

BIBLICAL RECORDER.

THE ORGAN OF THE NORTH CAROLINA BAPTISTS—DEVOTED TO BIBLE RELIGION, EDUCATION, LITERATURE AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Volume 87. RALEIGH, N. C., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1892. Number 32.

The Biblical Recorder.

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY.

OFFICE:
107 (top stairs) Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, N. C.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION:
One copy, one year..... \$ 2.00
One copy, six months..... 1.00
Five of ten (copy extra to sender)..... 90.00

Anonymous communications will always find their way to the waste basket. No exceptions.

In sending letters of business, it is absolutely necessary that you give your postoffice address in full. The date on the label of your paper indicates when your subscription expires, and also serves as receipt for your money.

Obituaries, sixty words long, are inserted free of charge. When they exceed this length, one cent for each word must be paid in advance.

When writing to have your paper changed, please state the postoffice at which you receive the paper, as well as the one to which you wish it changed. Remittances must be sent by Registered Letter, Postoffice Order, Postal Note, Express or Draft, payable to the order of the Publisher. Do not send stamps.

Sketches of Pioneer Baptist Preachers in North Carolina.

BY JOHN W. MOORE, STATE HISTORIAN.

MEMOIR V—REV. LEMUEL BURKITT.

CHAPTER FOUR.

The war of the Revolution was a great interruption and obstacle to many others of the godly laborers in the Lord's vineyard besides Elder Lemuel Burkitt. So direful grew the struggle in parts of North Carolina that even the pitiless soul of Col. Banastre Tarleton grew sick of such butchery as marked the forays of David Fanning, and declared in his memoirs of the period, that another year, such as 1781, would depopulate the State. While the Albemarle region was almost wholly exempt from such evils, still British outrages at Suffolk in Virginia were so close to hand that the alarm that was occasioned led to the suspension of the sessions of the Kehukee Association for several years. Many church-members of that fold were under the Continental army, or they were enrolled under the standard of Gen. Gregory. It was during those stormy years of blood and confusion that a great bond of love and confidence was formed between Mr. Burkitt and Godwin Cotton. So close was this tie, the great preacher bought a farm alongside that of his friend and brother in the Lord. They were nearly the same age, and to both the cause of the Baptist people was paramount to all other human affairs. Not that either felt for a moment in any way indifferent to the freedom of America. On the contrary, their brightest hopes for the emancipation of their faith were bound up in the success of the revolted Colonies. With the overthrow of King George's control in America, they had much reason to believe there would come at the same time the downfall of the Church Establishments all over the Republic. Gen. Washington gave noble testimony to the united and zealous support given him in his seven years of perilous combat, and as the first President of the United States certified to the world how they had been alike strenuous as soldiers in the field and in yielding loyal and unquestioned fealty to the revolutionary officials in a civil affairs.

When British violence and brutality toward the people of Suffolk and its vicinity and with other reasons resulted in the suspension of the sessions of the Kehukee Association, the heart of Mr. Burkitt was widened of many of its chiefest joys. He not only pined for the presence of so many to whom his soul was knitted. The valiant soldiers of the Lord, who were still waging a dubious conflict for emancipation in Virginia, as well against the ecclesiastical tyrants at home as the King beyond the seas, no longer met in annual convalescence to concert measures with their Carolina allies. All his many plans for missionary concert of action among the preachers and the churches were a complete abeyance. To that reverend father in the Lord, Elder McGlamre as the moderator, and to Mr. Burkitt as the Clerk, the Kehukee Association had committed authority to call another meeting whenever they should think such action prudent and proper. For some reason now unaccountable in its strangeness, the chapel of St. John in Hertford county was first selected as the place where the session should be held in October, 1783. Capt. Arthur Cotton, the father of Mr. Burkitt's peculiar friend, as one of the church wardens of old St. John's, had given his consent to the use of the Episcopal chapel, but just before the arrival of the delegations, Col. Robert Sumner, the other warden, made such violent objection to what he said would be a profanation of the ancient fane, Capt. Cotton invited the Baptist people to his own spacious brick residence. There under the shade of wide-spreading mulberry trees, arrangements had been made for the comfort of the delegates and visitors. The village of St. John's and the many farm-houses of Aboskie Ridge gave ample entertainment to all the many good people who gathered there to rejoice over the renewal of old Kehukee's power and usefulness.

all true Americans the Baptist people of the Kehukee churches first heard the glad tidings of Lord Cornwallis' overthrow at Yorktown. The ablest and most effective of all the British commanders had, after a noble career of victory, at last come to such entire defeat that the seven years of war were virtually ended. We can not in our day appreciate the feelings that actuated our forefathers on that occasion. In our plenitude of power and safety from all apprehensions of invasion from foreign nations, we fail to remember how feeble in comparison were the thin settlements strung along the Atlantic seaboard. With all the conjoined dangers of Indian and servile insurrection, added to the bloody work of the British soldiers and Tories, the wonder is that men could be found brave enough to risk such an aggregation of perils. But the men who thus dared so much to be free, were not to be balked in the line of duty by any suggestion of evil to come. They had an unflinching trust in the God of battles. They felt assured of that divine protection promised to all who, in the direst grief and danger, put their trust in the Lord. Had they been modern agnostics with their sneers and doubts, they would have prated about the maxims which tell us that God is neutral in such human complications, and that the sole arbiters of every conflict at arms are the heavier battalions and larger purse of those who may be so fortunate as find themselves possessed of such advantages.

The war had largely circumscribed, during its pendency, the area of Mr. Burkitt's activity as a missionary. With the return of peace, he put on a double portion of that wonderful activity that was so largely characteristic of the man in every portion of his career. Like his noble compeer in grace, Elder Silas Mercer of Halifax county, he was no longer to be circumscribed by State lines. No pent-up Utica should longer confine his powers. Strange peoples and unknown lands were to be now visited and thrilled by his eloquent appeals. This same distinguished Baptist divine, the Rev. Silas Mercer, was present at the Association of 1783. He was one of the foremost preachers ever born in North Carolina, and the great crowds gathered beneath the spreading trees at Mulberry Grove were enraptured with his splendid discourse on Sunday.

Another of the foremost American Baptist preachers was seen and heard on the same occasion in the person of Elder Abraham Marshall of Georgia. He was the son of that Rev. Daniel Marshall whose life and services were commemorated in the preceding memoir. With broader culture and a more finished elocution, Mr. Marshall was even more powerful in the pulpit than his honored father in his palmiest days. But he or some one else brought great loss to North Carolina by inducing Mr. Mercer to leave our limits and make Georgia his future home.

With the return of peace to the American people, Mr. Burkitt was further cheered by the continued applications of the different revolted churches of old Kehukee, which had gone off on a tangent at the Falls of Tar River in 1775. Soon the vast christian brotherhood had with hooked shields again formed their phalanx of old. But the body got to be so huge and unwieldy that in 1790 the Virginia churches withdrew and formed the Portsmouth Association. A year or two later the churches around Newbern followed this example in the formation of the Neuse Association. These movements curtailed the amount of Mr. Burkitt's labors as Clerk of the Kehukee Association, but the favor of his brethren soon more than restored the sum of his labors by making him the historian of the great Association he so much loved. We have only to read the chronicle he was thus induced to prepare and compare it with the rapid and jejune continuation by other hands, to see how remarkable a man he must have been. Confined by the directions of the committee who had the proposed history in charge to a mere skeleton of a narrative, he yet managed to store it with many incidents of movement and in his terse style was always abounding in pungent and pertinent observations. The little fragment, meagre as it is in size and detail, is still the only source from which we can recall the Baptist movements in eastern Virginia and North Carolina for the period embraced in its pages. Thus as leading preacher and man of affairs in the Kehukee Association, besides his great role as reformer, Mr. Burkitt had bargained out into still another great department of usefulness. It was thrice fortunate for his own fame and memory that he thus left his imperishable record; for great as he was without this book, we should have but a mutilated torso, instead of the full statue of the man. No doubt many traditions would have handed down to after generations dim glimpses of his power and usefulness, but at best these would have been vague and shadowy.

But Mr. Burkitt had great sorrow along with many of his brethren that the late war had so completely steeled the hearts of the people to any religious influences. It was all in vain that the most moving discourses were delivered in the hope of a revival of religion. It seemed, on the contrary, that French skepticism and atheism were poisoning and blighting the hopes of heaven over a large part of the new Federal Union. France had given such noble and timely aid to the suffering Colonies in their late struggle that great love and gratitude was felt by all the American people for their late gallant allies in the bloody struggle. This sentiment, so natural and honorable in itself, was used by French emissaries of the infidel

philosophers to debase the minds and souls of the trusting American people. Alas! the task seemed but too easy when in place of the old trust in God doubt and blasphemy were heard all over the land in the little debating clubs which were organized to spread abroad this foreign contagion. It was all in vain for Lemuel Burkitt to expect God's blessing on a people thus perverted and apparently undone. When the Associations met, there was only a meagre list of additions to the churches to be reported. He gives these reports for a number of years, and so small were they that the loss by death and dismission must have more than counterbalanced such small gains. The future of America seemed overcast with a hopeless gloom. Men of God were on every side depressed and with only one hope left. They never forgot that "Christ is able to save to the uttermost part of the world," and they trusted, in good reason, their hope would yet be realized.

At last came tidings from Tennessee and Kentucky that the Lord had visited his people. A great pentecostal season of refreshment and conviction flowed in upon the new countries like some mighty tidal wave of God's grace. The careless and skeptical multitudes came flocking by thousands and myriads to find the Lord they had learned to doubt and neglect. The great spiritual revival of 1801 and 1803 is yet one of the wonders of our history as a nation. From dead apathy and distrust of all things heavenly and pure, the same communities awoke to newness of life. From the Atlantic seacoast to the wilderness beyond the Mississippi, the great tide of grace rolled on, and America was saved from the foul embraces of a creed which had already deluged France in blood and ruin.

The glad tidings from the West filled the soul of Mr. Burkitt with such joy that he mounted his horse and set out for the theatre of such glorious blessings. How, as he went on his way, he found the great gatherings of men and women seeking the way to life; and how, through both of the new States, he thrilled so many thousands with the magic of his eloquence and zeal, is yet a household tradition in many a family whose ancestors found peace in his preaching and prayers. He had long prayed for the coming of the Holy Spirit in all his power, and lo! here was what surpassed and dwarfed his loftiest dreams. Thus in a continuous round of abounding grace, Lemuel Burkitt lingered until, when duty called him home, he came back with a light in his face that had never been seen there before. He was like Moses when he descended from Sinai, the glory of the Lord had not yet ceased to illumine his features.

Spurgeon at Rest.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon has passed away. The faithful preacher, the devoted pastor, the noble philanthropist, the beloved college president, and the voluminous author and writer has finished with earth and has entered into that Sabbath-rest that remains to the people of God.

Mr. Spurgeon was literally worn out by untold labors. He fell, but without any rust on his armor; buckler, breast plate, shield and sword burnished and gleaming, is the panoply which he left to the earth when he was wafted to the skies.

There were twenty-four departments of labor connected with Metropolitan Tabernacle, Mr. Spurgeon's great church in Newington, London. These labors in mission fields, Sunday schools, orphanages, &c., employed thousands of workers, and hundreds of thousands of dollars were expended annually. London throbbed with his influence reaching all classes, high and low. England, Scotland and Ireland knew him personally, while all of the civilized nations, and some that are not, have read his sermons and books, which have brought thousands of souls to Christ.

We are almost led to say that the sum of all this great soul's labor for Christ would equal, if not surpass, that of many entire nations who are called christian. Counting the last thirty-six years, has not this one man equalled in influence for good, the labors with their results, of the millions of Baptists of the South? How do you account for these results of one man's life? Why couldn't you do so? Why couldn't I do so? Is the answer, Because we didn't try? Or, in other words, Because I did not want to do so?

The question has been often asked, What is the secret of Spurgeon's power? The answers have been as various as their numbers. He possessed great versatility of talent, or, in other words, he did well so many things. He perhaps had in him the gifts of twelve first-class intellects, enabling him in as many directions to play the master. He could not have discovered these gifts had he not tried. Do we try? He was not classically educated, and yet he trimmed the sails of sceptical authors and scholars, as only few critics could. His monthly periodical, *The Sword and Trowel*, fully attests this remark.

The secret of Paul's, and even of Christ's, success as preachers, we all know. It was *consecration, energy, fire.* We shall not miss it much if we say, it was Spurgeon's also.

In his inaugural address before his Pastor's College in 1881, he said to the young preachers: "It is dreadful work to listen to a sermon, and feel all the while as if you were sitting out in a snow-storm, or dwelling in a house of ice, clear but cold, orderly but killing. You have said to yourself, 'That was a well-divided and well-planned sermon, but I cannot make out what was the matter with

it,' the secret being that there was the wood, but no fire to kindle it. Everything gives way before fire. Let the fire be kindled by the Holy Ghost and not by animal passion, the desire of honor, emulation of others, or the excitement of attending meetings. Burn, because you have been in solemn fellowship with the Lord our God. Recollect, also, that the fire which you and I need will consume us if we truly possess it. 'Spare yourself,' may be whispered by friends, but it will not be heeded when the fire is burning. We desire to be whole burnt offerings and complete sacrifices to God, and we dare not shun the altar. 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.' We can only produce life in others by the wear and tear of our own being. Fruit can only come of the seed by its spending and being spent even to self exhaustion. All men who are eminently useful are made to feel their weakness in a supreme degree. When God visits us with soul-saving power, it is as though devouring flames come forth from heaven, and made its abode in our bosoms; and where this is the case, there may well be a melting away of all strength. Yet, let it be so; we humbly invite the sacred burnings. We have a choice between these two, to be eaten up by our corruptions, or by the zeal of God's house. He that saveth his life loseth it; but he that loseth his life for Christ's sake shall find it unto life eternal."

We have selected this extract from Mr. Spurgeon's inaugural address, to prove our remark that he wore himself out, for he practiced what he preached.

We were in London in 1864 and heard him once every Sunday, besides many delightful interviews which it was our privilege to enjoy. At that time it was published that he preached regularly eleven times a week, and not less than twenty thousand people heard him weekly.

We felt as easy in his presence as we could in that of Dr. John Mitchell or any other brother in North Carolina. He would ply me with questions, and, Yankee-like, we returned the compliment. On one occasion, we asked, "Brother Spurgeon, aren't you doing too much work? Will you not cut short your usefulness by over taxing your constitution?" His answer readily came, "My constitution and my work all belong to the Lord. I'll do the work with his help, and he must take care of the constitution." He did not care to live long, or to be known as great, but to do the work of the Lord while it is day, because the night cometh when no man can work. He was of powerful build, a very strong man physically, and he endured wonderfully when we consider his labors and their variety. As Demosthenes said, (Not action) "Energy is the first thing in oratory, and the second thing is energy, and the third thing is energy," and so Spurgeon said, "I am sure that as a matter of fact, *energy* is the main thing in the human side of preaching." Not action, running from one side of the platform, shaking your fist, and saying nothing, but soul energy. "Like the priests at the altar," said he, "we can do nothing without fire." "Brethren, speak, because you believe the gospel of Jesus; speak, because you feel its power; speak under the influence of the truth which you are delivering; speak with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and the result will not be doubtful."

The correspondent of the *Washington Post* must be corrected in some of his animadversions regarding Mr. Spurgeon. After saying many good and true things, comes this: "Only word about his eccentricities. On one occasion he gave out as his text, 'Its d—d hot,' and then proceeded to say that this was the remark he heard a young man say, on entering his chapel, and thereupon he preached a sermon on blasphemy."

Now, in the first place, there is no such text; and, secondly, the same thing was attributed to Mr. Beecher in 1851, while this writer was a student in the Seminary in New York City. Mr. Spurgeon never said such a thing.

But much more serious is the statement of this same London correspondent in these words: "Spurgeon was more ridiculed and abused during his life-time than most preachers are. During the early part of his career, his sermons on regeneration by baptism excited a world of opposition and censure, and he was for many months attacked all along the line of established orthodox, hundreds of papers and pamphlets devoting themselves to the exposition of the current theological quack, as they were fond of calling him."

Now, we may be mistaken, but we submit to the candid and intelligent reader that this statement is calculated to mislead and cause one to think that Mr. Spurgeon was trying to prove the Scriptural truth of regeneration by baptism, especially when in the same article the London correspondent deliberately says: "He believed that unless you are baptized you will be damned." "There is to be no mitigation of punishment."

The *Post* must have very cheap and unreliable men to write for its columns, since every intelligent person must know that the Baptist churches of the world do not believe that "unless you are baptized you will be damned," but, on the contrary, they hold and preach that baptism comes after conversion, and that only regenerate persons, or those already saved by repentance and faith in Christ, are authorized by the Scriptures to be baptized. Salvation by faith must precede the ordinance, and therefore the ordinance cannot be saving, because the subject of baptism must be regarded as

saved by faith in Christ before the subject can be accepted by the church for baptism. This is a great slander on Mr. Spurgeon. We wish to call special attention to this misrepresentation since the *State Chronicle*, Feb. 2nd, and *News and Observer*, Feb. 8rd, copies the article of the London correspondent of the *Washington Post*, and thus publishes in North Carolina what the ill-informed and careless correspondent of London chooses to scribble. We were in London when Mr. Spurgeon preached and published his scathing sermon against Baptist Regeneration, as taught by the Episcopal church of England, or as it called there, the established church. This sermon of Mr. Spurgeon was answered by over one thousand of the pulpits of the establishment, and this explains the correspondent's statement with regard to the censure and opposition by the clergy-ministers of the establishment—"he was for months attacked all along the line of established (italics ours) orthodoxy."

One more correction. The London correspondent has in his head lines "The building of the Tabernacle and his secession from the Baptists." Mr. Spurgeon lived and died a Baptist. He did not secede from the Baptists. "In October, 1887," says the correspondent, "Spurgeon withdrew from the Baptist Union, giving as his reason, 'to pursue union at the expense of the truth is treason to Jesus; to tamper with his doctrine is to become traitors to him. We have before us the wretched spectacle of professedly orthodox christians publicly avowing union with those who deny the faith and deny the personality of the Holy Ghost.'"

The Baptist Union is not an ecclesiastical body. It is a missionary society, like the Southern Baptist Convention. What would be thought of us if the Southern Baptist Convention should receive delegates from churches who rejected the divinity of Christ or denied the personality of the Holy Ghost? The world and the Established Churches of State in Europe know nothing of the separate, independent and sovereign constitution of the original gospel churches, notwithstanding their own Archbishop Whately's views to the contrary. The Metropolitan Tabernacle church, of which Mr. Spurgeon was pastor, is as much a true gospel church, without any representative connection with the Baptist Union, as if it was represented in that Union. The correspondent is not to be blamed perhaps for not understanding our Baptist church polity, even though it be the New Testament polity.

We rejoice in the fact that Mr. Spurgeon did not leave the world without conveying to us in express form his belief or creed of his church and of himself, which the correspondent was thoughtful enough to embody in his sensational account of this unequalled man, who really is cosmopolitan and belongs to all nationalities, creeds and centuries, as one of the Almighty's greatest gifts to the church of his Son. We will reproduce it. Mr. Spurgeon, not more than six months ago, in conjunction with a large number of ministers, issued the following confession of faith:

"We the undersigned, banded together in fraternal union, observing with growing pain and sorrow, the loosening hold of many upon the truths of Revelation, are constrained to avow our firmest belief in the verbal inspiration of all holy Scriptures as originally given.

"To us, the Bible does not merely contain the word of God, but is the word of God. From beginning to end we accept it, and continue to preach it.

"To us, the Old Testament is no less inspired than the New. The book is an organic whole. Reverence for the New Testament, accompanied by scepticism as to the Old Testament, appears to us as absurd. The book is an organic whole. The two must stand or fall together.

"We accept Christ's own verdict concerning 'Moses and all the prophets' in preference to any of the supposed discoveries of so-called higher criticism. We hold and maintain the truths generally known as 'the doctrines of grace.' The electing love of God the Father, the propitiatory and substitutionary sacrifices of his Son Jesus Christ, regeneration by the Holy Ghost, the imputation of Cl. ist's righteousness, the justification of the sinner (once for all) by faith, his walk in newness of life and growth in grace by the active indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and the priestly intercession of the Lord Jesus, as also the hopeless perdition of all who reject the Saviour according to the word of the Lord in Matt. 25:46, 'These shall go away into eternal punishment.' These are, in our judgment, revealed and fundamental truths. Our hope is the personal pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus in glory."

This is no mean creed. It was intended, doubtless, to meet the intimations of many, of Baptist and Pedobaptist views, which are now being aired in the ecclesiastical synods and other forms of ecclesiastical authority. One thing the Baptist brotherhood of the world may count on as true, that our people, the sect everywhere spoken against, intend to believe, teach and defend these views to the last, and this is what Mr. Spurgeon did, from the first to the last, insist upon, and we also insist upon.

THOMAS E. SKINNER.

There is no velvet so soft as a mother's lap, no star so lovely as her smile, no music so melodious as her voice, no rose so fragrant as the memory of her love.—*Dr. Davidson.*