

9-20-1872

# 1872 Minutes of the Kings Mountain Baptist Association

Kings Mountain Baptist Association

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MINUTES  
OF THE 22  
TWENTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY MEETING  
OF THE  
KING'S MOUNTAIN  
**Baptist Association,**  
HELD WITH  
BETHLEHEM CHURCH,  
CLEAVELAND CO., N. C.,  
*Friday, September 20th, 1872,*  
AND DAYS FOLLOWING.

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RALEIGH, N. C.:  
EDWARDS & BROUGHTON, BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS,  
1872.

MINUTES

TWENTY-FIRST ANNUARY MEETING

KING, MONTANA

W. H. HARRIS

CLERK

CLEVELAND COUNTY, O.

RECEIVED SEPTEMBER 20, 1878

AND DATE FOLLOWING

RECEIVED 7 1878

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## PROCEEDINGS.

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FRIDAY, September 20th, 1872.

The delegates composing the King's Mountain Association met with the Church at Bethlehem. At 11 o'clock A. M. the introductory sermon was preached by Elder Wade Hill. Text: Mark xvi, 15. Recess of forty-five minutes.

### AFTERNOON.

Religious exercises conducted by Elder J. D. Hufham. Elder T. Dixon called the body to order. The church letters were read and the delegates enrolled, as follows:

*Sandy Run*.—Elder G. W. Rollins, L. R. Rollins, W. B. Stroud, B. B. Harris and M. D. Padgett.

*Zion*.—R. Poston, A. C. Erwin and D. Poston.

*Zoar*.—J. R. Logan, M. O. McIntyre and P. D. Wilson.

*Double Springs*.—E. J. Lovelace and J. M. Bridges.

*New Bethel*.—W. B. McCall, W. A. Thompson, R. W. Gardner and T. J. Dixon.

*Pleasant Hill*.—J. A. Roberts, S. A. Wilson, R. Bell and Jas. Poston.

*Corinth*.—D. B. Lynn.

*Big Springs*.—J. C. Lattimore and W. Chitwood.

*Bethlehem*.—Elder P. R. Elam, J. Barber and P. D. Paterson.

*Concord*.—W. Harrell and R. L. Metcalf.

*Thessalonica*.—J. J. Hicks.

*Bethel, Iredell Co.*—John Setzer.

*Bethel, Rutherford Co.*—J. J. Jones.

*Mt. Sinai*.—Elder L. H. McSwain.

*Mt. Pleasant*.—J. A. Scruggs and J. W. McGinnis.



*Beaver Dam.*—Elder Martin Pannell, B. Hamrick, N. S. Harrell and C. Green.

*Walls.*—J. Smart.

*Sandy Plains.*—E. M. Sweazy, R. D. Whitaker and W. Bridges.

*High Shoals.*—J. M. Goode, W. D. Wiseman and J. P. Burgess.

*Mt. Paran.*—Peter Sepoch, George Martin and A. Earle.

*Mt. Harmony.*—J. S. Melton.

*Boiling Springs.*—Elder A. A. McSwain, B. H. Bridges, W. H. Green and J. Hamrick.

*Shelby.*—Elder N. B. Cobb, J. Jenkins and Elder G. M. Webb.

*Capernaum.*—Elder Wade Hill and Thos. Kendrick.

*New Prospect.*—Elder T. Dixon, J. L. Ledford, J. C. Hoyle, A. Bean, E. R. Welman and Jas. Parker.

*Mt. Zion.*—F. L. Dillinger and J. R. Moss.

Elder T. Dixon and G. M. Webb were re-elected Moderator and Clerk.

The Church at Mt. Zion, formerly a member of the Broad River Association, was received into this body.

The usual invitation to correspondents from sister Associations was given, and the following appeared: Catawba River, H. Padgett and C. C. Weathers; Green River, Elder H. Harrell.

Elders C. Durham, of the Pamlico Association, T. Mullinax, of the Broad River, and J. D. Hufham, Corresponding Secretary of the Baptist State Convention of N. C., were seated as visiting ministers.

Committee on order of business appointed as follows: W. Hill, G. W. Rollins and J. B. Lattimore, with the Moderator and Clerk.

Committee on Religious Exercises: J. R. Logan, W. B. Stroud and J. Jenkins, with the pastor and deacons of the Church.

Adjourned till 9½ o'clock A. M., to-morrow. Prayer by C. Durham.



SATURDAY, 9½ A. M.

Prayer by Elder R. Poston. The roll was called. The minutes of yesterday were read. The committee on order of business reported. The report was received. The rules of decorum and abstract of principles were read.

The following committees were appointed :

*Sabbath Schools*.—N. B. Cobb, J. C. Lattimore and H. H. Bridges.

*Missions*.—J. D. Hufham, J. C. Hoyle and J. J. Hicks.

*Temperance*.—G. W. Rollins, J. R. Logan and J. Setzer.

*Finance*.—J. Jenkins, T. Kendrick and W. Harrell.

*Periodicals*.—R. Poston, W. Hill and L. R. Rollins.

*Union Meetings*.—J. A. Roberts, B. B. Harriss and W. Bridges.

*Obituaries*.—A. A. McSwain, M. Pannill and W. B. McCall.

*State of Religion*.—P. R. Elam, L. McSwain and W. D. Wiseman.

The following brethren were appointed delegates to the Baptist State Convention : N. B. Cobb, J. Jenkins, T. Dixon, G. M. Webb, G. W. Rollins, A. C. Dixon, L. R. Rollins, J. J. Hicks, A. A. McSwain and B. H. Bridges.

The Missionary Committee was appointed, as follows : J. Jenkins, J. L. Ledford and E. J. Lovelace.

Messengers to sister Associations were appointed, as follows : Broad River, W. Hill, P. R. Elam, T. Dixon, G. M. Webb, N. B. Cobb, G. W. Rollins, L. R. Rollins, J. R. Logan and J. L. Ledford ; Green River, G. W. Rollins ; Catawba River, A. A. McSwain, J. Setzer, J. J. Hicks and T. Dickson ; York, P. R. Elam.

Elder G. W. Rollins was appointed to preach the introductory sermon at the next session of the Association ; Elder G. M. Webb, alternate.

Elder Wade Hill was appointed to preach the missionary sermon at the next session ; Elder N. B. Cobb, alternate.



Elder J. D. Hufham was appointed to preach at 11 o'clock, A. M., to-morrow ; in the afternoon, Elder C. Durham.

It was agreed to hold the next session of the Association with the church at Zion, commencing on Friday before the 4th Sabbath in September, 1873.

The church at Corinth was, at her own request, dismissed from this body to join the Catawba River Association.

The following query, sent up by the church at Sandy Plains, was taken up : "Can the majority of a church grant a letter of dismission in full fellowship to a member, a minority voting against it?"

It was moved that a negative answer be given. Pending the motion, the Association adjourned for one hour.

#### AFTERNOON.

The motion to give a negative answer to the query, after a full and free discussion, was carried.

The Circular Letter was read by Elder A. A. McSwain and ordered to be appended to the Minutes.

The report of the Committee on Missions was read, as follows:

#### REPORT ON MISSIONS.

Our Savior's last commission to his disciples was, that they should "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This command is still in full force and constitutes every believer a missionary. He can not fail to be a missionary in heart and practice without proving false to the Savior whom he professes to love. We would call especial attention to two departments of labor:

I. STATE MISSIONS.—During the past year the Board of Missions of our State Convention has been actively engaged in trying to supply the destitute portions of our own State with the preaching of the gospel. Since our last session more than twenty missionaries have been in the field in different parts of the State. Under their labors several hundred persons have been baptized, several churches have been organized and houses of worship at important points are in contemplation or in process of construction. There have been two missionaries at work in this Association, viz.: Elders Cobb and Webb. They have met with an encouraging degree of success. This has been the case wherever an effort has been put forth. Everywhere there is a readiness—in some places an earnest desire—to hear us. We only lack the means to carry on this work more extensively. God seems to be calling on us to enlarge our efforts and our liberality in this direction.

II. FOREIGN MISSIONS.—From all quarters of the foreign field cheering intelligence reaches us. Our brethren there tell us that their labors are blessed now



more than ever and that new fields are constantly opening before them. By a wonderful dispensation of God, Rome, so long the head-quarters of Anti-Christ, has been thrown open to us; and the Baptists are now preaching the pure gospel in the city where Paul suffered martyrdom. Our brethren there are asking us to help them build a house of worship. Let us see to it that we do not neglect the calls which come to us from these quarters.

[While the Association was engaged in considering the importance of sending the gospel to the world, the body was thrown into great confusion by the sudden appearance and curses of one Newton Long who, in a state of intoxication, came on the church-yard with a body of United States Cavalry and by their disorderly conduct created such excitement that the Association dispersed without formal adjournment. When the delegates started to their homes they found the roads leading from the Church, guarded by the soldiers and it was only after considerable delay that they were allowed to proceed.]

#### SABBATH.

The exercises of the Sunday School mass meeting were conducted by Elder Wade Hill. Addresses by Elders Cobb and Hufham. Preaching at the stand at 11 o'clock, A. M., by Elder Hufham. Text: James, v.: 20. Collection, \$43.20. At 2 o'clock Elder C. Durham preached from Heb. ix.: 27.

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#### MONDAY, 9 o'clock, A. M.

Prayer by Elder A. A. McSwain. The roll was called. The minutes of Saturday were read and approved. The discussion of the report on Missions was resumed. After addresses on Foreign Missions by Elders Hufham, Hill and Webb, a collection for that object was made, amounting to \$52.15, and the report was adopted.

The Committee on Sabbath Schools reported as follows:

#### REPORT ON SABBATH SCHOOLS.

While we are happy to receive cheering reports from some of the Churches, we are sorry that we can not give a correct statement of the number of the



schools within the bounds of the Association. But we hope that the Churches are doing more than they report. We think there is no better place for the early training of children in the paths of virtue than the Sabbath School; for the principles implanted in the minds of the little ones are the principles that control them through life. If then so much depends upon early training, where can we labor more usefully than in the Sabbath School? We therefore urge the importance of having a School in every Church, and hope that this desirable result will be accomplished by the next session of your body.

B. H. BRIDGES, *Ch'n.*

The report was adopted.

Bro. J. R. Logan read the report on Temperance, which was adopted.

#### REPORT ON TEMPERANCE.

The common definition of temperance is, a moderate use of things lawful and a total abstinence from everything unlawful, pernicious, or detrimental to good health or morals. It is admitted by all to be a chief and paramount christian virtue. It has therefore been the practice of religious bodies of nearly every name and order to endeavor to inculcate the duty of temperance throughout the human race and especially among those professing godliness. But alas! Notwithstanding the efforts put forth by the advocates of the great and good cause, we lament that so little has been done; or, rather, that so much yet remains to be done. We see, on the right hand and on the left, very many of our young men, and old men alike, steeped in the foul sinks of intemperance, perverting the cause of christian progress and that civil liberty which has hitherto been the bulwark of every benevolent institution in our once happy but now distracted country. It was once our boast that we could sit under our own vine and fig-tree and worship our Maker according to the dictates of conscience. How changed is our condition at the present day. By the intemperate administration of the secular authority, the great bulwark of civil liberty is well nigh uprooted by military domination or despotism. The instrumentalities used to carry out this vile system of iniquity are often of the lowest classes of society, drunken and profane and seeming to glory in their shame; invading at times the sanctuary of God; disturbing, and intimidating by deadly weapons, whole assemblies convened for the worship of the Most High. Over this species of intemperance we claim no jurisdiction or control. We can only enter our most solemn protest against it, invoking the attention of those who have the rule over us and asking a guarantee of protection in our civil and religious rights.

But we call on the Churches that we represent to arouse from their slumbers and do their whole duty. Resolutions and Associational reports will avail very little unless backed up by acts conformable thereto. Let the Churches be purged of intemperate persons and especially of those who are guilty of drunkenness. Then may we expect a better state of things, greater religious health and prosperity.

G. W. ROLLINS, *Ch'n.*

The Committee on Finance reported the following amounts:

For Minutes,	- - - - -	
State Missions, sent up by churches,	- - - - -	\$44 85
State Missions, collected on Sabbath,	- - - - -	72 55
State Missions collected by Webb on Mission field,	- - - - -	43 20
	- - - - -	7 20

Total, - - - - - \$167 80

J. JENKINS, Chairman.



The Committee on Periodicals reported, as follows :

#### REPORT ON PERIODICALS.

Believing that the Churches derive great benefit from the perusal of a religious journal containing able articles in the defense of gospel truth, and imparting glad tidings concerning the progress of Christ's Kingdom on the Earth, your Committee do most heartily recommend the *Biblical Recorder* as a paper suited to meet the wants of the denomination.

We also recommend, as a Sunday School paper, *Kind Words*. Every Sunday School should take this little paper.

L. R. ROLLINS, *Ch'm'n.*

Pending the motion to adopt the report, addresses, urging the claims of the *Biblical Recorder*, were made by Elders W. Hill, Webb and Hufham. Fourteen subscribers to that paper were secured.

The Committee on Union Meetings reported, specifying the church at Sandy Run as the place for next meeting, and Friday before the third Monday in July as the time. Elders G. W. Rollins, T. Dixon, G. M. Webb, P. R. Elam and L. McSwain were appointed to attend said meeting.

The Committee on Obituaries reported, as follows :

#### REPORT ON OBITUARIES.

By reference to the Church Letters we find that twenty-five members of the churches have died during the year. Among them was Sister Susannah Harrell, aged 75 years. She was an humble, devoted and beneficent christian lady, whose religious life will long be cherished by those who knew her.

Bro. Thomas Wilson has also died since our last session. He was one of the members of the church at Shelby, when it was first organized, and was one of the first deacons of that church. He was an upright and useful man in his generation.

Bro. Joseph Sepoch, a member of the church at Mount Paran, has also fallen asleep. He lived to a good old age and lived before the Lord in humble, faithful service to the last.

■ We sympathize with all the churches that have been bereaved, but trust that their loss is the everlasting gain of those who have been taken away.

A. A. McSWAIN, *Ch'm'n.*

The report was adopted.

The report on the State of Religion was read, as follows :

#### REPORT ON STATE OF RELIGION.

Some of our churches have enjoyed pleasant seasons of refreshing and we have been strengthened by the addition of soldiers to our ranks. Other churches



are cold and need reviving. Sabbath Schools are kept up here and there but it seems hard to get them established in all our churches. The spirit of Missions seems to be on the increase, but some of the churches do not give as they should; they spend money for parties and useless customs, but for the cause of missions they have no money to give. We rejoice to know that while the devil is striving to hinder the progress of Christ's Kingdom, it is yet steadily advancing.

P. R. ELAM, *Ch'm'n.*

The report was adopted.

On motion, the following was adopted.

*Resolved*, That the delegates be requested to present the subject of Missions to their respective churches and endeavor to secure the adoption of some systematic plan for raising funds for said object.

On motion of Bro. J. R. Logan, the following were adopted :

WHEREAS, We have heard, with unfeigned sorrow, of the death of Elder M. C. Barnett, who departed this life in Shelby, on the night of the 20th ult., cut down in the prime of his manhood and in the midst of his usefulness; at a time too, when, to his family and to his churches, there seemed to be so much need of him; therefore,

*Resolved*, That in the death of Elder Barnett, the churches have lost a faithful pastor and able preacher; the State an upright citizen; the cause of religion, as set forth not only in his teachings but also in his life, a successful advocate; his family a wise and affectionate husband and father.

*Resolved*, That we tender our sympathies to the bereaved family in their affliction and pray that it may be sanctified by Him who hath smitten them, to their well-being in this life and to their everlasting joy in the world to come.

The Clerk was ordered to superintend the printing and distribution of the minutes, and to receive ten dollars for his services.

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this body are due and are hereby tendered to the members of this church and the community for their generous hospitality during our present session.

On motion, adjourned to meet with the church at Zion, six miles north of Shelby, on Friday before the 4th Sabbath in September, 1873. Prayer by Elder J. D. Hufham.

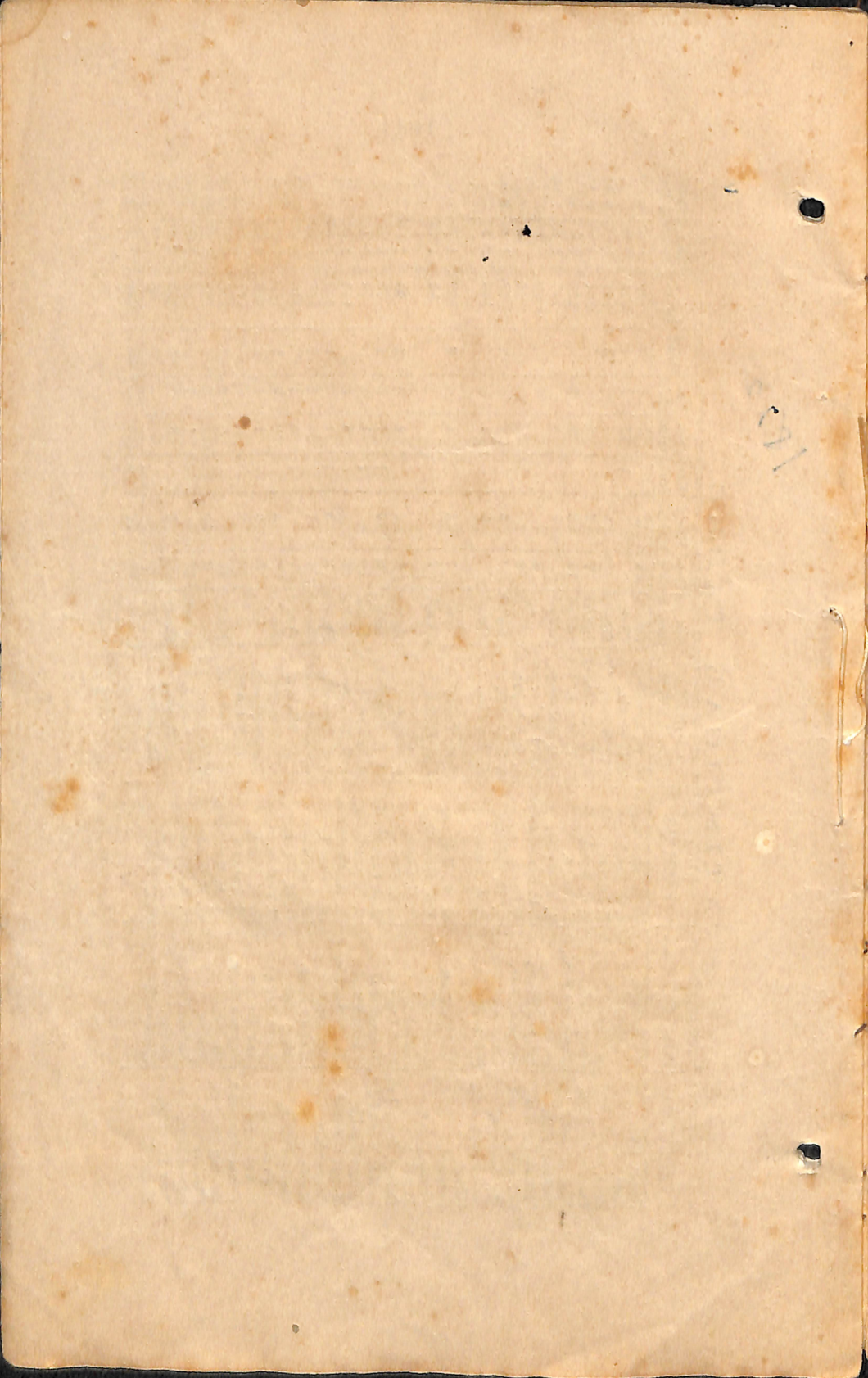
T. DIXON, MODERATOR.

G. M. WEBB, *Clerk.*











## APPENDIX.

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### *The King's Mountain Baptist Association, To the Churches in Union—GREETING:*

DEAR BRETHREN: According to an appointment of last year, we address you this year upon systematic beneficence.

BENEFICENCE, "Is the practice of doing good, or active goodness;" and is a conspicuous quality in the system of morality. Authority compels us to be feared, wealth to be praised, erudition to be esteemed; but beneficence renders us useful in society. Some endowments are solitary, and centre mostly in ourselves; but beneficence is social, diffusive, and kind. The disciples of Jesus Christ, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, were beneficent, "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." (Acts ii: 44-45). That is, so far as their mutual wants required. What a beautiful picture was the first church at Jerusalem. It was a church in which no person called anything his: but in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bonds of peace they had all things common. It was a church preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, and praising God day and night; and the word of God was magnified, and grew mightily; and the saved of the Lord were added daily to the Church. The objects of our beneficence should be all those who are in the sphere of our influence and action. Toward superiors, beneficence expresses itself in esteem, obedience, and service; toward inferiors in liberality, condescension, protection and support; toward equals, in the functions of affection as their cases require, and for which they have ability. It includes all the tender efforts on the behalf of the poor, the sick, the fatherless, the widow, the distressed, those destitute of religious knowledge, and especially those "who are of the household of faith." (Gal. vi: 10.) Each man should compare his views, motives, and conduct with the Bible. If they agree with that, they are right, and he may rejoice in them as evidences that he is born of God and is an heir of heaven. But if they do not, they are wrong and must be changed, or whatever he or they may think, he will be an outcast from God and all good forever. Life is the seed time for eternity, and the fruit of what each one here sows he will there forever reap. "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." (Gal. vi: 6.) Benefactions ought to be accompanied with prayer; for "the fervent effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much." We should always manifest a deep interest, a tender sympathy in the joys and sorrows of others. Good men will desire to do good, not to friends only, or to such as do good to them, but also to enemies and such as do evil. We may more clearly see the religious characters of men by their treatment of enemies than of friends; and those destitute of religious knowledge than those who possess it: "Rejoicing with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." (Rom. xii: 15.) A spirit of beneficence generally arises from a spirit of benevolence, the love of mankind in general, accompanied with a desire to promote their happiness; extending to all men universally without exception: and is the practice of it; and is not so universal, as it is; but is confined to objects around us from several considerations, such as our knowledge of others, and their different circumstances, and our abilities and opportunities. "As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men." (Gal. vi: 10.) Our



salvation, health, prosperity and reputation, should all be objects of concern; nor will this clash with the affection we may bear to others; on the contrary, experiencing the importance of these blessings ourselves, we are anxious for others to enjoy them also. We owe to men, purely on the ground of their being of the same species with ourselves, sympathy, relief and religious instruction. Obligations to beneficence arise from the law of nature: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move and have our being; as certain of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring." (Acts xvii: 26, 27 and 28.) If God has caused all men to spring from one family, and has determined the countries where they should live, and the periods of time during which they should occupy them; and if the object of God in creation and providence, is that men may know, worship and enjoy him; does not the laws of nature teach us that beneficence is a duty? And this they may do, for he is everywhere present, sustaining, upholding, and governing all things. *Your own* poets—Aratus, of Celicia, a Greek poet, who lived more than three hundred years before, and Cleanthes, who lived about the same time and was the successor of Zeno, the founder of the Stoics, both expressed the sentiment referred to; and Aratus expressed it in the very word which Paul quotes. As all the human race are the offspring, and are under the government of one common Father, they are all brethren of one family, and are bound to treat one another as such. Each has rights given him by his Heavenly Father, of which no man or body of men can deprive him, without deep injustice against a brother and flagrant rebellion against God. But where the law of natures leaves us in obscurity, the law of revelation throws upon us the light of noonday. It is a pleasure to the christian, to impart blessings as opportunity affords itself, to the needy. "But to do good and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (Heb. xii: 16.) It is not enough for men to be pious, devotional and grateful. They must also be beneficent, disposed to communicate of their blessings to others. This they are prone to forget, and they need often to be reminded that it is with such things God is well pleased. They would thus give evidence that their natural selfishness, which, if continued, will ruin them, is in a way of being subdued. A spirit of beneficence, manifests itself by being pleased with the share of good every creature enjoys; in a disposition to increase it; in feeling an uneasiness at their suffering; and in the abhorrence of cruelty under every disguise or pretext.

SYSTEM, is a connection of parts, of a whole connected scheme; SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENCE is a scriptural method of liberality for the support of the poor and the spread of the gospel, and for the benefit of all that are needy. The Tabernacle was not only a type of Christ's human nature, but was a type of Christ's Church, whose "tent was enlarged, and her curtains stretched out, her cords lengthened, and stakes strengthened," when the Gentiles were converted to Christ, and her gospel state established (Isaiah liv: 2): and are to be still more so when the heathen shall be converted to Christ. When Moses was to erect the Tabernacle, he gathered a congregation of the people, and, after repeating the law of the Sabbath, he asked their free gifts for it and its furniture. The spoils of the "Egyptians were brought as a free-will offering to JEHOVAH, jewels and precious metals, skins and woven fabrics, spices, oils, and incense." Two men were filled by God with skill for the work, Bezalel, the son of Uri, of the tribe of Judah, and Aholab, the son of Ahisomach, of the tribe of Dan; and they wrought with every wise-hearted man, in whom JEHOVAH put wisdom and understanding to work for the service of the sanctuary. They soon found the offerings of the people far above what was required. O, if we could see an Apostolic Church, what a different thing it would appear to one of our Churches! as different as light from darkness. There was not a member of that Church, as a rule, who was half-hearted; they gave their soul wholly to God. In the Apostles'



days they gave all their substance. It was not demanded of them then, and it is not now; no one thinks of asking such a thing; still we have run to the other extreme, and many give nothing at all. For we have not the Apostolic mode of liberality. And while we need means, we want men with Apostolic zeal; who can do as Paul did, when he went to Phillippi. Did he know a soul there? Not one. He had the Redeemer's truth, and he believed in the power of it. Men will be rewarded in proportion to what, from love to Christ, they do for His cause. "Every man according as he purposeth in heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth the cheerful giver." (2 Cor. ix: 7.) Grudgingly, or of necessity: for Christians who are in want, or those who are destitute of gospel truth, are peculiarly pleasing to God, and the greater the amount in proportion to their means, which any rightly bestow, the greater will be their reward. That which is given in expression of love to Christ by his sincere and devoted followers, is often thought by others to be wasted and lost. But in the view of Christ it is well used, and he will see that it receives a gracious and an honorable reward. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." A system of beneficence, as directed by the Apostle, for the relief of poor saints at Jerusalem, was upon the first day of the week; the day set apart and observed by the apostles and Christians as the Lord's day, which is the Christian Sabbath. "Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the church at Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come. (1 Cor. xvi: 1, 2.) We believe that on that day every one ought to lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, at home on each one Sabbath; we believe that every one ought to consider the blessings of God upon them, and lay up accordingly for the various benevolent causes, that there may be no improper gathering. As the first day of the week is the Lord's day, and from his resurrection has been observed by his people, as sacred to his worship, it is a proper time for us to consider his goodness, and contribute, or lay by in store, as he has prospered us, for the supply of the wants of our fellowmen. Wise and good ministers exceedingly desire that Christians should be prompt and liberal in their benefactions, and will be disposed to make honorable mention of such as are so, that others may be led to imitate their example. Faithful ministers of the gospel will if practicable, induce their hearers to liberally contribute for the benefit of the needy, and for the spread of the gospel, and regular, systematic beneficence will, in the end, be much more abundant than that which is merely occasional, and much more useful, both to giver and receiver. In forming plans for future action, we should remember our dependence on God, seek to understand his will, and commit ourselves in well-doing to his merciful guidance and disposal. Christian Brethren, and even pious and faithful ministers of the gospel, may differ in judgment about the best way of doing good; and while they exercise the right of private judgment as to their own duty, they should cheerfully concede the same privilege to others. The possession of property involves high responsibilities, increases obligations, and multiplies duties. "But whoso hath the world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him." (1 John iii: 17.) By the manner in which men use what they possess, they show their Christian character, and the manner of their love to God and Jesus Christ. The Disciples at Jerusalem, continuing in the Apostles' doctrine, included the whole body of divine truth, which was based on the Old Testament, viewed in the new light of the Spirit, bestowed upon the apostles to lead them into all truth. The fellowship, though a word used in a wide sense, which is familiar to us, seems here to denote that communication of the goods of this life which was needful to supply the necessities of the poorer brethren, and those starving for the bread of life, and the collection of which seems to have formed a part of their united worship. If our churches were like the Disciples, and had a common fund, as theirs, to be divi-



ded among the poor, and to send the gospel where it is not; and we would carry into full effect the principle that "naught of the things which we possess is our own," our prayers, as theirs, would be answered by another sign of God's presence, in the shaking of the place in which we meet, as theirs and Sinai was shaken of old; and would be answered by a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And the Apostolic work would be resumed with fresh power; and the church would be endued still more manifestly with divine grace and harmony. And the poor, who form a great part of our number, would be preserved from want; and the heathen, who form a greater part of the world, would receive gospel light and be saved, by sharing the wealth of the rest, according to their necessities. Brethren, let us try to be more systematic in our benefactions; that in Heaven may be written in fairer lines, with us, JEHOVAH is well pleased. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

