer, by Elder T. Meredith.
Elder John Armstrong was appointed Assistant Recording Secretary.
The Minutes of the last meeting were read by the Assistant Recording Secretary.
Resolved, That Brethren Armstrong, Stokes, and Lawrence be appointed a Committee to audit the Treasurer's account, and report to-morrow.

The Corresponding Secretary read a letter from Elder Thos. Crocker, in answer to one from the Board, requesting his services as a Missionary; which was laid on the table until to-morrow.

The proceedings of the Board of Directors, at Tarborough, in June, and at Raleigh, in December last, were read and approved.

A Committee for the supply of the pulpit was appointed, consisting of Brethren Austin, Lawrence and Skinner.

The following resolution was adopted without a dissenting voice:

Resolved, That this Society be transformed into a State Convention.

The following Constitution was read and adopted, by article.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE 1. This Institution shall be called the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

ART. 2. The primary objects of this Convention shall be, the education of young men called of God to the Ministry, and approved of by the Churches to which they respectively belong; the employment of Missionaries within the limits of this State; and a co-operation with the Baptist General Convention of the United States, in the promotion of Missions in general.

ART. 3. The funds devoted to these objects shall be kept distinct from each other, and punctually appropriated agreeably to the specific intention of contributors.

ART. 4. This institution shall be composed of such individuals, and Delegates from such Associations, Churches, and Societies, as shall make adequate contributions to its funds.

ART. 5. Every Association, Church, Society, or individual, shall be entitled to send to the Convention, one Delegate, who shall be a member of the Baptist Church, for every Ten Dollars paid into the Treasury.

ART. 6. The officers of this Convention, to be elected annually, shall be, a President, three Vice-Presidents, a Corresponding Secretary and Recording Secretary, and Treasurer, who, with eighteen others, shall constitute a Board of Directors; five of whom shall form a quorum.

ART. 7. It shall be the duty of the President, to preside at all meetings of the Convention, and Board, that of the Vice-Presidents, in case of his absence, according to seniority. The Corresponding Secretary shall be required to correspond with Societies or individuals, so far as the interests of the Convention shall require; and the Recording Secretary shall preserve a faithful record of the proceedings of the body. The Treasurer shall hold the funds of the Convention, to be subject to the order of the Board; shall give security for the faithful discharge of his duty, and shall make an annual report of all receipts and expenditures, which shall be audited and published with the Minutes.

ART. 8. The Board of Directors shall meet quarterly, at such place as it shall from time to time designate; when they shall adopt such measures as shall best tend to carry into effect the different objects of the Convention, subject to the provision of the Constitution.
Art. 9. There shall be an adequate number of Agents, subject to the direction of the Convention, or its Board, whose duty shall be to visit Associations and Churches, &c. and endeavour to secure their cooperation with this institution, conformably with the provisions of the Constitution; but in no case to collect or transmit funds.*

Art. 10. The Convention shall hold its meetings annually, commencing Friday preceding the third Lord's day in April, at such place as it shall from time to time direct.

Art. 11. The Convention shall require of its Board, a specific report of all their proceedings, at each annual meeting.

Art. 12. Any alteration may be made in this Constitution at any annual meeting, with the concurrence of two-thirds of its members present.

A Committee was appointed to arrange the order of business for to-morrow, consisting of Elders Armstrong, Meredith, and Mason.

Adjourned to 8 o'clock to-morrow. Prayer by Elder Armstrong.

At evening, a discourse was preached by Elder P. W. Dowd.

MARCH 27th.

Met according to adjournment. Prayer by Elder Biddle.

Brother J. Hartman arrived and took his seat.

The Convention proceeded to the election of the following officers, for the ensuing year:

Elder P. W. Dowd, President.
W. P. Biddle, Vice-President.
Thos. Meredith, Vice-President.
Bro. C. McAllister, Vice-President.
Elder John Armstrong, Corresponding Secretary.
Bro. R. S. Blount, Recording Secretary.
Bro. H. Austin, Treasurer.


The letter from Elder Thomas Crocker was referred to the Board.

Elder Thos. Meredith was appointed to prepare a Circular, to be attached to the report of the Convention.

A Committee was appointed, to enquire into the state and collect the funds of the Chowan Missionary Society. Elder Thos. Meredith, Breth. C. W. Skinner, and H. Skinner Committee.

A Committee was appointed to enquire into the state and collect the funds of the Neuse Baptist Missionary Society. Elders Wm. P. Biddle, Saml. Wait, and Bro. Saml. Simpson, Committee.

* This provision is made for the sole object of obviating objections that are often made against the collection of funds by Missionary Agents.
A Committee was appointed to enquire into the state and collect the funds of the Raleigh Baptist Missionary Society. Elder P. W. Dowd, Jno. Purpoys, and Bro. W. R. Hinton, Committee.

Resolved, That the next meeting of the Convention be held at the Cross Roads Meeting House, Wake County.

Elder J. Armstrong was appointed to preach the introductory sermon, and in case of failure, W. P. Biddle.

Elder Thos. Meredith was appointed to preach the sermon on Lord's day, in behalf of the Society, and in case of failure, Elder J. McDaniel.

The Committee appointed to audit the Treasurer's account, reported, that they had examined the same and found it correctly cast and duly vouched.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock. Prayer by Elder Mason.

Sermon by Elder Biddle at 11 o'clock.

At 3 o'clock met agreeably to adjournment.

Prayer by Elder Wm. P. Biddle.

Resolved, That the General Agent of the Convention, defraying his own expenses, receive for his services $35 per month.

Elder Saml. Wait was appointed General Agent of the Convention.

Resolved, That one thousand copies of these Minutes be printed; and that the Corresponding Secretary superintend the same.

The Corresponding Secretary was directed to open a correspondence with the different Conventions of the Baptist Denomination in the United States.

A delegation was appointed to represent this Convention, in the next sessions of the South Carolina and Georgia Conventions. Elders S. Wait, T. Meredith, J. Armstrong, J. McDaniel and P. W. Dowd.

Adjourned to Monday morning, 8 o'clock. Prayer by Elder Wait.

Sermon in the evening by Elder T. Meredith.

LORD'S DAY.

Sermons by Elders P. W. Dowd, J. McDaniel, and Jno. Armstrong

MONDAY, MARCH 29th.

Met agreeable to adjournment.

Bro. Saml. Simpson appeared and took his seat.

Prayer by Elder Wait.

A Committee was appointed to draft a Constitution, as a form for the organization of Primary Societies. Elders Saml. Wait, J. Armstrong, and Bro. William Sanders, Committee.

After a short address and prayer by the President, the Convention adjourned.
Treasurer's Report of the Baptist State Convention, N. C.

RECEIPTS—For Home Missions.
January, 1829. From the Tarboro Church, $ 49 00
Moses Baker, 1 00
G. Stokes, 10 00
J. Armstrong, 5 00
James McDaniel, 5 00
William R. Hinton, 10 00
Susan Dowd, 1 00
C. P. Dowd, 1 00
J. J. Davis, 2 50
E. S. Ely, 1 00
December, 1829.
Public collection in Raleigh, 20 44
T. D. Mason, 10 00
Bethel Church, Wake County, 4 04
Raleigh Church, 10 00
Lucy Watts, 2 00
Daniel Boon, 10 00
John Holomon, 5 00
William Sanders, 2 00
R. S. Blount, 10 00
March, 1830.
Charles W. Skinner, 25 00
Mary Satter, 1 00
James McDaniel, 5 00
Public Collection in Greenville, 30 14
Elizabeth Kertermus, 50

Amount for Home Missions, $220 62

EXPENDITURES—
January, 1829. Messrs. Gales and Son, for printing Minutes of Constitution, &c. $12 75
August, 1829. The same for printing a Circular letter to Agents, 4 50

Balance for Home Missions, $203 37

EDUCATION FUND.
March, 1830. Charles W. Skinner, $25 00
Jesse Rountree, Sen., 10 00

Total amount now in the Treasury, $238 37

H. AUSTIN, Treasurer.
CONSTITUTION
OF A
PRIMARY SOCIETY.

ARTICLE 1. This Society shall be called the Primary Society, Auxiliary to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

ART. 2. Any person may become a member of this Society, by contributing the sum of ______ annually.

ART. 3. This Society shall elect annually, a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a suitable number of Collectors.

ART. 4. The President, and in his absence the Vice-President, shall preside at all meetings of the Society.
   The Secretary shall keep the records, manage the correspondence, and at each annual meeting of the Society make a report.
   The Treasurer shall take charge of the money collected, and shall make a report at each annual meeting of the Society.
   The Collectors shall collect the subscriptions, solicit donations from individuals friendly to the Society, and pay the same over to the Treasurer.

ART. 5. The officers of the Society, with the Collectors, shall constitute a Board of Directors, who shall meet from time to time, as the interest of the Society may require.

ART. 6. The Society shall be entitled to send to the Baptist State Convention, one Delegate, who must be a member of the Baptist Church, for every Ten Dollars forwarded to the funds of the Convention.

ART. 7. The annual meeting of this Society shall be held on the when Delegates shall be elected, and reports received, a copy of which shall be sent with the Delegates, to the Baptist State Convention.