

Griffin's History

Chapter XIII

THE MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION

In July 1807, several churches met, by delegates, at Salem, in Jefferson county, and agreed to form themselves into an Association; and that each church appoint delegates to meet at Bethel, in Wilkinson county, in Sept., 1807. Accordingly the delegates, then and there, constituted the Mississippi Baptist Association:

PREAMBLE:

We, the churches of Jesus Christ, who have been regularly baptized upon a profession of our faith, are convinced of the necessity of a combination of churches, and of maintaining a correspondence, for the preserving a federal Union amongst all the churches of the same faith and order. We, therefore, do agree to unite and form ourselves into an Association upon the following principles, namely:

ARTICLES OF FAITH:

1. We believe in one only true and living God, and that there are a trinity of persons in the God— head, the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, the same in essence, equal in power and glory.
2. We believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God; are of divine authority, and the only rule of faith and practice.
3. We believe in the fall of Adam; in the imputation of his sin to all his posterity;; in the total depravity of human nature; and in man's inability to restore himself to the favor of God.
4. We believe in the everlasting love of God to his people; in the eternal unconditional election of a definite number of the human family to grace and glory.
5. We believe that sinners are only justified in the sight of God, by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ; which is unto all, and upon all them that believe.

6. We believe all those who were chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, are in time effectually called, regenerated, converted and sanctified; and are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.

7. We believe there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who by the satisfaction which he made to law and justice, in becoming an offering for sin, hath by his most precious blood, redeemed the elect from under the curse of the law, that they might be holy and without blame, before him in love.

8. We believe good works are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification; are evidence of a gracious state; and that it is the duty of believers to perform them from a principle of love.

9. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and a general judgment, and that the happiness of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked will be eternal.

ON GOSPEL ORDER.

1. We believe that the visible church of Jesus Christ, is a congregation of faithful persons who have given themselves up to the Lord, and to each other, and have covenanted to keep up a Godly discipline, agreeably to the rules of the Gospel.

2. We believe that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, the only law— giver; that the government is with the body, "the church," and is equally the right and privilege of each member thereof.

3. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's supper are Gospel ordinances, appointed by Jesus Christ, and are to be continued in the church, until his second coming.

4. We believe baptism, by immersion, is the only Scriptural mode, and that believers are the only proper subjects.

5. We believe that none but regular baptized church members have a right to partake of the Lord's supper.

6. We believe it to be the duty, and privilege, of all believers, to make a public confession of their faith to submit to baptism by immersion, and to give themselves members of the visible church.

7. We believe it to be the duty of every regular organized church, to expel from her communion all disorderly members, who are immoral in their lives—or that hold doctrines contrary to the Scriptures.

RULES OF DECORUM.

1. Those delegates who are regularly chosen by the churches in our Union, shall compose the Association.

2. The delegates so chosen shall produce letters from their respective churches, certifying their appointment, together with their number, in fellowship, baptized, received by letter, restored, dismissed, excommunicated, and dead, since the last Association.

3. The delegates thus chosen, and convened, shall be denominated the Mississippi Baptist Association.

4. This Association shall have a Moderator and Clerk, who shall be chosen by the members present.

5. If new churches desire to be admitted into the Union, they shall petition by letter and delegates. If, on examination, found orthodox, and orderly, shall be received by the Association, and manifested by the Moderator giving their delegates the right hand of fellowship.

6. No church in the Union shall have a right to more than two delegates, until she shall exceed one hundred members—then she shall have a right to an additional delegate for every fifty.

7. Every query sent to the Association, by any church of the Union, shall be read and put to vote by the Moderator, whether it shall be debated, and if there shall be a majority for it, it shall be taken up and investigated: Provided, always. That those be first considered, which effect the union of the churches.

8. Every motion made and seconded shall be taken up by the Association, except it be withdrawn by the person who made it.

9. Only one person shall speak at once, who shall rise from his seat and address the Moderator.

10. The person thus speaking, shall not be interrupted except he depart from the subject, break the rules of decorum, or cast reflections on a brother; in which case he shall be immediately called to order by the Moderator.

11. No person shall speak more than twice to the same subject, without leave of the Association.

12. No brother shall be suffered to whisper or laugh during the conference; neither shall he absent himself without leave of the Moderator.

13. The Moderator shall have the liberty of speaking to any question that may be debated, provided the chair be previously filled; and have the privilege of voting, only when the association are equally divided.

14. The names of the delegates shall be enrolled by the Clerk, and called over as often as the Association may deem expedient.

15. We think it absolutely necessary to have an Association fund, for defraying the expense of the same— for the raising and supporting of which, we think it the duty of each church in the Union to contribute such sums as they may deem proper, and send by the hands of their delegates to the Association—and the money thus contributed by the churches, shall be deposited in the hands of a Treasurer, by the Association appointed, who shall be accountable to the Association, for all monies by him received and paid out, according to the direction of the same.

16. The minutes of the Association shall be read, (and corrected if necessary,) and signed by the Moderator and Clerk, before the Association rises.

17. These rules of decorum and Gospel order, may be altered, changed or amended from time to time, or any part of them, when a majority of all the churches in the Association shall deem it necessary—but the Articles of Faith shall not be subject to any alteration, only as it respects form.

POWERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

1. It shall be the business of the association to provide for the general union of the churches.

2. To keep up a friendly correspondence, when convenient, with those Associations of the same faith and order.

3. This Association shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage, nor to infringe upon any of the internal rights of the churches.
4. It shall be the duty of this Association to give the churches the best advice in their power in difficult matters—to enquire into any difficulties which may exist between sister churches, and remove them if possible.
5. To admit any of the brethren in the ministry as assistants, but not to give them the privilege of voting.
6. This association shall have the power to withdraw from any church in the Union, who may be unsound in principle, or immoral in practice, until reclaimed.
7. To appoint any person or persons, by and with their consent, to transact any business which the Association may deem necessary.
8. The Association shall have power to adjourn to any time or place they may think most proper.
9. The Association shall be opened and closed by prayer.

1807

In September, the first session of the Mississippi Baptist Association was held, at Bethel, in Wilkinson county, in which five churches were represented by delegates, viz: Salem, Newhope, Bethel, New Providence and Ebenezer—the aggregate strength, 196 members. It was agreed, that each church should, hereafter, send three delegates, and no more.

1808

In October, the second session was held at New Providence, Amite county, in which seven churches were represented—the five above named, and the Bayou Pierre and Morgan's Fork—aggregate strength 236 members—\$26.50 sent up by the churches. Two union meetings were appointed, to be held during the ensuing associational year.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES.

Query.—What steps would be most advisable to take with the members of our society, whose treatment to their slaves is unscriptural?

Answer.—We recommend to the several churches, belonging to our connexion, to take notice of any improper treatment, of their members, towards their slaves, and deal with them in brotherly love, according to the rules of the Gospel.

Query.—What shall be done with members of our society who live in the constant neglect of family worship.

Answer.—We recommend to the heads of families in our connexion, to keep up family worship, as a Christian duty, and where they do not, that Gospel steps be taken, in order that they may be reclaimed.*

Query.—Shall the ordination of a Minister of the Gospel, who may become a member of the Baptist Church, be considered valid, who was ordained by men not in our connexion?

Answered in the negative.

Query.—Is a brother under obligation in all cases of private offence, to go to his brother, and tell him his fault? Answered in the affirmative.

*This is the only instance in forty-odd years that the subject is named.

Brother T. Mercer, M. Hadley, and D. Snodgrass, were appointed a committee to enquire into the validity of brother John Wood's ordination, and if thought requisite to ordain him; and to report the result to the church.

1809

In October, the third session was held at Salem, in Jefferson county — same churches represented — aggregate strength 251 members — no money reported — three Union meetings appointed for the ensuing year. Brother M. Hadley was appointed to write the circular for next year. Brother T. Mercer, to preach the introductory sermon at the next association, and in case of failure, brother E. Courtney. Brother D. Cooper, to superintend the printing of the minutes.

Query.—Is it consistent with Gospel order to receive testimony from persons of good character, not of our connection, against a church member?

Answered in the affirmative.

EXTRACT FROM THE CIRCULAR LETTER.

"For the better understanding of the mind of Christ on this subject, we shall observe in the first place, that the object of church censures, in whatever degree it may be necessary to use them, it is not the destruction, but the salvation (from error) of the unfortunate transgressor. Therefore, whether we exhort, admonish, reprove, or proceed to the high censure of excommunication, still our object should be the destruction or mortification of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

"But it is lamentable that possessors of religion are not always influenced by this principle. We may vent our spite, and gratify secret revenge, on a brother who has gone astray, and that under the spacious appearance of religion, and zeal for the Lord of hosts. But let that man tremble, who would thus pervert and prostitute sacred things to the gratification of a base, malicious passion. Let him recollect, that his hypocrisy and malice will be detected, when he shall stand before the Judge of quick and dead.

"We shall next enquire whether the Gospel requires private labors to be used in cases of public transgression. It has been the prevailing opinion that private offences require private labors; but where the offence is public, the offender should be immediately cited to appear at the bar of the church; and that no previous steps were necessary. But, however general this opinion may have been, it is not according to the rule of the Gospel. Which, we trust, will clearly appear from the following observations, wherein we shall endeavor to prove, that private labors ought to be used in all cases of public offence, except where the sin is of so heinous and flagrant a nature, that the honor of religion would require the offender to be immediately excommunicated. For we have already observed, that the great object of the church should be to reclaim the offender. Therefore, those means should most certainly be adopted, which are best calculated to answer that purpose.

"Should we go to the offender in the spirit of Christ, tell him his fault, explain to him the nature and consequence of his transgression, and charge the sin upon his conscience; it would be more likely to bring him to repentance, than if he should be immediately cited to appear at the bar of the church. Where rash measures are used, there is reason to fear, that the heart of the offender, already hardened by sin, would still grow harder, and the sheep which has gone astray, would only wander farther into the wilderness. But the good Shepherd will pursue the lost sheep into the mountains; and when he has found it, he will not drag it home, nor yet attempt to drive it, but he will lay it on his shoulder and bring it to the fold again.

"We shall now examine Matthew xviii: 15, 16 and 17, on this subject, which is considered as a directory in cases of offenders: 'If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established,' &c. There is but one description of private offence to which this rule will properly apply, viz: Where the offender does not deny the charge, but pleads not guilty, upon the ground of there being no criminality attached to the action. But where the charge is denied, the rule above will not apply. For it is a principle laid down in the word of God, that no man shall be condemned, until he is proved guilty, and that by the testimony of at least two witnesses. See Deut. xvii: 6, and xix: 15. 'One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin that he sinneth; at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.'" Again Matt.xviii: 16, and 2 Cor. xviii: 1: 'In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.' Now where the offence is of a private nature, if it should be brought into the Church, it would be impossible to establish the charge by the testimony required. Therefore, it would be improper in itself, as well as inconsistent with Gospel order, to bring it into the Church. The direction given by our Saviour is, 'If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault alone.' But should you fail to reclaim him, other steps must be taken; and should he continue impenitent, he is at last to be brought before the Church; and should he refuse to hear the Church, he is to be expelled. Here the labors commence in private, but end in public excommunication.

"Now in this case, it appears that the trespass could not have been entirely of a private nature, (although private labors are required) because it is to be established in the Church, by the testimony of two or three witnesses, which would be impossible, unless there were witnesses present and if there were witnesses, it could not be a private offence; therefore, we are constrained to believe, that the rule laid down in the 18th of Matthew, as there stated, is only applicable to public offences, which can be supported by proper testimony. And that it is the duty of the Church, in all cases of public transgression, to use private labors, except in the case of the heinous offender, before excepted.

"But to make this subject as plain as possible, suppose A and B, members of the same church, and of equal respectability; A brings a charge of immorality against B, which charge is by B denied. A then takes with him C and D to labor with B, but the charge is still denied, and no satisfaction obtained. B is now to be brought before the Church. This is an illustration of what has been called Gospel steps, where in the first instance, the trespass was of a private nature.

"Here we have two members of equal standing, the one affirms, but the other denies. Now who is the Church to believe, or by what rule will she form a decision. To censure the accused, would be a violation of the word of God. For no man shall be condemned but by the testimony of two or three witnesses. As to the helps who were called in, they can prove nothing to the point; all they can testify is, that a contradiction existed between the two brethren. And as to the testimony of the accuser, it is quite insufficient; the solitary evidence of one man can never be admitted, according to the rule of the Divine word. Therefore, the Church will be bound in this case, to acquit or justify the accused member; the accuser not being able to make good his charge. In this case, it is to be understood, that there is no collateral or circumstantial evidence, by which the charge may be supported.

But what shall be done with the member who brought in the accusation? He must be considered in disorder, and fall under the censure of the Church, for slandering his brother. See Deut. xix: 19. 'After strict inquisition shall be made, and it shall appear to be a false accusation, then shall it be done unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother.'

"But suppose I see a member of the Church commit a sin which merits excommunication, and I go to him, and tell him his fault, and he should deny the fact, what am I to do, there being no witness to establish his guilt? In this case it will be your duty to testify against his wickedness, and endeavor to charge the sin upon his conscience; but should he remain impenitent, you are clear, for you have discharged your duty. His blood shall be upon his own head. And should he continue a member of the Church, and presume to partake at the Lord's table, the sin will be at his own door. But is it my duty, under these circumstances, to continue a member of the Church, and to partake with this disorderly person at the Lord's table? We conceive it to be your duty to continue in the Church, and to fill your seat in the house of God, and upon all convenient occasions to partake of the Lord's supper. For the word of God is the rule of your duty, and not the conduct of any man. You ought to remember that you commune with Christ and his Church, and not with this disorderly person, whose sin you have borne a faithful testimony against."

1810

In Oct., the fourth session was held at Ebenezer, Amite county, in which nine Churches were represented, viz: Salem, Newhope, Bayou Sara, New Providence,

Ebenezer, Morgan's Fork, Bayou Pierre, East Fork and Middle Fork—the aggregate strength 277 members— 24.87 sent up by the churches—appointed four union meetings—agreed to open a correspondence with the Georgia Baptist Association, and the Cumberland Association, and that brother T. Mercer write to the former, and brother D. Cooper to the latter.

Extract.—"Be it known to the public in general, and all christian societies in particular, that John Wood, formerly a Baptist minister, in the month of January last, was expelled from the Baptist denomination."

Query from the Bayou Pierre church.—Is the washing the saints' feet a christian duty?*

Answered in the affirmative.

1811

In October, "The Association convened at New Hope, Adams county

The introductory sermon was preached by brother John Atkins, from Jud. i: 3.—'Earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.'

Letters from nine churches were read, and the names of the delegates enrolled.

Brother Thomas Mercer was chosen Moderator, and brother David Cooper, Clerk.

Read the rules of decorum adopted by this association.

The following churches applied, by letter and delegates, for admission into the Association: The church on Tancipiho, the church at Shiloh, and the church at Zion Hill, which were accordingly received.

Received a letter of correspondence from the Cumberland Association.

This is the only instance in which the subject is named.

The Circular Letter was read, and submitted to T. Mercer, M. Hadley and D. Cooper, for correction.

The same were appointed to preach on Sunday.

Monday morning, the Circular Letter was called for, read and received.

The petition from a number of brethren on Bogue Chitto, praying to be constituted into a church, was received. Brother T. Mercer and D. Cooper, were appointed to visit them, and, if they deem it expedient, to constitute them into a church.

Query from Ebenezer Church.—How should a church act that has an ordained minister among them, and who refuses to preach?

Answer.—We advise the church at Ebenezer to call in help to assist them in their difficulties.

On motion,

Resolved, That we think it expedient and necessary to appoint supplies to the destitute churches. Supplies for New Hope and Ebenezer churches: Brother Mercer to attend the first Saturday and Sunday in December at Ebenezer, and the third Saturday and Sunday in January at New Hope. Brother Hadley the first Saturday and Sunday in January at Ebenezer, and the third Saturday and Sunday in February, at New Hope. Brother Scarbrough, the second Saturday and Sunday in Dec, at New Hope. Brother Slocumb, the third Saturday and Sunday in November, at New Hope, and the first Saturday and Sunday in February at Ebenezer. Brother Atkins, the third Saturday and Sunday in March, at New Hope, Brother Cooper, the first Saturday and Sunday in March at Ebenezer, and the third Saturday and Sunday in April, at New Hope.

Appointed six union meetings, to be held at particular times and places the ensuing year.

The following brethren were appointed to write to the corresponding Associations: J. Atkins, to Hepzibah; T. Mercer, to the Georgia; D. Cooper, to the Cumberland; and M. Hadley, to the Savannah.

Brother Hadley appointed to write a Circular Letter for the next year.

Brother D. Cooper, to preach the next introductory sermon; in case of failure, L. Scarborough.

EXTRACT FROM THE CIRCULAR LETTER.

"These words contain more proofs than one; first, from the perpetuity of this covenant, which is not of works, promising life founded on obedience; for then, indeed, their perseverance would be precarious; but it is of grace, sovereign and

free, and so is a better covenant, established on better promises, not depending upon creative acts, but runs thus—' I will and they shall;'—a covenant well ordered in all things, nothing wanting which would be conducive to the welfare and happiness of the saints, containing all spiritual blessings for time and eternity, in both grace and glory, and therefore said to be sure: Its blessings are the sure mercies of David; its promises are yea and amen in Christ, and the whole is ratified and confirmed by the blood of the Son of God, and sure to all the spiritual seed—a covenant not made with them as considered in themselves, but with Christ as their head, and with them in him, and which will stand firm forever more. It is an everlasting covenant, flows from divine love, is founded on an eternal purpose, and consists of promises which God made before the world began, and of grace given in Christ, who was set up from everlasting as the mediator of it. It is said of those who are begotten again into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that they are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.—I Pet. i: 5. They are kept in the love of God, in the covenant of grace, in the hands of Christ, and on him the sure foundation, in a state of grace, both of sanctification and justification. They are kept in the paths of truth and holiness; also, from the destructive power of Satan, and from being finally carried away by the destructive errors of false teachers. Therefore, they shall never perish, but Christ will raise them up at the last day.

"Again. It is written: 'I am the Lord, I change not, therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.' Now, if the true believer should finally perish or be consumed, God must change in his love toward them, in his purposes and designs concerning them, and in His promises of grace made to them; and His blessings of grace bestowed on them must be reversed, which is impossible; for he will not alter the thing that has gone out of his mouth, nor change his mind; for he is of one mind, and who can turn him? The doctrine of the saints' final perseverance in grace, establishes the unchangeableness of God; but the contrary doctrine makes him changeable in his nature, will and grace, and reflects dishonor on Him with whom there is no variableness, no shadow of turning.

"The wisdom of God, which is displayed in all His works of nature, providence and grace, appears very conspicuous in this doctrine; which would not be the case, if any of the Lord's people should perish. No wise man, who has an end in view, but will devise and make use of proper means; and, if in his power, to make them effectual to accomplish the end. The end which God has in view is the salvation of his people; and it is inconsistent with his wisdom, to appoint means which will prove ineffectual, seeing it is completely in His power, to make them effectual to the accomplishing the end.

"God has appointed His Son as the author of this salvation, which he has wrought out by his obedience, suffering and death—and that for his people; and has appointed, as the means of their enjoying it, the sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth; for which purpose he sends his spirit to sanctify and work faith in them, whereby these means become effectual and the end is accomplished.

"Here we see the wisdom of God highly displayed and glorified. But where would be his wisdom to appoint a people to salvation and not save them? to send His Son to redeem them, and never be the better of it? to send His spirit into them to begin a good work, and not complete it? But this is not the case; for he has put the work of redemption into the hands of His Son, by whom it has been completed, and assigned the work of sanctification, in its beginning, progress and issue, to the agency of the Holy Spirit, who is adequate to it, and by whom it will be effected.

"In the work of salvation there is an eminent and glorious display of Divine power. Those who are elected according to the foreknowledge of God, and regenerated by the operation of the Divine spirit, are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation; so that they shall never perish, but be everlastingly saved.

"Brethren, we are obliged to believe, that inasmuch as God sent his Son into the world to save his people from their sins, that he has a people whom he designs to save.

Now, if any of those whom God designs to save should be finally lost, he must either change his mind, or else he has not power to accomplish his designs—the supposition of which we consider blasphemy. * * * *

"Having established the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints in grace, we shall conclude this letter, by just observing, that when this doctrine is properly understood, and received by a living faith, it is so far from producing licentiousness, that it fills the soul with humble gratitude and lively praise to him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

1812

In Oct., the Association convened at Zion Hill, Amite county—14 churches represented.

Received a petition from a number of brethren on the Tangipiho, praying to be constituted into a church, and brethren Courtney and Wall were appointed to attend them.

1813

In October, the Association convened at Bayou Pierre, Claiborne county—18 churches represented.

Query from two churches. — "What course shall a church take when an excommunicated person from a distant church applies for fellowship?

Answer.—In all such cases churches must act discretionally.

The union meetings to be discontinued." (No cause given.)

1813.—EXTRACT FROM THE CIRCULAR LETTER.

"War, it is readily conceded, is one of the greatest human calamities. It should never be entered into but upon principles, and from motives, that there is the clearest evidence the God of love and peace will approve. Then, indeed, it should be met with alacrity, and prosecuted with energy, as a means of speedily restoring the blessings of peace. History proves that a nation can be in no situation more dangerous than that of war, when it is conducted with languor and supineness. A pause, but a momentary pause, in its prosecution, endangers the vitals of freedom. Like commerce, war has its attendant train of vices to be carefully guarded against. From the aspect of the times, we all appear imperatively called upon to be found in the prompt discharge of all the duties of citizens and of Christians.

"This brethren, is not a war of passion and of mad ambition on our part. Deeply do we sympathize with many of the virtuous subjects of the government our country is contending against. We lament, with genuine sorrow of soul, the individual miseries that it will probably occasion, the useful and valuable lives that will be sacrificed, the many amiable and worthy characters that probably will, in consequence thereof, go with lacerated hearts to the grave. These reflections affect us deeply— but in the eye of Eternal Justice we stand acquitted of producing this evil—it devolves on the head of the aggressor." *****

1814

In Oct., the Association convened at Shiloh, Wilkinson county—18 churches represented. Brother Howell Wall, according to appointment, preached the introductory sermon from John iii: 36.

"The articles of faith and rules of decorum were read.

"On motion, a committee was appointed, of Jacob Cobb, Josiah Flowers, and B. E. Chany, to name six days in the year to be kept by our churches, as days of fasting, humiliation and prayer, and to be continued during the war in which our nation is involved.

"On motion,

Resolved,, That it be recommended to, and enjoined on, the preachers of our order, that they use the utmost diligence in the practice of itinerant preaching; taking into view the case of destitute churches and settlements, both in our territory and West Florida, whose language is, 'Come over and help us.'

Brother William Cooper was appointed to preach the next introductory sermon—and in case of failure, brother Nathan Morris.

A letter was received from sundry members on Cedar Creek, requesting that ministers be sent to them for the purpose of constituting a church. Whereupon, brethren Allen and Morris were requested to visit them, and comply with their wishes, if deemed expedient and proper.

1815

In Oct., the Association convened at Sarepta church, Jefferson county—24 churches represented.

Question.—"That in certain cases where two ministers should be called by a church to assist in the ordination of a minister, and it should afterwards appear, that one of said ministers was not at the time in good standing, as an orderly member of any church, shall the ordination of the minister to be ordained be considered valid?—and on the question being taken, it was carried in the affirmative.

"The two letters from Salem Church were called for and read, and after due deliberation it was

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed to sit forthwith and hear the evidence respecting the difficulties existing in said church, and make report of their views on the subject.

"Whereupon brethren Wm. Allen, Wm. Cooper, Jacob Cobb, Thos. Cason and Harman Runnels, were chosen in conformity with the foregoing resolution.

"The Half— Moon Bluff church made a request that this Association would advise, as to what would be their duty to do, respecting Robert Smith, who makes confession of his disorderly conduct, and shows marks of repentance sufficient to satisfy them, as to the propriety of receiving him as a private member, but have doubts whether he should be restored by them to the exercise of his public gift, without the advice of the Association. Whereupon, it was agreed that the Church has a right to restore him to fellowship, and leave him to act as it respects his public gift, as God and his own conscience may direct—and have appointed brethren Thomas Mercer, Ezra Courtney and Lawrence Scarborough, to act with them as helps, on the Friday before the first Sabbath in December next, to decide on the propriety of said Smith.

"A letter from the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States, was received and read; in which they solicit this Association, and the churches connected herewith, to contribute to aid them in raising funds for the purpose of sending missionaries to preach the Gospel to the heathen nations; and that a standing Secretary of this Association be appointed with whom they will correspond; and to whom they will forward their reports. Whereupon, brother Wm. Snodgrass was chosen to act in that capacity; and it is the wish of this Association, that the churches may contribute as liberally as they may find it convenient, and forward the same to our next annual meeting; also, that our ministering brethren endeavor to explain and further the views of said Board of Missions in the best manner they possibly can, and receive contributions from such persons as may be disposed to favor that great and blessed work; and that they preserve an account of the names and sums annexed, to be presented at our next meeting.

"On motion.

Resolved, That twenty dollars from our Association fund heretofore raised, and all the money received at this meeting, after paying for printing the minutes, be forwarded, by our Secretary, to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions."

"Brother Nathan Morris is appointed to preach the introductory sermon at our next annual meeting, and in case of failure, Brother William Whitehead.

Extract From the Circular Letter

"Brethren, you have long been praying for the destruction of anti— Christ, for the fullness of the Gentiles, for the calling in of the Jews, and for the spread of the Gospel, with the fulfillment of that prophesy which assures us that the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth. What think you of the signs of the times? This is certainly an eventful period. Our God is pouring out the vials of his wrath, and shaking terribly the nations of the earth; while many are purified and made white, many are running to and fro, and knowledge is increasing. We have reason to believe, that a glorious change is about to take place in the moral and political world; for the kingdoms of this world must become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ. Brethren, Christians of the Mississippi Territory, how do you feel? More than an ordinary portion of zeal has latterly manifested itself among modern Christians in many parts. Bible societies have been, and are now, forming throughout Christendom, for the diffusion of divine knowledge; while the missionary spirit has been revived, and is gaining ground in every direction. In a short time, we have reason to hope that the word of the Lord will be known from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof; for the Gospel of His kingdom must be preached unto all nations for a witness unto them. Our missionary brethren in India, with proper encouragement, will shortly have the Scriptures translated in twenty— seven different languages; which will enable about three hundred millions of poor benighted heathens, who are perishing for lack of knowledge, to read the precious word of God, which is able to make them wise unto salvation.

"Brethren, who will arise and come to the help of the Lord against the mighty? If your zeal is cold and languid, we trust the example of ancient and modern saints will have the necessary influence on your minds; that it will provoke you to love and good works. But are you ready to say, what can we do? You can do much. There is not a worthy member of Christ's militant church, but may be useful. By their example and prayer, with the contribution of a very small part of their wealth, great good may be done. You are entitled to the honor of being workers together with Christ; and, if you can't preach and exhort, you can, by your liberality, assist those who are engaged in the work of the ministry. Godly zeal will induce you to make many sacrifices, to suffer many privations, and to forego many inconveniences, that you may promote the interest of religion, and the salvation of God's elect."

1816

In October, the Association convened at Clear Creek, Adams county—30 churches represented.

Brother Nathan Morris, preached the introductory sermon.

Brother Nathan Morris was chosen Moderator, and brother Wm. Snodgrass, Clerk.

Brother Wm. Snodgrass presented a Circular Letter from the corresponding secretary of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, which was read, and also a receipt of the Vice— President of said Board for the following sums, sent from this Association, and from individuals— amounting to \$83.93.

Query.—Is it best to have church conferences in public or private?

Answer.—In public.

Resolved, That all the funds collected at this Association be forwarded, by our standing secretary, to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. (The amount not given.)

Extract From the Circular Letter

* * * * "You will please again to consider the direful effects of flattery in church discipline; and while some are striving to sweep the house of God from disorders, others will stand up, and, through flattery, will strive to make a bad cause good; and, in their turn, will strive to reduce mountains to mole— hills, and again, will strive to swell mole— hills to mountains, and hereby, flattery and plausible pretensions, will lead the simple astray. * * * * * * * * * *

"These things are matters of lamentation, if true; and whether they are facts or not, we leave general observation to determine. These hints strike not against the faithful, but the false, deceiving flatterers. And now, dear brethren, suffer a word of exhortation. We exhort you to abandon every kind of flattery, and in truth, faithfulness, and sincerity, keep up a regular and strict discipline in your churches, and you will soon find your difficulties disappear; your church tremblers will be made manifest, and be censured, and bear their own shame before the church and the world."

1817

In October, the Association convened at Bogue Chitto, Pike county—36 churches represented.

Eld. D. Cooper, chosen Moderator; Eld. B. Davis, Clerk.

Eld. James A. Ranaldson, missionary, being present, was invited by the Moderator, to take a seat in the Association.

Resolved, unanimously. That a summary of church discipline be published for the use of the churches; and that Elders D. Cooper, J. A. Ronaldson, and M. Hadly be a committee to compile a Discipline, and present to the next Association, for inspection and adoption.

Resolved, unanimously. That this Association recommend and support a plan for raising a fund, for the special purpose of promoting the proper education of pious men called to the great and important work of the Gospelministry.

"Our brethren, David Cooper, James A. Ronaldson and Benjamin Davis were appointed a committee to prepare and report a plan of education on to— morrow.

"To prevent imposition on the religious community,

Resolved, That certain imposters, under the names of Samuel T. Council and John W. Carry, be advertized in our Minutes."

Tuesday, Oct. 21.—"The committee appointed for the purpose, reported a plan of Education, and presented a short address to the churches on the subject, which was approved and accepted. In consideration of which, it was agreed:

1st. That a special committee of seven be appointed for one year, who shall be invested with right and authority to solicit subscriptions and donations for the education fund; to judge and determine of the moral character, piety, gifts, and graces of those who may apply for the benefit of this fund; to accept such as may be deemed worthy, and are called of God to preach the Gospel; also, to conduct and superintend their education; and to defray all necessary expenses out of the funds collected for that purpose.

2nd. That this special committee draft a constitution and by— laws, to present for inspection at the next Association.

3rd. That the respective churches of our order be recommended to contribute, yearly, to the education fund, by the hands of their delegates.

4th. That the address to the churches, prepared and presented by the committee, be substituted for our circular, and printed with the minutes.

Elders D. Cooper, J. A. Ronaldson, G. W. King, E. Courtney, L. Scarborough, B. Davis, and brother Wm. Snodgrass, were appointed the special committee of the Association, to manage the affairs of Education, as specified in the preceding articles.

"After some free conversation on the subject of Foreign and Domestic Missions, deeply interesting to this body, it was agreed, that our brethren, Thomas Mercer and Benjamin Davis, be requested to visit the Creek Indians, to enquire what can be done towards the establishment of schools, and the introduction of the Gospel among them."

Address on Ministerial Education

"Beloved brethren: Education is the subject to which we now invite your attention. This, next to the Gospel, is our choice theme. After religion, it is of the highest importance to the world.

"Philosophers, who know how much literature is indebted to Christianity, must value the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. Christians, who know how much education has contributed to the furtherance of the Gospel, must appreciate learning. The one is auxiliary to the other; and both are connected with the glory and happiness of man. Then let not the unsanctified philosopher spurn religion as opposed to reason; let not the bigoted Christian despise learning as incompatible with religion. Too, many, alas! are unacquainted with the excellency of the one; too many ignorant of the utility of the other.

"It is, however, with great joy we now behold churches arising in various parts of our goodly land; schools and colleges will also arise, as the hand— maids of knowledge and virtue. These, united, will make a land happy, and a nation exalted. These, separated, will lead to ignorance and profligacy.

"Although we do not consider a classical education absolutely essential to the qualifications of an evangelical preacher, yet "he shall not be a novice." It is the first principle of the oracles of God that they be able to teach. They should be apt to communicate their ideas with sound speech, that cannot be condemned. The words of the wise should be delivered with the tongue of the learned: that being fitly spoken, they may shine as apples of gold in pictures of silver.

"Literature is now in a state of improvement in our country. It is, therefore, the more important and desirable that those who are set for the defence of the Gospel, as the public teachers of morality and religion, should keep pace with the progress

of their disciples, that they may continue to be acceptable preachers in their respective congregations.

"We perceive some of our dear young brethren, called to this great work, this most dignified station, who, though they possess amiable graces, and promising gifts, yet, for the want of education, are doomed to labor under many disadvantages, while contending with learned infidels, and unmerciful critics. It is desirable that the student of divinity should be able to search the original text in Hebrew and Greek; and the practical preacher should be able to deliver his sermons with boldness without arrogance, with sound doctrine, with gramatical correctness, with logical strength, with elegance of rhetoric, and with simplicity of truth.

"Desirous to assist the student in the attainment of these objects, so far as practicable, under the auspices of Heaven, we have appointed a committee, as you will see in our minutes, for the purpose of soliciting donations for an education fund; to accept qualified candidates for the benefit of this fund, and to superintend their education.

"We now earnestly recommend to the respective churches we have the honor to represent in these States, to send their voluntary contributions annually, as God may prosper them, whether little or much, to be appropriated to this particular use. God will accept your free will offering; and when we shall be removed from among you, and you will no more hear our stammering tongues, our successors, we hope, may be more able ministers of the New Testament; who shall come to you, not with the doctrine of vain philosophy, and with the enticing word of man's wisdom, but with the pure doctrines of grace, delivered with the perspicuity of sanctified learning, in the clear demonstration of the spirit, and in power, and fraught with the fullness of the blessings of the Gospel.

1818

In Oct., the Association convened at New Providence church, Amite county—40 churches represented.

Eld. Josiah Flowers preached the introductory sermon.

Eld. D. Cooper, chosen Moderator, and Wm. Snodgrass, Clerk.

"Letters from the corresponding Secretary of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions were received by the hand of our clerk, accompanied by a copy of their fourth annual report, for each church connected with the Association.

Resolved, therefore. That the thanks of this body be expressed for the kind attention of the Board, in making these valuable and pleasing communications.

Communications from the Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Baptist Mission Society, of Kentucky, were received, which contained information of great importance relative to the most efficient plans for aboriginal reform; in consideration of which, it is resolved, unanimously, that the Association heartily concur in the views of the Board, and that a suitable memorial, representing the deplorable condition of the Indian tribes within the limits of the United States, be prepared and sent to Congress at the ensuing session, signed by the Moderator and Clerk, in behalf of this Association.

"A summary of church discipline, presented by the Moderator, prepared by a committee of the last Association, consisting of brethren D. Cooper, M. Hadley and James A. Ranaldson, was received and read, and with some alteration it was agreed, that it should be recommended to the churches as a proper system of rules for their government." (Form not given.)

"In compliance with a resolution of the last Association, a committee, consisting of brethren James A. Ranaldson, D. Cooper, G. W. King, E. Courtney, L. Scarborough, B. Davis and W. Snodgrass, reported a constitution for the Mississippi Baptist Education Society, which was read, approved, adopted, and is as follows:

1. The society shall be styled "The Mississippi Baptist Education Society."
2. The avowed and determined object of this society shall be to assist pious, evangelical young men, called to the work of the Gospel ministry, in receiving a literary and theological education.
3. This society shall consist of the delegates and messengers of such churches and associations as contribute yearly to the fund, and of such persons as shall subscribe to this constitution, and pay into the treasury a sum not less than two dollars annually. Fifty dollars at one time shall constitute a member for life; subject, however, to the rules and regulations of the society.
4. This society shall have a President, Secretary, Treasurer, and ten trustees, to be elected triennially by the society. These officers shall constitute the executive committee, to conduct the whole concerns of the institution; five of whom, including the President, shall make a quorum, to do business at any regular meeting of the committee, duly notified by the Secretary. The committee shall be

authorized to fill any vacancy occasioned, by death or otherwise, between the annual meetings of the society.

5. None shall receive the bounty at any time, but such as give satisfactory evidence of gracious experience, sound faith in the doctrines of the Gospel, good moral character, promising talent, and a Divine call to the work of the ministry.

6. The secretary shall keep a record of all the proceedings of the society and the committee, open at all times to the inspection of the members.

7. The Treasurer shall give competent security to the committee for the fund in his care; the whole or any part of which he shall be ready at all times to deliver to the order of the committee. It shall also be his duty to report a specific account of the State of the funds, audited by the Secretary at each meeting.

8. No moneys shall, at any time, be paid out of the treasury, but by a written order of the committee, signed by the President and Secretary.

9. The annual meetings of the society shall be held at the time and place of the meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Association.

10. This constitution shall be subject to any alterations which experience may prove necessary, by the concurrence of two— thirds of the members present at an annual meeting.

"The following brethren were appointed officers and trustees of the Mississippi Baptist Education Society, for three years, viz: David Cooper, President; James A. Ranaldson, Secretary; Bartlett Collins, Treasurer; Davis Collins, George W. King, Ezra Courtney, William Erwin, John Smith, Shadrack King, Jacob Buckholts, Joel Glass, William Grammond, William Snodgrass, trustees.

"Resolved, That the churches be recommended to have a sermon preached in each year, with a special relation to missionary concerns, and at the same time make a collection for the support of missionaries, and on forwarding the money to this Association, state whether the contribution was for Foreign or Domestic Missions.

Query from the Bayou Pierre Church.—Should a brother be held in fellowship, who prefers the rights and privileges of the Masonic Lodge to the communion of his church?

Answer.—No.

1819

In October, the Association convened at Hepzibah church, Feliciana parish, La.—33 churches represented—8 churches not represented—being 41 in all.

Eld. D. Cooper, chosen Moderator, and Wm. Snodgrass, Clerk.

Elders Charles Felder, David Cooper and Samuel Marsh preached on Sunday, and G. W. King closed by exhortation.

"The churches are requested to beware of W. White, who calls himself a Baptist preacher."

On motion.

Resolved, That each of our messengers, above named, shall receive out of our Association fund, fifteen dollars, for travelling expenses (to an Association West of Mississippi river.)

"Contributed for Foreign Missions.—Antioch Church \$21,75 Hepzibah Church \$150.

Extract From the Circular Letter

"We beseech you, brethren, in the name of Jesus, for the honor of God, and for the advancement of his blessed cause in the world, if you sustain the character of a master, that you govern with moderation, with gentleness, and with meekness of wisdom—always keep in view, that you have a Master in Heaven, to whom you are accountable for your stewardship."

1820

In October, the Association convened at Zion Hill church, Amite county—26 churches represented—7 not represented—being 33 in all, after dismissing 8, at last session, for the purpose of forming the Union Association.

"Brother Marsh was appointed Moderator, and brother Andrews, Clerk.

"The Association was highly gratified in the attendance of Messengers from the Union, Bigby and Louisiana Associations, bearing letters of correspondence.

"Queries from Zion Hill.—Has a church any claim on an excommunicated person?"

Answer.—None.

Shall a church be deemed censurable, in a reception of an individual excluded from any sister church?

Answer.—The excommunicated person should give suitable satisfaction to the church, which excluded him, before he can be consistently received by a sister church.

"Recommended and unanimously agreed, that our faithful brethren Samuel Marsh and James A. Ranaldson, visit all the churches of this Association in the ensuing year.

Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended to our sister Association, that we meet annually, by delegates appointed in one general meeting, for the purpose of corresponding, and of eliciting the energies of the whole, in aid of the missionary cause, and other benevolent and evangelical objects. Also, that any collections made from individuals or churches, especially for the Mission or Education Society, be transmitted by the hands of their delegates respectively, to the funds of these societies. It is further recommended, that this general meeting of the Association be held at the time and place of the meeting of the Mississippi Missionary Society, so as to unite and concentrate the whole in the best and most efficient endeavors to propagate the Gospel at home and abroad.

"Pursuant to the foregoing resolution, brethren D. Cooper, S. Marsh, J. A. Ranaldson, E. Courtney and H. Wall, were appointed as our delegates, to convene with other delegates at the next meeting of the Missionary Society, to be held at Zion Hill, on Friday, before the first Lord's day in May ensuing.

"Agreed, that the several contributions from the churches, for minutes and other purposes, be formed into one fund.

1821

In October, the Association convened at Bethel, Wilkinson county—16 churches represented—having dismissed 14 at last session, to form the Pearl River Association.

Eld. Samuel Marsh, chosen Moderator.

Appointed a committee to prepare corresponding letters to the Union, Pearl River, Louisiana and Bigby Associations.

"Received an affectionate and encouraging letter from the Board of Foreign Missions, with the intention of which we desire to be united in heart and exertion.

"Agreed, that brethren Marsh, Ranaldson, Smith, Cooper and Estes, be our messengers to the next annual meeting of the Mississippi Society for Baptist Missions, to meet at Zion Hill, on Friday before the first Lord's day in May, 1822.

"On motion,

Resolved, That the first day of January ensuing be observed with fasting and prayer for the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

"Now in the Treasurer's hands \$30 25. In the Clerk's hands for the payment of printing, \$38 37."

Extract From the Circular Letter.

Written by James A. Ranaldson, Missionary

"Come, let us follow on to know the Lord; and as we are called to walk mournfully before him, let us pry into the nature of those evils which mar the beauty of Zion.

"And, first of all, may we not suspect covetousness as one of the aggravating sins of the age. * * * *

Evil Speaking.—"This crime is the bane of society. The ignorant speak evil against others, because they know nothing. They have not resources for conversation in science, literature or religion, and they must talk. Children lisp in slander because they are imitative animals, and they learn sad stories from indiscreet parents. Slaves deal and traffic in misrepresentation, because they love bribery and seek revenge."

1822

In October, the Association convened at Ebenezer, Amite county—churches not given.

"The committee of finance received the collections, audited the Treasurer's accounts, and reported a balance of \$85 37 in the treasury.

"Brethren S. Marsh, J. A. Ranaldson, Wm. Balfour, C. Felder and D. Cooper, were appointed Messengers to the Missionary meeting to be holden at Zion Hill meeting house, Amite county, on Friday before the first Sunday in July, 1823.

1823

In October, the Association convened at Mars Hill, Amite county—14 churches represented.

"Resolved, unanimously. That we concur with the Pearl River and Union Associations, in appointing faithful brethren to assist in forming a constitution, for the more systematic and efficient appropriation of your talents in the great concerns of religion; and that D. Cooper, E. Estes, J. A. Irion, J. Smith, E. Courtney, S. Marsh, and C. Felder, be our delegates to meet those of the other Associations, at Bogue Chitto church, Pike county, on Saturday before the third Lord's day in February, 1824.

Agreed, that Eld. J. Smith be requested to write our next circular address; and that the subject be 'The high responsibility and criminality of those who do not contribute, according to their circumstances, to the cause of religion in general.'

"The Association fund was eighty— three dollars."

1824

In October, the Association convened at New Providence, Amite county—17 churches represented.

Eld. D. Cooper chosen Moderator, and E. Estes, Clerk.

"Agreed, that our delegates to the next meeting of the State Convention, be D. Cooper, E. Courtney, E. Estes, S. Marsh, G. A. Irion, C. Felder, and W. Balfour; and that this Association loan the Convention all their unappropriated funds for the promoting of Domestic Missions.

"After a settlement with the treasurer, the funds of the Association, amounted to \$82 33."

Extract From the Circular Letter

"Remember that God has no less ordained the means of accomplishing, than the end to be accomplished. The gold and silver are his, he has committed them to you, care, to be used at his direction; and if you do not faithfully discharge the trust committed to you, he may say to you "Give account of thy stewardship, for thou mayst no longer be steward. *****"

"We need men trained, by every rule of Heavenly discipline, to the sacred warfare. Men who are thoroughly armed, and able to carry the assault to the very gate of the enemy, to storm his garrison, and drive him from his last entrenchment. But where are these men to be found? Are we to sit down in careless unconcern and wait the Lord's time? And do we thus act in our worldly concerns? We have equally a duty to perform in both, and the criminality of neglecting either must be in proportion to its importance.

1825

In October, the Association convened at Shiloh church, Wilkinson county—churches not given.

"Delegates to the next State convention, appointed brethren Cooper, Ranaldson, Marsh, Balfour, Felder, Cain, Courtney and Andrews.

"A circular having been received from the Baptist General Convention and read before the Association,

Resolved, That the Association feel a deep and lively interest in the great objects recommended by the General Convention, and most cordially pray for their success; but at present, we find all the pecuniary efforts we can make, as a body, are imperiously demanded within our own boundaries.

"The contributions for Missionary purposes having been unintentionally omitted on yesterday, an opportunity was offered, at this stage when the very liberal sum of 90 dollars was taken up for that pious object."

1826

In October, the Association convened at Hepzibah, East Feliciana, La.—16 churches represented.

"The Lord's day was employed in public worship. After the sermon, a collection was taken in aid of domestic missions, which amounted to \$110 75. This sum was ordered to be paid over to the Treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist State Convention, to be judiciously applied to the objects designated.

"The Constitution, Articles of Faith, &c, were read,

"Appointed as delegates to the Mississippi Baptist State Convention brethren Ranaldson, Balfour, Felder, Erwin, Cain, J. Walker and J. Mumford."

1827

In October, the Association convened at Woodville, "Wilkinson county—15 churches represented—18 in all.

Brother Charles Felder chosen Moderator, and C. G. Hatch, Clerk.

"Elders Courtney, Ranaldson, Andrews, Felder, Irion, Cain and Creath, were appointed to attend the State Convention.

"Brethren Walker, Quin and Mumford were appointed a committee of finance, and reported that, after the current expenses of the last year, they found in the hands of the Treasurer \$29 75, and that the amount of contributions this year was \$58 87, which sums added, make \$88 62, now in the hands of the Treasurer."

1828

In October, the Association convened at Zion Hill church, Amite county.

Eld. C. Felder chosen Moderator, and J. A. Ranaldson, Clerk.

"Courtney, Felder, Cain, Matthews, Robinson, Paxton and Ranaldson, were appointed delegates to the Mississippi Baptist State Convention.

"The committee on the Treasurer's account reported that the contributions from the churches this year are \$60 62—the balance of last year, in the treasury, \$53 62—total \$114 25.

"On motion,

Resolved, unanimously. That a collection be taken on Lord's day, at our annual meetings, for the support of Home Missions, under the patronage of the

Mississippi Baptist State Convention—and that it be earnestly recommended to our churches and congregations to take a collection at least once a year for the same object.

"The collection was taken up by E. Courtney, for Domestic Missions, which amounted to \$93 37, and was ordered to be transmitted by the delegates to the Mississippi Baptist State Convention.

1829

In October, the Association convened at Jerusalem, Amite county—churches not given.

Eld. E. Courtney chosen Moderator, and J. A. Ranaldson, Clerk.

"T. Swearingen, Robertson, Courtney, Felder, Cain, Mercer and Robertson, Messengers to the Mississippi Baptist State Convention.

"E. Courtney was requested to take a collection tomorrow for Home Missions.

"Resolved, That this Association accept, with pleasure, the generous offer of the 'Baptist General Tract Society,' to receive a parcel of their tracts—and that brother D. Cooper be requested to act as our agent at Natchez, and to correspond with the society.

Query from New Hope.—"Has a church the power of ordaining a pastor or elder, without calling the assistance of an elder or elders from another church or churches?

Answer—No.

"Lord's day a contribution was raised for Home Missions, amounting to \$66.

1830

In October, the Association convened at Ebenezer, Amite county—19 churches represented.

Eld. E. Courtney was chosen Moderator, and brother Cain, Clerk.

"The Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum, and the Powers of the Association were read by the Moderator.

"Corresponding letters to sister Associations were read and received, and messengers appointed, viz: Brethren Courtney and Ranaldson, to the Leaf River; Felder and Mercer, to the Union; Cain and Beavers, to the Pearl River; and Ranaldson to address a letter of correspondence to the Louisiana Association.

"Resolved, That it be recommended to all the churches composing this Association, to discountenance the writings of Alexander Campbell—and the new translation of the New Testament— — and any minister who holds to the Campbellite creed.

On motion,

Resolved, That the query of last year from Salem church be considered, viz: What will amount to heresy in a Baptist church, in a scriptural point of view?

Answer.—A departure from any Gospel doctrine is heresy, according to the Scriptures—the Baptist believing that their faith is in strict conformity to the Scriptures, whatever is contrary to their faith is heresy to them.

"Brother Mercer informed the Association that he had in the past year, travelled in the southern boundary of this body 97 days, in which time he rode about 670 miles, and preached to about 1800 persons, with apparent success.

"Resolved, That the Treasurer be authorized to pay to brother Mercer \$37, for his missionary labors the past year.

"Resolved, That, instead of receiving a collection at our annual meetings, the churches be advised to send their contributions for Missions, by the hands of their delegates annually.

"Brethren C. Felder, J. Cain, and M. Robinson were appointed a standing committee until our next Association, to employ missionaries to labor in the limits of this body, and visit destitute churches.

"On motion,

Resolved, That our messengers to sister Associations be allowed 50 cents per day, to defray travelling expenses."

In October, the Association convened at New Providence, Amite county—18 churches represented— 19 in all.

"Two letters were presented, as being from Shiloh church. On investigation it was unanimously agreed, that the one presented by Charles Edwards and John Tison, was the letter from Shiloh church.

"Corresponding Messengers.—D. Collins, S. Coker and J. Crawford, from Pearl River; N. Morris and J. Burch, from Union; J. Hill, from Louisiana. A letter and minutes from Leaf River.

"Resolved, That brother E. Courtney receive \$50, and brother C. Felder \$29 50, for missionary services.

"Resolved, That, in the future, all corresponding messengers receive the sum of one dollar per day while necessarily absent.

"Resolved, That this Association withdraw her fellowship from W. E. Matthews and David Hughes, as men having apostatized from our faith and order, and having created disturbances in our churches.

"Resolved, That a public collection be taken to— morrow for local missionary purposes.

"Resolved, That T. Swearingen, T. Goode and T. R. Cheatham, be a committee for local missionary purposes."

"The Missionary fund was \$165 12—\$72 12 of which was received from the estate of Dr. Cooper.

The appropriations were as follows: By cash paid A. Mercer, at the last Association for missionary services, \$37; E. Courtney, \$50; C. Felder \$29 50. Total \$116 50. Balance \$48 62.

Ezra Courtney, Moderator

1832

In October, the Association convened at Mount Nebo church, La.—16 churches represented.

"Brother C. Felder chosen Moderator, and brother D. Lea, Clerk.

"Corresponding Messengers.—Pearl River Association, D. Collins, J. Crawford: Leaf River, T. C. Hunt; Union, J. T. Fairchild and J. E. Bailey.

"Resolved, That T. R. Cheatham, John Jenkins and W. Knight be, and are hereby, appointed a committee to employ a suitable Baptist Minister to ride and preach under their direction, within the limits of this Association; and it shall be the duty of any preacher, thus employed, to certify to the committee, the number of days they have served, sermons preached, and places where; on which certificate, it shall be the duty of the committee to give a draft on the Treasurer, to pay said preacher, at the rate of one dollar per day, out of any funds he may have in his hands for missionary purposes."

"Association fund \$39 56—due from former Treasurer \$101 12—contributions from the churches \$55.37. Total \$196 06.

"Paid to Messengers—E. Courtney, \$13; A. Cotton, \$11;

C. Felder, \$9; J. Cain, \$10; R. Quin, \$9. For printing minutes \$50. Balance in hands of Treasurer \$94 06.

"Missionary Fund.—Public collection at the Association, on Lord's day, \$58 87—in the hands of Treasurer, \$48 62; from Mount Zion church \$3 50. Total \$111.

1833

In October, the Association convened at Hepzibah meeting house.

"Brother Ezra Courtney chosen Moderator, and brother D. Lea, Clerk.

"A letter of correspondence and a package of minutes were received from the Yazoo Baptist Association.

"Brethren T. R. Cheatham, W. Wright and M. Seal, were appointed to employ ministers to ride and preach the ensuing year."

"Resolved, unanimously. That this Association discountenance and will not fellowship, or knowingly commune, with any church or individual member, who holds to the doctrines or dogmas held by the Christian Baptists, alias, the Campbellites; and also, those held by elder Parker, alias, the two seed doctrine, so

far as relates to the eternal existence of the Devil, and his being literally the father of a certain portion of the human family.

"Association fund 110 11. Contributed by the churches, \$42.

"Paid Messengers.—C. Felder, \$10; J. Young, \$5; J. Cain, \$5; due the present Treasurer, \$6 06. Printing minutes, \$45.

"Mission fund \$111. Collection on Lord's day \$45 62. Received from different churches \$29 85. Total \$186 47.

"Paid C. Felder, \$42. Balance \$144.47.

1834

In October, the Association convened at East Fork, Amite county—13 churches represented.

Eld. E. Courtney, chosen Moderator, and D. Lea, Clerk.

Letters of correspondence to Union Association, Pearl River, Leaf River and Yazoo.

"Corresponding Messengers.—To Union, Felder and Rabourn; to Pearl River, Reeves and Young; to Leaf River, Reeves and Young.

"Resolved, That brethren Brian, Cheatham and Sibly be appointed a committee to employ missionaries in the ensuing year.

"Resolved, That this Association recommend the churches of her union to take into view the blessing of God on foreign and home missionary labors; that each individual should instruct himself by a liberal and prayerful zeal, to send the gospel to every human being, for it is God's method by which he will give to His Son the heathen for his inheritance, and the remotest parts of the earth for his possession."

1835

In October, the Association convened at Zion Hill, Amite county—16 churches represented.

Brother C. Felder chosen Moderator, and H. D. F. Roberts, Clerk.

"Lord's day, J. Webb, J. Fairchild, E. Courtney and J. P. Martin, preached in the order of their names—a considerable number of both sexes availed themselves of an invitation to kneel before the stand, and have the prayers of the brethren made in their behalf.

"Correspondence.—Pearl River, Union, Leaf River and Yazoo Associations.

"Messengers.—To Pearl River, C. Felder and Z. Reeves —to Union, S. Coker and J. Young—Leaf River, E. Courtney, H. T. F. Roberts and T. M. Bond.

"Reports on Missions.—Bro. C. Felder rode 30 days, preached 36 sermons, and travelled 444 miles for which he is allowed \$30.

"Bro. Jesse Young rode 19 days, preached 20 sermons —travelled 350 miles, for which he is allowed \$19.

"Resolved, That this Association transfer all missionary monies now in the treasurer's hands, amounting to \$201 42, over to the treasurer of the Missionary Society.

Resolved, That this Association recommend to the churches, the consideration presented to us by the Union Association; the propriety of meeting by delegates, in a State Convention of Mississippi Baptists, to take into consideration the utility of patronizing a State Seminary, to be under the control of the Baptist denomination, and also for Missionary purposes, and that they express their view in their letters to the next meeting of this body."

"Association fund \$87 06—contributions from the churches \$69 69. Total \$156 75.

"Paid to Messengers \$34—for printing these minutes \$50—balance in treasury \$72 75.

1836

In October, the Association convened at Galilee church, Amite county—18 churches represented—21 in all. Elder C. Felder, chosen Moderator, and H. D. F. Roberts, Clerk.

"Letters of correspondence received from Associations: Union, Yazoo, Pearl River, and Bethel.

"Corresponding letters sent to the same, and also to Leaf River. Messengers sent to all but Yazoo.

"Appointed the following brethren to preach on Sabbath: J. B. Smith, S. S. Lattimore, A. Vaughan and J. Bailie.

"Resolved, That this Association deem it important, that the Baptists in this State should meet in convention by delegation, to take into consideration the adoption of some systematic plan, by which the efforts of our denomination may be united, her resources drawn out, the Gospel preached to the destitute, religious information disseminated, and other objects of importance, to the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

"Resolved, That we recommend a meeting consisting of delegates from Associations, Missionary societies and churches; also, of individuals, to be held at Washington, Mississippi, on Friday before the 4th Sabbath in December next, to consider the propriety of forming a State Convention of our denomination.

"Resolved, That brethren C. Felder, J. B. Smith, H. D. F. Roberts, S. Coker and J. Young, be appointed as delegates from this Association to attend the above mentioned meeting.

"Resolved, That we rejoice in the fact that our beloved Judson has accomplished the entire translation of the Bible in the Birman language, and that the American and Foreign Bible Society, organized in Philadelphia, to aid in publishing the Bible, in that and other languages, has the confidence and approbation of this body."

"Resolved, That we have confidence in the objects and government of the contemplated Judson Institute, and take pleasure in recommending it to the patronage of the friends of religion and literature.

"Association fund \$72 75—contributions from the churches \$78 25. Total \$152.

"Paid Corresponding Messengers \$29—for printing these minutes, \$50—balance in treasury \$73.

Extract From the Circular Letter

A great deal has been said against missionaries, and it must be acknowledged there would not be so much' use for them, provided our country was well supplied with

settled preachers, that would do their duty. * * ***** To all the young ministers whom God may raise up within our bounds, the Judson Institute is the thing needful. It is entirely under Baptist direction and control; it will be filled with teachers from the most prominent in the ranks of the Baptist preachers."

1837

In October, the Association convened at Jerusalem church, Amite county—22 churches represented— 23 in all.

Brother C. Felder chosen Moderator, and H. D. F. Roberts, Clerk.

"Letters and Messengers from Union, Pearl River, and Leaf River Association — also a letter from Yazoo Association.

"Association fund, \$73—contributed by the churches, \$110 12—total \$183 12.

"Paid corresponding Messengers \$29—for printing these minutes (1,250 copies), \$100. C. Felder as Superintendent, \$15—balance in treasury, \$38 75.

Extract From the Circular Letter

"The purposes of God are perfect and unalterable. His infinite wisdom and perfect knowledge, forbid the occurrence of any event or change of circumstances, which would dictate the slightest alteration in his plans; and his absolute power precludes the possibility of frustration by any obstacle. It is with great propriety, therefore, that God himself assures us that 'His council shall stand; that he will do all his pleasure.' These purposes can be made known to us, or concealed from us, as God pleases. But, in relation to the plan of salvation, in which we are chiefly concerned, it has pleased God to reveal, by the spirit of prophecy, the outlines of his eternal purpose and grace, which embrace the salvation of his people. The work of salvation is represented in Scripture as being properly and strictly the work of God. Christ, the ransom price of our redemption, is the gift of God. 'He has made him to be sin for us.' The renovation of the human heart, and the translation of a sinner out of darkness, into marvellous, light, is universally ascribed to God. Of his own will he begat us. We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works. According to his mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Now, if the salvation of sinners is properly, as these Scriptures teach, the work of God, then, according to the position established, their salvation is effected in accordance with God's previous purpose.

"Hence the purpose of God, which is eternal and unchangeable, embraces the salvation of every soul that God ever saved, or will ever save. This view is confirmed by the language of the Apostle to the Ephesians: 'According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.' It is also confirmed by his language to Timothy: 'Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.' And here is the very essence of the doctrine of election or predestination, which is so much contested. The very pith of this doctrine is simply God's previous purpose or intention to do, in the salvation of sinners, what he does do. If God, at a certain time, and in a certain way, calls, renews and saves an individual, predestination in reference to that individual denotes God's previous design to call, renew, and save him, at that certain time, and in that particular way. Hence, if the doctrine of predestination embraces any one sinner that God saves, it embraces, of necessity, every sinner that God has saved or will save. Election, therefore, is necessarily personal and eternal.

"Now, surely, no person who is capable of discovering the connection between three ideas, can admit that salvation is really and truly the work of God, and yet deny the doctrine of election as here explained. If sinners save themselves, this doctrine may be false; but, if God saves them, it is true, and will stand when the heavens and the earth shall be no more. God has a definite purpose, therefore, fixed and unalterable, which embraces everything that he does, or has any control over, in the great plan of the redemption."

1838

In October, the Association convened at Jackson church, La.—23 churches represented—27 in all.

"The introductory sermon was delivered by brother Reeves, from Titus ii: 14.—
"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

"Brother C. Felder chosen Moderator, and H. D. F. Roberts, Clerk.

"Read the articles of faith.

"A petition was presented by Elder E. Courtney, complaining of corrupt and unjust conduct towards him, by Hepzibah and Ebenezer churches. The petition was rejected as unconstitutional, and the following resolution adopted:

Resolved, That this Association disclaims all power to interfere with the government of the churches, but for the good of the cause of Christ, she recommends Hepzibah and Ebenezer churches to call a committee of brethren in this Association, and that Elder Courtney choose an equal number of brethren in the Association, and that the persons chosen by the churches and said Courtney compose an advisory counsel, all of whom are to be disinterested and unprejudiced either way, and that said council, thus composed, shall investigate the difficulties, and recommend said parties to settle them in a gospel and satisfactory way, if possible.

"Association fund \$48 75—contributions from the churches \$127—total \$175 75.

"Paid Corresponding Messengers \$17.00—for printing these minutes \$75,00—C. Felder, as superintendent \$15— balance in treasury \$38.75.

1839

In October, the Association convened at New Providence church, Amite county—27 churches represented—28 in all.

'Brother C. Felder chosen Moderator, and C. E. Pinckney, Clerk.

"Read the articles of faith.

"Correspondence, by letter and messengers, was received from Leaf River, Pearl River and Union Associations.

"The Hepzibah church complained to the Association that Jackson church had received and retained in her fellowship Elder E. Courtney, whom she had previously excluded—whereupon.

Resolved, That this Association recommend the above churches to settle the difficulty among themselves; and, for the accomplishment of that object, to call such help from sister churches as they may think proper.

"Resolved, That in the opinion of this Association, there are three things necessary to constitute gospel baptism, viz: 'A regularly authorized administrator; a believer in Christ; and immersion in the name of the Holy Trinity—and as such, those ministers who have been excluded from our communion for immorality, or heresy, are not proper administrators, and consequently, immersion administered by Campbellite, or reforming teachers, as they call themselves, is not valid baptism.

"Association fund \$38.75—contributed by the churches \$133 75—total \$172 50.

"Paid J. Young \$13—Z. Reeves \$4—for printing these minutes \$75—C. Felder, as superintendent \$14—balance in treasury \$65 50.

Churches and Messengers.—New Providence, R. Wilkinson, J. Jenkins; Ebenezer, R. Johns, W. Jackson; East Fork, C. Felder, J. Wilson; Zion Hill. M. Seal, A. Butler; Shilo, J. Tison, C. Edwards; Jerusalem. W. Wall, C. Wall; Percy's Creek, no delegation; Hepzibah, S. Walker, C. Pinkney, R. Taylor; Mount Nebo, P. Bankston, D. Sanders; Mars Hill, R. Chadwick, M. Whittington; Mount Zion, W. Clark, G. Clay; Hopewell, John Ford, N. Lee; Galilee, J. Straughan, T. Causey; Salem, R. Quin, C. Tate; Pinckneyville, T. Hunter, N. Daws; Friendship, S. Coker, J. Reeves; Beulah, R. F. Sibly, A. Addison; Ramah, Jesse Young, John Gill; Jackson. S. Brian, F. Brian; Clinton. James Smith, A. W. Poole; Hebron, T. M. Bond, J. Phelps, Bethlehem, D. Morgan, D. Chany; Mount Enon, James Wright, James Strickland; Mount Pleasant, Z. Reeves, W. Thompson; Liberty, D. Lea, J. Turnipseed; Baton Rouge, Peter Harbour, Wm. Thomas; Mount Ebal, R. Hutchinson; Mount Moriah, M. Naul, D. Lewis."

1840

In October, the Association convened at Ebenezer church, Amite county—23 churches represented.

"Brother C. Felder chosen Moderator, and J. B. Smith, Clerk.

"Association fund \$70 50—contributed by the churches \$115 12—total \$185 62.

"Paid Z. Reeves, (messenger) \$20—W. B. Wall, for two years, \$26—S. Coker, \$4—for printing these minutes \$60—C. Felder, as superintendent, \$15—balance in the treasury \$40 62.

1841

In October, the Association convened at East Fork church, Amite county—32 churches represented—36 in all.

"Brother S. Coker chosen Moderator, and H. McKnight, Clerk.

"Correspondence with Leaf River, Pearl River, Union and Louisiana Associations.

"Association fund \$40.63—contributed by the churches, \$161 37—total \$202.

"Paid S. Coker, (messenger) \$13—H. Wall, (do) \$16—for printing these minutes, \$70—the Clerk, as superintendent \$15—balance in treasury, \$87.

1842

In October, the Association convened at Bluff Creek, La.—38 churches represented.

"Brother C. Felder chosen Moderator, and T. M. Bond, Clerk.

"Read the articles of faith.

"Correspondence with Union, Pearl River and Louisiana Associations.

"Association fund \$87; contributed by the churches \$121 50; total \$208 50.

"Paid Z. Reeves, (messenger) \$40; J. Young, (do.) \$16; T. M. Bond, (do.) \$16—for printing these minutes \$45; for superintending the same \$15; balance in treasury, \$76 50."

1843

In October, the Association convened at Liberty, Amite county—21 churches represented,—(reduced in number, by dismissing churches to form two other Associations viz: Eastern Louisiana, and Mississippi River.)

"Brother Z. Reeves chosen Moderator, and H. D. F. Roberts, Clerk.

"By motion of brother Roberts, brother E. Courtney, with the aid of brother T. M. Bond, was appointed to draw up and furnish brother D. Benedict with a brief history of this Association, and of the older churches composing it.

"Bro. C. Felder died since last session.

"Resolved, That this Association appoint E. Courtney, S. Coker, J. Young, Z. Reeves, H. D. F. Roberts, W. Clark and T. R. Cheatham, a committee to meet and revise the fourth article of faith, of this Association, so far as respects form, and report at our next meeting.

"Association fund \$76 50—contributed by the churches \$74 35—total \$150 85.

"Paid for printing these minutes \$75—for superintending the same, \$15—T. M. Bond, (messenger) \$18—S. Coker, (do.) \$14—Eastern Louisiana Association (distributive share) \$28,25—balance in treasury, 60 cents.

1844

In October, the Association convened at Galilee, Amite county—19 churches represented.

"Brother S. Coker chosen Moderator, and G. P. Claughton, Clerk.

"Letter and Messengers received from Pearl River, Union, and Eastern Louisiana Associations.

"A letter of correspondence was received from the Mississippi River Association by the hands of her delegate, Elder W. B. Wall—whereupon, the faith of said Association was read, and there being some objections raised, the correspondence was laid on the table until Monday morning.

"Correspondence by letter and Messengers arranged with the three first named Associations.

"The subject of correspondence with the Mississippi River Association was taken up, and after a free and full discussion on the orthodoxy of their faith, the motion to correspond was withdrawn by their messenger.

"The committee appointed by this body at her last session to revise the fourth article of her faith, reported, which report was received, and ordered to be printed with these minutes. (But it was not done, and the writer is unable to ascertain what kind of a report was made on the subject.)

"The Zion Hill church presented a grievance against the Liberty church, which was taken up, and a committee appointed to labor with the Liberty church, and report at the next meeting of this body; and that T. R. Cheatham, T. Caney, Z. Reeves, J.

Sojourner, and S. M. Brian, be said committee; and that the Clerk be instructed to furnish the Liberty church with a copy of the charges preferred against her by the Zion Hill church.

"The Liberty church petitioned for a letter of dismissal, which was rejected on account of existing difficulties with the Zion Hill church.

"Association fund 60 cents — contributed by the churches, \$75 15—public collection \$14 25—by a friend \$1 60—total \$.

"Paid W. B. Wall, \$10—for printing minutes, \$40—superintending the same \$15—balance in treasury \$26.64,

1845

In October, the Association convened at Mount Pleasant church, Pike county; — churches represented.

"Brother Z. Reeves, chosen Moderator, and G. P. Claughton, Clerk.

Correspondence arranged with Pearl River, Union and Eastern Louisiana Association.

"Committee appointed by this body at its last session to labor with the Liberty church, made their report, which was received and the committee discharged:

"We, your committee, appointed to visit the Liberty church, to labor with her to settle, if possible, a difficulty existing between her and the Zion Hill church, beg leave to report: Met, pursuant to an appointment, with the Liberty church, in connection with the committee from Zion Hill church, on Friday before the 2nd Sabbath in November, 1844, and after some labor and discussion upon the subject, the said difficulty was amicably settled, by the Liberty church erasing out the sixth article of the faith which she had adopted, and inserting the 15th and 16th verses of the 16th chapter of Mark in its stead, and also erasing out the third line of the eighth article. . All of which is respectfully submitted.

"Elder H. D. F. Roberts, rose and said, that he felt bound and authorized, as a pastor of Liberty church and delegate from that body, to acknowledge it a rash act on his own, and on the part of the church, to adopt articles of faith, which this association had publicly disapproved.

"It was moved and unanimously carried, that this Association extend her love and forgiveness to the Liberty church, as if no difficulty had occurred between them.

"Association fund \$26 63—contributed by the churches \$170 82—total \$134 55.

"Paid J. Young \$10—W. Clark, \$10—M. T. Conn, \$10; for printing these minutes, \$55; for superintending minutes \$15; balance in treasury, \$32 45.

1846

In October, the Association convened at Mount Zion church, Franklin county;—churches represented.

"Brother Z. Reeves chosen Moderator, and G. P. Claughton, Clerk.

"Correspondence arranged with Union, Pearl River, and Eastern Louisiana Associations.

"Association fund \$32 55; contributions by the churches \$108 30; total \$140 75.

"Paid T. M. Bond (messenger) \$21 00; Z. Reeves, \$8; M. T. Conn, \$10; balance in treasury, \$98 75.

1847

In October, the Association convened at Percy's Creek church, Wilkinson county;—churches represented.

"Brother Z. Reeves chosen Moderator, and G. P. Claughton, Clerk.

"Correspondence was arranged with the Union, Pearl River, and Eastern Louisiana Associations.

'A petitionary letter was received from the Pearl River Association, requesting us to appoint delegates to meet her in convention in connection with the Mississippi River Association—whereupon, a committee to nominate delegates was appointed, viz: Brethren R. Thompson, J. W. Felder, G. P. Claughton, J. Thomas and B. Miles, who made the following nominations, viz: Brethren J. D. McFarland, T. M. Bond, Z. Reeves, W. Clark, G. P. Claughton, J. W. Felder, and E. Gresham, which nominations were agreed to.

"Whereas, the Mississippi Baptist State Convention has addressed a letter to this Association, asking aid from us to assist the weak churches within the State.

Therefore,

Resolved, That we lay this matter before the churches composing this Association—that if any of the churches feel free to give a helping hand, they will send up a separate fund for that purpose, at the next meeting of this body.

"Association fund \$98 75; contributed by the churches \$102 50; total \$201 25.

"Paid for printing minutes last year \$35; for superintendence \$15; J. D. McFarland, \$12; S. Coker, \$8; Wilson Clark, \$10; for printing these minutes \$55; for superintendence \$15; balance in treasury, \$51 25.

1848

In October, the Association convened at Hopewell church, Franklin county;— churches represented.

"Elder Z. Reeves .chosen Moderator, and G. P. Claughton, Clerk.

"Correspondence received from three Associations, viz: Union, Pearl River and Eastern Louisiana.

"Correspondence, by letter and delegates, arranged with the same.

"The delegates appointed by this body at its last session to meet in convention with the Pearl River and Mississippi River Associations, were called on to make their report; but not being prepared at this moment,

Elder Z. Reeves was requested to make a short statement of the same, which gave satisfaction; whereupon, brother R. R. Webb was appointed to write a corresponding letter to our sister, the Mississippi River Association, and elders J. D. McFarland, A. McKenzie and Z. Reeves, be our Messengers to the same.

"To the Mississippi Baptist Association:

"The undersigned persons, appointed delegates by your body in session last year, to meet in convention with the Pearl River, Mississippi River, and Eastern Louisiana Associations, for the purpose of settling the difficulties existing between

this and the Mississippi River, beg leave to report, that we performed the services assigned us, and that after full and free investigation, and explanation, the difficulty was fully and satisfactorily settled, so far as we are concerned.

"Query from the New Providence Church.—Is it according to gospel order to receive members from the Campbellites, without rebaptism? Whereupon, the following brethren were appointed to draft an answer, viz: S. Coker, W. Clark, C. Stewart, A. McKenzie, and H. McKnight, who reported as follows:

"That we consider it improper to answer the question in the form presented; but recommend, for the satisfaction of that, and all the other churches composing this Association, the adoption of the following resolution, viz: 'That this Association deem it unscriptural for a church to receive a person as a member, from the Campbellites, Reformers, or any other denomination, without baptism.'

"Whereas, this Association does not transact missionary business; therefore

"Resolved, That we recommend to the favorable attention of the churches, the Missionary Society in its bounds, as affording a facility through which they may carry out their benevolent designs on that subject.

"Whereas, the Pearl River Association has recommended to this Association the meeting of a convention, to prepare an article of faith and rules of decorum, so that uniformity of article and rules of decorum may exist among our Associations and churches; and to appoint and send messengers to the same.

"Resolved, That we cordially approve of the object, and convention contemplated, and that we appoint a committee to select seven suitable delegates to meet in said convention, at the time and place appointed by said Pearl River Association, viz: At Hopewell church, Copiah county, on Saturday before the first Sabbath in August, 1849; said delegates to report at our next meeting.

"The following brethren were appointed a nominating committee viz: J. Cain, A. Butler and D. Perkins, who nominated Elders S. Coker, Z. Reeves. W. Clark, H. McKnight, A. McKenzie, J. D. McFarland and M. Seal, as delegates to said convention."

"Association fund \$51 30; amount refunded \$10; contributed by the churches, \$180 80; total \$162 10.

"Paid J. Young, \$10; R. Wilkinson, \$14; for printing these minutes, \$40; for superintendence, \$15; balance in treasury, \$83 10.

1849

In October, the Association convened at Bogue Chitto church, Pike county—churches represented.

"Elder Z. Reeves chosen Moderator, and G. P. Claughton, Clerk.

"Correspondence received by letter and messengers from three Associations, viz: Pearl River, Mississippi River, and Eastern Louisiana.

Correspondence arranged with the same in return, and also with Union Association.

"In view of the commotions now agitating the nations of the earth—the result of which is the opening the foreign ports to the messengers of the Gospel of Salvation—that now the Missionaries of the Cross have entered many of the heathen cities with the word of God, and messages of love to our fellow dying men—as well as the downfall of Popery, which indicates to us the near approach of Messiah's universal reign; therefore,

"Resolved, That we earnestly recommend to our churches, and all Christians, this indication of Divine Providence, as a suitable time for them to unite in their prayers and contributions for the foreign missionary operations, to aid in the great work of giving the Gospel to the heathen, and for all other efforts for its spread at home as well as abroad.

"Association fund, \$83 10; contributed by the churches, \$100 30; total \$183 40.

"Paid W. Clark, \$22; Z. Reeves, \$40; A. McKenzie, \$8; M. T. Conn, \$12; M. Seal, \$10; W. Clark, \$12; Z. Reeves, \$12; S. Coker, \$10; for printing these minutes, \$40; for superintendence, \$15; balance in treasury \$2 40.

1850

In October, the Association convened at Zion Hill church, Amite county—23 churches represented.

'Elder Z. Reeves chosen Moderator, and G. P. Claughton, Clerk.

"Correspondence received from four Associations, viz: Pearl River, Union, Mississippi River, and Eastern Louisiana.

"Correspondence to the same arranged.

"Resolved, That the blessing of God, which have attended the labors of our missionaries to the heathen, and especially the labors of our deceased brother, Judson, indicate to us that the missionary cause is a cause approved of God.

"Whereas, there is at this time a great opening, and constant earnest appeals made, both from the heathen, and our beloved brethren who are laboring in heathen lands, for the Gospel, and more faithful laborers to promulgate the truth of the glorious Gospel; and in view of the great want of means in the Treasury of the Foreign Board, to carry out their benevolent and praise—worthy designs.

"Therefore, be it

"Resolved, That this important subject commends itself, with peculiar force, to the Christian sympathy, prayers, and liberal patronage of all who love our Saviour and His gospel, and we do most earnestly recommend to the ministers of our Association, to bring this subject before their several churches and congregations, and recommend to the churches to respond to the call of their pastors, and take up a free—will contribution for that purpose, and send it up to the Treasurer of this Association, to aid in sending the gospel to the benighted heathen.

"Resolved, That domestic missions claim our peculiar regard; that circumstances have been and are now transpiring, which call for great efforts to be made by the people of God, to sustain the domestic mission cause; that we recommend to the ministers of this Association, to present the cause to their respective churches and congregations during the present Associational year, requesting the churches and congregations to respond to the same, by liberal, free—will offerings to God, for the support of said cause, and to send the same up to this Association, that the same may be forwarded to such bodies for that purpose, as the Association may deem proper, or as the respective churches may direct.

"Association fund \$2 38; contributed by the churches, \$113 20; contributed by individuals, \$20 20; total \$135 80.

"Paid Wilson Clark, \$14; Moses Seal, \$12; A. McKenzie, \$18; R. Wilkinson, \$20; Liberty Post Office, 25 cents; for printing these minutes \$45; for superintendance \$15."

Remarks.—The Mississippi Baptist Association was constituted on the principles in substance, that were adopted by the General Assembly of Particular Baptists of England in 1689; and also the Philadelphia Association in 1742. And though they had many ups and downs, in their hard struggles with the missionaries—and though the flood cast out of the serpent's mouth, beat strong against the walls of gospel order, and at times would seem to overflow and carry everything before it, yet, aided by grace, they "fought a good fight and kept the faith."

We have given full quotations, from the minutes, of every thing relating to missionism, so that the reader can have a fair chance of drawing his own inferences. We have also given extracts from the circulars, setting forth principles on both sides of the question. In 1815, the first heavy wave of the missionary flood overwhelmed the Association for a time. A letter was received from the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions; and its horseleech entreaties for money pressed upon the churches. The minutes make no mention of the discussion of this subject. Indeed it is not usual to do so. Hence we are unable to learn what opposition was raised to these unscriptural proceedings. Be that as it may, the Association permitted itself to become, for a time, the satellite of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, and it forthwith issued a circular full of the missionary spirit.

In order to expose the cunning and deceit, dictated by this spirit, to delude these Old Regular Baptists, we quote ' from the circular, to wit: "Godly zeal will induce you to make many sacrifices, to suffer many privations, and to forego many inconveniences, that you may promote the interest of religion, and the salvation of God's elect." This spirit knew the faith to which these people held, and hence the insidious drift in order to win their good feelings.

It is more than likely that he had also a deeper and darker design, of casting a blur upon the character of Jesus—as if he had undertaken to save his people from their sins, and was not able to accomplish it, without the zealous aid of the people. But it is not likely that even the writer was permitted to know or see this bottom design. How necessary, then, for all Christians to try the spirits, by the word, lest peradventure they be found fighting against the truth, under the influence of their worst enemy.

Notwithstanding this dark eclipse, it soon passed off at least in part. The reader is referred to an extract from the circular letter of 1816, in which he will find some heavy blows dealt out against flattery, disorder, church troubles, &c.

In 1817, "Elder James A. Ranaldson, missionary (and church troubler) being present, was invited by the Moderator to take a seat in the Association." The tide of

Foreign Missions having receded, Elder J. A. Ranaldson, and those under his immediate influence, succeeded in getting up a flaw on pious education. At the succeeding session a constitution was reported and adopted:

"1st. The society shall be styled the Mississippi Baptist Education Society.

2nd, The avowed and determined object of this society shall be to assist pious, evangelical young men, called to the work of the gospel ministry, in receiving a literary and theological education."

Eight more sections are added, and then follows the appointment of President, Secretary, Treasurer and Trustees. This wave, too, soon receded back into the gulf, and left the Association, in 1819, on dry ground, once more free from all such cumbersome apparatus.

This gave them an opportunity of turning their attention to an object which Christian duty required at their hands. And that was to exhort those who were masters to treat their slaves according to the rule laid down in the gospel. The abolition excitement rendered it necessary, that they warn the brethren against over-cautiousness and severity; in guarding against evil influences "always keep in view, that you have a Master in Heaven."

In 1820, Samuel Marsh and James A. Ranaldson, a couple of "church troublers," with cloaks drawn snugly around them, were permitted, under the sanction of the Association to visit all the churches during the ensuing year. Preliminary steps were also taken at this session for a general meeting, which ultimately became a State Convention. This lived a puny life until 1830, when it was annihilated by the following resolution, viz: "A departure from any gospel doctrine is heresy, according to the scriptures—the Baptists believing that their faith is in strict conformity to the Scriptures, whatever is contrary to their faith, is heresy to them." This was mainly aimed at the Campbellites, but like a two-edged sword, it cut more ways than one, and thrust the State Convention in its most vital part.

We must now notice another important fact worthy of consideration. The Association is formed of delegates sent by the churches, for the purpose of promoting social and religious intercourse, and the mutual benefit of counselling together, on difficult questions. When the advice of the Association is in strict accordance with the Scriptures, it is gladly received by the churches. But when the Association gives advice, which the churches reject, it is proof positive, that there is something wrong in one party or the other. In the case now under consideration, notwithstanding the repeated advice of the Association in favor of the Baptist

Board of Foreign Missions, we can find but one instance in which funds were sent up for that purpose. In 1819 Antioch church contributed \$21 75, and Hepzibah church \$1 50, for Foreign Missions, but the other thirty— eight churches belonging to the Association contributed nothing for this purpose. The State Convention and Educational Society "all likewise perished." Covetousness, of course, was the cause. This is the stale charge brought by the missionary spirit against every church or churches who refuse to obey its unscriptural dictation. This, by reference to an extract from the circular of 1821, you will find to be strongly insinuated against the brethren. The extracts alluded to should all be read as a model of pious literature—illustrating the great advantages of a theological education.

Also, read the extract from the circular of 1824 in which you will find the foregoing advantages more forcibly set forth; and a strong manifestation of the bold and chivalrous bearing of the missionary spirit in attempting a hazardous achievement. The following is a quotation, viz:

"We need men trained by every rule of Heavenly discipline to the sacred warfare. Men who are thoroughly armed, and able to carry the assault to the very gate of the enemy, to storm his garrison, and drive him from his last entrenchment."

Is this not fascinating presumption? Have they not more to fear from the gate being thrown wide open for their reception, than from any impediment in scaling the walls? Does not the Spirit and the word say, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues?"

In 1828 and 1829, the Association sent the hat around for public contributions. The succeeding year they resolved to discontinue such a practice. The next year again, they resolved to resume it, and continued it till 1833, after which no trace of such a practice can be found, in their minutes.

These public collections were designed to sustain a kind of home Missionary System, which they had gotten up among them. Subsequent to the demise of the Foreign Mission cause, the State Convention, the pious Education Society, &c, these Gallatian brethren undertook a system under their own immediate control. This was done by appointing a committee to employ ministers "to ride and preach under their direction, within the limits of the Association." The preachers were required to report to the committee "the number of days they have served, sermons preached, and places where." Thus exalting a committee to the exercise of a prerogative reserved to Himself by the Lord of Glory; and which the apostles, or any apostolic church, never attempted to exercise.

In 1835, she received a proposition from her eldest daughter, the Union Association, to meet by delegates for the purpose of forming a State Convention once more. The matter was laid before the churches for their consideration, and they requested to "express their views in their letters to the next meeting of this body." We have no means of ascertaining how the churches viewed this proposition, as the minutes make no mention of it.

At the succeeding session, the Association appointed delegates to meet at Washington, in Adams county, for the purpose of forming a Convention, in which Associations, Missionary Societies and individuals, might be represented. The missionary spirit now bid fair to swell into as much importance as ever.

The Association took pleasure in recommending the Judson Institute to the friends of religion. Their circular says: "To all the young ministers whom God may raise up within our bounds, the Judson Institute is the thing needful." This "thing needful" was located at Middleton, Carroll county. Those who are acquainted with the rise and fall of that pious institute, will know how to appreciate the carte blanche to which the Association signed her "confidence."

In 1837, while the missionary spirit was swelling with anticipations of the future; and promising the Association great things, if she would serve him; some how, or some how else, a circular letter from abroad was presented, just in time, from which we have made a copious extract. The letter was read and adopted by the Association. And now, gentle reader, will you turn to that extract, and read it, and then return, and let me tell you the effect?

Well, the Missionary spirit left that place in haste; and Missionism fell upon its face, to the ground, and both the palms of its hands were cut off. These Gallatian brethren once more come to themselves, and resolved to quit feeding swine, and return to their Father, and live upon his bounty; for they had been taught to know that He had plenty and to spare. They now acted for a number of years, like they were trying by grace to be reconciled to God, instead of trying to reconcile Him to themselves.

Nothing appears in the minutes, for a number of years following, that would have been a bar to fellowship with the Old School Baptist generally. The missionary spirit being foiled in its anticipations, commenced an insidious and malicious fling at those who stood up against its efforts. The following from the minutes of 1842 will illustrate this subject:

"Resolved, That we deeply regret that there has appeared at different times in the 'Banner and Pioneer/ a number of expressions that misrepresent the views and characters of the churches and ministers of this Association, such as the following: "Some of the ministers at that period were, doubtless, near the line of antinomianism;' 'singing psalms in a cock— pit;' "strikers;' "guardians of the faith;' 'safe depository of faith;' 'selfexalted domineering keepers of conscience;' 'pullers of wires;' 'if they had efficient pastors.' &c.

Therefore,

Resolved, That this Association regards these things highly censurable, &c." The truth is, the Association and churches had been, in former years, too lax in their 'guardianship of the faith,' and they were now seeing and feeling the sad consequences. The following from one of the church letters to the Association, and published in the minutes of 1842, will be amply sufficient on this subject:

"Shiloh.—The letter from this church is of an interesting nature, exhibiting a small number struggling against a tide of opposition, having the form of godliness, but denying the power. We fear that the standard of evangelical piety, which hath its seat in the heart, and the operations of which are felt in the soul, has been lamentably low in this region, and that many have assumed the name of disciples, and have become partakers of ordinances of the gospel, who have never felt its power. While the road has been made easy and the qualifications slight, many have been tempted, we fear, to go forward in the holy rite of baptism, who make no pretensions to, and some who do not believe in that fundamental doctrine of the gospel, a change of heart."

The Association had been in a like condition at various times since 1815. But they had now driven out every vestige of the corrupt missionary system, so far as we can learn from their minutes. And, as the hireling system is one of the distinguishing traits of the New School Baptists, by way of contrast, we extract the following from the circular of 1843, showing the view of this Association, on that subject, viz:

"Now the true minister of Christ is not altogether at liberty to choose his place of residence, but must submit to an overruling Providence. When invited to take the oversight of a church, he is commanded to do so 'willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.'—1 Peter, 5 and 2. 'The fact of a minister refusing to preach to a church for the lack of any particular sum as a salary, has no foundation in the word of God. To say, I will preach for a thousand dollars, for five hundred dollars, or for

one hundred dollars; in a word setting up a certain sum for which he will supply a church, and without which he will not preach to her, savors much of a love of filthy lucre, and has no precedent in the writings of the apostles, nor among the primitive saints." .

The circular then goes on to enforce the duty, which no true church will deny, of sustaining the ministry.

The missionary spirit smarting under former defeats, and having learned that it could not prevail against them effectually, so long as they "kept the faith," now commenced a plan for having it changed. On a former occasion it had persuaded them to get up a missionary effort "to save God's elect." They soon saw through this flimsy veil—and though it had often cast them down, yet they had as often risen again. Therefore, the effort must now be directed against the faith.

The plan, as manifested, was to get up a committee to revise the most objectionable article first, and at the same time draw off, and form the Mississippi River Association, upon articles of faith suitable for the occasion. But the whole scheme was defeated. The committee reported in favor of "keeping the faith," and a correspondence with the new Association was declined.

The Liberty church also made a simultaneous effort against "the faith," which came up before the Association in the form of a charge by the Zion Hill church. Finding, however, that she had no alternative but to secede or conform, she chose the latter. In this she done right. Had the Association changed, it would not only have been her right but her duty to secede. But so long as the Association maintains the letter and spirit of her original formation, the churches are bound by every principle of moral rectitude to sustain her.

Notwithstanding many things are impelling us beyond our contemplated limits, the propriety, every way, of the circular letter of 1845, is such, as we are constrained to give place to the following extract, viz:

"Beloved Brethren: In compliance with the order of your last anniversary meeting, we address you with a circular letter; and from the various circumstances and difficulties that we, as an Association, have had to meet with for the three past years, relative to doctrinal views, which we, as an Association, profess to hold, we invite your attention to the exhortation and charge, given by an inspired apostle to the church, "that you should earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints."

"This epistle, as some few others are, is styled general, or catholic, i. e., to all them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and can the whole society of Christians of that time converted to the faith of Christ, and will be of standing, lasting and special use, in and to the church, so long as time shall last. One design the apostle had in writing this epistle was, to caution the church against evil and perverse men, who were already sprung up in that infant state of the church, and would be succeeded by others of the like evil spirit and temper, in after times. In Tim. iv: I, we are told of what should take place in the latter times, the apostle uses the following language:

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron."

In 2 Tim, iii: 1—7, we are told by the Apostle:

"This know also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasting, proud, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, heady, high—minded, lovers of pleasure more than of God, having the form of godliness but denying the power thereof; from such turn away; for of this sort are they which creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.' 'The Apostle Peter, in his epistle to "them that have obtained like precious faith with us,' warned the church of those characters that would infest her, in her last days, viz: 'Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days, scoffers walking after their own lusts.'— 2 Pet. iii: 3.

"The apostle Paul, in one of his last charges to the elders, when about to leave them, when his eyes were streaming with tears, and his heart burning with love for the future welfare of the church, which Christ had purchased with his own blood, said to them, 'Elders, for I know this, after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.' After examining to some extent the predictions of the inspired apostle, relative to those individuals who would infest the church, and strive to turn away the disciples from the faith, more or less, throughout the gospel dispensation, we have seen one of the great designs of the apostle in writing the epistle, in which our subject stands—to establish them in 'the faith' and a practice and conversation truly conservant and

conformable thereunto—and in an open and bold profession thereof—especially in times of a notorious opposition, whether by artful seduction, or violent and inhuman persecution.

"As we have received the charge and exhortation from Divine authority, we must see to it very carefully, that it be really the Christian faith which we believe, profess, propagate, and contend for, not the creeds, and doctrines, and man—made abstracts, called faith; nothing of later date than the inspired writings of the holy evangelists and apostles. Their sayings are faithful and worthy of all acceptance. It is the faith once delivered to the saints, to which nothing should be added or taken from. Here let us abide—here we are safe—if we stir a step further, we are in danger of being entangled or seduced."

Here follow four or five pages relative to the Mediator, and then continues thus: "From these texts, it is plain that all the means and instrumentality which was to be used to effect the salvation of his people, were chosen at the same time. It is the opinion of some of our modern preachers, that this doctrine should not be preached, because it perplexes the minds of men, and some have been wicked enough to say, after they had come in the church, by acknowledging and professing to believe the doctrine of Election find Predestination, and for several years try to preach it, that they now prefer a universal system. Such men must be unstable in all their ways, and must have used hypocrisy when they came into the church—but their objection is not the question to be decided.

"Is it a Bible doctrine? Has God revealed it in his word? If so, then it ought to be proclaimed throughout the length and breadth of the land, and earnestly contended for, as part of that faith once delivered to the Saints.

"The church must have been definite in the mind of Christ, (John xvii: 20,) or how could the hairs of their head have been numbered, or their names written in Heaven.—Rev. xiii: 8, Luke x: 20.

"Surely, there is a great difference between the spirit that Paul possessed, and the modern objections to this doctrine. The Apostle said he felt bound to give thanks to God for the same. Predestination is that blessing which is bestowed upon them who believe in Christ, whereby they become adopted children of God, and joint heirs with Christ; and this is done according to the good pleasure of God's own will.—Eph. i: 5.

"It is believed by some, that if the election is true, the doctrine of eternal

reprobation is also true; but this by no means follows. We make no remarks on this doctrine, because we find no such doctrine in the Bible. We leave those who charge us with preaching that doctrine to give an account to God, of graces bestowed upon us in a holy calling, regeneration, sanctification and justification,

"God calls sinners with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,—2 Tim. i: 9. Through this calling God, by his spirit, quickens the soul that was dead in trespasses and sins, giving to it eternal life, creating it in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—Eph. ii: 10.

"The soul being quickened together with Christ, possesses a godly sorrow for sin, and with a broken heart, a contrite spirit, humbly repents of its sins before God, the Holy Spirit sanctifying its affections from the love of sin to that of the love of holiness, by giving a holy disposition to the mind, and drawing it by love to Christ—thus the soul comes most willing to Christ, and thus by faith believes in Christ as offered in the Gospel—receives the forgiveness of his sins, justified from all things in the righteousness of Christ, and has peace with God.—Rom. v: 5; Acts xiv: 39, Isa. xiv: 25; Rom. iv: 16. Thus the soul is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.—John i: 13; iii: 3.

"When Christ preached this doctrine the people murmured, and so they do yet. He told them in John vi: 44, 'No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him'—but the creeds of men—made faith, tell poor sinners, that it rests upon their own voluntary acts. This contradiction we leave for the Lord to decide.

"The doctrine of glorification is of great consolation to the believer: he has a promise to be kept by the power of God, through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time.—1 Pet. i: 5. The blessed Saviour said to his mourning disciples in John xiv: 19, 'Because I live ye shall live also.'

"The law by which the church is to be governed, is a part of that faith which we contend for. Every thing that God requires us to do. is plainly taught in the Bible, &c."

This circular was written by Elder Z. Reeves, the Moderator of the Association. There is no trace in the minutes of any further efforts against the faith—so the missionary spirit was again foiled.

The next attempt was made in 1847, through the Mississippi Baptist State Convention. A letter v/as addressed to the Association, asking aid to assist the

weak churches within the State. Had she acted consistent with her settled course, and in accordance with her future peace, this letter would have been rejected. It was, however, referred to the churches, for them to kill with silence. This mode of disposing of the matter was understood by the Convention, and hence no more corresponding letters were sent.

But the missionary spirit was not so easily repulsed as the convention. The mere reception of that letter was considered something of a triumph. And the next session (1848) it procured the passage of a resolution, recommending to the churches the missionary society in the bounds of the Association. The next session (1849) they were so completely under the control of the missionary spirit, that they saw the near approach of the millenium, and passed a resolution to hurry it on with all possible speed. The proceedings of the session in 1850 is no better. Were we not bound by the truth of history to speak of these things we would gladly hide them in oblivion.

The reader, however, if he has paid strict attention to the history of this Association, is now prepared to understand, that it is composed of two people, struggling against each other, sometimes one having the ascendancy, and sometimes the other.

The State Convention, above alluded to, is not that mentioned in the early part of the history of this Association, which perished for want of support, This Convention was gotten up by the New School Baptist, about the time the separation began to take place in this State.