

"THE GEM,"
PRINCETON, N. J.,
October 19th, 1870.)

Dear Brother Bodenhamer:—According to a partial promise to write you on my return home, I embrace the present opportunity, being confined to my room by sickness. I will as briefly as I can give you an account of my visit to North Carolina, and attempt to extend my most grateful thanks to you, and all others who felt to welcome their poor Northern brother, and embrace him in their "heart of hearts." Language is too feeble for me to describe the joy and gladness of heart, experienced, in having been permitted to mingle in the society of so many dear brethren, and the comfort and edification derived from a personal acquaintance of yourself, and it has greatly strengthened my weak hope, in the never ending mercies of Christ to see the great love abounding among the Brethren at each and every place we were entertained. I cannot rest satisfied without mentioning the names of those whose liberal hospitality was enjoyed and to say that they, with all their families, done everything to make our visit a pleasant one, and am under lasting obligations to them all. "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward."

I left my home on Tuesday Sept. 27th, and proposed a journey of four weeks, but my first week's visit, was all that I was permitted to follow after my plan, or route of travel.—At the time I left home, I did not know of the Contentna Association, and that week was to have been spent in traveling to Richmond, Petersburg and other places in Virginia. Yet had there been no meeting that week, my plans would have been partly frustrated, on account of the great freshet. "Man proposes but God disposes." I arrived at brother Hassell's on 29th, a dull, rainy day. They were expecting me, but disappointed in not seeing some one with me. I was soon made to feel at home, with them; met brother Joseph Biggs and Sister, also a number of brethren on their way to Kehukee Association. On Friday morning brother Hassell kindly took me, with his family in his carriage and took up our line of march for the place of meeting. Stopped over night at brother Bass's, and met

with many of the brethren at that place. Saturday morning arrived at the place of meeting, and there met brother Biggs of Norfolk, Sister King and family, and many new friends. The meeting was largely attended, throughout; the best of order was observed. 'Twas the first Association I ever attended at the South, and the contrast was very great from those at the North, being held out in the grove, and the congregations much larger; the contrast was great, also, in manners, customs, habits, conversations, diet; also manner of farming very different, crops unlike ours, and even the face of the country forms the greatest contrast, from the hills of the North to the level sea board country.

I have digressed, and will return to my subject. After first days meeting stopped at Mrs. Whitehead's over night, Elder St. John preached. Next day, Sunday, the great day of the "feast" three sermons. Elders St. John, Bodenhamer, and Gold. Staid all night at sister Bryant's. Elder St. John preached again. Monday, the last day of Association. The preaching was all alike, no discord, but was all "Salvation by Grace" from beginning to end. After the meeting brother Daniel took me with yourself and brother Gold, in his carriage, and kept us in his care during the following week. We went to brother Faithful's and staid over night. Next day meeting at Tarboro, and that night at brother Daniel's. Our company consisted there of brother Asa Biggs, brother and sister Outerbridge, brother Cannady, and ourselves. On Wednesday, to Little Creek, stopping all night at Father Thigpen's; next morning to Sparta; took dinner with brother Carney, and at night at brother Dupree's.—Friday had meeting at Old Town Creek, and there brother Daniel baptized brother Mercer; stopped at night with brother Pitt.

On Saturday started for White Oak, the place of meeting; the congregation much larger than at Kehukee, but the weather was more favorable, being very clear and pleasant, and on Sunday the estimated number on the ground was between four and six thousand people, nearly one third colored; all was orderly as could be expected, certainly very attentive to the preaching. The preaching a continuation of the other meetings—"Christ and him crucified."—The singing was very good, and all

joined in and appeared to sing with the spirit and understanding. The colored people took great delight in that portion of the worship; their voices were very good, and it produced a frame of mind similar to the Poet when he penned these lines:

My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away,
To everlasting bliss.

We were entertained while at this meeting at brothers Calvin, and William Woodard's. We there had to part with nearly all our companions, and they had become endeared to me, very much; and would again thank them for their kindness and affection towards me. After the Association, we went to Wilson and had preaching, and the door of the church being open, three gave in their experience and received the right hand of fellowship. That evening had to bid you and brother Gold adieu at brother Clark's; spent the evening with sister Woodard. I was quite unwell while there, but wished to appear natural and not cause them any uneasiness.

The next morning, Tuesday, was rainy and dull; went to the water to see Elder Hart baptize the candidates, and while at the water, brother Warren Woodard said he wanted to "go with them and have a place with them;" his old mother's heart was made glad to overflowing, and I don't know who rejoiced the most, his brothers, Elder Hart, or all present. It was indeed a fitting and glad scene to behold five willing candidates go down into the liquid stream, following the footsteps of their Redeemer, and it seemed a beautiful ending of a series of meetings—and then to separate from all, and give the parting hand, and say,

Farewell my dear brethren, farewell for a while,
We'll soon meet again, if kind Providence smile:
But while we are parted and scattered abroad,
We'll pray for each other and trust in the Lord.

After parting with the friends I was sick all day, and brother Biggs and myself left in time to take the cars for the North; stopped that night and the next day with him, not getting any better. I left Wednesday evening on Boat for Baltimore; was very sick all night, making three nights that I had suffered so I could not rest. Arrived at home Thursday evening, and found my family in usual health. On Friday was obliged to call in our Physician, and until the present (one week) have not

been out of the house, but hope soon to be enjoying that inestimable blessing (health) again.

I heard in all, thirty-five discourses, during my visit, and if my judgment is correct, they were all addressed to the children of God, and were edifying and instructing. Each one in his own peculiar way fed the sheep and lambs of Christ. A great portion was experimental, and was witnessed to by all the brethren. It is well to strengthen the brethren, to say that all Scripture is to them, and not a word of it to the world; all the promises they contain, are for them only, and all the messages ever given to any of God's ministers, who are called to preach the everlasting Gospel of the Grace of God, are given to the Church, and not a word is ever given them to give to the world. Yet sometimes, if left to themselves, ministers preach to the world, and the poor sheep and lambs hunger for the word. May we all be drawn together by the bonds of love, and unite in singing praises to His name.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!"

Pardon me for taking up so much of your valuable time, and regret that my letter is not one of more interest.

Remember your unworthy brother
at a Throne of Grace:

Yours in the bonds of love,
A. S. COOK.

EDITORIAL.

L. I. BODENHAMER, EDITOR.

WILSON, N. C., NOVEMBER, 1, 1870.

I have sinned: what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself? Job 7: 20.

"I have sinned" is language that is uttered by many, yet it originates from different causes, and is productive of different effects. Hence, the christian and the wicked both make confession that "I have sinned."—But there is quite a difference in the nature of their confessions, or in the causes producing the confession, as there is also in the effects produced upon the confessors. In the christian there is an abhorrence to the deed or sin committed, producing pungent conviction, that causes the soul to turn from sin and truly lament his crimes, and to fly immediately to God to make his confession, saying: "I have sinned," and also to enquire what he shall do, saying: "What shall I do unto thee, O thou preserv-