

The Eastern Baptist Association.

This body of christians met in their 40th session with the Concord church, six miles west of Magnolia, on the 8th inst.

The opening sermon was preached by Rev. F. A. Underwood from Col. 1:18 and was a closely reasoned and rhetorically elegant discourse setting forth the dependence of the churches and the interdependence of the churches. There was an unusually large number of the churches represented at the opening of the session, some fifty, and the Rev. J. L. Stewart, one of the best presiding officers in the State, was elected moderator, a position he has filled most efficiently for many years. Rev. J. L. Britt, re-elected clerk and S. W. Carlton, Treasurer. The reading of the letters from the churches consumed the entire afternoon, and their tenor was in the main of an encouraging character. The attention of your correspondent was arrested by the financial statement of the First Baptist church of Wilmington, which aggregated a grand total of \$6,470 for all objects. The Brooklyn church was reported in a prosperous condition and much encouraged by the settlement of their new pastor, Rev. A. A. Scruggs among them.

The number of visiting ministers was large, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Mitchell, Durham, Dill, Speight and L. Britten, while those are pastors within the body, there were the Moderator and the Clerk, Rev. Messrs. Kennedy, Pritchard, Barlow, Bert, Faison, Sausling, Weeks, Gower and Matthews, seventeen in all. One of the promising young ministers of the body has just gone to Crozer Theological Seminary, near Philadelphia, Mr. F. W. Wooten, the better to prepare himself for the work of his life.

The special order for Thursday at 10 a. m., the second day of the meeting, was State Missions, which cause was presented in a speech of much interest and ability by the Secretary of the Board, Rev. C. Durham. He stated that ninety-one missionaries had been employed during the year in many destitute places east of the Blue Ridge, the Western Convention which meets at an early day at Asheville, having charge of the regions beyond the mountains. Throughout the State generally, there had been 20,000 additions to the church, and 100 new churches built at a cost of more than \$100,000; that the Missionary Baptists of the State numbered not less than 250,000, 100,000 of whom were colored; that for the past sixty years the denomination had doubled every twenty years, and at no time had there been more rapid progress in all enterprises or a larger increase of the members than during the past year.

At 11 a. m. the missionary sermon was preached by Dr. Pritchard of your city, from the text, Exodus xvii: 15, *Jehovah-Nissi*, The Lord our Banner. The preacher spoke of a banner as representing principles, a banner as an ensign of victory, and presented a very earnest plea for the prevalence of Baptist principles. Some of other churches who were present could not see exactly where the missionary part of the sermon came in, but the Baptists seemed to be well pleased with the discourse, which was strongly denunciational, was at the same time courteous and kind, as was to be expected from Dr. P. towards other churches.

The afternoon was occupied by Dr. Mitchell in an excellent speech for educating poor young preachers and an eloquent presentation of the claims of Home Missions by Mr. Dill, of Goldsboro. Dr. Mitchell said there were now at Wake Forest some forty young preachers, thirty-one of whom were helped, to some extent, by his board, besides about a dozen who were at theological seminaries. Mr. Dill spoke of mission work among the negroes of the South, the Indians of the West, the foreign element in our large cities and the very interesting mission in Cuba under Alberto Diaz, M. D., one of the most remarkable works of grace known in this century.

Dr. Pritchard had an appointment to lecture in Magnolia to-night, but learning that a revival was in progress in the Methodist church, he withdrew it, and preached for the talented young pastor, Rev. Mr. Sawyer.

The first matter claiming the attention of the Association Thursday morning was the report of the Executive Committee of the body, when a spirited debate sprang up between J. T. Bland, of Burgaw, who wished the Association to conduct its own missionary operations, and Messrs. Mills, Pritchard and Weeks, who were in favor of co-operating with the State Mission Board. The body voted to continue co-operation. Mr. Weeks and Dr. Pritchard made speeches on the Foreign Mission report submitted by Mr. Albritton, and in the afternoon Mr. Mills spoke for an hour in behalf of the orphanage at Thomasville. He said they had buildings for four families of twenty-four children each, a new building now in process of erection for children under eight years of age, to be paid for by Mr. Simmons of Williamson, another house soon to be erected, money for which, has been promised by a lady, a chapel, and a printing office where "Charity and Children" the organ of the orphanage is printed, a paper which now has a circulation of 3,200 copies. There are now 113 children at the orphanage; \$5 per month is needed to feed and clothe each child and meet the cost of officers and teachers and other running expenses; it will be seen that a larger amount of money is required to meet the current demands of the Institution. Many feared when the orphanage was projected that it would seriously cripple other enterprises of benevolence; but while it has been perhaps the most popular of all, the other causes, nurseries, education, etc., have all steadily increased in the support they have received. Mr. Mills was, as he always is, unique in his style, but very interesting as well as very original. The next session after to-day will be held at Riley's Creek, not far from Rocky Point.

Rev. J. A. Spright read the report on periodicals and made an address on the *Periodical Recorder*, the organ of the Baptist in this State. This speech produced roars of laughter and excited varied comments. Some liked it very much while others thought its humor too broad and its style of delivery altogether too undignified for a Gospel minister. Sermons were preached each day by different ministers, Messrs. Dell, Durham and Gower officiating at

the stand while the business was being transacted in the church. The crowd in attendance was large, especially on Wednesday, and what is more, it was remarkably well behaved. The ladies were generally handsome and elegantly attired, while the supplies of "creature comforts" were abundant and appetizing. The corn crop in this section is fairly good, the potatoes hardly so good but the cotton is wretchedly poor, and will be shorter still by the early frost which has damaged it seriously. The appearance of the people and the tables groaning with savory food, however, would not indicate that there had been war or famine in this country for a hundred years.

ALIQUIS.

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