

A DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY
OF THE
MARYLAND BAPTISTS
(1742-1882)

By
Norman H. Maring

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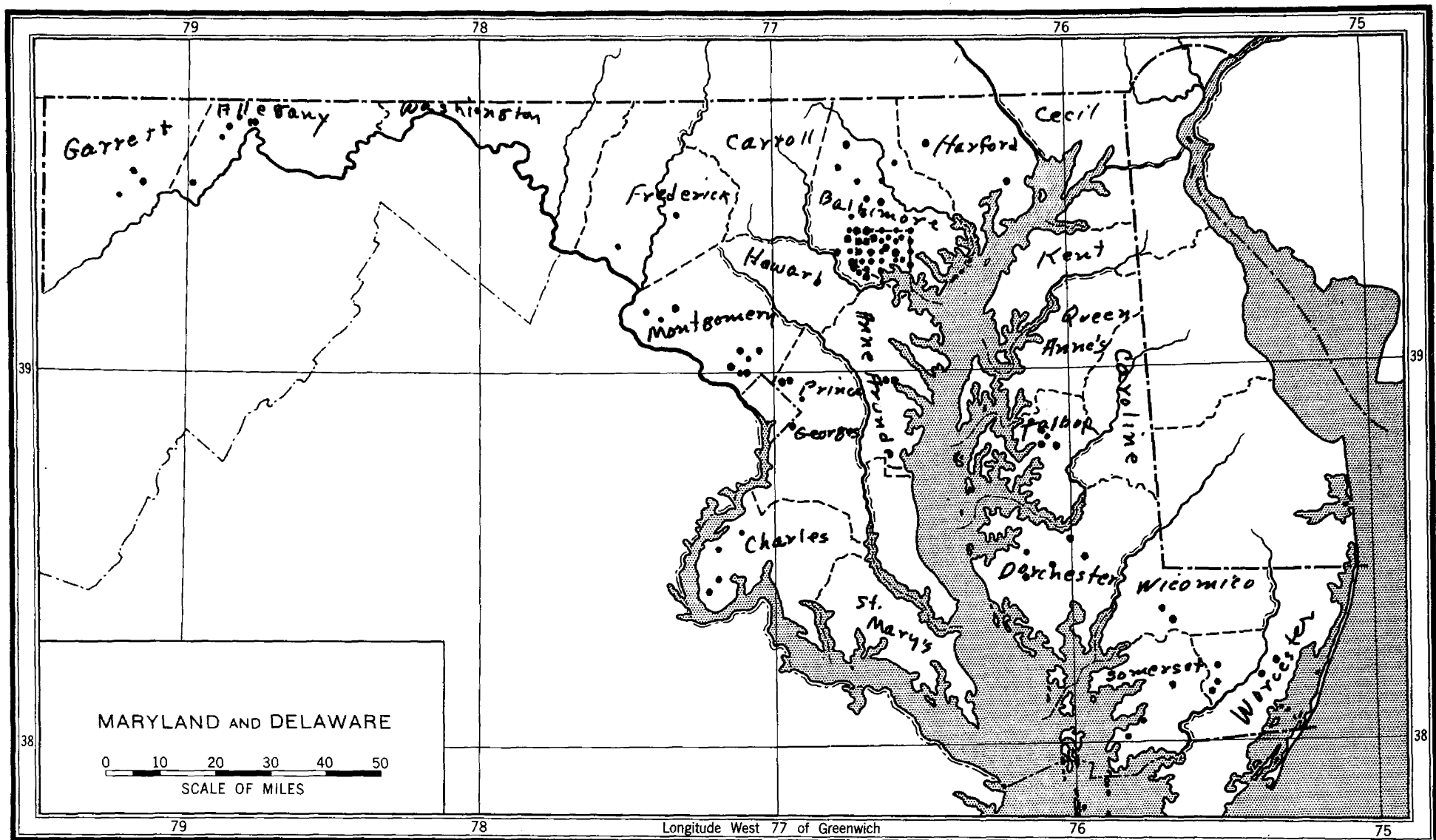
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**Distribution of the Churches of the Maryland Baptist
 Union Association in 1946**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| PREFACE | i |
| CHAPTER | |
| I. BACKGROUNDS AND ORIGIN OF AMERICAN BAPTISTS. | 1 |
| II. BAPTIST BEGINNINGS IN MARYLAND, 1742-1800. . | 7 |
| III. MARYLAND BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE EARLY NINE- TEENTH CENTURY, 1801-1813. | 24 |
| IV. QUERIES, QUIBBLES, AND QUESTIONS (to about 1813). | 41 |
| V. MISSIONS AND EDUCATION, 1814-1821. | 53 |
| VI. A GROWING SPIRIT OF CONSERVATISM, 1822-1831. | 65 |
| VII. "BLACK-ROCKISM," 1832-1836 | 74 |
| VIII. A NEW BEGINNING, 1836-1845 | 91 |
| IX. TEMPERANCE AND SLAVERY, 1836-1845. | 104 |
| X. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, 1846-1860. | 120 |
| XI. SOCIO-RELIGIOUS ISSUES, 1846-1860. | 136 |
| XII. PARALYSIS OF WAR AND RECOVERY, 1861-1872 . . | 162 |
| XIII. NEGRO BAPTIST CHURCHES OF MARYLAND | 182 |
| XIV. FINANCIAL PROBLEMS AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE D. C. CHURCHES, 1873-1882. | 193 |
| XV. CONCLUSION | 208 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY. | 216 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | | |
|-------|---|-----|
| Table | I. Number of Baptists in the Several States in 1790, in Proportion to Population. . . | 8 |
| Table | II. Baptist Churches in Maryland in 1792. . . | 19 |
| Table | III. Baptists in the Southern States in 1813 . | 25 |
| Table | IV. Baptist Churches in Maryland in 1813. . . | 26 |
| Table | V. Churches in the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1819 | 63 |
| Table | VI. Churches in the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1831 | 73 |
| Table | VII. Distribution of Anti-Mission Baptists in 1846 | 77 |
| Table | VIII. Churches in the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1835. | 89 |
| Table | IX. Growth of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, 1836-1845 | 103 |
| Table | X. Growth of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, 1846-1860 | 135 |
| Table | XI. Growth of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, 1861-1872 | 181 |
| Table | XII. Growth of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, 1873-1882 | 206 |

LIST OF MAPS

- Distribution of Baptist Churches in Maryland, 1946.
(Frontispiece)
- Location of Baptist Churches Begun in Maryland by 1800.
(End of chapter II)
- Location of Churches in the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1819. (End of chapter V)
- Location of Churches in the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1835. (End of chapter VII)
- Location of Baptist Churches in 1860. (End of chapter X)
- Location of Baptist Churches in 1882. (End of chapter XIV)

PREFACE

There is probably no state in the East for which the history of the Baptists has been more neglected than that of Maryland. As early as 1813, David Benedict complained of the difficulty of securing information regarding the Baptist work of that state, and he gives scant treatment to their history. Later general histories of the Baptists in the United States have relied heavily on Benedict, and, therefore, little is to be found in them concerning the denomination in Maryland. No Baptist historian who has been consulted seemed to have any familiarity with materials which could be used for a history of the Maryland Baptists.

The Baptists of Maryland themselves have manifested little interest in their own history. Two brief historical sketches were written in 1872 and 1885, respectively, but these consist largely of the records of the organization of individual churches, along with the names of the pastors who served them. The first was written by the Reverend Joseph H. Jones, who seems to have been primarily interested in proving that he had not been identified with the anti-missionary group which brought about a split in the denomination in Maryland in 1836. The other was a compilation made by J. F. Weishampel, a printer in Baltimore, who edited materials which had been collected by the Reverend George F. Adams and a committee of the Association.

Little attempt has been made to preserve and collect

historical materials relating to the work of the denomination in the state. Hence it has been necessary to examine records in the possession of individual churches and to discover associational minutes, biographies, and periodicals, which are scattered in a number of libraries. Although some things that might have value for the present study have apparently been destroyed, a considerable number of sources have been brought to light. The research, which has necessitated a good deal of travel, has resulted in the discovery of much material which throws light on the history of the Maryland Baptists.

It is the purpose of this dissertation to tell the story of the Baptists in Maryland, attempting particularly to show how the slow beginnings and internal dissensions have contributed to the backwardness of Baptist development in Maryland, in comparison to other southern states. An attempt has been made to relate developments in Maryland to broader denominational currents, especially with regard to missions and education. Some chapters have been included which deal with the attitudes of Maryland Baptists towards some of the major social issues of the times, slavery and prohibition in particular. In the latter aim, obstacles are encountered because of the absence of any central authority through which majority sentiments could be translated into action. The churches and associations did not display much interest in such issues, because Baptists have traditionally

maintained that it is the business of the churches to avoid issues that are not directly religious. If sermons had been preserved, possibly they would reveal more about such attitudes than has been discovered. But practically no sermons have been found. However, certain church-books and periodicals shed some light on attitudes on social questions.

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to Professor Wesley M. Gewehr, who first suggested this undertaking and who has given encouragement in its pursuit. He is also indebted to Professors Robert G. Torbet, of the Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Verne E. Chate-lain and Irvin G. Wyllie, of the University of Maryland, for reading the manuscript and making criticisms and suggestions. The assistance of a number of pastors and church clerks in making available their church records has also been appreciated. Acknowledgements are due to the librarians of the American Baptist Historical Society, the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, the Library of Congress, the Enoch Pratt Library, the Peabody Institute Library, and the Maryland Historical Society for their help in locating materials.

CHAPTER ONE

ORIGIN AND BACKGROUNDS OF AMERICAN BAPTISTS

Although Baptist history in the American colonies began as early as 1639, the history of that denomination in Maryland did not start until a little more than one hundred years later. In view of the religious toleration extended by the Baltimore proprietors, one might expect that Baptists would have sought a haven in the Province of Maryland during the seventeenth century. However, there is no trace of adherents of that religious sect before the eighteenth century, and it is not certain that a church was constituted before 1742. Yet this fact is not surprising, when one considers that Baptists did not emigrate from England in large numbers to any of the colonies. Such emigration as did take place was confined largely to New England and the Middle Colonies.¹ Not more than seven small churches were to be found south of the Mason and Dixon Line prior to 1740.

In order to understand the paucity of Baptists in the American colonies before the middle of the eighteenth century, it is necessary to recall their origin and development in England. An outgrowth of English Separatism, Baptists

¹ Since Rhode Island had been founded by a Baptist, and complete religious freedom had been proclaimed there, that colony would naturally seem more attractive than Maryland. Even though religious toleration existed in Maryland, Protestants were likely to be suspicious of any province of which a Catholic was the proprietor. After the Quakers had made Pennsylvania and the Jerseys places of religious liberty, some Baptists settled in those colonies.

trace their beginning to 1611,² when a small band of English Separatist refugees in Amsterdam were led by their pastor, John Smyth, to be re-baptized. Believing infant baptism to be unscriptural, they submitted to being baptized anew upon a profession of faith. This step was the first breach between them and other English Separatists.³ By 1644, when their first Confession of faith was published,⁴ they had adopted immersion as their mode of baptism. Having become a distinct religious body by the latter date, they comprised only forty-seven small churches. Although they experienced considerable growth prior to 1689, progress practically ceased after that time as a result of controversies between Arminian and Calvinistic parties.⁵

² Although some Baptist historians have maintained that Baptists have existed under one name or another since Apostolic times, such claims cannot be substantiated. More recent historians have conceded that, while there was a spiritual kinship between Baptists and earlier sects, yet no organic connection can be traced. For the former view, see Thomas Armitage, History of the Baptists; J. T. Christian, History of the Baptists, Vol. I. For the latter point of view, see: H. C. Vedder, Short History of the Baptists; A. H. Newman, History of the Baptist Churches in the U. S.

³ This congregation in Amsterdam had been closely associated with the one at Scrooby. Both went to Holland at about the same time. Under Mennonite influences, one became Baptist. The other went to Plymouth and became a part of the New England theocracy. It is of interest to note how these similar congregations diverged because of their different circumstances.

⁴ W. J. McGlothlin, Baptist Confessions of Faith, pp. 171-189.

⁵ Over this theological point, the General and the Particular Baptists maintained separate organizations in England.

American Baptists owe their origins largely to the influence of the English Baptists, and the differences between General and Particular Baptists were transferred to America. As Vedder points out, "Nearly all of the early American churches had among their constituent members those who had belonged to English Baptist churches, and nearly all of them received accessions from time to time."⁶ However, there were a few men like Roger Williams, who arrived at Baptist positions independently, as a result of their circumstances and the study of the New Testament.

The earliest Baptist churches in America were in New England,⁷ the first one being formed under the leadership of Roger Williams. Having been banished from Massachusetts in 1636, partly because of his insistence upon the principle of the separation of church and state, he established Providence Plantation in what is now Rhode Island. There, in 1639, he reached the conviction that immersion was the proper mode of baptism. Whereupon, he was immersed by Ezekiel Holliman; then he, in turn, immersed Holliman and several other persons, who constituted the first Baptist church in America.

If Roger Williams had played an important part in the

⁶ H. C. Vedder, Short History of the Baptists, p. 55.

⁷ For an account of the early New England Baptists, see: Isaac Backus, A History of New England with Particular Reference to . . . Baptists, 3 vols. Briefer sketches will be found in H. C. Vedder, op. cit., and A. H. Newman, op. cit.

development of Baptist churches in America, it might be held that the American Baptists were almost an indigenous movement. However, Williams soon severed his connection with the Baptist church which he had helped to form, because he had doubts about the validity of a baptism which was administered without benefit of apostolic succession. He was thereafter a Seeker, adhering to no church organization. The church which he had been instrumental in organizing continued, but it was not influential in the development of other Baptist churches. The other Baptist churches begun in this region in the next fifty years were due mainly to the influence of Baptists who emigrated from England. By 1700, there were only ten churches, comprising not more than three hundred members.⁸ The next four decades witnessed the establishment of a few more churches located in all of the colonies of New England except New Hampshire.

In the early part of the eighteenth century, the Baptists in the Middle Colonies began to assume the denominational leadership.⁹ Having planted five or six churches in Pennsylvania and New Jersey prior to 1700, the Baptists grew more rapidly after the turn of the century. In 1707, a few churches in the neighborhood of Philadelphia organ-

⁸ H. C. Vedder, op. cit., p. 302.

⁹ For an account of the early Baptists in the Middle Colonies, see H. C. Vedder, A History of the Baptists in the Middle Colonies.

ized the Philadelphia Baptist Association. Gradually, member-churches were added from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and northern Virginia, and the Association afforded a means of co-operation in matters of education, evangelism, and discipline. No other Association of Baptist churches was formed until after the middle of the eighteenth century, and this one exerted a strong influence upon the theology of Baptist churches throughout the colonies. It was largely responsible for making the Baptists in America predominantly Calvinistic. Whereas most of the earliest churches had been inclined towards Arminian views, most of the Baptists had become Calvinistic by 1740.

As for the colonies in the South, where Baptist strength was to be greatest in later years, only a negligible beginning had been made before 1740. One church was founded at Charleston, South Carolina, in 1696, by William Screven, who had been banished from Kittery, Maine, because of religious disagreements with the authorities there.¹⁰ Between 1700 and 1740, three more churches were begun in South Carolina. In North Carolina, there was one by the latter date, and two in Virginia. Maryland and the infant colony of Georgia had none.

From this brief survey, it will be seen that the growth of American Baptists had been small in the first century

¹⁰ Leah Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 1696-1805, pp. 5-6.

of their existence. It appears that the total number of Baptist churches in the colonies in 1740 was only forty-seven. Only seven of these were south of the Mason and Dixon Line.¹¹ Hence, it is not surprising that there were some colonies, like Maryland, in which there were no churches of that denomination.

¹¹ H. C. Vedder, Short History of Baptists, p. 307.

CHAPTER TWO

BAPTIST BEGINNINGS IN MARYLAND

(1742-1800)

There are today fewer Baptists in Maryland than in any of the other southern states, in proportion to population. One reason for this situation is that they made a poor beginning. During the years between 1740 and 1800, a period in which the Baptists in America increased considerably in numbers, the organization of Baptist churches was begun in Maryland. The revival spirit which stemmed from the Great Awakening gave an impetus to Baptist development in New England,¹ and the Middle States benefitted to a lesser extent.² The South was the section in which Baptist growth was the greatest during the revivals which preceded and followed the American Revolution,³ but Maryland Baptists participated in these waves of revivals less than did the other southern states. However, it was in this period that the first Baptist churches were constituted in Maryland, and two Associations were organized in the state, in 1782 and 1792, respectively.

¹ See Table I, p. 8.

² According to Newman, "The effects of the Great Awakening were less marked in the colonies included at the time in the Philadelphia Association [these were mainly the Middle States] than in New England." A. H. Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 272. (See Table I, p. 8.)

³ See Table I, p. 8.

TABLE I. Number of Baptists in the Several States in 1790,
in Proportion to the Population.⁴

| State | Number of Baptists | Population | Ratio of Baptists to Population |
|----------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------------------------|
| Maine | 3,214 | 96,540 | 1 - 30 |
| New Hampshire | 1,732 | 141,885 | 1 - 82 |
| Vermont | 1,610 | 85,425 | 1 - 53 |
| Massachusetts | 6,234 | 378,787 | 1 - 61 |
| Connecticut | 3,214 | 237,946 | 1 - 74 |
| New York | 3,987 | 340,120 | 1 - 85 |
| New Jersey | 2,279 | 184,139 | 1 - 81 |
| Pennsylvania | 1,231 | 434,373 | 1 - 353 |
| Delaware | 409 | 59,096 | 1 - 120 |
| Maryland | 776 | 319,728 | 1 - 412 |
| Virginia | 20,157 | 747,610 | 1 - 37 |
| North Carolina | 7,743 | 393,751 | 1 - 51 |
| South Carolina | 4,012 | 249,073 | 1 - 62 |
| Georgia | 3,184 | 82,548 | 1 - 26 |
| *Kentucky | 3,105 | 73,677 | 1 - 24 |

* Kentucky had not been admitted to the Union as a state, but it was two years later.

It is difficult to understand why the Baptists did not increase more rapidly in Maryland during this period. The assumption is sometimes made that the predominance of Roman Catholics in the state hampered the growth of Baptists and other Protestant groups.⁵ Actually, however, the Catholics were relatively weak in Maryland throughout the colon-

⁴ John Asplund, Annual Register, 1st edition, p. 44, is the source of the Baptist figures. The population statistics are based on the United States Census Table included in the Appendix of S. E. Morison and H. S. Commager, The Growth of the American Republic, p. 918.

⁵ For example, Armitage says, "When the first Baptist Church was founded in Maryland, it was a Roman Catholic colony. . . ." Thomas Armitage, op. cit., p. 759.

ial period.⁶ Certainly the Catholic influence was no deterrent to the Methodists. Their work was begun by Robert Strawbridge about 1770, and within fourteen years their numbers increased to 5,648.⁷ On the other hand, the Baptists numbered only 776 by 1790. The slow beginnings of the latter denomination seems to have been due to the lack of vigorous leadership. Men of great energy, like Daniel Marshall and Shubael Stearns, brought the revival spirit of the Great Awakening from New England to Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.⁸ Itinerant preachers were raised up by these men, and numerous churches were started in all four of the above-mentioned states. Westward migration carried large numbers of Baptists into Kentucky and Tennessee.⁹

⁶ Concerning the first settlers, a contemporary Catholic priest wrote: ". . . by far the greater number were heretics." (Henry Foley, The Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesuits, Vol. III, p. 364). In 1695, Thomas Bray reported that Catholics composed only about one-twelfth of the population of Maryland. (Thomas Bray, A Memorial Representing the Case of the Church in Mary-Land, p. 23.) In 1758, Governor Sharpe wrote to the proprietor, ". . . the people of that religion [Roman Catholics] do not at present make a thirteenth part of the inhabitants, as I find by the returns of the sheriffs and constables." (W. T. Russell, Maryland, Land of Sanctuary, p. 425).

⁷ The work of Robert Strawbridge is discussed in J. M. Buckley, History of the Methodists in the United States, pp. 113-116. The statistics are given in B. C. Steiner, History of Education in Maryland, pp. 229-254).

⁸ W. M. Gewehr, Great Awakening in Virginia; G. W. Paschal, North Carolina Baptists, 1727-1805; and Leah Townsend, South Carolina Baptists, 1696-1805.

⁹ "It is estimated . . . that fully one-fourth of the Baptists of Virginia emigrated to Kentucky between 1791 and 1810." A. H. Newman, op. cit., p. 303.

The New Englanders who did so much to promote Baptist work in the rest of the South seem to have passed by Maryland. In 1772, there were only two churches of the Baptist denomination in Maryland,¹⁰ and thereafter their growth was gradual.

The first permanent Baptist church in Maryland was at Chestnut Ridge, located about nine miles northwest of Baltimore.¹¹ About 1709, Henry Sater, a General Baptist from England, bought a tract of land and settled at Chestnut Ridge.¹² Occasional preaching services were held in his home during the next thirty-three years, but no church was formally organized until 1742. At the latter date, the Reverend Henry Loveall came into the neighborhood from New Jersey. After baptising forty-eight persons, he formed them and eight others into a church.

From the Governor and Court permission was obtained to hold worship services. The document which was presented to the Court, along with the petition to be licensed, was as follows:¹³

We, the humble professors of the Gospel of Christ, baptized upon a declaration of faith and repentance, believing the doctrine of general redemption (or of the free grace of God extend-

¹⁰ Morgan Edwards, Materials Towards A History of the Baptists in Maryland, 1772, p. 14.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 2-5.

¹² Isaac W. Maclay, Henry Sater, 1690-1754.

¹³ Morgan Edwards, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

ed to all mankind) do hereby seriously, heartily, and solemnly, in the presence of the Searcher of all hearts, and before the world, covenant, agree, bind, and settle ourselves into a church, to hold, abide by, and contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. . . . ; differing in nothing from the Church of England and Scotland, except in infant baptism, modes of church government, the doctrine of absolute reprobation, and some ceremonies. We do also bind ourselves to live up to the Protestant religion, and abhor, and oppose the whore of Rome, pope, and popery, with all her anti-christian ways. We do also engage with our lives and fortunes to defend the crown and dignity of our gracious sovereign, King George, to him and his issue forever, and to obey all his laws. . . . We do further declare that we are not against taking oaths, nor using arms in defense of our king and country, when legally called thereto; and that we do approve and will obey the laws of this province. . . .

For a few years the Chestnut Ridge Church increased quite rapidly. Within four years, its membership grew to 181. The members were not all concentrated in the immediate vicinity of the church building, but they were scattered as far away as Virginia. In 1746, its membership was reduced by the removal of a colony to Opeckon, Virginia. Later, another group withdrew to form a Particular Baptist Church in Harford County. Still another division took place, when some of the members formed a Particular Baptist church in the very neighborhood of the original meeting house. During the Revolutionary War, the members became scattered, and the church passed out of existence.¹⁴

¹⁴ J. F. Weishampel, Historical Sketch of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, p. 24.

The next Baptist church to be organized in Maryland originated in the withdrawal of some members from the one at Chestnut Ridge. Certain members of the Particular order of Baptists had visited and preached among the people, some of whom had been won over from their General Baptist sentiments. Being dissatisfied with the doctrines of their own church, these persons desired to be constituted into a new church. Whereupon, with the assistance of two ministers from the Philadelphia Association, Peter P. Vanhorn and Benjamin Griffith, they organized the Winter's Run Church in Harford County.¹⁵

The Philadelphia Association showed its interest in the fledgling church by recommending a pastor to it. In a letter sent by the clerk of the Association, the Reverend John Davis was certified as a minister, who had been regularly ordained and whose character was unrepachable.¹⁶ John Davis proved to be a satisfactory pastor, and he served the church for more than fifty years. His preaching was not confined to his own meeting house, for he carried on an itinerant ministry over a wide territory. In a centennial sermon (preached on the occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary of the Philadelphia Baptist Association), John Davis was one of the ministers regarded as worthy of special mention.¹⁷

¹⁵ Morgan Edwards, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁶ Minutes, Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1756.

¹⁷ A. H. Newman, op. cit., p. 280.

According to the Minutes of the Philadelphia Association, the Harford Church (or Winter's Run) showed gradual accessions in its membership during the years from 1754 to 1773. At the latter date there were 146 members. After that, the membership began to decline, until it amounted to only 120 in 1792. The main reason for this decline was probably that persons were dismissed to form other churches. Among its offspring were churches at Taneytown, Fredericktown, Westminster, and Baltimore.¹⁸

Of the four churches mentioned in the latter paragraph, little is known, except in the case of the one in Baltimore. The one at Fredericktown was organized in 1773, and it was received into the Kettocton Association of Virginia in that year.¹⁹ As for the church at Taneytown, there had been some Baptists holding religious services sporadically as early as 1785. Occasionally John Davis and other ministers visited their community. Not until 1791 was the church officially organized. Beginning with about 25 members, it never experienced much growth. However, it managed to maintain an existenee for many years.²⁰ Nothing is known about the Westminster Church, except that it was in existence for a brief time.

¹⁸ J. F. Weishampel, op. cit., p. 28.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 28.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 51-52.

There was no Baptist church organized in Baltimore until 1785. Prior to that date, there were several Baptists in the city. However, they were members of the Harford Church, and John Davis preached for them once a month at Baltimore.²¹ The city had been laid out in 1729, and by 1782, it had a population of about 8,000.²² The Quakers had erected a meeting house even before the town was founded, and the Anglicans followed with theirs in 1744. During the years between 1770 and 1782, several other churches were started there. Among them were the Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, German Lutheran, and Dutch Calvinist.²³ The Baptists built a meeting house about 1774, although they did not formally organize themselves into a church until several years later.

The regular constitution of the church took place after a Baptist minister moved to the city and agreed to become its pastor. Lewis Richards, the first pastor, was a native of Wales. Having been baptized by the Reverend Richard Furman in South Carolina, he was ordained at Charleston in 1777. After traveling in different sections of the South for several years, he moved to Baltimore in 1784, and a few months later the Baltimore church was organized.²⁴

²¹ T. W. Griffith, Annals of Baltimore, pp. 55-56.

²² Ibid., p. 98.

²³ Ibid., p. 98.

²⁴ J. H. Jones, History of the Baltimore Baptist Association, p. 35.

Only one other Baptist church was formed in Baltimore before the end of the century. This was the one at Fell's Point (later called Second Baptist). It was begun in 1797 by five General Baptists from England.²⁵ Starting with this small number, it gradually grew into a fairly strong church, and it had a continuous ^{existence} until well into the twentieth century. Since this church was General Baptist, it did not receive a cordial reception from the other Maryland churches, which were Particular, or Calvinistic, Baptists. When it applied for admission to the Baltimore Baptist Association, its application was rejected.²⁶ Also, John Healey, who had been chosen pastor of the church, had some difficulty in finding ministers who were willing to assist in his ordination. John Davis and Lewis Richards were requested to take part in an ordination service, but they refused to do so.²⁷ However, two Baptist ministers from England came to Baltimore on a tour, and the ordination took place in 1798.²⁸

Two other Baptist churches were organized in the general vicinity of Baltimore by 1800, but it has not been pos-

²⁵ An account of the formation of this church is given in the Minutes, Second Baptist Church, Baltimore, on the inside of the cover.

²⁶ The question of the relations between the Fell's Point Church and the Baltimore Association will be treated later in the chapter.

²⁷ Minutes, Second Baptist Church, Baltimore, July 20, 1798.

²⁸ Ibid., July 20, 1798.

sible to discover much about the details of their organization. One of these was Hammond's Branch Church, in Anne Arundel County. Organized in 1791 with 20 members, it was one of the constituent members of the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1792. The church never advanced much beyond the original 20 members, and it ceased to exist soon after 1821.²⁹ The other church, called Patapsco, was begun in 1800 and was presumably one of the branches of the Harford Church.³⁰ Its membership was always small, and it became extinct soon after the anti-missionary split in 1836.³¹

The history of the Baptists on the Eastern Shore of Maryland is more obscure than that of any other section of the state. Few records have been preserved, and little is known beyond the names of the preachers who did the pioneer work in this field.³² Although it appears that there were

²⁹ Minutes of the Baltimore Baptist Association, passim.

³⁰ J. H. Jones, op. cit., p. 34.

³¹ Minutes, Baltimore Baptist Association, passim.
(These will be referred to hereafter as Min., BBA.)

³² The reason for this obscurity may be attributed to the fact that by 1830 all of the Eastern Shore Baptist churches had seceded from the main body of the denomination as a result of a controversy over missions. Some of these soon became extinct, and others retained only a nominal existence. Consequently, little attention was given to the preservation of historical materials. For example, there were Minutes of the Salisbury Association from 1782 onwards, but none of these have been located earlier than 1841. Only one church-book was discovered, that of the Old School Salisbury Baptist Church. Benedict had very little to say about the Baptists of this section.

some Baptists holding services there in the first half of the eighteenth century, no permanent churches were organized prior to 1776.³³

Of the beginnings of Baptist work on the Eastern Shore in 1776, the following account is all that has been discovered:³⁴

Baptist sentiments were first propagated in this region by the pious and laborious Elijah Baker, as related in his biography,³⁵ soon after he began to preach in these parts, he was joined by Philip Hughes, whose ministry was crowned with much success.

These two ministry's laboured on the Eastern Shore, both in Maryland and Virginia, rather as evangelical itinerants than as stationed pastors and often visited the churches they had planted as fathers do their children. . . . Mr. E. Baker it appears first visited these parts in 1776; and in 1782 a sufficient number of churches having been organized they met at Salisbury, and formed themselves into an Association, which from that circumstance it received its name.

According to John Asplund, there were nine churches in the Salisbury Association in 1793, which had an aggregate membership of a little more than 500.³⁶

³³ In Clayton Torrence, Old Somerset, there are two quotations from the Somerset Judicials, which indicate that Paul Palmer, a Baptist minister, applied for permission to hold religious services in certain houses on the Eastern Shore, in 1735 and 1740, but there is no record of a church being organized at that time. Clayton Torrence, Old Somerset, pp. 508-509.

³⁴ Minutes, Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, 1799.

³⁵ No biography of Elijah Baker appears to be extant.

³⁶ John Asplund, Annual Register, 5th edition, p. 23. (See Table II, p. 19).

Only three other churches seem to have been started in Maryland before the end of the eighteenth century. One was the Nanjemoy Church in Southern Maryland. It was begun by Virginia preachers from the Kettocton Association, and it remained affiliated with that body for many years.³⁷ The origin of the Seneca Church was also due to a preacher from the Kettocton Association, Daniel Fristoe, and its early connections were with that Association.³⁸ The other church was in the extreme western part of Maryland, and it was called the Georges Hill Baptist Church. Having been started by ministers in the western part of Pennsylvania, it became connected with the Redstone Association in that state. Organized in 1780, it became extinct in 1816.³⁹

By 1800, there were about twenty churches in Maryland with a total membership of around 1200. All of these churches were united with Associations in Virginia, Pennsylvania, or Maryland. Scattered as they were over the state, some of them at considerable distances from each other, they were lacking in cohesiveness. By that date, however, both the churches of the Western Shore and the Eastern Shore had begun Associations, which aimed at bringing about some unity in their work.

³⁷ William Fristoe, A Concise History of the Kettocton Association, p. 12.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 11.

³⁹ Minutes, Georges Hill Baptist Church, 1784-1816.

TABLE II. Baptist Churches in Maryland in 1792.⁴⁰

| Church and County | Association | Ministers | Members |
|--|---------------------|--|----------------|
| 1. Allegany Georges Hill | Redstone | | 54 |
| 2. Anne Arundel Hammond's Branch | Baltimore | James Henning | 30 |
| 3. Baltimore Baltimore | Philadelphia | Lewis Richards | 65 |
| 4. Caroline Fowling Creek Tuckahoe | Salisbury " | | 55 18 |
| 5. Charles Nanjemoy | Ketocton | | 65 |
| 6. Dorchester Northwest Fork Vienna Fishing Creek | Salisbury " " | Edw. Rounds Steph. Woolford | 13 80 14 |
| 7. Frederick Fredericktown *Taneytown | Baltimore " | A. Bainbridge | 37 29 |
| 8. Harford Harford | " | Abs'm. Butler John Prichard John Davis | 107 |
| 9. Montgomery Seneca | " | | 50 |
| 10. Queen Anne Queen Anne | Salisbury | | 28 |
| 11. Somerset Salisbury | " | Philip Hughes Thomas Jackson | 106 |
| 12. Worcester Indian Town Lower End | " " | Dan'l Hancock | 91 99 |

* Taneytown is in Carroll County.

⁴⁰ John Asplund, *op. cit.*, 5th edition, p. 23.

In regions where there were few Baptists, the lack of a central authority among the Baptists often proved to be a handicap. Unlike the Methodists, they could not assign preachers to needy fields. Instead, it was necessary to depend upon the efforts of volunteers to plant new churches and to supply destitute ones. To counteract this weakness Baptists have from an early period formed Associations.⁴¹ Such agencies were purely voluntary, in that a church could join or sever its connection with an Association at will, and decisions of the Association were not binding on the member-churches. Sometimes such organizations encountered opposition from churches which feared some infringement of their independence. In general, however, these associations were able to help in unifying the work of the churches without exercising any authority over them.

On the Eastern Shore, the Salisbury Association was organized in 1782. Ten years later, some of the churches on the Western Shore constituted the Baltimore Baptist Association. At first, there were only six churches in the latter body.⁴² Only three other churches applied for admission during the years between 1792 and 1800. The First Baptist

⁴¹ The earliest Association in America was the Philadelphia Baptist Association, which was begun in 1707. In 1751, the Charleston Association was formed. Thereafter, about 48 such bodies were established by 1800. William Cathcart, Baptist Encyclopedia, pp. 266-267.

⁴² These were: Harford, Fredericktown, Hammond's Branch, Taneytown, Seneca, and Huntington (Penna.). Min., BBA, 1793.

Church, Baltimore, and the Tuscarora Valley Church, of Pennsylvania, were admitted without any objection.⁴³ The other one which asked to be received into the body, the Fell's Point Church in Baltimore, was denied admission, because its General Baptist theology was not in harmony with the prevailing sentiments of the churches in the Association, which were Calvinistic.⁴⁴

The purposes of the Association were set forth in the Constitution of the body. The three main ones were to discuss queries which might be raised by the churches, to supply destitute churches with preachers, and to help guard against doctrinal aberrations. Queries addressed to the Association were to be decided by majority vote. However, such decisions were not binding upon churches which disagreed with them. But, in matters which involved important questions of faith and practice, any church which failed to abide by the decisions of the Association might be excluded from its membership.

The following excerpts from the Constitution set forth the nature and purposes of the Association, as they have been delineated in the foregoing paragraph:⁴⁵

⁴³ Min., BBA, 1794, p. 3; 1795, p. 1.

⁴⁴ A committee appointed to consider the application of the Fell's Point Church recommended that it not be received. Not until eight years later, in 1808, did it gain admittance. (Minutes, Second Baltimore, 1799-1801, passim; and Min., BBA, 1799 and 1800).

⁴⁵ The Constitution appears in Min., BBA, 1793.

1. But we act as an advisory council only; disclaiming all superiority, jurisdiction, coercive right, and infallibility; and acknowledging the independence of every church, which has received authority from Christ, to perform all the duties enjoined, respecting the government of his Church in this world.⁴⁶

2. The utility of an Association appears in many respects. As the obtaining a more general acquaintance with the state of the churches, maintaining a friendly intercourse with each other, giving advice in cases of difficulty, supplying destitute Churches, and guarding against innovations.

.
10. If any Church should deviate from the faith and practice on which they were received into this Association; the Association hath power to exclude them from the privileges of the same.

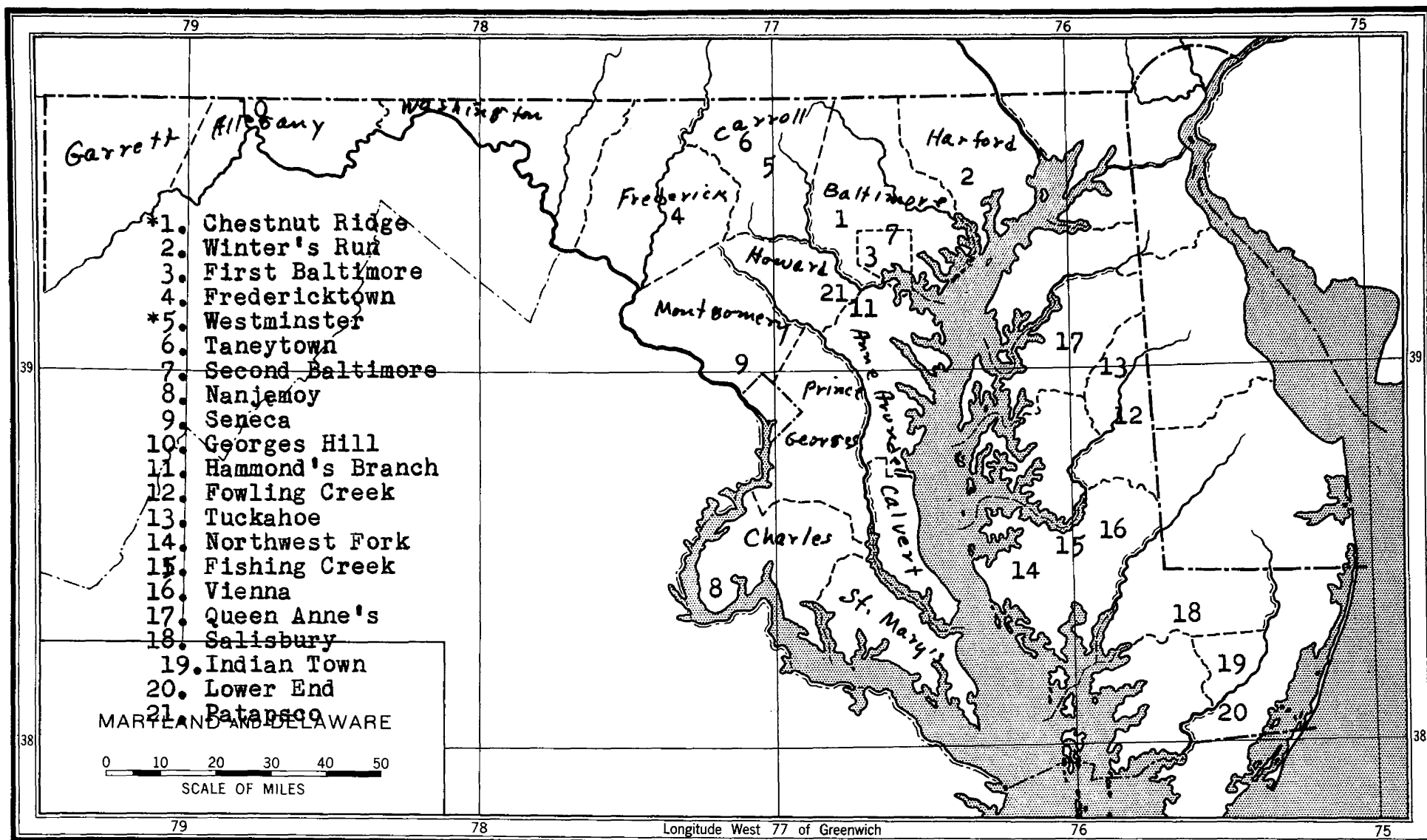
Little was attempted or achieved by the Association in these years. Most of the time during the three days of its annual meetings were taken up with preaching. Appointments were made for pastors to supply destitute churches. A "Yearly Meeting," which was an additional gathering of the churches in the Spring for preaching services, was attempted for a while, but the plan was not very successful and was soon abandoned.

At the close of the century, fifty-eight years of Baptist history had passed in Maryland without much growth. In 1800, there were only about 21 churches with not more than 1200 members.⁴⁷ At this time, Maryland was the weak-

⁴⁶ The italics are in the original document.

⁴⁷ Two of the eight churches in the Baltimore Association, in 1800, were located in Pennsylvania. See the map at the end of this chapter.

est state in the Union, in point of Baptist work. These slow beginnings, enhanced by dissensions which will be described later, combined to make Maryland the most backward state in the South, in respect to the development of Baptists -- a situation which remains unchanged today.



NYSTROM SERIES OF DESK MAPS

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**Location of Baptist Churches Begun
in Maryland by 1800**

(Note: possibly there one or two others on the Eastern Shore)

CHAPTER THREE

THE MARYLAND BAPTIST CHURCHES

IN THE

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

(1801-1813)

During the first thirteen years of the nineteenth century, there was little growth in the Baptist churches of Maryland. While some new churches were begun in this period, others dropped out of existence, so that by 1813 their number had risen from 21 to only 28 churches.¹ There was also very little increase in the membership of these churches. Meanwhile the Baptists in the other southern states were gaining ground, so that the difference between them and Maryland was becoming even more apparent.² The churches which did exist were small, and their organization was very simple. For the most part, the inadequate financial support of ministers did not attract men of great ability, nor did it enable pastors to devote sufficient time to the growth and development of their churches.

On the Western Shore, the opening years of the century seemed to indicate that the Baptists had been injected with

¹ See Table IV, p. 26. (Benedict's list contains the names of 32 churches, but 2 of these were in Washington, and 4 of them were in Pennsylvania. He does not include Nanjemoy and Georges Hill, which were affiliated with Associations in Pennsylvania and Virginia.)

² See Table III, p. 25, for statistics of the Baptists of other southern states in 1813.

new life. In 1802 and 1803, the number of baptisms reported was larger than usual.³ However, the new spurt of life did not continue; for after 1803, the churches slipped back into their former apathy.⁴ On the Eastern Shore, the number of churches increased from 9 to 14 in this period, but the accessions in membership were exceeded by dismissals and deaths.⁵

TABLE III. Baptists in the Southern States in 1813.⁶

| States | Number of Churches | Number of Members |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Maryland | 28 | 1,331 |
| Virginia | 292 | 35,655 |
| North Carolina | 204 | 12,567 |
| South Carolina | 154 | 11,325 |
| Georgia | 164 | 15,755 |
| Kentucky | 285 | 22,694 |
| Tennessee | 156 | 11,325 |

It was during this period that Baptists began to organize churches in Washington, D. C., and these were affiliated with the Baltimore Baptist Association. Having recently become the capital of the United States, Washing-

³ In 1802, 120 baptisms were reported; in 1803, there were 126. Min., BBA, 1802 and 1803.

⁴ In 1804, the number of baptisms dropped to 29, and for the rest of the period, they did not average much more than 25 annually. Ibid., 1804-1813.

⁵ See Table IV, p. 26, and compare with Table II, p. 19.

⁶ The figures for Maryland are based on Benedict, op. cit., 1813, Vol. II, p. 517, and corrected as noted Supra p. 24, footnote 1. Those for the other states are derived from A. H. Newman, op. cit., pp. 303, 307, 315, 332, 336, and 338.

ton could hardly be called a city yet. By 1810, two Baptist churches had been organized there.⁷

TABLE IV. Baptist Churches in Maryland in 1813.⁸

| Churches | Date of Organization | Ministers | Members |
|------------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------|
| Harford | 1754 | | 121 |
| First Baltimore | 1785 | Lewis Richards | 147 |
| Frederick Town | 1773 | John Welch | 27 |
| Tuskarora Valley (Pa.) | 1792 | | 49 |
| Taney Town | 1792 | | 16 |
| Old Seneca | 1773 | | 11 |
| Huntington (Pa.) | | | 30 |
| Hammond's Branch | 1793 | William Wilson | 38 |
| Sideling Hill (Pa.) | 1789 | Thomas Runyon | 33 |
| Pleasant Valley | 1802 | Gabriel Nourse | 31 |
| First Washington | 1802 | Obadiah Brown | 51 |
| Conolloyway (Pa.) | 1754 | John Cook | 56 |
| Gunpowder | 1806 | George Grice | 68 |
| Saters | 1806 | Benjamin Green | 38 |
| Upper Seneca | 1805 | | 21 |
| Patapsco | 1800 | Edward Choat | 29 |
| Second Baltimore | 1797 | John Healey | 69 |
| Second Washington | 1810 | | 27 |
| | | | <u>862</u> |
| Salisbury | 1780 | Robert Lemon | 66 |
| Nassiongo | | | 63 |
| Newtown | | | 13 |
| Matiponi | | | 25 |
| Indian Town | 1780 | | 69 |
| Head of the Sound | | | 11 |
| Little Creek | | | 40 |
| Broad Creek | 1780 | Caldwell Windsor | 46 |
| Bethel | | Isaac Fisher | 30 |
| Fowling Creek | 1781 | | 31 |
| Fishing Creek | 1791 | Stephen Woolford | 11 |
| Jones's Mill | | Stephen Woolford | 26 |
| Barren Creek | | Caldwell Windsor | 31 |
| Strait's Hundred | | | 7 |
| | | | <u>469</u> |

⁷ For the beginnings of First Washington, see Benedict, *op. cit.*, 1813, Vol. II, p. 20. For Second Washington, see *Minutes, Second Washington*, 1810.

⁸ Benedict, *op. cit.*, 1813, Vol. II, p. 517.

Narratives of individual churches and statistical descriptions of change and growth do not convey a very clear picture of the Maryland churches of this period. In order to show what these churches were like, an attempt will be made to describe a typical church from a composite of facts taken from several church records. Of course, there is no such thing as a "typical church" any more than there is an "average man;" there are always distinctions to be made when one is making comparisons. However, these churches were enough alike to present some generalizations about their organization and practices. There is likely to be a tendency to read one's present experience into the past, so that when one speaks of a church of the first decade of the nineteenth century, he is apt to have in mind a picture of a modern church with fairly elaborate building, numerous agencies, settled ministers, and fairly well-developed programs which entail considerable financial support. The churches of that day were very simple in their organization and programs. Some of the aspects which it will be of interest to consider are: the ways by which churches were started, the buildings, the church meetings, their organizations, and the ministers.

The churches which were formed in Maryland prior to 1813 had so many diverse origins that there are examples of almost all of the ways whereby Baptist churches are gathered. The most common method of starting a church in this early period was through the preaching of some itinerant

minister, who made a few converts in a given locality. Then, with the assistance of other ministers, he would organize them into a church.⁹ In some instances, a number of members of a church, because of dissatisfaction or for the sake of convenience, wished to form a separate congregation.¹⁰ At other times, Baptist people moved into a locality where there was no church of their faith and order. Banding themselves together, they would proceed to organize a church.¹¹ Sometimes an entire church, or a part of a church, would migrate from one place to another, where they continued to carry on as a church.¹² About the only other method by which Baptist churches are started, one which is fairly common today, is to select some situation where the possibilities for a church are deemed favorable. Then some church, or a mission board, will supply a pastor, leaders for a Sunday School, and perhaps a building, until enough persons have been enlisted to carry on the work by themselves. None of the early Maryland churches was begun in this way, but most of those which came into being after 1836 were started in such a manner.

⁹ For example, John Davis and Jeremiah Moore, through their itinerant labors, were instrumental in beginning a number of the early Maryland churches.

¹⁰ The Harford Church, in 1754, had been formed of members of the Chestnut Ridge Church, who were dissatisfied with the General Baptist theology. Upper Seneca was begun in 1806, for the sake of the convenience of certain members.

¹¹ First Washington is a good example of this.

¹² Fell's Point Church, Baltimore, was the only one which was begun in this manner.

Although Baptists have never had a central organization to which it has been necessary to appeal for permission to establish a church, the usual practice has been to ask ministers of other churches to attend a meeting for the purpose of constituting a church. Although their theory of the autonomous local church would seem to make such a step unnecessary, it was usually considered a requisite preliminary. In some cases, churches which had neglected to do so were charged with being irregularly constituted.¹³

After an organization had been effected, the next step was generally to obtain a meeting house. Sometimes a building was secured before the church was formed, but that was exceptional.¹⁴ The buildings were very simple structures. The typical one was about 30 by 40 feet, consisting of a single room, with no provision for Sunday School or other purposes.¹⁵ The city churches, which usually grew more rapidly than the rural ones, were likely, before long, to find

¹³ One of the reasons given for not receiving the Fell's Point Church into the Association on its first application was that it had been irregularly constituted. Minutes, Second Baltimore, 1802.

¹⁴ The building of First Washington was 42 by 32 feet. (Benedict, op. cit., 1813, Vol. II, p. 21). The Harford Church, which still stands, was about the same size. This was about the size of all the churches about which such information has been found.

¹⁵ It was unnecessary to provide room for Sunday Schools, as there was only one of these in Maryland before 1813. That was at Second Baltimore. John Healey was probably familiar with those in England, and he began one in 1797. Minutes, Second Baltimore, July 17, 1797.

their buildings inadequate. Some of them erected more elaborate buildings in the following period.¹⁶

Church organization was also very simple. Unlike the present concept of the "working church," with a multiplicity of offices shared by a large proportion of the members, these early churches had only a minister (usually called an Elder), a clerk, and one or two deacons. After 1802, when the Maryland Legislature passed an act providing for the incorporation of churches, trustees were elected annually. The trustees were the persons in whose name the property was vested, and they were responsible for the transaction of any legal business of the church.¹⁷ The duty of the other members consisted in attending the few stated services of the church. In most of the churches, there were worship services only once or twice a month, but in the city churches services were usually held every Sunday, with sometimes a week-night meeting.¹⁸ The only other regular meeting was a business session, which every church held at least once a month.

These early churches, frequently referred to as "religious societies," were primary groups in which people were

¹⁶ First Baltimore built "Old Roundtop" in 1818, a rather elaborate building which cost about \$50,000.00. First Washington erected its second building in 1833.

¹⁷ A good example of Articles of Incorporation will be found in Minutes, Second Baltimore, pp. 126-137.

¹⁸ A list of churches with the times of regular services is in Min., BBA, 1815. First Baltimore, Second Baltimore, and First Washington had services every Sunday. The rest met only once or twice a month.

united by ties of common interests. Members exercised restraints upon each other, and they provided encouragement in living up to the accepted standards.¹⁹ More direct controls over the behavior of members was exerted by means of church discipline.²⁰ New people were not admitted to membership without close scrutiny as to their sincerity, their beliefs, and their religious experience.²¹ Memberships were small, in few cases being in excess of sixty people.²² Church attendance was compulsory for all of the members, and there are numerous instances of persons being disciplined for irregular attendance.²³ As a result of the small memberships and their associating regularly in church meetings, relationships could not be as impersonal as they often are today.

¹⁹ A church usually adopted a covenant at the time of its organization, which provided a minimum standard of conduct. Second Baltimore, however, did not believe in having such a covenant. (Minutes, Second Baltimore, June 28, 1808).

²⁰ The church books are filled with instances of disciplinary actions. The causes are diverse; failure to attend services, neglect to pay debts, lying, stealing, drunkenness, adultery, heterodoxy, gossip and slander, and dancing are among them.

²¹ A person had to appear before a church meeting to "relate his experience." If his beliefs and sincerity were approved, he was baptized or his letter from another church was received.

²² Only Harford and First Baltimore had more than 100 members. See Table IV, p. 26.

²³ For example, "Resolved, that William Carman is excluded from this church in consequence of nonattendance." Minutes, Second Baltimore, p. 13.

Baptists have always taken pride in the democratic nature of their church government. However, as is often the case, abstract principles were sometimes in contradiction to actual practice. Certain assumptions, which Baptists held in common with their social milieu, brought about some discrepancies between theoretical and practical democracy. During the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth centuries, these inconsistencies were most apparent with regard to women and colored people. While the status of women in legal matters was somewhat better in the United States than in Europe at that time, it was generally considered improper for women to participate in public affairs. In the churches, biblical injunctions strengthened the tendency to expect women to maintain a golden silence in public meetings. For many years it was the custom in many churches to segregate the sexes in the church services, the men sitting on one side and the women on the other. This custom was gradually changed, though the rural churches were usually slower than the urban ones to modify this practice.²⁴ Although the liberties allowed to women in church meetings varied somewhat in the various churches, the usual practice was to require them to maintain a discreet silence in the business

²⁴ Not until 1835 did the Second Baptist Church of Washington vote "that there is no prohibition to keep them from sitting on either side of the house, male and female." Minutes, Second Washington, July 11, 1835.

and other meetings.²⁵

The privilege of voting was also denied to the colored members of the churches. Nearly every church in Maryland had some colored members, both free and slave. These persons were not expected or allowed to take an active part in the conduct of church business.²⁶ So, in relation to both women and Negroes, the democratic theory of the Baptists was limited in its application.

²⁵ The Constitution of the Rockville Church provided that: "No female shall have the privilege of voting in the church." Scriptures were quoted in defence of this position. (Minutes, Rockville Baptist Church, April 2, 1822). However, it was added: "But it is desirable that the female members should attend the church meetings and should any candidate offer themselves for membership for whom any of the female members . . . may know something immoral, it is . . . their duty to communicate the same to any male member." (Ibid., same date).

When the question came up in the First Church, Baltimore, in 1805, it was agreed "That the female members of this church be permitted to speak and vote at our business meetings, except in those cases thereafter mentioned [legal matters]." But it was significantly added, "And that this privilege continue until otherwise determined by the male members. . . ." (Minutes, First Baltimore, Sept. 14, 1805).

At the Navy Yard Church, as late as 1837, it was voted: "That whereas the word of God expressly forbids that women should speak in the church or should usurp authority over the man, therefore, be it resolved that henceforth the female members . . . are requested to refrain from voting." (Minutes, Second Washington, 1837).

²⁶ The Constitution of the Rockville Church also forbade slaves to take part in the business of the church: "No servant shall be allowed to vote in the church, because he is bound to obey his own master in all things." (Minutes, Rockville Church, April 2, 1822).

At First Baltimore there was considerable difference of opinion on this question. In May, 1809, the question came up for discussion, and it was finally laid over until another meeting: "Motion made and seconded that this church take into consideration till next meeting whether the Black members shall have liberty to vote in our church." In the

Not many churches at this time had resident ministers. Ordinarily, one man, living at a distance from his several churches, would preach once or twice a month at three or four different places. Partly because the average congregation was small and composed of a poor class of people, and partly because of a traditional dislike of "hired ministers," there were few churches which had stipulated salaries for their pastors. When salaries were paid, they were very meager. Consequently, the number of progressive and competent ministers was small. Yet it is a wonder that there were any who were willing to make the sacrifices involved in such an undertaking, in view of their necessity to provide for their families. However, there were a few men who did offer their services. On the Eastern Shore, there were four ministers for fourteen churches in 1813. On the Western Shore, there were eleven ministers who were serving

next few meetings, the subject was several times postponed for "further consideration." (Minutes, First Baltimore, May 29, June 26, and August 28, 1809). It appears that the issue was considered quite important, for the question was finally taken into court along with other matters. A clipping taken from a Baltimore newspaper, which is not dated, but is pasted in the minute-book of Second Baltimore, shows the final outcome: "The Judges of the Baltimore County Court, delivered their unanimous opinion The opinion of the Court is elaborate and decisive in favor of the applicants, excepting that a slave has no authority to exercise the right of suffrage in the election of Pastors and officers of the church." (Clipping pasted in Minutes, Second Baltimore, p. 140).

All of the available evidence points to the conclusion that neither slave nor free Negroes were allowed the privilege of participating in the business of the churches.

eighteen churches.²⁷

Who were the men who could volunteer their services for little or nothing? How did they earn a livelihood? What training did they have, if any? These are some of the questions that one naturally asks of the ministers of these early churches. It must be realized that in those days a person who wished to become a Baptist minister did not feel any need for special training beyond a rudimentary knowledge of reading and writing. There were no Baptist theological seminaries at that early date, and there were scarcely any schools where specialized training could have been acquired. Some of the churches in the larger cities did expect their pastors to have some educational preparation for his work, but such training was usually received in a college or under the tutelage of some successful minister. In Maryland, not only were there no Baptist schools of any kind, but there were few public schools which offered even an elementary knowledge of reading and writing. Only one of the ministers who served the churches of Maryland before 1813 had any part of a college education.²⁸ Most of them had no formal education of any sort.²⁹

²⁷ See Table IV, p. 26.

²⁸ Lewis Richards had attended college in England for a time. Benedict, op. cit., 1813, Vol. II, p. 17.

²⁹ Enough has been learned about most of the Maryland Baptist ministers prior to 1813 to state that practically none of them had any formal education. This information has been gleaned from so many sources that they are not cited here.

The process of becoming a Baptist minister was usually somewhat as follows. A person would declare that he felt called to preach. His church would then appoint a time to hear him deliver a sermon. Then, if he were considered an acceptable candidate, he would be given license to preach whenever there was opportunity to do so. After a time, if some church called him as its pastor, he would be ordained.³⁰

Few of the churches were able to provide an adequate living for a pastor. Sometimes, when they were able to do so, they did not believe in having stipulated salaries for

Of the ministers on the Eastern Shore, it has been impossible learn much. However, Benedict says, "The preachers of the Salisbury Association have been from the first distinguished for their piety rather than for their parts." This would seem to imply that they had little in the way of educational attainments. Benedict, op. cit., 1813, Vol. II, p. 21.

³⁰ A typical statement is: "It appearing to this church that Bro. Henry Welch is under impression to speak for his Master in a public way, it is agreed by the church that he shall have liberty to exercise his gifts when opportunity serves." (Minutes, Upper Seneca Baptist Church, May 11, 1816). An entry about one year later stated that he had been ordained. (Ibid., June 29, 1817).

Sometimes the church did not approve the candidate and denied him license to preach. For example, "Lewis Richards informed the Church that John Stow has for a considerable time been exercised with an impression of a divine call to the ministry -- The Church agreed to proceed in the case agreeably to the order adopted by the church's Session." Later, when a vote was taken, "the church did not think it would be justified in calling him to the ministry." (Minutes, First Baltimore, July 10 and Dec. 10, 1794).

One colored man, Charles Thomas, was licensed by First Baltimore to preach among his own people. (Minutes, First Baltimore, July 28, 1817). (The Negroes did not have a church of their own in Maryland until 1836, and there were few of the before the Civil War. See chapter 13.)

preachers.³¹ First Baltimore had a stipulated salary for its pastor from the outset.³² Second Baltimore did not provide any support for John Healey until 1816, and then it was a mere pittance.³³ In order to support his family, he worked at his trade as a silk-dyer.³⁵ Obadiah Brown was not paid a salary by the First Church of Washington for many years. He earned a livelihood as a government employee during most of the forty-three years that he served the church.³⁵ The Navy Yard Church (Second Washington) did not feel able to provide any remuneration for a minister, and they did not call a pastor for several years after the organization of the church.³⁶ Upper Seneca was the only rural church, so far as has been ascertained, that paid its minister a regular salary, and it was only about \$60.00 a year.³⁷ Most of the pastors of the churches outside of Baltimore and Washington were farmers.

³¹ The Gunpowder Church, although it had several well-to-do planters in its membership, had no settled salary for its pastor for many years. Minutes, Gunpowder Baptist Church, 1806-1830, passim.

³² Minutes, First Baltimore, Aug. 28, 1787.

³³ Minutes, Second Baltimore, May 29, 1816.

³⁴ True Union, Jan. 23, 1851.

³⁵ L. J. Burrows, Baptist Register, 1852, pp. 538-540.

³⁶ Minutes, Second Washington, passim and Feb. 28, 1832.

³⁷ Minutes, Upper Seneca Baptist Church, March 29, 1806 and passim.

No doubt, some of the ministers were satisfied with a situation such as has just been described. On the other hand, there were some who believed that the churches ought to feel responsible to provide for the needs of the ministers who served them. In 1811, the Circular Letter of the Baltimore Association dealt with the subject of ministerial support. A few excerpts from this plea will show its general tenor:³⁸

. And it follows, therefore, that the churches are bound indispensibly [sic] to pay all the attention to the wants of their preachers that their circumstances enable them to render. And when we reflect that the Lord Jesus seldom goes into the schools to furnish his Church with gifts for her edification, the duty of so providing, that the preacher may give himself wholly to reading, study, and waiting on his ministry in the various duties it involves, the obligation becomes more indispensibly [sic] obligatory.

It is true that. . . . in some instances we see men of scientific acquirements fill the pulpit to great advantage; but it is lamentably true. . . . that a great majority seem much more disposed to let us know that they are scholars and orators, than that they are the humble servants of the meek and lowly Jesus. . . . [but] without much reading and study, few men will be qualified to preach. . . . to the credit of the cause they profess to support and defend. . . . Let special care be taken that nothing is withheld that we ought to communicate to those who labour in the word and doctrine, that they may give themselves wholly to the work. . . . and not be obliged to leave the work to provide for themselves and families, by labouring with their own hands. . . .

This plea has been quoted at length, because it reveals several things about the average minister of that

³⁸ Min., BBA, 1811, pp. 5-12.

day. Besides indicating that there were few among them who had any formal education, it shows that there was a suspicion of such training in the schools. Yet there is an acknowledgment that some improvement of intellectual gifts was necessary. Therefore, it recommended that an adequate support be provided for the minister to enable him to have leisure for the cultivation of his mind and spiritual capacities. However, little change took place with respect to ministerial support for a long time. In the city churches, there was more of a tendency to feel a responsibility for the support of pastors. The rural churches never did change much in this matter. Instead, they became more opposed to salaried ministers, as time went on.

The situation in Maryland, with regard to the education and support of preachers, was not very different from that of most other states. In 1813, Benedict summed up the situation over the country in the following paragraph:³⁹

The ministers of this connection are, for the most part, a set of plain laborious preachers, who strive to address themselves to the consciences of their hearers, than to amuse them with the flowers of rhetoric and the embellishments of style. But a small proportion of them have any considerable share of human learning. . . . No set of preachers, except the Methodists, are more incessant in their labours; none preach with greater effect. . . . When it is considered how little they have received for their services, and how straitened their circumstances have been, it is a matter of surprise that they have continued so incessant in their labours. . . .

³⁹ Benedict, *op. cit.*, 1813, Vol. II, pp. 457-459.

This description of conditions among the Baptist ministers in general might be aptly applied to Maryland. Perhaps conditions in that state were a shade worse than in some of the others, but they fit quite well into the general pattern.

These, then, were the Maryland Baptist churches in the early nineteenth century. Informal services were held once or twice a month in simple, one-room buildings, which were bare of adornments or musical instruments. In their monthly business meetings, they were much concerned with matters of discipline. Organization was simple, and there were few financial problems, because they assumed few obligations which required money. Although the pastors sometimes had much native ability, they were hampered by a lack of general education, which caused them to be provincial and lacking in vision. While in regions where frontier conditions still existed, such men and methods could still meet with success, in the older, established sections like Maryland, they were inadequate to meet conditions. Progress was very slow for years to come, but it is a wonder that there was any at all.

CHAPTER FOUR

QUERIES, QUIBBLES, AND QUESTIONS

(To about 1813)

Having presented a description of the churches in the early nineteenth century, the next step will be to discuss some of the matters which occupied their attention prior to about 1813. The subject of missions and education, which became the storm-center of the denomination a little later, had not yet been raised.¹ Most of the controversial points which were considered during this period were related to theological questions, but a few matters bearing social import received some attention. The main questions which will be discussed in this chapter are Arminian theology, the "laying on of hands," some aspects of church-state relations, lotteries, slavery, and usury.

During the latter part of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth, a growing Arminian sentiment throughout the country gave rise to a counter-offensive among some Baptists, which took the form of hyper-Calvinism.²

¹ The development of education and missions among the Baptists will be discussed in chapter 5.

² Perhaps Deism, which was widespread in the United States in the post-Revolutionary period, was a factor in the development of extreme Calvinism. A similar reaction had taken place among the English Baptists somewhat earlier. (See H. C. Vedder, Short History of the Baptists, pp. 239-241, for a brief sketch of the rise of extreme Calvinism in England.)

That some of the Maryland Baptist churches were affected by this theological current is evident from entries in some of the church minute-books.³ From the outset, the churches of the Baltimore Association had been Calvinistic, and most of them became more rigidly so as the nineteenth century progressed.

A theological point which caused considerable disturbance among the Baptists for many years was the question of the "laying on of hands."⁵ This rite had been brought to America by Welsh Baptists, who settled near Philadelphia, and they refused to commune with other Baptists who did not observe it.⁶ In 1742, the Philadelphia Association had adopted this form as a part of its Confession of Faith.⁷ For a long time thereafter, much dissension grew out of the question whether the rite was a necessary church ordinance or not. To some extent, the Maryland Baptist churches were affected by the controversy.

³ For example, a member was excluded from the Georges Hill Church "for holding the doctrine of the universalists and denying election." (Minutes, Georges Hill Church, Sept. 17, 1793). Also, First Baltimore took up the case of a man who, it was reported, "could not believe in the doctrines . . . and is inclined towards Arminianism." (Minutes, First Baltimore, Feb. 12, 1803).

⁴ See chapter 6 regarding the development of an extreme Calvinism.

⁵ This was a rite in which hands were held over a person in connection with his baptism. It was supposed to symbolize the impartation of the Spirit to the baptised convert.

⁶ Benedict, op. cit., 1813, Vol. II, p. 4.

⁷ W. J. McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 295.

In the Baltimore Baptist Association, the question was brought up in 1797. A query addressed to the body asked, "Whether the imposition of hands on baptized believers, as an ordinance of the Church, shall or shall not be a bar to communion?"⁸ The Association voted in the negative. In 1803, the matter was again before the Association. The question was then disposed of by voting that the practice was not an ordinance of the church.⁹ Considerable discussion of the matter took place in the First Church, Baltimore. After decisions had been made and reversed, the final verdict was that this was not an essential practice.¹⁰ On the other hand, Second Baltimore decided that it was a necessary ordinance of the church.¹¹

Baptists have traditionally insisted that religious freedom depends upon the complete separation of the church and the state. This contention has led them to scrutinize every act of government, which might have a bearing upon religious matters. Sometimes this has led to petty cavils, but, in the long run, it has probably helped to guard against the unwholesome influence of government in religion. Two questions were raised in these years that were related to

⁸ Min., BBA, 1797. Also, J. H. Jones, op. cit., p. 5.

⁹ Ibid., 1803, p. 2.

¹⁰ Minutes, First Baltimore, July 3, Aug 7, 1804; and May 26, 1817.

¹¹ Minutes, Second Baltimore, Oct. 24, 1808.

this matter. One of these was of some importance, but the other was of little consequence.

First, in point of time, was a question which had to do with a power granted to the Maryland Legislature to support churches by means of taxation. Although Maryland had abolished its church establishment in 1776, yet there was a power vested in the legislature, which authorized it to set up a quasi-establishment. In the Declaration of Rights which was adopted in 1776, Article 33 provided that taxes might be levied for the support of religion.¹² The legislature had never shown any disposition to make use of this power, but the authority to do so remained. Consequently, the Baltimore Association, in 1803:¹³

. took into consideration the expediency of adopting a resolution regarding a clause in the 33rd Article of our Bill of Rights, permitting the legislature to lay a general tax for the support of Christian religion. The Clerk presented a petition which he had prepared. . . . to be laid before our Legislature at their next session, praying an amendment of said clause in our Bill of Rights; and which we unanimously directed our Moderator and Clerk to sign it on our behalf and to lay it before the Legislature in due season.

The efforts of the Association may have had something to do with the ultimate change in this part of the Declaration

¹² The article, as amended and adopted, read: ". . . . yet the legislature may, in their discretion, lay a general and equal tax for the support of the Christian religion, leaving to each individual the power of appointing the payment over of the money collected from him to the support of any particular place of worship or minister. . . ." Proceedings Of the Convention. . . . Held at Annapolis in 1774, 1775, and 1776, pp. 299-300 and 307.

¹³ Min., BBA, 1803, p. 2.

of Rights.

The other matter relating to church and state had to do with the employment of chaplains by Congress. Reverend Jeremiah Moore, pastor of the Seneca Church, held that this practice set a dangerous precedent. He wrote a pamphlet in 1808, in which he attacked the custom. In it he stated:¹⁴

. . . . And still we see Congress employing chaplains, and paying them out of the public money, and whether this does not comprehend the essence of an ecclesiastical establishment, is a matter of serious enquiry.

Moore's sensitiveness on this subject may be justified on the grounds that he had preached in Virginia in the pre-Revolutionary period. During that time he had been incarcerated for preaching without securing a license to do so.¹⁵ When the question was brought before the Association in 1808, it was laid over for a year. In 1809, the body voted: "Resolved, That it be expunged from our Minutes."¹⁶

Another issue dealt with by the Association was concerned with the holding of lotteries to raise funds for churches. In 1804, a query was sent to the Association, inquiring: "How far is gaming justifiable when the money arising therefrom is appropriated to build Meeting Houses?"¹⁷ No doubt, this issue was raised as a result of a petition

¹⁴ Jeremiah Moore, An Enquiry Into the Nature and Propriety of Ecclesiastical Establishments, p. 15.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁶ Min., BBA, 1809, p. 3.

¹⁷ Ibid., 1804, p. 3.

which Second Baltimore sent to the Legislature, requesting permission to raise money by a lottery. That church, along with two more of other denominations, received a favorable reply; and the lottery was carried out in 1803.¹⁸ The churches of the Association did not approve of this means of raising funds, and they voted: "We conceive Gaming of every kind to be wrong; and as Lotteries are a species thereof, we disapprove of them."¹⁹ Of course, Second Baltimore had not yet been admitted to the Association, or it might have been taken to task on this matter.

Another issue which caused considerable agitation in several of the churches was that of slavery. In the post-Revolutionary period, many people were becoming aware of the inconsistency between the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence and the existence of human bondage. Leaders in Maryland and Virginia tried to formulate methods for its abolition, but the problem was a knotty one. The church-books of several of the Maryland Baptist churches have interesting material reflecting their attitudes on this issue. From these records, two facts stand out. One is that there was a strong anti-slavery sentiment in their ranks. The other is that there was also an influential pro-slavery element, to which the other side usually gave way in the interests of harmony.

¹⁸ Minutes, Second Baltimore, Oct. 25, Nov. 25, 1802.

¹⁹ Min., BBA, 1804, p. 3.

After the Revolution, there was a strong sentiment among the Baptists of Baltimore against slavery. In 1789, First Baltimore sent the following letter to the Philadelphia Association:²⁰

. Brethren contemplating the sufferings and unhappy condition of the Negroes who are held in Slavery among us, we are indeed happy to recommend to your notice and solicit the influence of your councils in their behalf. Societies have been formed in this and some of the neighbouring States for the protection of those who are unlawfully held in bondage, and we are happy to observe that the Societies lately established in this Town have been in some measure serviceable in the cause of liberty, and in time we hope will become more extensively usefull. This is a subject which dwells on our minds with peculiar weight, and we trust you will not think it unworthy your attention, and that your influence may be employed to mitigate the sufferings and redress the wrongs of these unhappy people.

In response to this letter, the Philadelphia Association passed a resolution, which urged that the churches take an interest in the formation of societies to encourage the gradual abolition of slavery.²¹

One of the earliest churches to take up the question was the Georges Hill Baptist Church in Western Maryland. In 1795, the question was raised, "Wheather [sic] slavery is consistent with justice or not?" and a majority voted in the negative.²² Accordingly, one of the members, who was

²⁰ Minutes, First Baltimore, Sept. 25, 1789.

²¹ Robert G. Torbet, Social History of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1707-1940, p. 94.

²² Minutes, Georges Hill Church, April 19, 1795.

charged with holding slaves was cited to appear before the church. When investigation proved the accusation to be untrue, the matter was dropped.²³ Another member of the church withdrew from its fellowship because of the anti-slavery stand which had been taken.²⁴ So much dissension was aroused over the resolution of the church, that the action was finally rescinded:²⁵

Resolved, That the query of March the 15th, 1795, Wheather [sic] slavery be consistent with justice or not, and answered in Apriel [sic] the 19th, 1795 in the negative, the church resolves that the said query and answer be null and void.

The Gunpowder Church was nearly wrecked over the issue of slavery between 1814 and 1817.²⁶ After the question had been debated at some length, it was voted that slaveholding should be regarded as a bar to communion.²⁷ This resolution created a good deal of dissension, and several members quit the church because of it.²⁸ After abiding by the original decision for over two years, the offensive resolution was repealed.²⁹ Evidently the members preferred peace to a moral crusade which threatened to destroy the church organization.

²³ Ibid., June 20, 1795; July 18, 1795.

²⁴ Ibid., Sept. 19, 1795.

²⁵ Ibid., Sept. 19, 1795.

²⁶ Although these dates take us beyond the period under consideration, the subject fits best here.

²⁷ Minutes, Gunpowder Church, Aug. 16, 1814; Mar. 31, 1815.

²⁸ Ibid., April 1, 1815, and passim.

²⁹ Ibid., Aug. 24, 1817.

Several of the other churches passed resolutions during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, which put them on record as being opposed to slavery. The Fell's Point Church voted, "that this church discountenance the keeping of their fellow creatures in bondage."³⁰ First Church, Washington, admitted Samuel Smoot to membership on the condition that he liberate his slaves at an early date. When he sold them, instead of emancipating them, he was excluded from the church.³¹ The Third Baptist Church of Baltimore voted that "no person holding slaves be admitted a member of this church."³² At the Navy Yard Church, Washington, the question was brought up, but after a month of discussion, it was decided that the query should be "expunged from the minutes."³³

In the meetings of the Baltimore Association, the slavery issue was never raised. That it was not seems strange, since there was so much discussion of it in the churches. The only reference to slavery prior to 1813 was a query which involved the right of slaves to hold membership in Baptist churches. In 1801, the query was made: "Are persons

³⁰ Minutes, Second Baltimore, March 25, 1802.

³¹ Lucille W. Wilkinson, "Early Baptists of Washington," Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Vols. 29-30, p. 234.

³² Minutes, Third Church, Baltimore, Oct. 13, 1818.

³³ Minutes, Second Washington, July 13, Aug. 17, 1821.

holden in perpetual slavery qualified to be members of a Baptist Church?"³⁴ After tabling the question for a year, the Association voted in the affirmative.³⁵

Another query presented to the Association in 1808 is of interest, because it reveals something about the general economic status of the Baptists at that time. The majority of them were farmers and laborers, and they were opposed to the business practices of the merchants and bankers.³⁶ The first part of the query reveals an antagonism against the money-lender, who took advantage of those who found it necessary to borrow money. The second part shows a hostility to merchants who charged as much as they could get for their wares. The two-fold query was as follows:³⁷

1. Is it consistent with the character of the Christian to receive more than legal interest for money lent?

2. Is it consistent with the Christian character to buy at the lowest rate, and sell at the highest rate he can, for the sake of gain, without regard to the value of the articles in which he deals?

In the following year, the Association answered the first

³⁴ Min., BBA, 1801, p. 3.

³⁵ Ibid., 1802, p. 2.

³⁶ "The plain Baptist folk, for the church [First Baltimore] was very feeble then [ca. 1813] in Baltimore, and few wealthy people belonged to it. . . ." (Edward W. and Spencer W. Cone, Life of Spencer H. Cone). If this was so of First Baltimore, it was even more so of the rest of the Baptists, who were mostly farmers.

³⁷ Min., BBA, 1808, pp. 5-6.

part of the query in the negative. With regard to the second question, the reply was: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."³⁸

Apparently the report of this action of the Association brought repercussions from certain members, although there is no evidence to indicate the source of the objections. Perhaps the old cry was raised that, "Religion should not meddle in business." At any rate, something occurred before the session of the following year, which led to a reconsideration of the matter. When the body convened in 1810, it was voted, "That the resolve of the last Association, respecting 'buying and selling,' be expunged from the minutes."³⁹

Another transaction of the Association will serve to help locate the majority of the Baptists of the Western Shore politically and socially. That is a letter of approval, which was written to Thomas Jefferson in 1808.⁴⁰ In that year, the Association ordered that a letter be prepared to be delivered to President Jefferson, "approbating his political conduct." In the letter, the Association endorsed the measures which Jefferson had used to decrease taxes, diminish the national debt, and to keep the country aloof from

³⁸ Ibid., 1809, p. 4.

³⁹ Ibid., 1810, p. 3.

⁴⁰ "Baptists of that day were largely of the Jeffersonian School in politics." Missionary Jubilee, p. 414.

the wars in Europe.⁴¹ When one recalls that by this time Jefferson had made many enemies by his policies towards the Supreme Court and by the Embargo, it is significant that these people were so whole-heartedly in favor of his administration.

Various other queries were addressed to the Association prior to 1813. Most of them were concerned primarily with doctrinal details, and they are not of sufficient interest to discuss here. The primary concerns of the churches were theological. Those issues which had social implications were, for the most part, closely related to questions which were regarded as being directly religious.

⁴¹ Min., BBA, 1808, pp. 13-15.

CHAPTER FIVE

MISSIONS AND EDUCATION

(1814-1821)

About the year 1814, a new era was inaugurated in the history of the Baptists of the United States. In that year a national missionary convention was organized within the denomination. During the years which followed, the Baptists were becoming more aware of possibilities for aggressive evangelization in the western part of America and on other continents. Effective work of this kind demanded organization and money. Within twenty years many new agencies were created for various purposes connected with the objective of evangelizing the world. Domestic and foreign missionary societies were founded. Tract societies, Sunday Schools, colleges, seminaries, and religious periodicals began to be utilized towards the expansion and development of the denomination.

It was not unnatural that opposition to the new movements should arise, just as similar antagonism had been aroused in England a short while before. During the two decades after 1814, there were two opposing tendencies at work. On the one hand, there was an aggressive spirit, which favored the utilization of new methods to spread the Baptist message. On the other hand, there was a conservative spirit which looked askance upon all innovations. The opposition developed mainly in frontier and rural areas,

where education and culture had made little impact. In some states the former spirit carried the day. In others, like Maryland, the old order succeeded in almost stifling the new movements. The conflict was not settled until 1836, when the triumph of the conservative spirit in the latter state drew most of the churches away from the main currents of the denomination.

Hostility to the new movements did not attain full growth immediately. Although there was some suspicion of them from the outset, yet many were perplexed as to what stand to take with regard to them. It took about twenty years for the opposition in the East to become crystallized. By 1836, the issue had become clear-cut, and all Baptists were compelled to take a definite stand. In this chapter, the beginnings of the new movements will be discussed, the early attitudes of the Maryland Baptists will be noted, and the first signs of hostility will be pointed out.

Prior to 1814, there was no real opposition to missions among the Baptists, for there was hardly any organized missionary endeavor. There had been a few local organizations for the purpose of promoting domestic missions in America and the foreign missions of English Baptists.¹ Also, there had been little opposition to ministerial education, as there were no Baptist seminaries and only one Baptist

¹ A. H. Newman, op. cit., pp. 384-187.

college in the United States.² However, as missions and education came to take a prominent place in the interests of the denomination, it was natural that antagonism should develop.

In the United States, the Congregationalists took the lead in foreign missionary endeavor. The Baptists began to take a more active interest in 1813, when two Congregationalist missionaries, Adoniram Judson and Luther Rice, became Baptists while en route to India.³ Since the Baptists in America had no missionary organization to support them in India, it was decided that Rice should return to America to persuade the Baptists to sponsor their work. Upon his return, Rice traveled throughout the states on the Atlantic seaboard with a proposal that a missionary convention be formed. His efforts culminated, in 1814, in the organization of the General Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions (popularly known as the Triennial Convention).⁴

Prior to that time, Maryland Baptists had not been entirely unaffected by the earlier currents of domestic and foreign missionary interest, which had been stimulated by the sending of William Carey to India from England. Through the Philadelphia Association, the First Baptist Church of

² Rhode Island College (now Brown University) had been founded in 1764. Ibid., pp. 261-262.

³ Ibid., pp. 388-391.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 391-393.

Baltimore had, in 1792, given a small sum "for the purpose of spreading the gospell [sic] in the western parts of the country."⁵ In 1807, Second Baltimore had invited the First Church to participate in a weekly prayer meeting in behalf of domestic and foreign missions.⁶ After learning of Rice's proposal for a general missionary convention among the Baptists, these two churches had united to form a Baltimore Missionary Society in 1813.⁷ When Luther Rice visited Baltimore, he received a cordial reception, and First Church showed its interest by taking an offering for his work.⁸

Of the thirty-three founders of the Triennial Convention, three were from Maryland and the District of Columbia. One of these was Lewis Richards, pastor of First Baltimore.⁹ Another was Thomas Brooke, who lived in Baltimore, but who was not a pastor at the time.¹⁰ The third was Burgess Allison, who was residing in Washington, having been compelled to retire from the active ministry because of ill health.¹¹

⁵ Minutes, First Baltimore, Oct. 15, 1792.

⁶ Minutes, Second Baltimore, Dec. 21, 1807; Jan., 1808.

⁷ Ibid., Nov. 22, Dec. 20, 1813; Minutes, First Baltimore, Nov. 29, 1813.

⁸ J. B. Taylor, Memoir of Rev. Luther Rice, p. 132. And Minutes, First Baltimore, April 26, 1814.

⁹ Missionary Jubilee, pp. 129-130.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 130.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 114-115.

However, there were none from the Salisbury Association or from any of the rural churches of Maryland.¹²

After the organization of the Triennial Convention, Rice sent letters to the various Associations in the United States, asking them to form auxiliary societies¹³ and to take annual collections for the cause of foreign missions. The Baltimore Association received one of these letters in 1814, and the delegates did not know just what action to take with regard to it. Consequently, it was voted that, "This Association deem it proper to postpone the consideration thereof until next year. . . . We request Brother Richards to answer Brother Rice accordingly."¹⁴ The next year, there was evidently little enthusiasm for the suggested project, for it was resolved, "That the farther [sic] consideration of Brother Rice's letter, mentioned in . . . last year's minutes, be postponed indefinitely."¹⁵

The disposition of Rice's letter may have been due to a definite opposition to missions, but there is nothing to indicate than any real opposition to missionary activity, per se, had developed at that early date. Probably there were many who felt that Baptist work was so weak in Maryland that

¹² Ibid., pp. 108-138. (Biographical sketches of founders.)

¹³ Auxiliary societies were required to contribute at least \$100.00 per year.

¹⁴ Min., BBA, 1814, pp. 4-5.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1815, p. 3.

it would not be justifiable to send money to support work in other places.¹⁶ That there was no strong opposition to the idea of missions is apparent from the fact that, in 1816, the Baltimore Association organized a Domestic Missionary Society for the purpose of furthering work within the bounds of the state.¹⁷

The first inkling of opposition to the new movements appeared in 1818, and it was only a faint rumble of suspicion. In that year, the Association received with approval the Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Triennial Convention. However, the Corresponding Letter of the Association for the same year contained a note of warning against Arminian tendencies. Referring to the efforts which were being made to spread the gospel, the Letter stated:¹⁸

But while we were welcoming these grateful ideas, let us not neglect to guard against those errors now prevailing, not only among avowed Arminians. . . . but among such as profess to hold the doctrines of the gospel; who, like Joab, are saying, "Art thou in health, my brother?" while beneath the mantle is concealed a dagger to stab the very vitals of truth. . . .

These words may not be very significant, but they seem to indicate that a suspicion was lurking in some minds that

¹⁶ J^oH. Jones stated that he knew of no early opposition to missions, but that there were some who felt that the concerns of their own territory were more important. J. H. Jones, op. cit., p. 29.

¹⁷ Min., BBA, 1816, p. 3.

¹⁸ Ibid., 1818, p. 7.

the new movements might have a tinge of doctrinal heterodoxy.

There was some interest in foreign missions among the Maryland Baptists in these years, but it was confined largely to Baltimore and Washington. Two Foreign Missionary Societies had been formed within the bounds of the Baltimore Association. These two societies, one in Baltimore and the other in Washington, made substantial contributions to the Triennial Convention for a few years.¹⁹ The only ministers of the Association, who took an active interest in the work of the Convention, were from these cities.²⁰ In the Salisbury Association, a collection was taken for foreign missions in 1817, but it does not seem that there was ever sufficient interest to organize a foreign missionary society.²¹ No record has been found of any of the persons from the rural churches ever attending any of the sessions of the Convention or otherwise exhibiting any interest in its work.

Meanwhile, the Triennial Convention was expanding its purposes. By 1817, its scope of activities had come to include Domestic Missions and education. In both of these mat-

¹⁹ Proceedings of the Baptist General Convention For Missionary Purposes, 1814, pp. 20 and 35; also for the years following.

²⁰ The ministers who took part in the work of the Convention were Lewis Richards and John Healey, from Baltimore; Obadiah Brown and Spencer H. Cone were from Washington; there were also two laymen from Washington, Enoch Reynolds and Joseph Gibson. Ibid., 1814-1821, passim.

²¹ Ibid., 1815, p. 23; 1816, p. 84. A list of the member societies appears each year, but there were none from the Salisbury Association.

ters, Luther Rice was the leading figure. He considered that two requirements for the progress of foreign missions were the education of ministers and the evangelization of the home base. In accord with suggestions made by him, the Convention altered its Constitution in 1817 to include domestic missions and education in its program.²²

The authorization of the Board to promote education led to the establishment of Columbian College.²³ A site in the District of Columbia was selected by Rice and a few Washington Baptists.²⁴ The next step was to raise funds, but in this matter little response was elicited from the Baptists of Maryland.²⁵ In September, 1821, the theological school was opened, and the college department began operation in the following January. By 1823, there were sixty students enrolled in the institution.²⁶

The Maryland Baptists seemed almost oblivious of the new educational institution, which was taking shape within

²² A. H. Newman, op. cit., pp. 395-397.

²³ Now called George Washington University.

²⁴ These were O. B. Brown, S. H. Cone, and Enoch Reynolds. J. B. Taylor, op. cit., pp. 169-170.

²⁵ A list of contributors is contained in the Proceedings of the Baptist General Convention, pp. 454-455.

²⁶ J. B. Taylor, op. cit., pp. 171-173. (Contains an account of the beginnings of Columbian College.)

the bounds of the Baltimore Association. It would be expected that there would be some mention of the school which was being launched. However, the Minutes of the Association contain no reference to it prior to 1836. A few individuals contributed small sums towards the purchase of a lot and the erection of buildings.²⁷ These facts, the failure to mention the school in the Associational meetings and the small contributions, seem to be a good indication of indifference, or of hostility towards the college.

As denominational concern for missions and education increased, opposition began to manifest itself in Maryland. Prior to 1821, there does not seem to have been any open criticism of these things from the Maryland Baptists. However, the Domestic Mission Society was not receiving much support from the majority of the churches. In 1819, the Constitution of that Society was changed, with an intent of putting some pressure upon delinquent churches. Instead of allowing all of the churches in the Association to be members of the Society, it was decided that only those which contributed could belong to it.²⁸ This move aroused some opposition, and several of the churches debated whether to con-

²⁷ Proceedings of the Baptist General Convention, pp. 454-455, contains a list of contributors. This shows that \$214.00 was given by Maryland Baptists, the bulk of which came from Baltimore. Members of only one rural church made contributions, and their interest probably grew out of the fact that one of its members, J. H. Jones, had entered the college.

²⁸ Min., BBA, 1819, p. 4.

tinue as members of it.²⁹ In 1821, two churches withdrew from the Association because of hostility to missions and education.³⁰ This was the first overt antagonism that has been discovered. As yet, the other churches had not developed the spirit of opposition which characterized most of them later.

The growth of the churches of the Baltimore Association was not very large during the period from 1814-1821. The peak strength of the body was reached in 1819, when there were 21 churches with 1,362 members.³¹ The withdrawal of 8 churches in 1820 and 1821 marked the beginning of a decline, which culminated in the disruption of the Association in 1836. Two of the eight churches, Alexandria and First Washington, left the body as a result of a quarrel between the former church and First Baltimore.³² Four churches, which were located in

²⁹ Minutes, Gunpowder Church, Dec. 1821; Minutes, Second Washington, April 13, Dec. 14, 1821; and Minutes, Upper Seneca, Aug. 29, 1821.

³⁰ The Old Seneca and Hammond's Branch Churches withdrew from the Association without affiliating with any other body. (Min., BBA, 1821). Jones attributed their action to an opposition to missions. He states that their pastor, Plummer Waters, was influenced by a pamphlet written by Henry Holcombe (A Reply to. . . the Philadelphia Association), which denounced Rice, Staughton, and other leaders of the Triennial Convention. (J. H. Jones, op. cit., pp. 29-30).

There is further evidence that this was the case in the fact that some of the members of the Old Seneca Church withdrew to form a new church in the same year. The members declared that one reason for this move was that: "His [Plummer Waters] preaching against the missionary cause. . . , And charging the Theological Institution with having its origin in Hell, and of raising its preachers for the devil." (Minutes, Rockville Church, Aug. 19, 1821).

³¹ Min., BBA, 1820, p. 3.

³² Ibid., 1819, pp. 3-4; 1820, p. 4. J. H. Jones, op. cit., p. 14.

Pennsylvania, found it more convenient to become connected with an Association in their own state.³³ The other two were those already mentioned as having withdrawn as a result of their hostility to missions.

TABLE V. Churches in the Baltimore Baptist Association, in 1819.³⁴

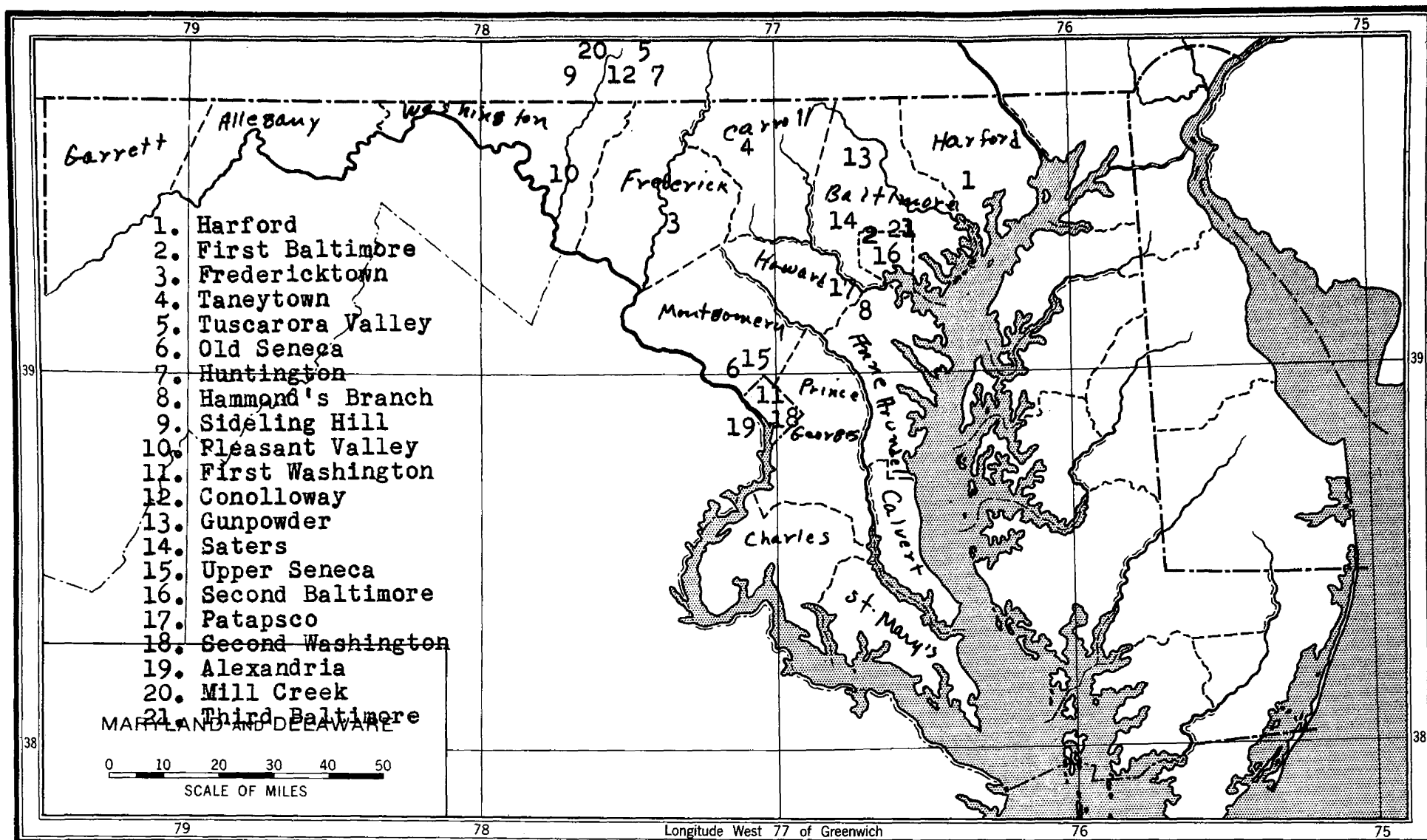
| Churches | Date of Organization | Pastor | Meeting Sundays |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Harford | 1754 | | 1st & 2d |
| First Baltimore | 1785 | E. J. Reis | Every |
| Frederick Town | 1773 | Plummer Waters | 2d |
| Taney Town | 1792 | | Uncertain |
| Tuscarora Valley (Pa.) | 1792 | | Uncertain |
| Old Seneca | 1773 | Plummer Waters | 4th |
| Huntington (Pa.) | | | Uncertain |
| Hammond's Branch | 1793 | Plummer Waters | 1st & 3d |
| Sideling Hill (Pa) | 1789 | Thos. Runyon | Uncertain |
| Pleasant Valley | 1802 | Francis Moore | 1st & 3d |
| First Washington | 1802 | Obadiah Brown | Every |
| Conolloyway (Pa.) | 1804 | M. Starr | 3d |
| Gunpowder | 1806 | | Uncertain |
| Saters | 1806 | George Grice | 3d |
| Upper Seneca | 1806 | Henry Welch | 1st |
| Second Baltimore | 1797 | John Healey | Every |
| Patapsco | 1810 | Edward Choat | 3d |
| Second Washington | 1810 | Thos. Barton | Every |
| Alexandria (Va.) | 1813 | S. H. Cone | Every |
| Mill Creek (Pa.) | 1817 | | Uncertain |
| Third Baltimore | 1818 | Jas. Osbourn | Every |
| | | John Welch | |
| | | Wm. Wilson | |

By 1821, the movement toward the development of missionary organizations and of ministerial education had gained considerable momentum throughout the nation. Mary-

³³ Tuscarora Valley, Huntington, Sideling Hill, and Mill Creek Churches, Min., BBA, 1821.

³⁴ Ibid., 1819, p. 2.

land had gone along rather half-heartedly with the trend. Only one minister, so far as has been found, had condemned the missionary organizations and theological schools in a forthright manner. Perhaps a few others shared his feelings, but as a whole, the Maryland Baptists had not become definitely committed to the anti-missionary position by that time. The small Baltimore Baptist Association, weakened by the loss of more than a third of its churches and members, had only 13 churches with about 800 members in 1821. The ensuing period was one of further decline and was a prelude to the anti-missionary split of 1836.



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Location of Churches in the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1819

CHAPTER SIX

A GROWING SPIRIT OF CONSERVATISM

(1822-1831)

The attitudes of the Maryland Baptists towards missions and education were being crystallized during the years between 1822 and 1831. As new agencies were adopted by the denomination, the Maryland churches adopted a defensive attitude towards the "effortist" movement.¹ The ill-feeling and suspicion bred by the conflict led to numerous disputes within and between churches. As a result, so much energy was dissipated in wrangling that there was little opportunity for growth. Beginning the period with 15 churches and 823 members, the Baltimore Association had only 19 churches with 764 members at its close.² In the Salisbury Association, the same opposing tendencies were at work. Before the end of the period under consideration, all of the churches of the latter body had seceded from the main wing of the denomination over the issue of "effortism."

Although seven new churches came into the Association

¹ The conservative spirit was not directed against missions alone, but against all of the new agencies, which had been created by the denomination to further its work. The crux of the issue was whether or not God needed the aid of human efforts to accomplish His purposes. Hence, the terms "effortism" and "anti-effortism" were used to designate the two parties. The terms "anti-effort" and "anti-missionary" are used synonymously.

² Two new churches were added in 1822, bringing the total to fifteen. Min., BBA, 1822, pp. 2-3. And ibid., 1831, p. 2. (See Table VI, p. 73).

during these years, they were not the products of an aggressive spirit of evangelism. In almost every case, these new churches were brought into being as a result of dissension in the older churches. In Washington, the Central and the Shiloh Churches were formed in the 1820's by members of the First and Second Churches, respectively.³ In Baltimore, the Ebenezer Church was constituted in 1822, as a result of disturbances in the First Church of that city.⁴ Mount Zion Church, Baltimore, was begun in 1830.⁵ The Bethel Church (later called the Rockville Church), which came into the Association in 1822, had been organized as a protest against the anti-missionary spirit of Old Seneca.⁶ The Warren and Black Rock Churches, both in Baltimore County, were organized by anti-effort leaders.⁷

³ Andrew Rothwell, History of Baptist Institutions in the District of Columbia, pp. 12, 15-16.

⁴ First Baltimore began to be disturbed by a series of doctrinal difficulties about 1820. The first of these, started over differences of opinion regarding a "general atonement" (Arminianism), led to the resignation of E. J. Reis, the pastor. A number of the members left with him to form the Ebenezer Church. (Minutes, First Baltimore, May 4, 1819; May 15, 1820; and 1820-1822, passim). The troubles did not end with the resignation of Reis. In 1824, the church was excluded from the Baltimore Association on a charge of heterodoxy. The growth of the church was virtually halted for the next ten years. (Ibid., April 19, 1822; April 18, Aug. 2., 22, 1823; Jan. 24, 1824 and the following years to 1834, passim).

⁵ J. H. Jones, op. cit., p. 20. Min., BBA, 1831, p. 3.

⁶ Supra, p. 62, footnote 30.

⁷ The pastors of these churches were all unquestionably linked with the anti-effortist party.

During the period being considered, the denomination as a whole was enlarging its educational and missionary activities. While its efforts were met by opposition from some quarters, the Baptists in most of the states were broadening their programs and starting new agencies, which were related to missions, evangelism, and education. Many new auxiliary missionary societies of the Triennial Convention were started in nearly every state. Several Baptist colleges had been founded by 1831, and a few Baptist periodicals had been launched. Also, a Tract Society had been organized for the purpose of publishing Baptist literature. Maryland Baptists were little affected by these movements, except as their opposition was strengthened by them.

Soon after the inception of the Triennial Convention in 1814, a member missionary society had been begun in Baltimore.⁸ By 1823, this had gone out of existence. Only one other attempt to organize such an agency was made in the state before 1836. That one was started at Rockville, in 1823, and it was represented by Joseph H. Jones at the session of the convention in that year.⁹ In Washington, there were seven such societies in 1823; and John Healey and Lewis Richards, both of Baltimore, represented one of these at the Convention held in that year.¹⁰ Both of these men served

⁸ Supra, pp. 59.

⁹ Proceedings of the Baptist General Convention, 1823, p. 419.

¹⁰ Ibid., 1823, p. 419.

on the Board of Managers for the following Triennium.¹¹ However, in 1826, and thereafter, there were no delegates from Maryland.¹²

A similar lack of interest was manifested towards Columbian College. Having started out with great promise in 1821, the school had soon become involved in the throes of financial difficulties. The financial backing of the Triennial Convention was cut off from the college in 1826, and the institution had a struggle to maintain an existence.¹³ The Maryland Baptists did practically nothing to aid the school during these years. They neither gave money for its support, nor did they send their children to it.¹⁴ Only one of the Maryland Baptist ministers attended there, and he remained for only one year.¹⁵ The rest of the preachers, with very few exceptions, looked askance at the literary and theological education of ministers. Having had no such training themselves, they did not see the need of it for others. Most of the Baptists of Maryland could not afford to send their children to college. Besides, to require ministers to be

¹¹ Ibid., 1823, p. 424.

²² Ibid., 1826-1832, passim.

¹³ For an account of the early difficulties of the school, see J. B. Taylor, op. cit., p. 179.

¹⁴ Between 1821 and 1836, there were only 15 graduates from Maryland, and it is not certain that all of these were from Baptist families. Historical Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates of the Columbian University, 1821-1876, pp. 3-9.

¹⁵ This was Joseph H. Jones.

educated seemed to be a reflection upon the power and wisdom of God. If He could not endow those whom He called to the ministry with proper gifts and qualifications, then He must be lacking either in power or wisdom.¹⁶

Receiving practically no support from Maryland, the college also gradually lost the financial assistance of most other states. The Baptists in several states had established educational institutions of their own, towards which they naturally felt more responsible than to Columbian College.¹⁷ This was the only Baptist school in, or near, the Baltimore Association, and it was the logical one to receive the support of the churches of that body.

Another interest which was developing among the Baptists at this time was the establishment of religious periodicals. In these, the Maryland Baptists took little interest either. The Columbian Star began to be published at Washington in 1822.¹⁸ The Latter Day Luminary, a periodical devoted to Baptist missions, was also published in Washington for several years.¹⁹ The Virginia Baptists established

¹⁶ For the attitude of Maryland Baptists to education, see the quotation on page 72. Also the "Black Rock Declaration" quoted in chapter 7.

¹⁷ The Maine Baptists started Waterville College (now Colby) in 1820. Hamilton (now Colgate) in N. Y., 1820; Furman in S. C., 1826; Georgetown in Ky., 1829; Richmond College in Va., 1832; Mercer in Ga., 1832. Several others in the next ten years. A. H. Newman, op. cit., pp. 408-408-418.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 400.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 400.

a weekly religious periodical, the Religious Herald, in 1828. A Baltimore printer, William Sands, moved to Richmond to become its editor.²⁰ This was about as close as the Maryland Baptists came to having any connection with a religious periodical in this period. In general, they disapproved of them; at best, they were too indifferent to subscribe to them.²¹

The American Baptist Tract Society was another agency of the denomination, which was started in this period. The Maryland Baptists furnished the man who made the suggestion, which led to its establishment, but they took little part in maintaining its work. This was one of the things to which they soon expressed their opposition.²² The idea of a Baptist Tract Society emanated from Noah Davis, of Salisbury, Maryland.²³ Later, when the headquarters of the society was moved from Washington to Philadelphia, Noah Davis became its General Agent.²⁴

While such movements were making headway among the

²⁰ Thomas Armitage, History of the Baptists, p. 883.

²¹ For example, the American Baptist Missionary Magazine, a national journal, had agents in all but three of the seaboard states in the 1820's; one of these three was Maryland. Proceedings of the Baptist General Convention, 1820-1831, passim.

²² See the "Black Rock Declaration" in chapter 7.

²³ A. H. Newman, op. cit., pp. 426-427.

²⁴ A sketch of the life of Noah Davis is contained in J. L. Burrows, Baptist Register, 1852.

Baptists in nearly all of the eastern states, the Maryland Baptists were formulating their objections to them. In reacting against missions, education, and allied agencies, they became more conservative in their theology. More and more their Corresponding and Circular Letters dealt with theological distinctions between Calvinism and Arminianism. For example, the Circular Letter of 1823 was an exposition of "God's effectual calling of a sinner to repentance."²⁵ In 1825, it was noted that some members of the Association were drifting into new theological positions, and it was: "Resolved, That the 9th article of the constitution be printed upon the first page of our minutes."²⁶ In 1830, the Corresponding Letter warned of encroaching error:²⁷

It would seem the "latter day" is come when "some shall depart from the faith," and therefore the exhortation should be well attended to by the ministers of Christ, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine."

These undercurrents of dissatisfaction with the theological trends of the day were made more explicit in 1831. The Circular Letter of that year deplored doctrinal drifting, and the target of its complaints was the belief in a general atonement. Some quotations from the Letter, which was approved

²⁵ This term emphasized the inability of man to recognize his need of God, without divine interposition. Min., BBA, 1823, pp. 6-8.

²⁶ Ibid., 1825, p. 5. Article 9 was their statement of theology. It stressed essentially Calvinistic points such as "the elect" and "efficacious grace," by putting them in italics.

²⁷ Ibid., 1830, p. 11.

without amendment, follow:²⁸

We must, therefore, candidly acknowledge, beloved brethren, there is no sentiment that has a more deleterious effect on the church of God than an indefinite or general atonement. . . .

. . . . Thus to invite all characters, indiscriminately, however, it may seem to savor of zeal for God or love to the souls of men, we are persuaded is delusive in its consequences and unwarranted by the word of God.

On the behalf of these principles we are also called to view the march of ~~The~~ Human Intellect. . . . Human wisdom is no help to the attainment of divine knowledge. . . . The Lord Jesus chose twelve illiterate men to go into all the world and preach the glorious mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. If he had needed the services of the learned and wise, the hearts of all were in his hands, and he could have "turned them as rivers of waters." . . . Let us therefore, beloved brethren, while others are seeking the wisdom of this world that cometh to naught, look up to the Great Head of the Church. . . . cleaving to the word of the Lord, and rejecting the inventions of men, however plausible they may appear.

On the Eastern Shore, the Baptists were also developing an opposition to the direction which was being taken by the denomination at large. During the first few years after the organization of the Triennial Convention, there was no sign of hostility. Although no missionary society connected with the Convention was organized, the churches did form a Domestic Missionary Society for work in their own

²⁸ Min., BBA, 1831, pp. 5-9.

section. Gradually, however, hostility to the missionary enterprise developed. In 1828, eight years before the final disruption of the Baltimore Association, the anti-effortist party brought the conflict to a head in the Salisbury Association. All of the churches of that body went with the side which was opposed to missions and ministerial education. Not for another twenty years was there a church on the eastern Shore, which was connected with the main body of the Baptists.²⁹

TABLE VI. Churches in the Baltimore Association, 1831.³⁰

| Church | Pastor | Members |
|------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| Harford | Thomas Poteet, Wm. Wilson | 62 |
| Frederick Town | Joseph H. Jones | 19 |
| Tuscarora Valley | | 18 |
| Taney Town | Thomas Leaman | 16 |
| Pleasant Valley | Joseph H. Jones | 36 |
| Gunpowder | Thomas Leaman | 42 |
| Saters | Thomas Poteet | 12 |
| Upper Seneca | Joseph H. Jones | 38 |
| 2d Baltimore | John Healey | 139 |
| Bethel | | 18 |
| Patapsco | Edward Choat | 19 |
| 2d Washington | | 90 |
| Ebenezer | E. J. Reis | 93 |
| *3d Baltimore | | |
| Warren | William Brinkett | 22 |
| Central, Wn. | Stephens Woolford | 25 |
| Black Rock | Edward Choat, Eli Scott | 33 |
| | Thomas Poteet | |
| Mt. Zion | Thomas Burchell | 60 |
| Shiloh, Wn. | Charles Polkinhorn | 22 |
| | | <u>764</u> |

* No report for this year.

²⁹ The information regarding the Eastern Shore is based on a series of articles by Franklin Wilson, which appeared in the True Union, July 21, 28, and Aug. 4, 1859.

³⁰ Min., BBA, 1831.

CHAPTER SEVEN

"BLACK-ROCKISM"

(1832-1836)

In the Baltimore Association, the years between 1832 and 1836 marked the final phase of the contest over missions and education. During the opening years of the American Baptist missionary movement, there was little sign of opposition on the part of the Maryland Baptists. While no churches outside of Baltimore and Washington showed much interest in the work of the Triennial Convention, yet no open objections seem to have been expressed prior to 1821. For a decade thereafter, occasional protests were made against theological changes, which appeared to be implicit in the new movements. During this time the Maryland churches were developing their attitudes toward the denominational trends, and the objections to the innovations were being formulated more clearly. With the adoption of the Black Rock Declaration in 1832, a campaign was launched to win over as many adherents to anti-missionism as possible. The test of strength came at the Associational meeting of 1836. At that time the conservative party won the day, and the Baltimore Association severed its ties with the main wing of the denomination.

¹ This term was applied to the anti-missionary movement in Maryland, because of the "Declaration" drawn up at the Black Rock Church in 1832, and because the final break was made during the session of the Association which was held there in 1836. (For the location of the Black Rock Church, see the map at the end of this chapter.)

The anti-missionary movement in Maryland was not an isolated phenomenon. It was part of a widespread protest which affected the Baptists in nearly all of the states, although it was strongest in the West and the South. This opposition to missions and ministerial education developed earlier in the West than in the East.² In order to see the Maryland situation in its proper setting, it is necessary to sketch the beginnings and progress of the anti-missionary movement.

The earliest protest seems to have come from the pen of John Taylor, a Kentucky preacher, in 1819. In his pamphlet,³ he lamented that the denomination seemed to be departing from the old paths. In his lengthy complaint, he stated: "The deadly evil I have in view, is under the epithets or appellations of Missionary Boards, Conventions, Societies, and Theological Schools. . . ." The chief grounds of his objections appear to have been the threat of organization to the liberty of the churches, the multiplied appeals for money, and the claims which were being made for the necessity of having educated ministers. All of these things, he believed, were inconsistent with the older practices of the denomination.

² For an account of the beginnings of this movement in the West, see: William W. Sweet, "Rise of the Anti-Mission Baptists," Religion on the American Frontier; the Baptists, 1783-1830, pp. 58-76.

³ John Taylor, Thoughts on Missions, 1819.

Another of the foremost leaders of anti-missionism in the West was Daniel Parker. In 1820, he published a brochure, in which he denounced missions and education of ministers in much the same vein as Taylor had. It seemed to him that mission boards tended to destroy the democratic nature of the Baptist churches. He also objected to the financial appeals made by the mission Board. The gist of his protest is contained in the following quotation:⁴

We stand opposed to the mission plan in every point and part where it interferes, or is connected with the ministry, either in depending on the church to give them a call, or, seminaries of learning to qualify them to preach, or an established fund for the preacher to look back upon for a support, and when the board assumes the authority to appoint the fields of their labor, we believe they sin in attempting a work that alone belongs to the Divine Being.

The influence of these men had a telling effect upon the Baptists of Kentucky and Illinois. In 1819, the Licking Association in Kentucky declared itself out of the General Union of the Baptists in Kentucky. The next year it voted to approve John Taylor's pamphlet instead of a circular from the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions.⁵ By 1830, several of the Kentucky Associations had declared themselves in opposition to missions.⁶ The Wabash Association, which included churches in Indiana and Illinois, passed an anti-mission

⁴ Daniel Parker, A Public Address to the Baptist Society, 1820.

⁵ J. H. Spencer, A History of Kentucky Baptists, Vol. I, p. 609.

⁶ Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 619-621.

resolution in 1819.⁷ By 1830, all but one of the nine Illinois Associations were opposed to missions.⁸ The anti-missionary movement continued in the West for a long time, but the climax had been reached in nearly every state by 1846. At that date all of the western states had fairly large contingents of anti-missionary Baptists.⁹

TABLE VII. Distribution of Anti-Mission Baptists, 1846.¹⁰

| States | Members | States | Members |
|----------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| New England | 245 | Mississippi | 1,619 |
| New York | 964 | Louisiana | 80 |
| New Jersey | 246 | Texas | 132 |
| Pennsylvania | 868 | Arkansas | 517 |
| Delaware | 334 | Tennessee | 10,186 |
| Maryland | 404 | Kentucky | 7,085 |
| Virginia | 4,461 | Ohio | 3,456 |
| North Carolina | 5,185 | Indiana | 3,870 |
| South Carolina | 289 | Illinois | 4,382 |
| Georgia | 11,603 | Missouri | 4,336 |
| Florida | 509 | Iowa | 189 |
| Alabama | 6,417 | | |

In the East, open pronouncements against missions began in the late 1820's. The Kehukee Association in North Carolina passed a resolution in 1827 "to discard all Missionary Societies, Bible Societies, and Theological Institutions."¹¹ During the ten years following this action,

⁷ Daniel Parker was a minister in this Association.

⁸ Henry Sheets, Who Are the Primitive Baptists? p. 15.

⁹ See Table VII, p. 77.

¹⁰ W. W. Sweet, op. cit., p. 66.

¹¹ Joseph Biggs, A Concise History of the Kehukee Association, p. 241.

numerous Associations in the eastern states declared their opposition to missions and ministerial education. After the action of the Kehukee Association in 1827, the anti-missionary movement in the southern states was called "Kehukeeism."¹²

The year 1832 marked a milestone in the development of the anti-missionary spirit of the Baltimore Baptist Association. When the Association met in that year, apparently nothing unusual was expected to occur.¹³ The only incident of note was the drawing up of a reply to an article, which had appeared in the Religious Herald, a Baptist weekly published at Richmond. This article had described the Maryland Baptist ministers as follows:¹⁴

Many of the ministering brethren in this [the Baltimore] Association do not believe that it is their duty to address the unconverted, or exhort sinners to repentance; they pass them by altogether. The great theme of their sermons is, the many valuable and glorious privileges of the Elect; who according to their doctrine, believe against their will, and are kept in the way of righteousness without effort.

In the Circular Letter of the Association, a reply was made to the above assertions.¹⁵ This reply conceded that the ministers of Maryland did not believe in exhorting sinners to repent as some others did. It maintained that their

¹² Hassall, Church of God, p. 736.

¹³ Jones, who was present, says: "All was peace and quiet, but alas! it was only the delusive calm that precedes the storm." J. H. Jones, op. cit., p. 21.

¹⁴ Religious Herald, July 22, 1831.

¹⁵ Min., BBA, 1832, pp. 6-10.

detractors, who believed in holding revivals, were Arminian in theology.¹⁶ It was admitted that the main theme of sermons was "the many valuable and glorious privileges of the elect." As to the statement regarding their belief that people were made to believe against their will, the writers declared that this was a perversion of their predestinarian views. The Letter concluded by advising the editors of the Religious Herald to read the Scriptures, which "are preferable to a thousand Religious Herald's. . . ."

The article just referred to is significant, because it shows how the Maryland Baptist preachers were regarded by neighboring Baptists. The estimate was probably a fair characterization of their preaching and beliefs. In reacting against what was regarded as doctrinal error, these Baptists had swung to an extreme Calvinistic position. So often is the phrase "contend earnestly for the faith" found in the Minutes of the Baltimore Association, that it may be accepted as a major emphasis of their thinking. Believing that the denomination as a whole had veered away from its original principles, the Maryland Baptists had attempted to erect bulwarks that would keep error from flooding their own territory. Gradually they came to oppose any agency or method which implied that God was dependent upon human efforts to

¹⁶ Revivals were among the things opposed by the anti-effort party. See the reference to protracted revival meetings in the Black Rock Declaration quoted later in this chapter.

accomplish His purposes.

At the close of the Associational meeting in 1832, the messengers held a special meeting to "consult about the present state of the cause of Christ." At that time, Edmund J. Reis made a brief address, in which he expressed his delight that the eyes of the brethren had been opened to see the evils that had come upon them. He was glad that they were now ready to oppose "all those inventions of men, such as missionary societies, Bible and tract societies, Sunday Schools, and other progeny of Arminianism." Joseph H. Jones then stated that, if the purpose of the meeting had been correctly interpreted by Reis, he did not wish to have any part in its proceedings. Two other ministers, Samuel Trott and Thomas Barton, arose to assure him that the aim of the meeting had been misconstrued.¹⁷

If there had been any intention of taking further action, it was halted by this unexpected protest. Nothing more was done at this time, except to appoint a time for an extra-Associational meeting to convene at the Black Rock Church in September. One other thing was done. Probably not in the meeting itself, but in an informal way, those who were opposed to missions laid plans for an official organ, which would serve to propagate their anti-mission views. Conse-

¹⁷ The foregoing paragraph is based upon the account of the meeting which is contained in J. J. Jones, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

quently, in August of the same year, Gilbert Beebe began to edit a new periodical, The Signs of the Times, which was devoted to the Old School Baptist cause.¹⁸

The appointed meeting at Black Rock was announced in the pages of the Signs of the Times, along with an invitation to "all ministering brethren distinguished by the name 'Old School Baptists,' so called in different parts of the United States."¹⁹ From this gathering there was issued the "Black Rock Declaration" a manifesto which set forth the opinions of the Old School Baptists in a comprehensive and lucid way.

In this document, tract societies, Sunday Schools, the Bible Society, missions, denominational colleges, theological seminaries, and revival meetings were denounced. The arguments against these things were that they were unscriptural, that they led to too much centralization of authority, and that they required too much financial support. Some excerpts from the length Declaration follow:²⁰

We will notice severally, the claims of the principal of these modern inventions, and state some of our objections to them. . . .

We commence with the Tract Societies. These

¹⁸ Beebe preached for a time in Baltimore. See: R. H. Pittman, Biographical History . . . of the Old School Baptist Ministers, p. 30. So influential was this man that "Beebeism" was often used as a synonym for anti-missionism in Maryland.

¹⁹ Signs of the Times, Aug. 8, 1832. ("Old School" was another designation for the anti-mission Baptists.)

²⁰ Ibid., Nov. 28, 1832.

claim to be extensively useful. Tracts claim their thousands converted. . . . These claims represent tracts as possessing in these respects a superiority over the Bible, and over. . . . the gospel ministry, which is charging the GREAT I AM with a deficiency of wisdom. . . .

Sunday Schools come next under our consideration. . . . First because these, as well as the pretensions of the Tract Societies are grounded upon the notion, that conversion or regeneration is produced by impressions made upon the natural mind, by means of religious sentiments instilled into it; and if the Holy Ghost is allowed to be at all concerned in the thing, it is in a way which implies his being somehow blended with the instruction, or necessarily attendant upon it; all of which we know to be wrong.

Secondly: because such schools were never established by the Apostles. . . . We, therefore believe that if these schools were of God, we should find some account of them in the New Testament.

.
That the Bible Society, whether we consider its monied foundation for membership, and directorship, and its hoarding of funds, in its blending together all distinctions between the world and the church, or in its concentration of power, is an institution never contemplated by the Lord Jesus Christ as connected with his kingdom. . . .

.
We will now call your attention to the subject of missions.

First. Object to the financial requirements for membership.

Second. In reference to ministerial support, the Gospel order is to extend support to them who preach the Gospel. But the mission plan is to hire persons to preach. . . . But the Mission Boards exclude all from participation in the benefit of their funds who do not come under their direction and own their authority. . . . And what is more, these Boards so scour every hole and corner to scrape up money for their funds, that the people think they have nothing left to give a preacher who may come among them. . . .

.
In speaking of colleges, we wish it to be distinctly understood, that it is not to colleges, or collegiate education, as such, that we have any objection. . . . But we

object to sectarian Colleges, as such. The idea of a Baptist College. . . . necessarily implies that our distinct views of church government, of gospel doctrines, and gospel ordinances, are connected with human sciences, a principle which we cannot admit.

. . . . We decidedly object to persons, after professing to have been called of the Lord to preach his gospel, going to a college or academy to fit themselves for that service. -- 1st. Because we believe that Christ possesses perfect knowledge of his own purposes, and of the proper instruments by which to accomplish them. If he has occasion for a man of science, He having power over all flesh will so order it that the individual shall obtain the requisite learning before he calls him to his service, as was the case with Saul of Tarsus. . . . For should Christ call a person to labour in the gospel field, who was unqualified for the work assigned him, it would manifest him to be deficient in knowledge relating to the proper instruments to employ, or defective in the power to provide them.

As to Theological Schools, we shall at present content ourselves with saying that they are a reflection upon the Holy Ghost, who is engaged according to the promise of the Great Head of the Church, to lead the disciples into all truth. Also, that in every age. . . . they have been a real pest to the church of Christ. Of this we could produce abundant proof, did the limits of our address admit their insertion.

We now pass to the last item which we think it necessary particularly to notice, viz. Four Day Protracted Meetings. . . . But these meetings are got up, either from the purpose of inducing the Holy Spirit to regenerate multitudes who would not otherwise be converted, or to convert themselves by the machinery of these meetings, or rather to bring them into the churches by means of exciting their animal feelings, without any regard to their being born again. . . .

. . . . There is, brethren, one radical difference between us and those who advocate these various institutions. . . . It is this: they declare the gospel to be a system of means; these means it appears they believe

to be of human contrivance; and they act accordingly. But we believe the gospel dispensation to embrace a system of faith and obedience. . . . We believe, for instance, that the seasons of declension, of darkness, of persecution, &c. to which the Church of Christ is at times subject, are designed by the wise Disposer of all events -- not for calling forth the inventive genius of men to remove the difficulties; but for trying the faith of God's own people in his wisdom, power, and faithfulness, to sustain his church.

Various attempts have been made to explain the impulses which led men to object to the missionary movement. In the main, however, there are two general explanations of the phenomenon. One is that the protests were a rationalization of unwillingness to give money and of a jealousy of educated ministers and missionaries. The other is that such objections were the logical outcome of strict Calvinistic theology. Neither of these explanations, taken by itself, seems a complete answer to the problem. If the former were the sole reason, then similar reactions should have developed among the Methodists and Presbyterians.²¹ Certainly the Calvinistic theology could have been worked out to this end, but there have been many staunch Calvinists who were not opposed to evangelism and ministerial education.²² The anti-

²¹ "This movement, then, was undoubtedly peculiar to the Baptists." W. W. Sweet, op. cit., p. 67.

²² For example, George Whitefield was so much a Calvinist that he broke with his friend, John Wesley, over the issue, but he was not opposed to evangelism or to the education of ministers. John Gillies, Memoirs of George Whitefield, pp. 65-67.

missionary movement seems to have been the result of a combination of circumstances with characteristic Baptist theology and practices.

The anti-missionary spirit was strongest in frontier and rural regions. The main objects of attack were large, centralized organizations, salaries for ministers, appeals for money, and ministerial education. The emphasis placed by Baptists upon the independence of the local church, coupled with the frontier spirit of democracy, would tend to make Baptists in such sections especially wary of all changes which threatened to infringe their liberty of action. Also, it was in such regions that there was a scarcity of money and little education, and ministers would be likely to feel jealous of better-paid and better-educated missionaries who came among them. Biblical literalism and ultra-Calvinistic theology provided a rationalization for the Baptist objections to the new organizations, appeals for money, and ministerial education. For, they could reason that if these things were not in the Bible, they were not in accord with God's plans. Moreover, according to their theology, God did not need any help in bringing the elect to repentance. The elect would be saved anyway; and there was no need to preach to the non-elect. Therefore, it was useless to send missionaries, or to have Tract, Bible, and Missionary societies. These were unscriptural institutions, which attempted to supplant the power and purposes of God.

The explanation that theology was developed along lines that would rationalize an antagonism to giving money and supporting education seems to be in accord with what occurred in Maryland. At first, there was little forthright hostility expressed in the Baltimore Association. But, as has been noted, there was no enthusiasm manifested towards the work of the Triennial Convention or towards Columbian College. During the 1820's mild protests were uttered against theological trends in the denomination, and a theological basis for opposition to missions and education became crystallized. By 1832, a rationale had been worked out, and it was given concrete expression in the Black Rock Declaration.

At the conclusion of the latter Declaration, a challenge was flung out to those in the Association, who were wavering between the two parties. It said, "Now, brethren, . . . it is for you to say -- not us, whether we can no longer walk in union with you. . . ." ²³ Having thrown down the gauntlet, the leaders of the movement threw themselves into the attempt to win as many adherents as possible to their side. The medium of their propaganda was the Signs of the Times, which appeared every week. Several of the ministers of the Baltimore Association served as its agents. ²⁴

²³ Signs of the Times, Nov. 28, 1832.

²⁴ These were Charles Polkinhorn, Eli Scott, Thomas Pooteet, Edward Choat, William Wilson, Thomas Ritchie, S. W. Woolford, Richard English, and Joseph Preston. Signs of the Times, Nov. 23, 1832; Dec. 11, 1833.

Both sides used their influence to bring others into their respective camps. For example, J. H. Jones wrote to Beebe that he had been receiving the Signs of the Times from an anonymous donor. However, he wished it to be known that he was an advocate of Bible, tract, and missionary societies.²⁵ The other side was also making its bid for support. Thomas Barton wrote to Beebe that he had been receiving literature intended to win his favor for the new movements.²⁶ In reply to his anonymous benefactors, he stated: "I cannot think that Christ has any need of such helps, not withstanding the opinions of their advocates." During each of the next three years, after 1832, an extra-Associational meeting was held in September. Here the Old School party gathered to make plans for furthering its cause.

Although there was a fairly strong Old School party in the Baltimore Association, there were some who were not willing to go along with them. Only four of the pastors were favorable to the missionary movement and its kindred agencies,²⁷ but they represented eight churches. Nine churches and eight pastors were Old School in sentiment. The other two churches were not taking a very active part in the Association, and their sentiments are not known. Since neither party had a definite majority, a policy of peace was followed, prob-

²⁵ Ibid., July 31, 1833.

²⁶ Ibid., Jan. 22, 1834.

²⁷ These were J. H. Jones, Thomas Leaman, John Healey, and Thomas Burchell.

ably in the hope of gaining more strength for one side.²⁸

It was only natural that with the existence of such a state of affairs, no aggressive work could be carried on. Consequently, there were few baptisms reported in these years. Yet the lack of progress did not seem to be felt very keenly. As was explained in the Corresponding Letter of 1835: "It has not pleased the Father of all mercies to add many to the number of the Churches comprising this Association. We wait upon the Lord in the use of his 'appointed means.'"²⁹

A situation like this could hardly continue indefinitely, and the final break came in 1836. At the meeting of the Association of that year, the issue was forced into the open. On Friday morning, the following resolution was offered and adopted:³⁰

Whereas a number of the churches of this Association have departed from the practices of the same, by following cunningly devised fables, uniting with and encouraging others to unite in worldly societies, to the great grief of other churches of this body, as there cannot be any fellowship between principles so essentially different, Therefore, Resolved, That this Association cannot have fellowship with such churches, and that all that have done so be dropped from our Minutes.

When the vote was taken, it was 16 to 9 in favor of the resolution. Whereupon the following churches withdrew: Rockville, Pleasant Valley, Second Washington, Linganore, Mount Zion (Baltimore), and Frederick Town. Three messen-

²⁸ Min., BBA, 1833, p. 10.

²⁹ Ibid., 1835, p. 2.

³⁰ Min., BBA, (Old School), 1836.

gers had refused to vote, and the messengers of two churches favorable to missions had not arrived. If the latter delegates had been present the vote would have been a little less one-sided.³¹

TABLE VIII. Churches of the Baltimore Association, 1835.³²

| Churches | Ministers | Baptisms | Members |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------|------------|
| Harford | William Wilson Eli Scott | 1 | 56 |
| Frederick Town | Joseph H. Jones | | 8 |
| *Tuscarora Valley | | | 25 |
| *Taney Town | | | 13 |
| Pleasant Valley | Joseph H. Jones | | 32 |
| Gunpowder | Thomas Leaman | | 42 |
| Saters | Thomas Poteet | | 14 |
| Upper Seneca | Joseph H. Jones | | 37 |
| Second Baltimore | John Healey | | 133 |
| Patapsco | Edward Choat | | 21 |
| Bethel | William Marvin | 1 | 17 |
| Ebenezer | Edmund J. Reis | | 85 |
| Warren | Thomas Poteet | | 20 |
| Black Rock | Edward Choat Eli Scott | 1 | 34 |
| Mount Zion | Francis Clark | 1 | 72 |
| Shiloh (Wn.) | Charles Polkinhorn | | 30 |
| Rockville | Joseph H. Jones | | 25 |
| Linganore | Joseph H. Jones | | 12 |
| Old Seneca | | | <u>41</u> |
| | | | <u>717</u> |

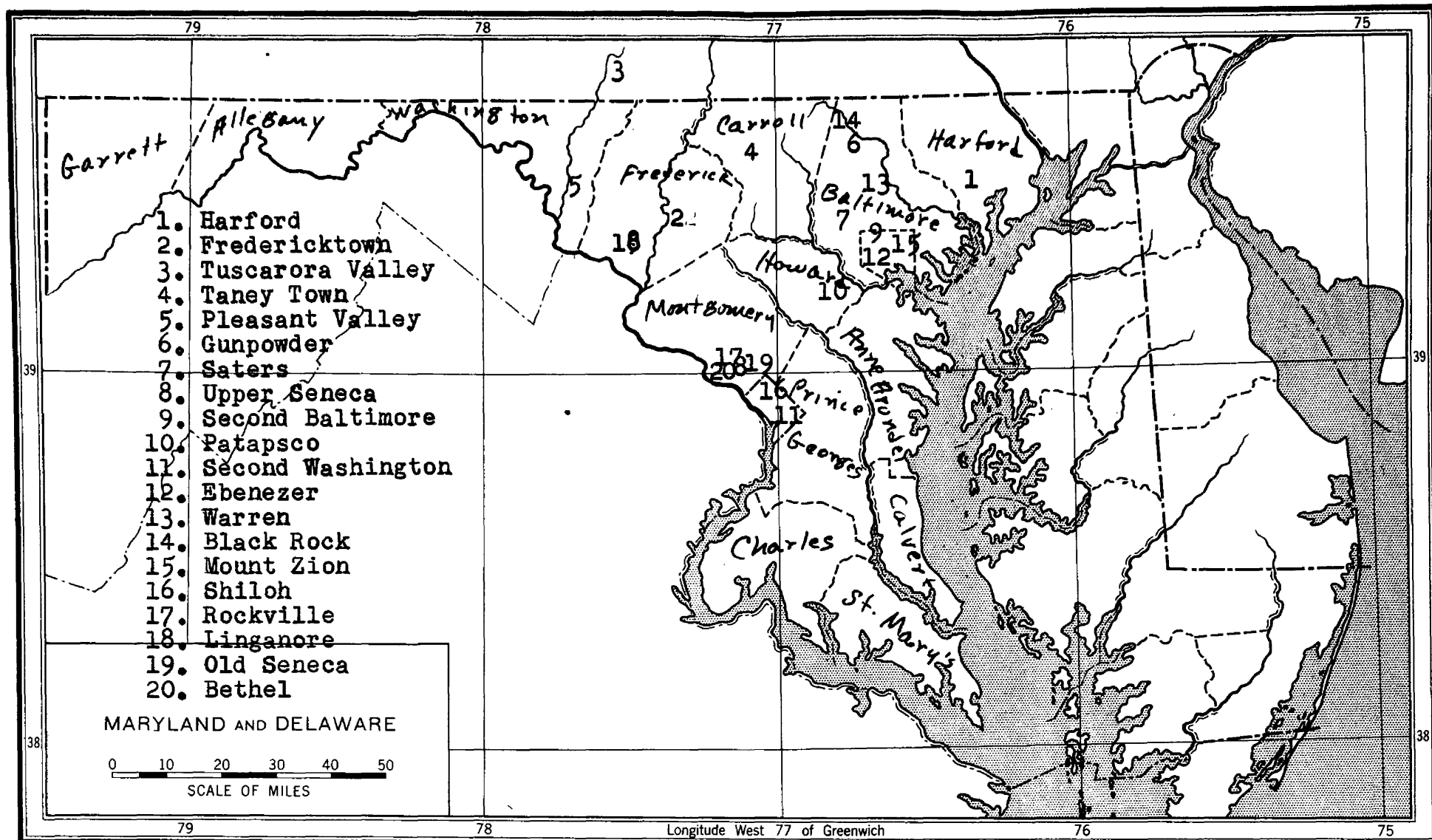
* No report for this year. Figures are for preceding year.

The six churches which had withdrawn after the passage

³¹ Min., BBA, Missionary, 1836. An "Expose" is here published, in which the Old School party was accused of chicanery in bringing about the passage of the resolution excluding the missionary churches. (Note: there were two bodies claiming to be the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1836. They are designated: Min. BBA (Old School) and Min., BBA, Missionary.)

³² Min., BBA, 1835, p. 2.

of the anti-mission resolution met at Washington in September, along with representatives from the Gunpowder and Taney Town Churches. They declared themselves to be the real Baltimore Baptist Association. In an "Expose" they published an account of the proceedings at the Associational meeting of that year, and they accused the Old School party of unfair dealings. However, it was probably to the best interests of all concerned that such a separation should have taken place. Since the Salisbury Association had already gone over to the anti-missionary side, it appeared that there were only eight churches left in Maryland and the District of Columbia which would make a new beginning of denominational work. Of the eight churches which met at Washington, only three actually engaged in the process of making a new start. These three, with three previously unassociated churches, met in the Autumn of 1836 to form the Maryland Baptist Union Association. This was the body which took up the work which had been set aside by the Old Baltimore Association.



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Location of Churches in the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1835

CHAPTER EIGHT

A NEW BEGINNING

(1836-1845)

After the Baltimore Association had been rent by the controversy over missions and education, prospects for the denominational work in Maryland looked bleak. The eight churches which had been excluded by their anti-missionary fellows met at Washington in September, 1836, but they did little more than to proclaim their right to the title of the Baltimore Baptist Association. Five of these churches continued to meet for several years. After their fellowship had been dissolved, these churches remained unassociated for some time.¹ Later, some of them became affiliated with the Maryland Baptist Union Association.²

The future work of the Maryland Baptists was undertaken by the Maryland Baptist Union Association, which was organized in October, 1836. Disappointed that the churches which met in Washington did not adopt more positive measures, the Taney Town, Gunpowder, and Second Washington Churches joined with three previously unassociated churches to form this

¹ J. H. Jones, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

² Second Baltimore in 1848; Rockville, 1849; Frederick, 1854. Minutes of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, 1848, 1849, and 1854, respectively. (These records will hereafter be designated as Min., MBUA.)

³ Whereas we have been greatly disappointed in respect to the proceedings held. . . . in Washington. . . . and

new body.⁴ One of these three was First Baltimore. The other two were the recently organized Pikestown and Calvert Street Churches.

Before the work of the new Association is taken up, a final word will be said about the churches which had followed an anti-missionary course. Ten of the older churches had taken the lead of the Old School element, and their membership amounted to about 350.⁵ Unconcerned about the schism which had taken place, they expressed their complacency with the situation in the Corresponding Letter of 1837:⁶

. . . . Our present session has been marked with that unanimity and fellowship which can never fail to render such seasons pleasant and profitable to the dear children of God. Our churches, as our minutes will show, are not enjoying any special ingathering of souls, but we rejoice to say that our expectation is not from men, the churches of our union having disclaimed all confidence in, and dependence on, any of them.

As is to be expected in a movement which loses all interest in making any effort to propagate its faith, this body showed a constant decline in the next few years. No money was raised for any causes, and complaints were made in 1837, that there was not sufficient money to pay for the

whereas there are several Baptist Churches about to convene with the First Church in Baltimore on the 27th day of October with a view to organizing a new Association, we therefore appoint Bro. Thomas Leaman and Z. Alban. . . ."
Minutes, Gunpowder Church, Sept. 14, 1836.

⁴ Min., MBUA, 1836.

⁵ Min., BBA, (Old School), 1837, p. 2.

⁶ Ibid., 1837, p. 12.

printing of the Minutes.⁷ The number of baptisms in ensuing years usually averaged two or three annually. For a long time, each passing year witnessed a greater number of losses by death and exclusion than there were accessions in membership. By 1841, although there were still ten churches, the aggregate membership had dwindled to 79.⁸ This body of Old School Baptists has continued to exist to the present time, but it is about extinct.⁹

In another chapter, notice has already been taken of the anti-missionary spirit, which permeated the Salisbury Association. In 1841, there were seven preachers serving fourteen churches. These reported 6 baptisms, 7 losses by death and 1 loss by exclusion.¹⁰ This Association has also followed a trend towards dissolution similar to that of the old Baltimore Association.¹¹

Turning now to the Baptist churches, which had organized a new Association, one finds an atmosphere so different from that of the old body, that he feels as though he were in a different world. In the constitution drawn up

⁷ Ibid., 1837, p. 5.

⁸ In 1925, there were 5 churches, 1 minister, and 57 members. Ibid., 1925, p. 3.

⁹ In a personal letter to the writer, dated July 30, 1945, the clerk of the Association stated: "The Association is now about extinct. There has not been any session since 1941."

¹⁰ Minutes, Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, 1841, p. 3.

¹¹ So stated by a member of one of the churches in a conversation last summer.

by the new organization, no theological standard was incorporated, which could be used as a test of the orthodoxy of the churches. Also, no provision was made for excluding member-churches. There were some who felt that there ought to be a statement of doctrine and a means of excluding churches which did not conform to the standard. For, in 1845, an attempt was made to amend the constitution to that end.¹² However, when the proposal was brought to a vote in the following year, it was rejected.¹³

That the new body meant to follow a course wholly different from that of the older group was apparent in a resolution adopted in 1835. The following motion was made and adopted:¹⁴

That this Association express its decided approbation of efforts made by the Christian community to elevate the moral condition of our species, by means of Bible, Missionary, Education, Sabbath Schools, Tract, Temperance, and other benevolent Institutions.

With this complete reversal of the older negativistic attitude, the churches and leaders of the new Association set about to carry on a vigorous propagation of their faith. There were many obstacles in their course, and results were slow in coming. However, the Associational meetings were no longer characterized by endless sermons to comfort the elect. The sessions were concerned with the making and execution

¹² Min., MBUA, 1845, pp. 11-12.

¹³ Ibid., 1846, p. 10.

¹⁴ Ibid., 1836, p. 9.

of plans to expand the work of the denomination. Agencies which had never been mentioned favorably in the older organization were given encouragement by the new one. While the results for the first few years were meager, it was evident that a new day had dawned for the Maryland Baptists.

The constituency of the Baltimore Association had been predominantly rural, and its leadership had come from the rural ministers. Although a few rural churches joined the new Association in the next few years, the development of Maryland Baptists since 1836 has been primarily an urban movement.¹⁵ Of the six constituent churches, three were in Baltimore and Washington, and only one was a strictly country church. That the leadership of the Union Association was drawn largely from the urban churches perhaps accounts for the new direction which was taken.

With the entrance of new men on the Maryland Baptist stage, and the infusion of new energy into the life-stream of the churches, the work of the denomination soon began to be strengthened. While individuals may not mould their times, personalities do play a part in accelerating or retarding the trends which are in operation. To the influence of a few men who came to Maryland at the beginning of this period, much of the credit for the growth of the denomina-

¹⁵ Today, there are three open country churches, out of a total of 100 churches, in the Maryland Baptist Association. This situation is in contrast to that of other Southern Baptist states. Southern Baptist Handbook, 1947, p. 7.

ation was due. Four men who played prominent roles in the new beginning were Reverend Stephen P. Hill, William Crane, Reverend George F. Adams, and Reverend Joseph Mettam.

The first of these men, the Reverend S. P. Hill,¹⁶ was called to the pastorate of the First Church, Baltimore, in 1834. Since about 1820, this church had been involved in dissensions of various kinds, which lasted until about 1834. The membership had been affected by "Campbellism," and many of the members had left the church. In short, the church had ceased to be a force in the Baptist work of the state after its exclusion from the Baltimore Association in 1824.¹⁷ With the coming of Hill, changes were gradually made, and the church became one of the original members of the Maryland Baptist Union Association.

Deacon William Crane was another man whose activities were of importance to the new work in the state. As a successful merchant in Richmond, he had taken an interest in the Baptist work of that city. His interest in the Negroes had led to his starting a school for them and to the beginning of a mission in Liberia under the auspices of the Triennial Convention.¹⁸ He had also been instrumental in the establishment of the Religious Herald. During his visits

¹⁶ A biographical sketch of Hill will be found in William Cathcart, Baptist Encyclopedia, p. 524.

¹⁷ Min., BBA, 1824, p. 8.

¹⁸ Missionary Jubilee, pp. 19-20.

to Maryland on business trips, he had been impressed with the backwardness of Baptist work in that state. In 1834, he moved to Baltimore to take charge of his business interests there and to promote the work of the denomination.

A few months before moving to Baltimore, he had arranged to purchase the building of the Ebenezer Church. Two months later, he and his family took up their residence in the city. The Calvert Street Church was organized in the building which he had bought. For ten years, it grew slowly, being financed almost entirely by Crane. Moving to a new location in 1844, it gradually became one of the stronger churches of Baltimore.¹⁹ In 1845, Crane moved his membership to the newly organized Seventh Baptist Church and lent his aid in making it the most influential church in the state.²⁰

The Reverend George F. Adams was also an influential leader of the Maryland Baptists in this early period. Having graduated from Columbian College in 1829, he went to Virginia, where he served as the principal of a female school for several years. In 1836, he came to Baltimore as pastor of the Calvert Street Church. With the exception of a few years spent in Virginia, he devoted the remainder of his almost fifty years to the Baptist work in Maryland.²¹

¹⁹ G. F. Adams, A Brief Sketch of the Life and Character of William Crane, p. 20.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 20-21.

²¹ William Cathcart, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

The fourth man to be given special recognition was the Reverend Joseph Mettam. A native of England, he came to America in 1832. Soon he came to Baltimore, where he united with the Second Baptist Church, which licensed him to preach. While teaching school at Pikesville, he organized a Baptist church, which was one of the constituent members of the Maryland Baptist Union Association. For about forty years Joseph Mettam served as a missionary and a pastor in the Association.²²

In approaching the task of building up the work of the denomination in Maryland, the Association had to devise new methods and means. The chief plan was to have the Association operate as a mission board. The supervision of the work was entrusted to an Executive Committee, which was authorized to secure a General Agent and several missionaries.²³ Although attempts were made to put these instructions into effect, the Committee was hampered greatly by the lack of funds.

Some efforts were made during the early years to obtain the services of a General Agent, who would be a missionary-at-large over the state. However, it was difficult to find a suitable person to accept such an undertaking at a salary of about \$600.00 per year. In 1843, the Executive Committee persuaded G. F. Adams to assume this office, but

²² J. F. Weishampel, Historical Sketch of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, pp. 84-85.

²³ Min., MBUA, 1836.

the requirements of the position soon proved too much for his strength. When one reads the account of his work during the ten months of his service, it is not surprising that he found the task too strenuous. According to the report of the Executive Committee:²⁴

. . . . He has visited all of the churches of this Association -- some of them several times. . . . he has attended ten or twelve protracted meetings, aided in the constitution of two churches, preached 215 sermons, attended 202 prayer and other social meetings, baptized 46 persons, made 773 pastoral visits, and collected for the Association \$555.76.

In securing the services of men to work as missionaries in particular areas, the Committee was more successful. In 1840, one missionary had been assigned to the Eastern Shore and two to locations on the Western Shore. From then until 1845, there were always two or three regular missionaries employed by the Association. As a result of their labors, there were several hundred baptisms, and the groundwork had been laid for several new churches.²⁵

One means of promoting the cause which received considerable stress in the Association was the establishment of Sunday Schools. Prior to 1837, there had been only two of these in the Baptist churches of the state.²⁶ In 1836,

²⁴ Min., MBUA, 1843, pp. 5-7.

²⁵ See the Reports of the Executive Committee, Min., MBUA, 1840-1845.

²⁶ G. F. Adams, op. cit., p. 19.

a Committee on Sabbath Schools was appointed by the Association. Each year the committee brought in a report that was intended to stimulate interest in the use of this agency by the churches. However, it was not easy to get churches to organize Sunday Schools. There were still some in the churches who opposed these, and there were not many persons capable of conducting them.²⁷ By 1845, there were several churches which had begun to use this means of instruction.

In 1839, a new method of increasing the membership of the churches was adopted -- that of holding protracted revival meetings.²⁹ William Crane had suggested that the churches try to hold such meetings, and some of them did so with favorable results. In the winter of 1839-1840, Elder Jacob Knapp was invited to hold a series of meetings at First Baltimore. During the seven weeks of his stay, Knapp preached twice every weekday and three times on Sunday. Inquiry meetings were held every day, both morning and evening. Great interest was shown in these services, and their influence was extended to other churches of the city.³⁰ In the First

²⁷ "It is much to be lamented that there are those among us who are opposed to this benevolent effort." Min., MBUA, 1839, p. 10.

²⁸ Ibid., 1845. Statistical Table of Sabbath Schools.

²⁹ The practice of holding protracted meetings began about 1833. This was one of the things, which the Old School Baptists had opposed. Before long, it had become a common practice of the Baptist and other denominations. Reuben Jeffery, ed., Autobiography of Elder Knapp, p. 28.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 99-103.

Church, sixty persons were baptized at the end of three weeks, and others were immersed on each Monday thereafter. In these few weeks, the membership of the church increased from 164 to 400. Calvert Street Church also shared in the effects of the revival, so that its membership grew from 51 to 221 in the course of a year. As a result of these meetings, the aggregate membership of the churches of the Association more than doubled within one year. This initial impulse gave a considerable impetus to the work of the denomination in Maryland. The number of baptisms in the next few years exceeded anything that the churches of Maryland had ever reported in the past.³¹

With respect to denominational schools and ministerial education there was a different attitude than had been manifested in the Baltimore Association. Prior to 1836, practically none of the Maryland ministers had more than a modicum of education. However, within a few years after the organization of the new Association, there were several graduates of Columbian College and other institutions, who were pastors in the new body.³² Consequently, some more interest began to be shown in Columbian College. This interest may easily be exaggerated, however. While the general attitude was more favorable, there was not much financial support

³¹ See Table IX, p. 103.

³² In 1855, the following pastors were listed as graduates of Columbian: G. F. Adams, J. W. M. Williams, J. H. Phillips, J. H. Jones, S. C. Boston, Freeman Brown, and Isaac Cole. True Union, March 22, 1855.

forthcoming from them, and not many Baptist families could afford to send their children to college in those days.³³

Although not many Maryland students enrolled in the college and not many contributions were made for its support, the situation was different from the earlier days. A Committee on Education was appointed in 1839, and each year thereafter Columbian College was mentioned in its reports. The report on education in 1841, for example, emphasized the need of an educated ministry, urged the constituency of the Association to send their children to Baptist schools, and singled out Columbian College as deserving the special interest of Maryland Baptists:³⁵

. . . . and of such, the most prominent and deserving is the Columbian College, which . . . is under the control and dependent upon our denomination. . . . One of its main designs is to afford facilities to deserving young men, who are acceptable candidates for the ministry. . . . The committee rejoice that there are evident indications that the Baptists are disposed to regard it as meriting their encouragement; and that they will unite with their brethren of Virginia and other states in sustaining it.

³³ Ibid., Dec. 11, 1851: ". . . where little is given, little must be expected. The institution has been chiefly supported by Virginia, and consequently that state has derived the greatest benefit." The Historical Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates of Columbian College, 1821-1872, shows that there were only 9 graduates from Maryland between 1836 and 1845. Two ministers and four laymen served as trustees during these ten years.

³⁴ Min., MBUA, 1839-1845. Reports on Education.

³⁵ Ibid., 1841, p. 16.

The changed attitudes towards missionary organizations, evangelistic efforts, Sunday Schools, and ministerial education created an environment more favorable to the growth of the denomination. Beginning with 6 churches and 478 members, the Association had increased to 16 churches having 1755 members by 1845. Considering the Baptist work in the perspective of the entire religious work of the state, the progress seemed small. However, a new beginning had been made, and in comparison with the past, it was an auspicious one.

TABLE IX. Growth of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, 1836-1845.³⁶

| Year | Ministers | Churches | Baptisms | Members |
|------|-----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1836 | 4 | 6 | | 478 |
| 1837 | 6 | 7 | 58 | 535 |
| 1838 | 5 | 7 | 28 | 550 |
| 1839 | 5 | 7 | 26 | 565 |
| 1840 | 6 | 7 | 606 | 1183 |
| 1841 | 8 | 10 | 585 | 1554 |
| 1842 | 9 | 13 | 183 | 1690 |
| 1843 | 11 | 15 | 256 | 1850 |
| 1844 | 10 | 15 | 85 | 1888 |
| 1845 | 13 | 16 | 77 | 1755 |

³⁶ Min., MBUA, 1836-1845.

CHAPTER NINE

TEMPERANCE AND SLAVERY

(1836-1845)

In the old Baltimore Baptist Association, little attention had been given to any social issues. In general, the feeling had prevailed that matters of such a nature did not come within the province of a religious body, and this attitude became more fixed as theology became more conservative.¹ The Maryland Baptist Union Association was also inclined to remain aloof from social questions in its meetings. The issue of temperance, however, was an exception. This matter was regarded as being more of a moral issue than slavery and other matters which were being agitated in that day. The subject of slavery was one which could hardly be ignored be-

¹ That they became increasingly conservative in this respect is borne out by the following incidents. In 1824, "A letter from the agent of the Colonization Society. . . . was presented by Brother Brown. . . . and it was Resolved, That the churches are recommended to take into consideration the subject of the letter, which subject is a request from the agent to the churches, to have a collection taken upon the 4th of July next, for the benefit of the Society." (Min, BBA, 1824, pp. 4-5). But when a similar letter was received in 1833, it met with different treatment: "The committee to which was referred the communication from the Colonization Society, reported: 'That, however we appreciate the design to ameliorate the condition of the African race, and feel individually desirous of promoting the laudable design, yet we deem it inexpedient, as an Association to take any measure respecting the communication referred to your committee, as we consider it as not coming within the province of this body, whose institution and design it is, to attend to those things immediately connected with the order and prosperity of Zion.'" (Min., BBA, 1833, p. 4).

tween 1840 and 1860. Yet, in spite of the fact that most people had convictions on this matter, and that the Association was affected by the controversy which was becoming more heated, the subject was not considered at all by the Association. Indirectly, however, the Association did take a stand on one side of the issue. For, when the separation between the churches of the North and South took place, the Maryland Baptists elected to go with the southern Baptists.

Temperance, a subject which had never been mentioned in the Baltimore Association, became a regular order on the agenda of the new body. In 1837, the following resolution was passed:²

Resolved, That the cause of Temperance demands of every Christian and every philanthropist, a united and zealous effort to stop the ravages of intemperance throughout the land.

This statement demonstrated that a positive feeling against intemperance existed in the churches of the Association. It did not define clearly what was meant by the term intemperance. From this utterance, it was not certain whether these Baptists favored total abstinence or moderation in the use of alcoholic beverages.³ Nor did it indicate the means by

² Min., MBUA, 1837, p. 6.

³ In the early part of the nineteenth century, there seems to have been opposition only to the excessive use of intoxicants. There are many instances of persons being disciplined for drunkenness; but total abstinence was recommended only in exceptional cases. For example, the Salis-

which intemperance was to be combated. In the next few years, the passage of further resolutions made the position of the Association on this question more explicit.

Before looking any further into the developments in the Association relative to this subject, it may be well to turn for a moment to the more general temperance movement. In order to see the attitudes of the Maryland Baptists in their proper setting, one needs to recall what progress had been made in the United States up to this time with regard to the temperance movement. Prior to 1810, the temperance activities were confined largely to sermons and resolutions of individual churches, which inveighed against intoxicants in general terms. The intent of such measures was primarily to affect the conduct of the church members.⁴ The year of 1826 marked the beginning of organized temperance activities of a general nature. Before that date, there had been numerous local societies and one or two state organizations. In 1826, the American Temperance Society was organized at Boston. Within a year, 222 local auxiliaries of that Society had been formed in the various states, and one of these was in Maryland. In the decade following 1840,

bury Baptist Church cited Philip Hughes to appear before the church on a charge of "being intoxicated in public." After the charge had been admitted, the church "thought it expedient in order to wipe off the stigma occasioned thereby to the cause of Christ for him to abstain entirely from the use of speritous [sic] liquors; and he. . . cheerfully agreed thereto." (Minutes, Salisbury Baptist Church (now Old School), June 19, 1802).

⁴ Ernest Cherrington, Evolution of Prohibition in the United States, p. 65.

more temperance organizations were started than at any other period in the history of the United States.⁵

Thus it will be seen that the resolutions passed by the Maryland Baptist Association in 1837 and the ensuing years were a part of a widespread movement. In 1839, the Association declared its opposition to "the making and selling, as well as drinking, intoxicating liquors."⁶ Then, lest there be any chance of being misunderstood, a resolution was adopted in 1840, which stated that total abstinence was "the only true and safe principle."⁷ There was still little to indicate the means by which the temperance efforts were to be made effective. However, it may be inferred that up to this time, hopes were placed primarily in moral suasion.

The revival meetings held by Elder Knapp in Baltimore, in 1840, gave an added impetus to the temperance cause. As a result of his preaching, the "Washington Movement" was started by six men in Baltimore,⁸ and the movement spread to other cities. The pastors of the Association were urged to further the cause from their pulpits, and resolutions were passed each year by the Association in

⁵ Ibid., pp. 89-95.

⁶ Min., MBUA, 1839, p. 6.

⁷ Ibid., 1840, p. 7.

⁸ Leonard W. Bacon, History of American Christianity, p. 288.

its annual meetings. However, it was difficult to get any action from local councils or from the state legislature. The first legal measure came in 1848, at which time the Maryland Legislature enacted a law closing all saloons on Sunday.⁹ This was not a very momentous step, but it is an indication that the temperance movement was gaining strength through the efforts of churches and temperance societies.

In turning to the question of slavery, it is more difficult to ascertain the attitudes of the Maryland Baptists. The Association passed no resolutions regarding the "peculiar institution" of the South, and there was no committee appointed to make reports on this subject. It will be recalled that in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and the early part of the nineteenth, there had been considerable anti-slavery sentiment in the Baptist churches of the state.¹⁰ Several of them had prohibited slave-holders from membership, but in some instances anti-slavery resolutions had to be rescinded because of the antipathies which were aroused. Since slavery had not become increasingly important in Maryland, as it had in the Cotton States, it would seem natural that the anti-slavery sentiment would have been enhanced. Nevertheless, so far as the Baptists were concerned, there appears to have been no mention made

⁹ Ernest Cherrington, op. cit., p. 131.

¹⁰ Supra, pp. 46-49.

either in church meetings or by the Association after 1830, although it was becoming an increasingly prominent issue in political circles. It is difficult to see how the question could have been so entirely ignored by the Association. The reason was probably that the churches wished to preserve peace and harmony, in order to press the work of the denomination.

In general, it may be said that Maryland did not develop a strong anti-slavery sentiment or an ardent pro-slavery feeling. In the absence of a strong economic motive, there were not likely to be many to contend that slavery was a positive good. On the other hand, there was one condition which hindered the development of abolitionist sentiment. That was the fact that free Negroes were increasing in numbers, creating new economic, social, and political problems.¹¹ The situation is reflected in a resolution passed by the Maryland Legislature in 1832:¹²

That as philanthropists and lovers of freedom, we deplore the existence of slavery amongst us, and would use our utmost means to ameliorate its conditions. Yet we consider the unrestricted power of manumission as fraught with ultimate evils of a more dangerous tendency than the circumstances of slavery alone, and that any act, having for its object the mitigation of these points, not inconsistent with other paramount considerations, would be worthy the attention and deliberation of the representatives of a free, liberal-minded and enlightened people.

Resolved, That we consider the colonization of free people of colour in Africa as the

¹¹ J. R. Brackett, The Negro in Maryland, p. 66.

¹² Early Lee Fox, American Colonization Society, p. 30.

commencement of a system, by which, if judicious encouragement be afforded, these evils may be measurably diminished.

As a result of this two-fold tendency -- the disapproval of slavery and the fear of free Negroes -- it was natural that Maryland should become a staunch supporter of the project to export the Negroes to Africa. There is little evidence to show that Baptists took any leading part in the work of the Colonization Society.¹³ However, the moderate views of the Maryland Baptists on the slavery issue are reflected in the attitudes which they exhibited towards the matter in connection with the Triennial Convention.

The Triennial Convention avoided the slavery issue until about 1840. With the growth of abolitionist sentiment in the North, and with some Baptists becoming outspoken opponents of slavery, it was inevitable that the Convention would be affected sooner or later. In the winter of 1839-1840, the Board of Foreign Missions declared its neutrality on the question of slavery.¹⁴ This statement of policy by the Board was made in answer to questions which had been raised with regard to the appointment of slaveholders as missionaries.

In April, 1840, an American Baptist Anti-Slavery Convention was organized in New York. This convention formed

¹³ O. B. Brown, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Washington, which belonged to the Maryland Association at that time, was one of the original members of the American Colonization Society. Early Lee Fox, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

¹⁴ A. H. Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 443.

a provisional foreign missionary committee, which demanded that the General Convention sever its connection with all slavery influences. Committees at this meeting reported on various aspects of slavery and its relationship to the churches. An address was sent to the southern churches, and it proved to be a firebrand.¹⁵ This was the opening gun in the conflict which ended in the separation of the northern and southern Baptist churches.

During the ensuing year, 1840-1841, a good deal of discussion took place concerning the missionary policies of the Home and Foreign Boards. Feelings were aroused, and resolutions were passed by state Baptist conventions in both the North and the South. As the time for the meeting of the Triennial Convention approached, there were some in both sections of the country, who intended to bring the issue to a head. It began to appear as though a break might come about when the convention met. However, the majority of the people connected with the body were in favor of moderation, and they intended to do everything possible to sidetrack the issue.¹⁶

Two days before the Convention met at Baltimore, in 1841, the southern delegates held a meeting. They decided that, in order to allay excitement in the South, some of the obnoxious abolitionist members of the Board would have

¹⁵ Mary B. Putnam, Baptists and Slavery, pp. 21-24.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 25-28.

to be replaced. Also, a compromise article was drawn up by a caucus of northern conservatives and southerners. This document expressed opposition to the adoption of "new tests" by the Convention, and the signers disclaimed participation in the actions of the abolitionist Baptists.¹⁷ All of the Maryland delegates to this session of the Convention signed the compromise article.¹⁸

The outcome of the Convention was apparently satisfactory to the southerners. Before leaving Baltimore, they addressed a letter to their constituents. In it, they stated, "The election of the Board of Managers resulted agreeably to our wishes." The opinion was expressed that a basis for the continued co-operation of the northern and southern churches had been reached.¹⁹ The opponents of slavery were dissatisfied, and at the subsequent meeting of the American Baptist Anti-Slavery Convention, there were delegates from nearly all of the northern states. At this meeting, there was no delegate from Maryland, and Foss complained of the lack of anti-slavery sentiment among the Maryland Baptists.²⁰

¹⁷ Foss and Matthews, Facts For Baptist Churches, pp. 75-76.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 76. A list of the signers included William Crane, S. P. Hill, James Wilson, G. F. Adams, and John Healey. These five men were the only Maryland delegates. There would probably have been more, had it not been for the requirement of an annual contribution of at least \$100.00 for membership.

¹⁹ M. B. Putnam, op. cit., pp. 29-30.

²⁰ Foss and Matthews, op. cit., pp. 86-87.

Although the issue had apparently been settled, the question was too big to be sidestepped so easily. Just as the several political compromises on this subject provided only temporary accommodations, so no definite adjustment among the Baptists was reached until the churches of the North and South separated. Discussions continued for the next three years, until the next session of the Triennial Convention, in 1844. There were too many southerners, sensitive on the subject of slavery, and too many northerners ready to wound these sensitive feelings to make a compromise practicable.

In 1844, the Convention got through its session without any open conflict on the question. The Home Mission Board, which met a little later, did not fare so well. Here the matter was brought to a climax, when Reverend Adlam, an abolitionist from Maine, introduced a resolution that slaveholding should not debar a minister from appointment as a missionary.²¹ Dr. Richard Fuller introduced a resolution declaring that any action concerning slavery was unconstitutional, and this was approved by a vote of 123 to 61.²² However, feeling must have been at a high pitch. For, before the meeting adjourned, a committee had been appointed to draft a plan of division, in case such a separation

²¹ This seems a strange motion to come from an abolitionist. However, he explained that his intention was to force the Board to take a definite stand. If the Board voted in the affirmative, more support would be gained for the American Baptist Anti-Slavery Convention.

²² American Baptist Home Missions Society, Jubilee, pp. 386-394.

should take place.²³

Before the two Boards met again in 1845, two further developments had helped to make the issue even more critical. The first was a query sent by the Alabama Baptist State Convention, which demanded that the Foreign Mission Board make a forthright statement of its policy regarding the appointment of slave-holders. In reply to the question, the Board had written: "If. . . . anyone should offer himself as a missionary, having slaves, and should insist on retaining them as his property, we could not appoint him."²⁴ The other incident was an exchange of letters between Richard Fuller and Francis Wayland. Their discussions were published in a number of Baptist periodicals. Although the argument was carried on without acrimony or incriminations, it did help to focus the attention of Baptists on the subject.²⁵

After the way that the meeting of the Home Mission Board had ended in 1844, with the appointment of a committee to formulate a plan of division in case it should be needed, many felt that the decision to separate had virtually been made. The reply of the Foreign Board to the Alabama query led many southerners to determine that the time was ripe for the formation of a separate missionary convention.

²⁴ A. H. Newman, op. cit., pp. 446-447.

²⁵ Richard Fuller and Francis Wayland, Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution. (The crux of these discussions was whether slavery was necessarily a moral evil. Wayland maintained that it was. Fuller conceded that it was an unfortunate institution, but that it was not necessarily a moral evil, involving a slave-owner in sin.)

Before the meeting of the Boards at Providence, in 1845, an address had been sent to the "Baptist Churches in Virginia and the Baptist Denomination in the United States Generally." In this letter, which was signed by the president and secretary of the Virginia Baptist State Convention, it was announced that a convention would be held at Augusta, Georgia, in May of that year.²⁶

To many it seemed that the die was already cast, and that a new missionary convention would certainly be organized. But there were still some who clung to the straw of hope that the situation could still be saved. A few days prior to the meetings of the Boards at Providence, the Baptist ministers in the District of Columbia drew up a letter to the Foreign Mission Board. Condemning the reply of the Board to the Alabama question, they proceeded to urge that the Board give special attention to finding means of continuing the work of the Convention as heretofore. They also urged that the meeting of southern delegates at Augusta should adopt no measures that would bring about the dissolution of the old Convention. Among the signers of this document were several members connected with the Maryland Baptist Union Association.²⁷

²⁶ M. B. Putnam, op. cit., p. 62. (Quoted from the Religious Herald, April 10, 1845).

²⁷ This address, with a list of the signers, appeared in the Religious Herald, May 8, 1845. it was dated April 26, 1845.

The Home Board met at Providence on May 29, 1845, and the committee appointed the previous year brought in its report. This report did not contain any recommendation as to whether or not a division should be made, but it suggested certain settlements which ought to be made in case a separation was deemed advisable. Considerable discussion took place for two days, and William Crane of Maryland was one of the main contenders for the continued operation of the old organization.²⁸ Finally the following resolution was passed:²⁹

That in view of our allegiance to the King of Zion, it is in the judgment of this Society, inexpedient for the Executive Board to employ brethren holding property in their fellow men as missionaries of the Home Mission Board.

The Acting Board of the Foreign Missionary Society, meeting at the same time, engaged in a lengthy discussion of the matter also. At the end of their deliberations, the delegates passed a more conciliatory resolution. They conceded that the spirit of the constitution, as well as the previous policies of the Convention, recognized the eligibility of all Baptists to missionary appointments, without distinction on the ground of slaveholding. But, they averred, in carrying out this principle, contingencies might arise which would require the Board to take actions which would be offensive to the northern conscience. If such a case a-

²⁸ Foss and Matthews, op. cit., p. 159.

²⁹ Religious Herald, "Abstract of the Report of the Home Mission Board," May 15, 1845; also Foss and Matthews, op. cit., pp. 148-162.

rose, they agreed to refer the question to the Convention for a final decision.³⁰

The decisions of the two Boards strengthened the southerners in their determination to form a separate organization. Accordingly, when their delegates met at Augusta, in May, 1845, they formally constituted the Southern Baptist Convention. In a statement, setting forth the reasons for this step, it was denied that there was any intention of starting a sectional body. However, the main cause which was given was the discrimination of the General Convention against slaveholders.³¹ The delegates proceeded to organize a Domestic and a Foreign Mission Board.³²

In all of the proceedings which led up to this division, Maryland Baptist leaders had favored the continuance of the old organization, ignoring completely the question of slavery. None of them seems to have been a vigorous defender of slavery itself. Some of them, at least, were opposed to the institution.³³ Yet, few of them considered slavery as a real moral evil. Their position throughout was one of moderation. However, when the northerners insisted upon excluding slaveholders from appointment as missionaries, the

³⁰ Ibid., May 15, 1845, "Abstract of the Report of the Foreign Mission Board."

³¹ Annual Report of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1845, pp. 17-18.

³² Ibid., 1845, p. 8.

³³ William Crane, Anti-Slavery in Virginia.

Maryland Baptists felt that their interests lay with the other southern states. Only two delegates from Maryland attended the meeting for the organization of the Southern Baptist Convention.³⁴ Both of these were placed on the committee to draw up a preamble and resolution for the formation of the Convention.³⁵ William Crane was made a member of the Foreign Mission Board, and George F. Adams (though he was not present) was appointed to the Domestic Mission Board.³⁶

When the Maryland Baptist Union Association met in the Fall of 1845, the only reference to its decision to unite with the other southern states was made in the following resolution:³⁷

Resolved, That we approve of the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention, and hereby commend it to the churches, as worthy of their cordial co-operation and support.

The clerk added that "the resolution was adopted with little dissent." It would seem from the few indications which are available, that the Maryland Baptists were not ardent apologists of slavery. Yet when the issue was forced upon them, their sympathies with the South were strong enough to pull them in that direction. Since that time, their affiliations have been primarily with the southern Baptist states.³⁸

³⁴ Annual Report of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1845, p. 9.

³⁵ Ibid., 1845, pp. 10-11.

³⁶ Ibid., 1845, p. 8.

³⁷ Min., MBUA, 1845, p. 14.

³⁸ William Crane continued to take an interest in the work of the Northern Board and was made a "life-member."

Most of the pastors have come from the South, and theological inclinations have generally followed southern patterns, rather than northern ones.

In concluding this chapter, it may be of interest to note what was happening among other denominations with regard to the issue of slavery. The Catholic and Episcopal churches were little disturbed by this controversy, as they maintained a neutral position.³⁹ The Methodists were greatly agitated over this question between 1842 and 1845. In the latter year, this denomination also divided into northern and southern branches. In this cleavage, the Maryland Methodists adhered to the Northern organization, which was opposed to slavery.⁴⁰ The Presbyterians, though troubled over the matter earlier, staved off a division until 1861, when the southern churches formed a separate jurisdiction.⁴¹ In Maryland, the Presbyterian churches were divided in their loyalties, some going with the southern wing of the denomination, and others remaining with the northern part. Perhaps, if the Baptists had been more numerous, and if harmony had not been so essential to their recently organized work, there might have been a division within their ranks, with some adhering to each of the conventions.

³⁹ Leonard W. Bacon, op. cit., p. 345.

⁴⁰ J. M. Buckley, History of the Methodists in the United States, pp. 393-463.

⁴¹ Willard L. Sperry, Religion in America, p. 79.

CHAPTER TEN

GROWTH AND PROGRESS

(1846-1860)

As the Executive Committee surveyed the work of the Maryland Baptist Union Association in 1846, it issued a report which lamented the slow progress which the churches were making.¹ However, the pessimism reflected in the report was not altogether warranted. When Baptist strength was compared with that of the Methodists in the state, it naturally seemed that the Baptists were doing next to nothing.² Yet, taking into consideration the past history of the denomination in Maryland, commendable progress was being made in these years. During the opening decade of its existence, the Association had grown from 6 to 16 churches, and the membership had more than tripled. In the next fifteen years, 28 more churches were received into the Association, and there was a corresponding increase in the number of members. Of course, some of the new churches were short-lived, and most of them were small, so that not all of them were contributing much help in the task of strengthening the denomination in the state.

One of the chief weaknesses of the work of the Associ-

¹ "Report of the Executive Committee," Min., MBUA, 1846.

² In 1850, there were 479 Methodist churches in Maryland, comprising a little more than 40,000 members. True Union, March 4, 1852.

ation was that the new churches were not giving much financial assistance to the enterprise of employing missionaries and other workers. However, it is not surprising that few of the churches were helping much to augment the mission funds. Most of them were financially weak, and they were not able to support their own ministers. Even as late as 1851, only 4 out of 28 churches were providing adequate support for their pastors. Half of the churches were then receiving aid from the Mission Board towards the support of their pastors, and several of them felt unable to contribute anything at all.³ In view of these facts, it is a wonder that any program of expansion could be carried on.

During this period, a number of new personalities entered the picture, who did much to bring about changes by 1860. Three men in particular, who took up pastoral work in the state in these years, played influential roles in the development of the Maryland Baptists. One of these was Franklin Wilson, the son of a prosperous merchant in Baltimore. Educated at Brown University and Newton Theological Seminary, he took an active interest in Baptist work in Maryland until his death in 1896. Although poor health kept him from being an active pastor after 1852, he devoted his energies and large sums of money to the prosecution of the denominational work.⁴ Dr. Richard Fuller began his pastor-

³ True Union, Nov. 13, 1851.

⁴ Life Story of Franklin Wilson as Told by Himself in His Journals, edited by his family.

ate at Seventh Baptist Church, Baltimore, in 1847. Having taken a lead in the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention, he was already an acknowledged leader of the denomination. Under his leadership, the Seventh Church became the strongest church in the state. For nearly twenty-five years he continued as the pastor of this church, until, in 1871, he assumed the pastorate of the Eutaw Place Church, which had been started by a colony from Seventh Church.⁵ Dr. J. W. M. Williams also deserves special mention as a leader who came to Maryland during this period. Coming to First Baltimore in 1850, he found the church disrupted by factions. During the thirty-three years of his pastorate, he was instrumental in resolving the difficulties of the church and in strengthening the larger work of the Association.⁶

The greatest increase of Baptist numbers in these years was centered in and around Baltimore and Washington. In the former city, several new churches were organized, and the older ones took on new life. By 1860, there were seven fairly strong churches in Baltimore, and that city had begun to be the hub of the Baptist wheel in Maryland, as it has been ever since. In Washington, there were four Baptist churches by 1860, all of which belonged to the Maryland Association.⁷

⁵ J. H. Cuthbert, Life of Richard Fuller, passim.

⁶ J. W. M. Williams, Reminiscences of a Pastorate of Thirty-three Years in the First Baptist Church, Baltimore.

⁷ See the map at the end of this chapter.

Through the efforts of missionary employees of the Association, new churches were begun in some areas outside of the large cities, some of them in sections where there had been no Baptist churches before. On the Eastern Shore, where there had been no missionary Baptist churches in 1836, new Baptist work was begun. After 1840, one or two missionaries were engaged in that region during all the period prior to 1860. By the latter date, six churches had been constituted, four of which have continued to the present.⁸ There were also several mission points, some of which later became churches. In Southern Maryland, an attempt was made to start Baptist work in St. Mary's County, but it was never very successful.⁹ In the extreme western part of the state, a missionary was employed by the Association, and by 1860 there were three churches in Allegany County.

The methods which had been adopted earlier were continued for the most part. As the funds of the Association increased, the number of missionaries under appointment became larger. By 1855, there were six missionaries engaged by the Board, and one colporteur had been employed to work in Baltimore.¹⁰ The plan to have a General Agent to superintend the missionary work over the state had been

⁸ See the map at the end of the chapter.

⁹ Min., MBUA, 1847, p. 14; 1849, p. 15.

¹⁰ True Union, Dec. 6, 1855.

an objective from the outset. Although several attempts were made to secure the services of such a worker, it was difficult to find a man of ability to accept such an arduous undertaking, since the salary was not more than \$700.00.¹¹

In most of the other states, Baptists had begun to publish periodicals to disseminate information and to unify the work of the denomination by 1840, but Maryland did not begin such a publication until late in 1849. In December of that year, the True Union, a weekly paper, was launched; and it compared favorably with any of the Baptist papers of that day.¹² With the small constituency of the Maryland Baptists, this was quite an undertaking. Had it not been for the financial backing of men like William Crane and Franklin Wilson, it could not have been continued as long as it was. In spite of financial difficulties, this periodical managed to survive until the end of 1861, when the problems created by war made its suspension necessary.¹³

Another agency begun in this period, which has been of great value to the churches of the state, was the Baltimore Church Extension Society. Organized in 1853, it was intended to aid churches in the erection of buildings. At

¹¹ Joseph Walker was appointed to this office in 1850, at \$700.00 per year, but he soon resigned. True Union, April 11, 1850.

¹² The first issue came out Dec. 8, 1849.

¹³ True Union, Dec. 26, 1861.

first, the plan was for the society to seek out strategic locations for new churches, and then to erect or acquire a building. After a congregation had been developed to the point where it could be self-sustaining, the building was to be turned over to it. Later, however, this policy was changed, because it did not encourage churches to be independent enough.¹⁴ The first work undertaken by this organization was the construction of a building for the Franklin Square Church, which was dedicated in 1855. In the same year, an Episcopal chapel was purchased for the Lee St. Church.¹⁵ In these two undertakings, the Society became involved in an indebtedness of about \$11,000.00, which was not finally paid until 1860.¹⁶ Thereafter the Extension Society was not very active for a number of years.

From the beginning, as noted in the previous chapter, the Association gave considerable attention to the promotion of Sunday Schools. Prior to 1860, the efforts met with only moderate success. In 1847, the Committee on Sabbath Schools reported: "We . . . regret to observe that the churches composing this Association, do not manifest an increasing interest in this most important instrumentality."¹⁷ Six

¹⁴ Life Story of Franklin Wilson, pp. 59-60. Also, J. F. Weishampel, op. cit., p. 206.

¹⁵ J. F. Weishampel, op. cit., p. 206.

¹⁶ Life Story of Franklin Wilson, pp. 51-53.

¹⁷ Min., MBUA, 1847.

years later, their exhortations appeared to be bearing some fruit, and it was reported that several new schools had been organized.¹⁸ Although the struggle to persuade the churches to adopt this agency as an integral part of their programs was not ended, yet by 1860, the potential value of the Sunday School was coming to be recognized by most of the churches.

Christian education, in its broader aspects, was slow to catch the interest of the Maryland Baptists. Although a Committee on Education had been appointed in 1839, and it made reports each year thereafter, yet there were not many who had any real interest in higher education. Throughout the state, primary and secondary education were but poorly developed,¹⁹ and there were only a few colleges in the state.²⁰ So it is not to be wondered at that the Maryland Baptists generally did not take more interest in higher education. It was in this period that the only Baptist school, which has ever existed in Maryland, was begun; and it was on a secondary level. This school, which was not officially taken under the patronage of the denomination, soon became a boarding school for girls. As such, it continued for a few years

¹⁸ Ibid., 1853, p. 12.

¹⁹ In a message to the legislature, in 1856, Governor Ligon stated: "The system of public instruction in Maryland (if we except the city of Baltimore, whose schools are an honor to the state) is in a state of most utter and hopeless prostration." B. C. Steiner, Education in Maryland, pp. 53-62.

²⁰ For a discussion of educational developments in Maryland on all levels, see Ibid., passim.

and then became defunct.²¹

Columbian College was developing largely without the aid of Maryland Baptists. After the split between northern and southern Baptists, the college was left to fend for itself, Although a nominal control of the school was retained by the denomination for the rest of the century, the Baptists of the District of Columbia were the main ones interested in it after 1850. Even there, more support came from others than Baptists. Still, there were some in Maryland who did their best to get support for, and to arouse interest in, the college. In 1852, a Board of Visitors was appointed by the Association, whose duty it was to visit the school and make a report each year.²² At the Associational meeting of 1852, subscriptions amounting to over \$8,000.00 were taken.²³ But, as often happens in such cases, the pledges made in the Association, under the inspiration of the moment, were slow to be paid.²⁴ Whether all of them

²¹ Min., MBUA, 1847, p. 13. Also True Union, May 2, 1850. For several years the school ran an advertisement in the pages of the True Union. It has not been possible to find out any more about this school than can be gleaned from these fragmentary notices.

²² Min., MBUA, 1852, p. 22.

²³ A man in Washington had offered \$20,000.00 to the college, on condition that others would raise a like amount. At the Association, in 1852, pledges were made, which amounted to \$8,655.00. Ibid., 1852, p. 24.

²⁴ "Churches of Maryland Baptist Union Association! Have you forgotten your pledges! If you have turn back to the minutes. . . ." True Union, Oct. 14, 1852.

were eventually paid or not has not been discovered, but if they were, this was the greatest contribution made by the Maryland Baptists to Columbian College.

In the matter of ministerial education, there had been a great change since 1836. Prior to that time, there had been almost no pastors with any college training; and there had been a definite hostility to an educate ministers on the part of many. By 1853, about half of the preachers of the Maryland had been to college or seminary. So great had become the emphasis upon having educated pastors, that some felt the need of issuing a warning against neglecting to ordain those who did not have such advantages. The Committee on Education, in its report for 1853, stated:²⁵

But as in everything human, however excellent, have we not, oscillating as naturally as the pendulum swings, gone from one extrem to the other? Has there not been a neglect of the "Peters" and "Johns" who ought to be yet in the ministry; while the "Pauls" and "Appollooses" have been sought so exclusively, that God permits us not to find them?

In order to aid young men who were studying for the ministry, a plan was devised to contribute to their support. The impetus for this move came from the editor of the True Union, who suggested it in an editorial in 1854.²⁶ The proposal was made to establish a fund to aid needy students.

²⁵ Min., MBUA, 1853, pp. 26-29.

²⁶ True Union, Aug. 3, 1854.

After first being laid on the table by the Association, the matter was taken up again and adopted.²⁷ Through a newly created agency, which was called the Board of Education, a number of ministerial students were aided during the following years.

Some attention was also paid to the subject of female education during this period. In 1854, a Committee on Female Education was appointed. Its first report was made at the session of 1855:²⁸

Whereas, there can be no doubt that the proper intellectual and religious education of females is of the highest importance to society and the cause of Christ; and whereas there is at present no Institution of a high order in Maryland where such an education can be secured, entirely free from influences unfavourable to Baptist principles, therefore

Resolved, That a special Committee be appointed whose duty it shall be to secure, if possible, a competent person of our denomination, to undertake the establishment of such an Institution.

Resolved, That when such an Institution shall be commenced under the auspices of said Committee, the Association will recommend it to the patronage of the denomination.

Unfortunately good resolutions are not the equivalent of good actions. Nothing at all appears to have been done towards the realization of this proposal, and no such school was ever begun.

Another subject deserving consideration is the relationship of the Union Association to the Boards of the

²⁷ Min., MBUA, 1854, pp. 13, 16, 24. Also, True Union, Nov. 15, 1855.

²⁸ Min., MBUA, 1855, p. 19.

Southern Baptist Convention. Having declared, in 1836, that the Association heartily approved of missions, to what extent did it back up this sentiment with corresponding financial gifts? After the formation of the Southern Convention, some of the churches contributed to both the Home and Foreign Boards of that body. However, nothing was given through the Association prior to the Civil War. While the constituency of the Association seems to have been generally in favor of missionary endeavor, yet the needs of Maryland were so great that many felt that the work within their own bounds had prior claims. This view is expressed in a report adopted by the Association in 1847:²⁹

The committee upon evangelical efforts report: That while we recognize the claims of all objects of Christian benevolence upon our sympathies and aid. . . . still we believe the claims of Maryland are paramount to all others. . . . Moreover, if we compare the influence of the Baptists in this state with any other state or territory, we shall be forced to the conclusion that so far as Baptists are concerned, Maryland is the Burmah of our country. . . .

Nevertheless, it was decided that a token contribution should be given to the Domestic Mission Board of the Southern Convention, on condition that it be used towards the support of work in Maryland.³⁰ This policy was continued during the remainder of this period. Although the amount was increased from \$100.00 to \$300.00 in 1854, the former

²⁹ Min., MBUA, 1847, p. 7.

³⁰ Ibid., 1847, p. 14.

stipulation was retained.³¹ A few of the churches contributed something to foreign missions, but the Association was content with giving these small amounts to the Domestic Mission Board. These designated gifts were used to further work among the Negroes and Germans of Baltimore. Prior to this period, no one had ever gone from Maryland Baptist churches to serve as a foreign missionary. But in the latter part of the period, there were four who went out under the Foreign Board of the Southern Convention. Dr. Roswell H. Graves, a member of the Seventh Church, Baltimore, went to Canton, China, in 1856.³² From the First Church, Baltimore, three people set sail in 1860 for the Far East, but they did not arrive at their destinations. Sailing on the "Edwin Forrest," Reverend and Mrs. J. Q. Rohrer left the United States to become missionaries in Japan.³³ Reverend A. L. Bond was bound for Shanghai, China.³⁴ The ship and all on board were lost at sea and were never heard from again.³⁵ It is one of the ironies of fate, that, having gone so long without providing any missionary volunteers, three of the first four to go from Maryland should have met with such a disaster.

³¹ Ibid., 1854, p. 27.

³² H. A. Tupper, Decade of Foreign Missions, p. 25.

³³ Ibid., p. 787.

³⁴ Ibid., 870.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 26.

Of particular interest to the Maryland Baptists were missions in Liberia. William Crane had been one of those primarily responsible for beginning the mission in Liberia. He had interested two colored men in becoming the first missionaries to that place, and he had induced the Triennial Convention to adopt the work.³⁶ It was in keeping with the general predilection of Maryland to solve the slavery problem by means of colonizing the Negroes in Africa, that that they should be especially interested in this field.

The interest in missions to Liberia is reflected in a report made to the Association in 1854. The report explained that one of the chief obstacles to the fulfilment of the dream of evangelizing Africa lay in the finding of suitable colored men, who could be sent as missionaries. Therefore, it was proposed that a school should be established in Baltimore, where "colored men of piety and promise may be fitted for the missionary field."³⁷ The proposed school was operated for a few years, but financial difficulties brought it to an end after the opening of the Civil War.³⁸

Interest in the Negroes was not confined to those in Africa. The number of free Negroes was rapidly increasing in Baltimore, and other denominations were helping them to

³⁶ Missionary Jubilee, pp. 19-20.

³⁷ Min., MBUA, 1854, pp. 12-13.

³⁸ See chapter 13 regarding the Saratoga St. School.

organize churches. Prior to 1836, there was no colored Baptist Church in Maryland, but there were colored members in most of the churches. The First Colored Baptist Church of Baltimore was formed in 1836, and it became a member of the Maryland Association in 1841.³⁹ Three other Negro Baptist churches were organized prior to the Civil War, and they were aided by the white Baptists. However, the Negro Baptist churches made little progress in Maryland until the close of the war.⁴⁰

Towards the end of the period under consideration, a small work was begun among the Germans of Baltimore. In 1859, there were about 50,000 Germans in the city, and several Protestant churches had already been established among them. In the summer of 1859, the Association employed a German theological student to work among the German population, and in the Fall of that year, a church was organized with twelve members.⁴¹ Having felt the effects of the financial panic of 1857, the Association applied to the Domestic Mission Board of the Southern Convention for aid in supporting a pastor for the new German church.⁴² Within a year, the church increased to 45 members, and it

³⁹ Min., MBUA, 1841.

⁴⁰ See chapter 13 regarding the Negro Baptist churches.

⁴¹ True Union, Jan. 20, 1859.

⁴² Ibid., Aug. 8, 1861.

was admitted to the Association in 1860.⁴³ With the coming of war, all assistance from the South was suspended, and the pastor of the church returned to Germany. Without pastoral leadership, the church was soon dissolved, but it was reorganized in 1865.⁴⁴

In 1857, Elder Jacob Knapp came to Baltimore for another series of revival meetings, preaching this time at the Seventh Baptist Church. Although the results were not as noticeable as they had been in 1839-1840, there was some increase in the number of baptisms reported the next year.⁴⁵ There was also a revival in Baltimore during the years 1858-1859, which was part of a movement which was sweeping over many of the eastern cities at that time. The editor of the True Union commented in April, 1858:⁴⁶

. . . . so far as our city is concerned, instead of the interest declining, it appears to be deepening and widening. During the past week thousands thronged the capacious Hall of the Maryland Institute; and at the service on last Sabbath Day, it is supposed that upwards of 2,000 persons were compelled to retire from the doors, being unable to gain admission.

At the close of the fifteen year period, which has just been surveyed, there were 37 churches with nearly 4300 members. Baptist work had gained a foothold in Western Maryland and on the Eastern Shore. The number of missionaries employed by the Board had increased, as had the contribu-

⁴³ Min., MBUA, 1861.

⁴⁴ Maryland Baptist, Sept., 1902.

⁴⁵ Reuben Jeffery, op. cit., p. 103.

⁴⁶ True Union, April, 1858.

tions to the funds of the Association. A Baptist periodical had been successfully published for eleven years. During this time, several men of marked ability as ministers had entered the ranks of the Maryland Baptists. Also a fund had been created to aid students for the ministry, and a Church Extension Society had been organized to help churches secure buildings. In these respects, important gains had been made between 1846 and 1860. The coming of the Civil War was to retard progress for a while, a story which will be taken up in chapter 12.

TABLE X. Growth of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, 1846-1860.⁴⁷

| Year | Ministers | Churches | Baptisms | Members |
|------|-----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1846 | 11 | 17 | 83 | 1765 |
| 1847 | 12 | 16 | 66 | 1802 |
| 1848 | 20 | 22 | 184 | 2021 |
| 1849 | 20 | 24 | 184 | 2024 |
| 1850 | 17 | 26 | 95 | 2034 |
| 1851 | 19 | 27 | 301 | 2342 |
| 1852 | 25 | 28 | 249 | 2448 |
| 1853 | 23 | 28 | 162 | 2557 |
| 1854 | 25 | 25 | 382 | 2808 |
| 1855 | 27 | 30 | 265 | 3149 |
| 1856 | 32 | 30 | 559 | 3291 |
| 1857 | 28 | 32 | 242 | 3784 |
| 1858 | 35 | 32 | 420 | 4154 |
| 1859 | 30 | 34 | 198 | 4143 |
| 1860 | 32 | 37 | 265 | 4274 |

⁴⁷ Min., MBUA, 1846-1860.

1. First Baltimore
2. Taneytown
3. Pikesville
4. Gunpowder
5. High Street

10. E St., Wn.
11. Forest
12. Seventh, Balto.
13. Cumberland
14. Huntingdon, Balto.

19. Rockville
20. Vienna
21. 2d Colored, Wn.*
22. Eckhart Mines
23. Union, Balto.*

6. Second Washington

15. Second, Balto.

24. Rockville City (Newtown)

7. Nanjemoy

16. Whitehaven

25. Frederick

8. First Colored, Balto.*

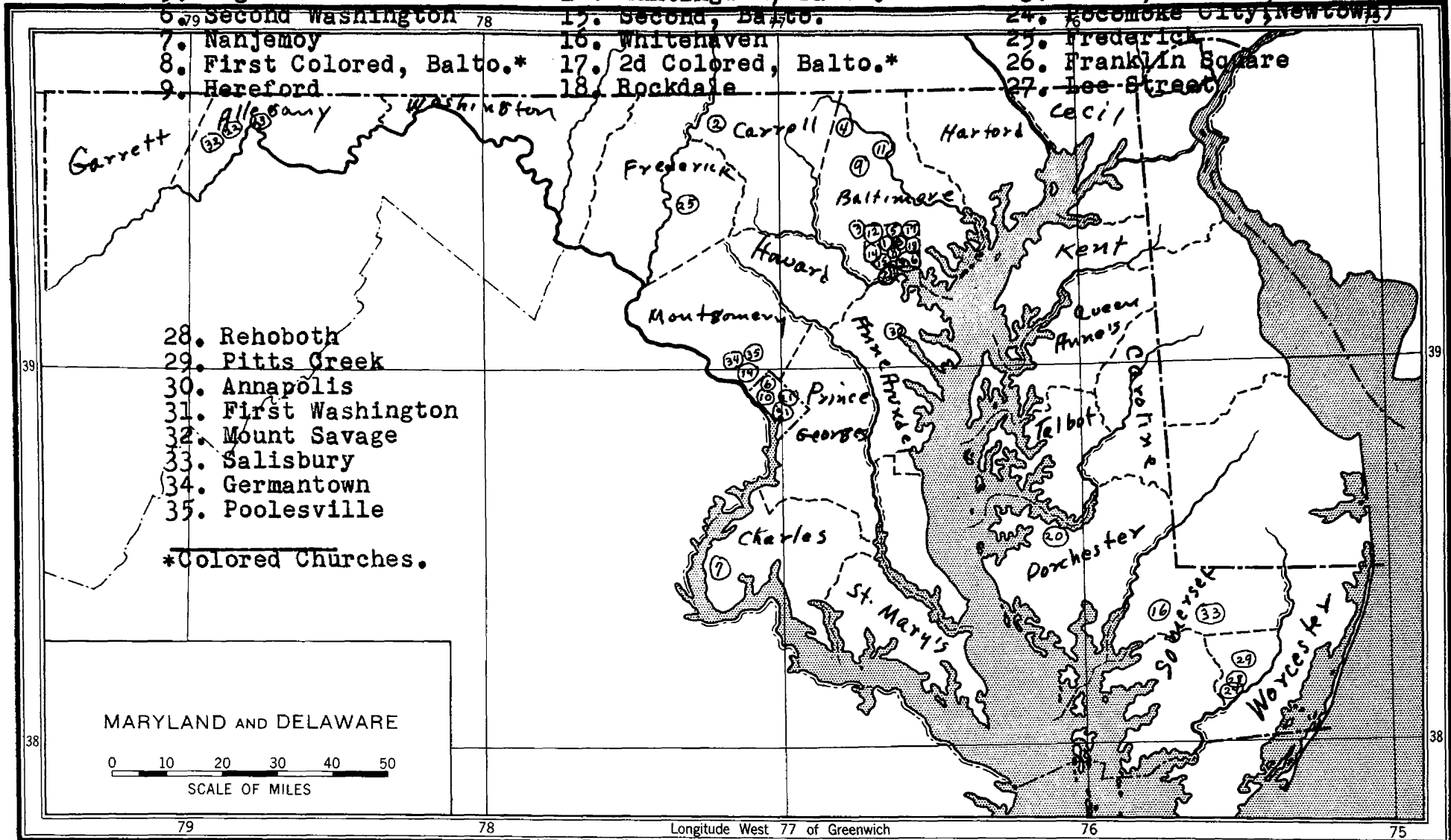
17. 2d Colored, Balto.*

26. Franklin Square

9. Hereford

18. Rockdale

27. Lee Street



Location of Churches in the Maryland Baptist
Union Association in 1860

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS ISSUES

(1846-1860)

During the first decade of the existence of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, little attention had been paid to social questions that were agitating the public mind in that day. This reticence was partly due to the traditional policy of the older Baptists, who avoided all questions which did not have direct religious bearing. Temperance was the only social issue which was dealt with in the Association meetings, and that was given a place of prominence because of its importance as a moral problem. During the period between 1846 and 1860, there is evidence of a growing awareness of social issues. Probably the fact that there was a weekly Baptist paper published during most of these years was a factor in disseminating information and creating interest in questions of a public nature.¹ At any rate, the Maryland Baptists began to take more interest in public questions during these years.

So many matters of a social nature received cognizance in these years, that they cannot all be considered in detail. Only passing mention will be made of the less important matters, while more detailed accounts of the attitudes towards

¹ The True Union dealt more with questions of public interest than have any of its successors.

major problems will be given. Those which were of most significance were temperance, religious liberty, Roman Catholicism, slavery, secession, and war.

In the matter of social amusements, the Maryland Baptists followed earlier Puritanical patterns, censuring many of the forms of recreation, which were popular in that day. Dancing, card-playing, and all forms of gambling came under the ban. Frequent discussions of such matters are to be found in the pages of the True Union. Other things which were usually condemned were the theater, the circus,² and the reading of novels;³ even the performances of Jenny Lind came in for censure.⁴

Other minor matters which received some measure of attention were the Homestead Bill,⁵ church union,⁶ and the appointment of chaplains to Congress.⁷ Largely through the efforts of Baptists, the Y. M. C. A. was established in Bal-

² Lee St. Church passed the following resolution in 1859: "Resolved, that attending theatrical performances, circuses, dancing parties, and Negro operas, be considered an offence against the church, and consequently a matter for discipline." (John Pollard, History of the Lee St. Baptist Church, 1870). The Seventh Church had a similar ruling. (Min., MBUA, 1847, p. 11).

³ The reading of novels was frequently criticised in the pages of the True Union.

⁴ See Franklin Wilson, Popular Amusements; or, How Far May a Christian Indulge in Popular Amusements?

⁵ True Union, Jan. 17, 1850.

⁶ Ibid., March 28, 1850.

⁷ Min., MBUA, 1857, p. 23.

timore in 1853.⁸ Encouragement was given to popular education, both on primary and secondary levels. Also there was some interest in education for the colored people.

With the growing interest in the question of the participation of women in public affairs, it was natural that some consideration should be given to the matter by the Baptists. Two aspects, in particular, received attention. The first was that of female education. It has already been noted that a proposal to start a female school was made in 1855, but the recommendation of the Association was never carried out. At least, female education on a secondary level was regarded with favor. No opinion was expressed concerning the higher education of women. The other aspect of the question of women's rights involved their participation in the business affairs of the churches. Evidently, little change had been made in the past fifty years on this matter. The general consensus seems to have been that women ought to be silent in the church. No women were permitted to be messengers to the Association, and perhaps none of them wished to do so at that time. In some of the churches, separate prayer meetings were sometimes held, in order that women might have an opportunity to express themselves freely.⁹

⁸ Ibid., 1852, pp. 27-28; 1853, pp. 20-21.

⁹ In a letter from Richard Fuller to his church, dated July 29, 1871 (while he was on vacation), he referred to the ladies' prayer meetings held on Friday evenings. J. H. Cuthbert, Life of Richard Fuller, p. 291.

When an editorial in the True Union expressed the opinion that women might be permitted to speak in prayer meetings or in the business sessions of the church, a member of one of the Baltimore churches wrote a reply. In his letter, he stated that he agreed with the editor, if such speaking were limited to the giving of a word of testimony. He added that such permission ought not to be interpreted to mean that women could help to make church decisions:¹⁰

I allude to their taking a conspicuous part, voting, for instance, in the ordinary business meetings of the church. Is this a comely practice for females? Is it not a very manifest usurping of authority?

That the question was forcing itself upon the churches to some extent seems apparent from the fact that it came up for further discussion before long. In an article, entitled "Ought Women to Speak in Our Churches?" the editor of the True Union wrote:¹¹

The question was recently put to us and a reply requested through the columns of the True Union. . . . If we were to express an opinion in one word, we should unhesitatingly say, No.

. . . . It may also be proper to observe, that some while they admit that it would not be desirable for a woman to ascend the pulpit, and deliver a systematic discourse, nevertheless consider it would be in order for her to speak at the prayer and conference meeting. . . .

The editor goes on to express his own disapproval of women speaking in a church gathering for any purpose than to give

¹⁰ True Union, Jan. 31, 1856.

¹¹ Ibid., Sept. 30, 1858.

a testimony. Quoting Scripture to support his opinion, he declares that such conduct would be "immodest" and "masculine." As there were no repercussions from this editorial, the opinion must have received general sanction. Certainly the women were not making much progress in winning new privileges in the churches, and it was to be nearly thirty years before any noticeable change took place among the Maryland Baptists in this respect.

Some individuals took an interest in institutions which were for the outcasts and dependents of society. Religious services were held at the Maryland Institute of the Blind and at the penitentiary.¹² Franklin Wilson took a lead in arousing interest in projects involving the welfare of unfortunates of society. He was on the Board of Managers of the House of Refuge.¹³ Becoming interested in redeeming prostitutes from their degraded condition, he devised a plan and aroused interest in the Union Association of the Baltimore Rosine. In a pamphlet, he explained his hope that a home for these unfortunate women might be established, where they could be reclaimed to useful living.¹⁴ His wife and several other Baptists were on the Board of Managers of this institution.¹⁵

¹² Ibid., Feb. 3, 1859.

¹³ Life Story of Franklin Wilson, p. 53.

¹⁴ Franklin Wilson, Appeal of the Union Association of the Baltimore Rosine, pp. 1-3.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

The temperance movement which had gained momentum in the forties had lost some of its force by the end of that decade. Since almost no legislation had resulted from the agitation, interest tended to wane. But in the fifties, a new impetus was given to the cause. The following observations were made in the True Union in 1851:¹⁶

Some ten years ago, this subject was the engrossing theme. Not only were the churches alive to its importance, but its claims were felt and acknowledged by our citizens generally. Agents were sent forth. . . . Society after society was organized. Speeches were made. . . .

But gradually the enthusiasm of some abated, and the zeal of many waxed cold. . . .

Within the last few weeks, we are happy to learn a new impetus has been given to teetotalism in this city. Not only have the several Temperance orders become more than usually wide awake, but some of the old societies have been reorganized. Among these we are pleased to hear that the "Washingtonians" are again in the field.

During the 1840's, the main stress among the Baptists had been put upon reform by moral suasion. By 1850, the opinion had been reached by the leaders of the Association, that such means were inadequate. It appeared that the only effective remedy lay in legislative enactments. The Committee on Temperance reported to the Association in 1851:¹⁷

The question arises, what is the duty of the churches in relation to the subject. . . . That most of our ministers and members are firm friends of total abstinence. . . . we rejoice to know. . . . But still the work is not yet done.

¹⁶ True Union, April, 1851.

¹⁷ Min., MBUA, 1851, p. 16.

Moral suasion which has ever had such mighty power over the human heart, with many, has had little or no influence. . . . Is it not time for Christians of every name and denomination to rise up with one heart and one voice, and with one hand, to wipe this foul blot off the Church of Christ?

The first real triumph of the temperance forces was registered in 1851, with the passage of the Maine Liquor Law in November of that year.¹⁸ The enactment of an "anti-license" law in the state of Maine, which at first seemed to be a complete success, gave encouragement to temperance societies all over the country. Early in 1852, petitions were signed in Baltimore and sent to the Maryland Legislature, asking for the enactment "of a law similar to that [of Maine] the benefits of which are so blessed."¹⁹ The editor of the True Union urged, "Let every Christian to whom these may be presented, sign this petition."²⁰ Two weeks later, an editorial appeared in the columns of that paper, advocating the passage of such a law:²¹

. . . . Fellow-citizens, there is a remedy. Secure the passage and enforcement of the Maine Law, and it will be applied. Dry up the fountains and the streams will cease to flow.

However, when the Maryland Legislature met in June, 1852, such a measure was passed by the House of Representatives,

¹⁸ True Union, Dec. 4, 1851.

¹⁹ Ibid., Feb. 5, 1852.

²⁰ Ibid., Feb. 5, 1852.

²¹ Ibid., Feb. 19, 1852.

but it was defeated in the Senate.²² The True Union observed: "The Senate has given the quietus, for the present to the anti-license law."²³

Still the battle was not conceded. The temperance organizations increased their efforts to stir up sentiment in favor of their views. The Maryland Association gave its support to the efforts to have the Maine Law passed. In its session of 1852, the following resolution was passed:²⁴

Resolved, That we earnestly recommend the Missionaries and Pastors of this Association to comply with the request of the Maryland Temperance Convention, to preach a sermon in favor of the adoption of the "Maine Liquor Law," and to take a collection to promote the cause of temperance on the third Lord's day in December next.

In January, 1853, the Honorable Neal Dow, author of the Maine Law, paid a visit to Baltimore. In an address made on that occasion, he gave heartening reports of the operation of the law in his state.²⁵ Thus new fuel was added to the fervor which was reaching an unprecedented intensity. In Baltimore, temperance sentiment was so strong, that in the 1853 elections for the legislature, the crucial issue was the "Maine Law" question. In these elections, the ten Maine Law candidates for the legislature were elected by a wide majority. Also the Maine Law candidate for sheriff

²² D. Leigh Colvin, Prohibition in the U. S., p. 33.

²³ True Union, June 24, 1852.

²⁴ Min., MBUA, 1852, p. 24.

²⁵ True Union, Feb. 3, 1853.

won out by an even larger majority.²⁶ Nevertheless, no satisfactory results were obtained from the next session of the legislature.

By 1855, the much-vaunted Maine Law had begun to show signs of weakness in the state of its birth. Difficulties of strict enforcement caused the law to go out of operation in October, 1855.²⁷ After the Maryland Legislature had met again in 1856, without giving any indication of willingness to take any action on the matter,²⁸ the strong tide of enthusiasm began to abate. It did not die out entirely, for there was still a noticeable current of public opinion on the question. In 1858, one final effort was made to persuade the legislature to pass some measure to control the liquor traffic. More petitions were sent to the body, and mass meetings were held in Baltimore.²⁹ Yet no results were forthcoming. By the time that the legislature met again, public opinion had become too much engrossed in other matters to pay much attention to temperance. With the coming of secession and war, the temperance movement suffered a setback from which it did not recover for more than a decade.

The next question to be considered is the attitude of Maryland Baptists towards Roman Catholicism. The great in-

²⁶ Ibid., Nov. 10, 1853.

²⁷ Ibid., Oct. 4, 1855.

²⁸ Ibid., May 1, 1856.

²⁹ Ibid., Jan. 7, 1858.

flux of Germans and Irish between 1820 and 1850 had added greatly to the strength of Catholics in Baltimore, as it had in most other northern cities.³⁰ Prior to 1830, the Catholics had been relatively weak in Maryland. Ever since colonial days, especially after the establishment of the Church of England in 1702, there had been hostility towards the Catholic Church, which sometimes found expression in anti-Catholic laws. Several such laws were passed between 1704 and 1718. At the latter date, the Catholics were deprived of their suffrage rights.³¹ In 1756, a double tax had been levied upon them for the support of the militia.³² Up to that time and for another century, this element of the population was a rather small minority group.³³ About the time of the Revolution, the intolerance towards the members of this faith became somewhat diminished. Not until their numbers had been augmented by the immigration between 1820 and 1850 did the anti-Catholic spirit become pronounced again.

³⁰ Even as late as 1860, Catholics were not as numerous in Maryland as were the Methodists. For example, in 1859, there were 26 priests and 19 churches in Baltimore. This was an advance over 1830, when there had been 8 priests and 5 churches. But the Methodists, at the latter date, had 34 ministers and 40 churches in Baltimore. True Union, Sept. 8, 1859.

³¹ W. T. Russell, Maryland, Land of Sanctuary, pp. 400-402.

³² Ibid., p. 418.

³³ Supra, p. 9, footnote 6.

The Baptists had shared in the general antagonism against Catholics in the pre-Revolutionary period.³⁴ In the old Baltimore Baptist Association, little mention was made of Roman Catholicism until after 1830. By that time, the wave of immigration from Catholic parts of Europe was beginning to cause some alarm. Consequently, in 1831, the Association had devoted its Corresponding Letter to a warning against the Catholic menace.³⁵ In the sessions of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, references were made on several occasions to the Catholics. In every instance, these references were connected with the subject of education. The admonition was repeatedly offered that the Catholics were winning over Baptist children, because the former provided for their education, while the latter neglected to do so.³⁶ By the middle of the century, anti-Catholic sentiment was quite strong in various sections of the United States, especially in the cities which had received the bulk of the recent immigration.

Almost every issue of the True Union during the twelve years of its existence, contained articles denouncing Cath-

³⁴ See the statement regarding Catholicism in the document of the Chestnut Ridge Church, quoted Supra, pp. 10-11.

³⁵ The letter said: "We believe that all of their plans. . . are designed to overthrow the foundations of our free institutions." Min., BBA, 1831, p. 9.

³⁶ For example, "Report on Education," Min., MBUA, 1841, p. 16.

olic practices. Sometimes the articles dealt with specific activities of the Catholic Church, and sometimes they criticized the church in general terms. For example, in one of the earliest issues, there appeared an article denouncing "Popery." Among other things, it stated:³⁷

Popery changed? Let England and America beware of cherishing such a sentiment as this. Popery is stamped with infallibility, and thus makes all the wickedness of past ages its own. When popery is divested of political power, it can easily assume the appearance of charity, kindness, liberty and moderation, but appearances of this sort deserve no regard. Never let us suppose that Popery will change. It is of the same nature as sin itself.

Practically every week this periodical scored some aspect of Roman Catholicism. In April, 1850, it warned that the Catholic Church was growing in the United States, including an intimation that immigration to our shores was part of a great conspiracy to dominate the United States:³⁸

The increase and extension of the Roman Catholic church in the United States is very apparent, according to a statistical exhibition contained in the Catholic Almanac for 1850. That such a result is necessarily consequent upon the immense flood of immigration pouring in upon our shores from Catholic Europe, every reflecting man will readily perceive; and really, in view of the intellectual, sacerdotal, and pecuniary aid so liberally expended upon this country. . . . we might have expected even more striking evidences of success. . . .

One of the chief grievances, which the Baptists had against the Catholics was that in countries where the latter were predominant, religious liberty was not granted.

³⁷ True Union, Jan. 17, 1850.

³⁸ Ibid., April 25, 1850.

In Maryland, the Baptists suggested that the Catholics be given an opportunity to prove the sincerity of their assertions regarding religious liberty. Maryland Baptists did not, as did some others, propose that Catholics be excluded from the country or restricted in their rights. Instead, they suggested that European and other countries which were predominantly Catholic should be persuaded to extend religious liberty to Americans of all faiths. In 1851, the Association appointed a committee to "enquire into the expediency of memorializing our government on the subject of obtaining from all foreign governments, particularly Roman Catholic powers, the same religious toleration and protection for American citizens, which are extended by this government to citizens from all portions of the world."³⁹ Accordingly, in 1852, the committee brought in a "Report on Romanism."⁴⁰ They had also drawn up a petition to be sent to the Senate and the House of Representatives.⁴¹ This petition asked that the State Department persuade all other countries to give guarantees of religious liberty to American citizens of whatever religious persuasion they might be.

At about this time, some instances of religious persecution occurred in Italy, which received wide publicity and helped to focus public attention upon the question of re-

³⁹ Min., MBUA, 1851, p. 19.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 1852, pp. 17-21.

⁴¹ Ibid., 1852, p. 21

ligious liberty.⁴² When the memorials of the Maryland Association were presented to Congress, General Cass made a speech in the Senate on religious liberty, which was reprinted in many newspapers.⁴³ By the time that the Association met in the Fall of 1853, there were high hopes that the petition would lead to the spread of religious freedom over the world.⁴⁴ However, this naive expectation was foredoomed to disappointment. A question of this nature was too complex to be settled so easily.

At about the same time that these memorials were being presented to Congress, events were taking place in Maryland, which raised antagonism against the Catholics to a new pitch. The cause of this heightened opposition was an attempt of that denomination to get a share of the public funds for the support of its parochial schools. A bill to that end had been presented to the Maryland Legislature in 1852.⁴⁵ Quite a stir arose in Baltimore over the proposal of the Catholics to divert tax money to their own interests. Protestants circulated petitions and held mass meetings protesting the

⁴² True Union, Jan. 27, 1853. In 1848, several thousand copies of the Scriptures in the Italian language were circulated in Florence. As a result, several persons were led to abandon the Catholic Church. In 1851, Count Guicciardini and others were imprisoned and finally banished for religious reasons.

⁴³ Ibid., Jan. 27, 1853.

⁴⁴ Min., MBUA, 1853, p. 22.

⁴⁵ True Union, May 6, 1852.

passage of the measure.⁴⁶ When the legislature met, the opposition was so strong that the bill was laid on the table at the request of its author.⁴⁷

Agitation over this issue continued after the adjournment of the legislature. The Catholics held mass meetings to win support for the proposed bill, and they tried to get the mayoralty candidates to commit themselves on the question. When they refused to do so, there was talk of running a separate candidate, who would favor the Kerney Bill.⁴⁸ Those who were opposed to the passage of the Catholic-sponsored measure held mass meetings to register their protests, and among the leaders were two Baptist ministers, John Berg and Richard Fuller.⁴⁹ The Maryland Baptist Union Association had gone on record in the Fall of 1852 as being opposed to the enactment of the bill.⁵⁰ One of these mass meetings was held in April, 1853, with Richard Fuller and other Baptists taking prominent parts in the discussions.⁵¹ At that time, a resolution was passed, requesting the legislature to disapprove the proposed Kerney Bill, and a committee was ap-

⁴⁶ Ibid., Sept 9, 1852.

⁴⁷ L. Schmeckebeier, Know-Nothing Party in Maryland, p. 55.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 56-57.

⁴⁹ True Union, Feb. 24, 1853.

⁵⁰ Min., MBUA, 1852, pp. 12, 19-20.

⁵¹ True Union, April 14, 1853.

pointed to carry it to the legislature.⁵² The ensuing session of the legislature sent the bill back to the committee from which it had emanated, and it did not reappear again.⁵³ In this successful protest against a proposed course of action, which was contrary to the principle of the separation of church and state, the Baptists had taken a leading part.

Considering the strong opposition to Roman Catholicism in general, augmented by the bid of that denomination for a share of the public funds to support their schools, it is not surprising that the Know-Nothing movement found a favorable reception in Maryland. In 1855, that party won the state elections. The storm center was in Baltimore; for the foreign-born population was concentrated there.⁵⁴ There is no evidence to show that the Baptists took any leading part in this movement. It would not be surprising if some of the Maryland Baptists voted with that party. However, the True Union did not advocate the program of the party, and no names of Baptist leaders have been found among the leaders of the Know-Nothing Party.

The questions which were most important in this period were those of slavery, secession, and civil war. In chapter four, it was shown that a rather strong sentiment exist-

⁵² Ibid., April 14, 1853.

⁵³ L. Schmeckebeier, Know-Nothing Party in Maryland, pp. 55-56.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 46-47.

ed among the Baptists of Maryland against slavery. Later, while they were not ardent in their advocacy of the institution, yet they were by no means in sympathy with the abolitionist Baptists of the North. In the break between the northern and southern Baptists, they chose to align themselves with the Southern Baptist Convention. During the period now being considered, they appear to have condoned slavery, although they were aware of its defects. Several of the pastors who had come to the state were from the South, and this increased the tendency to defend the southerners and to recognize the difficulties attendant upon the questions of slavery and emancipation.

While there were wide differences of opinion on the entire matter, one fairly consistent principle to which the majority of the Maryland Baptists clung was the preservation of the Union. Slavery and anti-slavery feeling was reaching a fever stage around 1850. But the preserving of the Union remained the foremost consideration of the members of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, until secession had become a de facto reality. As the Congress and the whole country were being agitated over the extension of slavery into the territories in 1850, the True Union struck the key-note, which was to characterize nearly all of the public utterances for the next decade:⁵⁵

. The preservation of the Union

⁵⁵ True Union, Jan. 24, 1850.

should be regarded as paramount to every other political consideration. We may complain of the real or imaginary invasion of personal right, but this cannot be substantiated as a system in violation of the Constitution. . . . Let no Christian be a party to an act which may involve successive generations in perplexity and strife; shatter the beautiful fabric around which the hopes of the world are clustering. . . . Let us resolve to preserve the Union, and in so doing, we shall be true to ourselves, true to our country, true to posterity, and true unto God.

When at last the Compromise of 1850 had been settled, this paper expressed satisfaction that a solution had apparently been reached. In an editorial, it was stated, "This triumph of the great interest of humanity will visit a wholesome rebuke unto the spirit of disunion. . . ." ⁵⁶ The stand of the editor of this Baptist periodical, and probably of the Maryland Baptists generally, was announced more definitely in December, 1850: ⁵⁷

. . . . We are no advocate nor apologist for slavery; we have not a particle of sympathy with it as an abstract thing. . . . We have always believed that the country would have been better off, if it had never been introduced. It is here, however, -- here as a disease, and it is no characteristic of the wise physician to be constantly fretting and provoking the patient with internal irritation, while his condition will not bear the exhibition of medicaments.

From the beginning of the colonization movement, there had been a strong public opinion in Maryland favoring this solution of the problem of slavery. Maryland Baptists, in general, seem to have shared this attitude. To Dr. Fuller

⁵⁶ Ibid., Sept. 12, 1850.

⁵⁷ Ibid., Dec. 12, 1850.

colonization of the Negroes in Africa appeared to be the only proper solution. Having come from South Carolina, and being an owner of slaves, he might have been expected to defend Negro servitude as a positive good. Many people thought him to be the champion of slavery; but even in his debate with Dr. Wayland, in 1844, he had conceded that the institution was an evil, for which there was no easy solution.⁵⁸ His position remained fairly consistent through the years. When, in 1856, someone suggested that his views had changed since coming to Maryland, he used the columns of the True Union to deny that his opinions had been altered. He explained that he had never been a strong defender of slavery;⁵⁹

But let no one regard me as an advocate of slavery. I deeply regret its existence; and though it would reduce me to poverty, I would be relieved of a burden of my conscience, if the slaves in my possession could enjoy the blessings of freedom.

He went on to say that it was a difficult problem to solve, stating that, "To hold them is not a sin. . . . They are here. We cannot free them. . . ."

This was the same view which he had expressed in an address to the American Colonization Society in Washington, in 1851. At the opening of the meeting, Henry Clay had voiced his opinion that there would be a gradual extinction of slavery. As the population increased, he said, the employment

⁵⁸ Richard Fuller and Francis Wayland, op. cit.

⁵⁹ True Union, Jan. 10, 1856.

of slave labor would become more unprofitable, until it would be abandoned. He did not think that the matter would ever lead to war. Fuller, in the address which followed, took a more realistic view. In the opening sentences, he deprecated the impatience of the North and the over sensitiveness of the South. Since the matter was fast becoming a question of religious feeling more than of political compromise, he felt that the country was approaching an hour of peril. The only hope, as he saw it, lay in the national support of the plan to send the Negroes to Africa:⁶⁰

We think that the time has come -- as this resolution says, and as your president has so eloquently said -- when we ought not in vain to invoke the attention of this government and the interposition of Congress in behalf of this great enterprise. . . . There stands Liberia; and if so much can be done by individual benevolence, what cannot be achieved if the wisdom and power and resources of this great republic were devoted to this great object. . . .

It something cannot be done, nothing will save this country from. . . the agitation of the slavery question and civil conflict.

His insight into the problem was keener than that of Clay; and future events proved him to be a true prophet. Whether the colonization scheme could ever have been practicable or not is a moot question. But Fuller and other Maryland Baptists thought it the only avenue by which war could be avoided. Frequent reports on Liberia and on the activities of the Colonization Society appeared in the True Union during these years.

⁶⁰ J. H. Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 194-201.

Another prominent Baptist leader of Maryland threw the weight of his influence on the side of moderation. At an early date, William Crane had come to hold advanced ideas regarding the Negro. In 1832, having taken an interest in the colored people of Richmond, Crane set forth some propositions stating his opinions in the form of thirty-six questions. These he intended to send to a minister in the city of Richmond, but when he learned that the views of that man were in contrast to his own, he decided not to make his opinions public. Perhaps he was lacking in courage for not publicising his convictions. However, considering that he was a layman and that few of his associates agreed with him, he can hardly be blamed for his reticence. Taking a stand in contrast to the general climate of opinion might have led to his ostracism by associates, and that would have precluded all further possibility of contributing to the welfare of the colored people. It was partly because he felt out of place in the intolerant atmosphere of Richmond that he had decided to move to Baltimore:⁶¹

. . . . I found very few individuals to sympathize with me in my conclusions. Some were quite willing to call me an abolitionist of the northern stamp, and for that reason these thoughts were written out in a hypothetical or interrogatory form as the most unobjectionable mode of giving them. . . . One of my strongest reasons for moving my family from Richmond to Baltimore in 1834, was an irrepressible foreboding of the terrible scenes we are now witnessing. I stated this to my brother, J. C. Crane, and that north of the Potomac I should hope to be out of them.

⁶¹ William Crane, Anti-Slavery in Virginia. This statement is a part of the explanation at the conclusion.

The thirty-six queries which he had set forth in 1832 are too lengthy to quote in their entirety. However, it may be of interest to include some of them to show how far in advance of his times he was:⁶²

24. If the same political rights and privileges which the white man possesses were allowed to the colored man, would this necessarily give to the colored man any claim to the daughter of the white man in marriage? Are not political and social or family rights distinct things. . . . ?

.
27. Can the white man be justified in denying the inalienable rights to the colored man, because possibly matrimonial connections may take place in the future?

28. Is it not denying the white man an inalienable right, legally to deprive him of the object of his choice, or whatever color that choice may be?

.
35. Can the slavery of the Old Testament be properly regarded in any other light than as one of the great evils of the fall of man, which with polygamy and many other evils in the dark age, God overlooked or "winked at?" and should we not be guided by the superior light of the New Testament?

36. Does the New Testament anywhere directly, unequivocally, approbate slavery, except as obedience to earthly governments required it? Do not its teachings, and its forms of communion entirely nullify or take from this civil institution all of its evil concomitants?

While these statements do not prove anything more than that they were opinions held by one individual, yet they are interesting in the light of the prevailing attitudes which surrounded him. Perhaps his interest in the Negroes and his opinions of their rights may have had some effect upon other Maryland Baptists, as he was one of the most eminent lay-

⁶² Ibid., pp. 11-20.

men of the denomination. In his opinion, colonization of the Negroes in Africa was impracticable and undesirable.⁶³ At least his views illustrate the diversity of opinion among the Maryland Baptists.

The predominant opinion in Maryland seems to have been one of toleration of slavery, rather than advocacy of it. Slaves had decreased throughout the state by 1850. In 1860, Baltimore had only 2,213 slaves out of a total population of 214,037.⁶⁴ In Frederick and other western counties, the slaves had almost disappeared.⁶⁵ The remaining slaves were mostly concentrated in Southern Maryland and on the Eastern Shore. There were few Baptists in these sections, and it appears that few of the Maryland Baptists were slaveholders. In the presidential election of 1856, Maryland displayed her lack of interest in perpetuating the controversy over slavery by voting for Millard Fillmore.⁶⁶ Even the insurrection at Harper's Ferry, in 1859, did not greatly excite the editor of the True Union, as it did many others farther to the South. To him it was merely "an affair. . . . concocted by 30 or 40 renegades and fanatics. . . ." ⁶⁷ It was not a plot of the abolitionist North against the South.

⁶³ Ibid., explanatory conclusion.

⁶⁴ True Union, Jan. 17, 1861.

⁶⁵ Ibid., Jan. 27, 1853.

⁶⁶ Ibid., Nov. 13, 1856.

⁶⁷ Ibid., Oct. 20, 1859; and Oct. 27, 1859.

As the presidential elections of 1860 drew near, the slavery issue was approaching a climax. In this election, Maryland showed her southern sympathies by voting for Breckinridge.⁶⁸ The Maryland Association, which met soon after the election, regarded with concern the disturbed condition of the nation which had resulted from Lincoln's election. The body drew up an "Open Letter to the Baptists of the United States," which was published in various Baptist periodicals.⁶⁹ The Baptist churches of Baltimore held union prayer meetings in the interest of peace. These were announced in the True Union, and nearly every one of the ministers signed a plea for the church members to gather and pray that peace would be maintained.⁷⁰

Up to the time that the Confederate government was organized, the preservation of the Union had been the main objective of the Maryland Baptists. After that step had been taken, some shifted their goal to the maintenance of peace, even if it meant the disruption of the Union. Richard Fuller, in a public letter, suggested that a peaceful separation might be the best way out of the dilemma.⁷¹ Franklin Wilson

⁶⁸ This may seem a contradiction to the contention that Maryland was a proponent of moderation. But the fact that the state did not secede shows that they were less concerned about the preservation of slavery than the Cotton States.

⁶⁹ This letter contained a plea to the Baptists of the North and South to seek "the things which make for peace." Min., MBUA, 1860, p. 15; also, True Union, Nov. 22, 1860.

⁷⁰ True Union, Nov. 15, 1860.

⁷¹ Ibid., Jan. 31, 1861.

concurred with Fuller in this opinion. In an editorial which expressed his approval of such a sentiment, he concluded, "Why, then, not have a peaceful separation?"⁷²

As was true of the other border states, there was no unified sentiment in Maryland on the issues of secession and war. Strong sentimental ties attracted its people to the South. However, there were commercial, political, and other factors which pulled them towards the North. Before the state had made a decision regarding secession, Franklin Wilson made an attempt to analyze the population, in order to determine which side Maryland would likely join. His analysis is here quoted:⁷³

There is probably no city in the land where public sentiment is more divided than here. Our population is largely made up of men from the South and from the North, with a great number of foreigners. From a careful examination of the census of 1850, we learn that the city then contained 169,054 inhabitants, 23,388 [free] colored, 2,946 slaves, and 140,666 whites. As very few of the colored people have come from other states, it is fair to make our calculations exclusively upon this enumeration of the whites. We find then that 10,606 of our own city were natives of free states, and only 5,122 of the slave states. Leaving out Virginia. . . . and Delaware. . . . all the remaining Slave States contributed but 761 souls to our population.

.
Of course, amid such a mixture there must be a great diversity of opinion. Many doubtless are ardent secessionists; others, though fewer, equally ardent Republicans; but we think we are not mistaken in asserting that the great mass, especially of substantial citizens, are and will be devotedly attached to the Union of their fathers, and the Constitution they established,

⁷² Ibid., March 14, 1861.

⁷³ Ibid., May 9, 1861.

so long as the Union can be maintained, and that Constitution administered in the spirit of the fathers.

In his prediction, Wilson proved to be correct, for Maryland did remain in the Union, despite attempts to win the state over to the Confederacy. The Baptists of the state partook somewhat of the divided sentiments. There were a few, who were outspokenly for the South, and a few definitely Northern sympathizers. The majority of them leaned towards the South in some degree, but their allegiance to the Union overshadowed the sentimental attachments.

CHAPTER TWELVE

PARALYSIS OF WAR AND RECOVERY

(1861-1871)

When the threat of war had developed into actual hostilities, all men were called upon to take a stand on one side or the other. As already pointed out, Maryland was a border-state and was torn by conflicting sentiments. The economic and political ties of the state were bound up with both the North and the South. But throughout most of the state, loyalty to the United States government proved the stronger force. For a short time it looked as though Maryland might join the Confederacy, but in the end the Unionist forces triumphed. With so much divided opinion, it was natural that the churches should feel its effects. The Catholic and Episcopal churches suffered least from the divided loyalties. The Methodist and Presbyterian churches of the border region were rent by the questions of secession and war.¹ The Baptists of Maryland did not suffer any organizational dissection into northern and southern wings. However, the conflicting loyalties had a hampering effect upon their work, and little was accomplished during the war years. Only one church was added to the Maryland Baptist Union Association between 1860 and 1865, and that one had been organized prior to this period. There was little

¹ J. M. Buckley, op. cit., pp. 506, 508.

increase in the membership of the churches, and financial difficulties necessitated the curtailment of part of the missionary work of the Association.

It is difficult to ascertain just how the several Baptist churches stood on the controversial questions of secession and war. However, the over-all picture seems to show that the feeling of sympathy towards the Confederacy was rather strong, but not predominant. A few of the pastors were out spoken in their favor for the Confederate government, and a few were strongly pro-Unionist. Others were moderate in their sympathies. To the Watchman and Reflector, a Baptist periodical published in Boston, the attitude of the Association seemed almost treasonable. It spoke of the Association as one "whose position is in broad contrast to that of their brethren elsewhere, and whose members turn a cold shoulder to the Government, and reserve their warmer sympathies for traitors." It also charged that "some of the ministers of the Association have visited Richmond on various pretexts, and have been suspected of corresponding with rebel leaders and carrying letters from Northern traitors."²

No doubt, this picture is over-drawn, coming as it did from Boston, where radical abolitionist sentiment was strong. The attack evoked a reply from William Crane, who denounced

² Religious Herald, March 17, 1864.

the charges as a "tissue of lies."³ Admitting that "unhappily some serious mistakes were made at the commencement of the rebellion. . . . by a few of the eminent ministers" of the Association, he maintained that "no charge of actual treasonable disloyalty" could be substantiated. In defense of the ministers, he pointed out that Maryland was passing over from the position of a slave to a free state, and "it is too much to expect even the very best of men, to sever themselves from all sympathy with their native homes and their kindred, and immediately to speak and act like ultra abolitionists."

In 1863, a resolution was placed before the Maryland Association, advocating and endorsing the course of the General Government in the conduct of the war, and pledging to it the sanction and support of the Association.⁴ This resolution did not pass. After some discussion, it was decided that the Association ought not to consider a matter of this nature. This action might have meant that the Association did not consider that the question was of religious significance. So William Crane maintained, and George F. Adams, who was definitely a southern sympathizer, seems to have agreed.⁵ However, the editor of the Religious Herald interpreted the matter in a different light. He thought that it

³ Ibid., March 17, 1864.

⁴ G. F. Adams, op. cit., p. 31.

⁵ Ibid., p. 31.

showed that the delegates were not in favor of it.⁶ Probably Crane, who was present, is a better authority than the Virginia editor, who may have been doing some wishful thinking.

Two of the ministers of the Association were decidedly in sympathy with the Confederacy. The Reverend Thomas Pritchard, of Baltimore, was forced to leave that city and pass the Confederate lines, because he was too outspoken in his bias for the South.⁷ The Reverend G. F. Adams left Baltimore early in the war. Refusing to take an oath of loyalty, he soon departed for the South, where he served for a while as a chaplain in the Confederate Army.⁸ On the other hand, the Reverend A. D. Gillette, a Washington pastor, who had four sons in the Union Army, was a strong proponent of the Union.⁹ The Reverend Pritchard represented to the editor of the Religious Herald the views of all the Maryland pastors as follows:

Samson and Meador of Washington, Fuller, Williams, Adams, Cole, and Berg of Baltimore, and Boston, Flipppo, Carr, Mettam, White, Booth, Stedham, Jones, Paul, Lodge, Kingdon and Marsten in other parts of Maryland, sympathized with the South; and Gillette and Hill of Washington, and Nice and Latham of Baltimore, with the North. Wilson of Baltimore, while bitterly opposed to the war, disclaimed being on either side. Shute, of Washington, is doubtful, but probably leans northward.

⁶ Religious Herald, March 17, 1864.

⁷ Ibid., July 30, 1863.

⁸ Ibid., Aug. 27, 1863.

⁹ Jones, Armitage, et. al., Reminiscences of the Life and Labors of A. D. Gillette, p. 131.

¹⁰ Religious Herald, April 28, 1864.

Data is not available to check on each of these individuals, so it is impossible to tell whether this estimate is correct or not. If it is, it certainly cannot mean that all of those who were classified as southern sympathizers had anything more than a sentimental attachment in that direction. It could not have meant, in every case at least, a lack of loyalty to the Union.

For example, one of those who was put in that category by Pritchard, was Richard Fuller. Throughout the war, he was devoted to the United States government. His position, as stated in a communication to the Religious Herald, was as follows:¹¹

. . . . I am a citizen of the United States, and the Bible . . . prescribes the duty of a Christian to the Government under which he lives. That duty I have religiously performed and will perform.

But, born and reared at the South; all my early, noble and honored religious associations at the South; every human being (except my immediate household) in whose veins is a single drop of my blood, at the South. . . . Why, he is not a man who could regard me as anything but a monster, if my natural and tenderest sympathies did not yearn over them in their tribulations and sorrows. . . .

Probably this was the case with most of the others. If their sympathies had amounted to actual feelings of disloyalty, they would have followed Pritchard into the Confederate territory.

At the same time, there were some in the churches, who

¹¹ Ibid., March 17, 1864.

had clear-cut convictions which made them stand up for the Unionist cause. In the E Street Church, Washington, a member was excluded in 1863 for having taken up arms in the aid of the rebellion. The memory of another was recorded with honor, as having fallen upon the field of conflict in defense of the Government.¹² William Crane is another who was strongly attached to the Union. In a letter, he wrote: "I claim full credit for as thorough a hatred of treason and as thorough a life-long loyalty to our Union and Government as any other man."¹³ These few glimpses are about all that has been discovered about the attitudes of pastors and churches during the war period. The church-books have little to say about the war, and several of them had very scanty records of any sort kept during these years. However, enough has been gathered to indicate that in the churches, there were varying points of view, but most of the Baptists seem to have been loyal supporters of the Union.

It might be supposed that the existence of such diverse sentiments on a question that was so charged with emotion would have torn the churches asunder. That they were not is due largely to the fact that most of the ministers, except for Adams and Pritchard, were willing to subordinate their

¹² Andrew Rothwell, op. cit., p. 22.

¹³ Religious Herald, March 17, 1864.

personal preferences to the interests of the churches. There seems to have been a general desire to bury such differences in the cause of the unity of the Baptist work. Dr. Fuller, who might be expected to take as strong a stand as anyone for the South, furnishes a good illustration of this tendency. An editorial in the Baltimore Clipper of May, 1861, thus discussed his policies:¹⁴

We have frequently been asked, as the friends of Rev. Dr. Fuller, what are his sentiments as to the position and duty of Maryland of which state he is now a citizen. We have been in the habit of hearing him; but as he never allows politics to enter his pulpit, and, never in any way concerns himself, we believe, with the political sentiments of his church or congregation, we could gather nothing from his official ministrations.

The fact that Richard Fuller and William Crane could get along together in the same church is testimony to the fact that political matters were subordinated to the cause of the denominational work.

Nevertheless, despite the policy of making civil matters subservient to those of a definitely religious nature, it would be too much to expect that the churches could continue the progressive course of the pre-war years without interruption. The effects of war and tensions within the churches soon began to make themselves felt. An editorial in the True Union, written a few months after the war had begun, indicates that the conflict was beginning to have a

¹⁴ J. H. Cuthbert, op. cit., pp. 260-263.

depressing influence upon the work of the denomination:¹⁵

Never, since its organization, has it [the Association] met under more discouraging auspices. Its resources have been most seriously impaired, several of its missionaries dismissed, its strongest churches almost reduced to a struggle for existence, and numbers of others have been left without pastoral care, while the excitement upon the state of the country, and our peculiar position, has naturally tended to divert the minds of men from spiritual things.

At the Associational meeting in November, 1861, it was reported that there was a large deficit. Financial stress made necessary the suspension of the True Union at the end of 1861. In the Digest of Letters to the Association, various churches reported that business depression had affected their spiritual and financial interests.¹⁶ Although the work of the churches was not discontinued during the war, it was almost in a state of suspension. Each year, a deficiency of funds was reported. Few missionaries were employed, and not one new church was constituted during these years. The Baptist cause in Maryland was suffering from a temporary paralysis.

Preoccupied as men were during this period, it is not surprising that interest in social questions should have given way to more pressing concerns. The only social issue which continued to receive any attention at all was that of temperance. Even that cause did not call forth the crusading spirit, which had been so enthusiastic for some years

¹⁵ True Union, Nov. 7, 1861.

¹⁶ Min., MBUA, 1861, pp. 7-9.

prior to the civil conflict. Opposition to the various aspects of the liquor traffic had not diminished, but a feeling of discouragement had dampened the ardor. The earlier desire to bring about suitable reform legislation gave place to a feeling that the only hope lay in individual action and moral suasion. This attitude is plainly apparent in the report made to the Association in 1863. After a preamble, stating its opposition to the use of spiritous liquors, the committee said:¹⁷

Though so greatly affecting the secular interests of society, there is little hope of having the evils of intemperance prevented by civil action. . . . It is therefore apparent that the only reliable organization to effectually oppose the tide of intemperance . . . is the Christian Church.

So great was the pessimism on this matter, that in 1864 the Committee on Temperance was stricken from the list of standing committees.¹⁸

The work of the Foreign and Domestic Mission Boards of the Southern Baptist Convention was seriously impaired by the exigencies of war. The Domestic Board turned its major attention to supplying the Confederate Army with chaplains. Because of a scarcity of funds, as well as the difficulties of communication, the aid which had been extended to the German and Negro work in Baltimore was stopped.¹⁹ As to For-

¹⁷ Ibid., 1863, p. 20.

¹⁸ Ibid., 1864, p. 22.

¹⁹ Ibid., 1861, p. 7.

eign Missions, the Southern Convention was forced to cope with the problem of maintaining communications with mission stations in other countries, because the southern ports were blockaded. Here the Maryland Baptists stepped into the breach, and they served as a liason agent between the Convention and its missions in China and Africa.

Realizing the predicament of the missionaries stranded in foreign places, the Maryland Association began, in 1861, to act as a medium through which funds could be transmitted to missionary personnel. A committee appointed to attend to this matter reported in 1862, and it offered the following resolution:²⁰

Resolved, That this body do appoint a committee of five to repair to Washington at once, and in the name of this body to solicit the Secretary of War to renew and render permanent the permission granted last year by the Secretary of State, and by which funds were received for the support of our foreign missions; the said correspondence with Richmond to be conducted under the supervision of the military commanders in this city and at Fortress Monroe, and by any convenient flag of truce.

The responsibility of looking after the foreign missionary interests of the Convention seems to have inspired the Maryland Baptists to become more interested in missions. Hereafter, their contributions to the Southern Convention for foreign missions began to increase. Their gifts during and immediately after the war helped in large measure to keep this work alive.²¹ The quickened interest was reflected

²⁰ Ibid., 1862, p. 12.

²¹ J. F. Love, ed., Southern Baptist Pulpit, p. 36.

in a constitutional change adopted by the Association in 1863:²²

Resolved, That Article II of the Constitution be so amended as to read as follows: "The object of this Association shall be to advance the cause of true religion in Maryland and the District of Columbia. . . . and to promote Foreign Missions.

That the efforts of the Maryland Baptists to keep open the channels to the foreign fields was effective is attested by reports made by the Corresponding Secretary through the medium of the Religious Herald:²³

We have been in receipt of letters from our brethren in China and Africa throughout the war, though not so regularly as formerly. Brethren in Baltimore and brother Samson in Washington city, have arranged to send their letters to us, and to receive our letters to them, by a flag of truce:

Heretofore, Southern Baptists had confined their foreign missionary activities to China and Africa. Owing to the desire of Franklin Wilson to establish a mission in Italy, the Convention extended its operations to that country after the war. Wilson noted in his journal in April, 1862: "If the Lord will open the way, I think of trying to organize an Italian Baptist Missionary Society here, or to support a missionary or two there myself." A note appended to that entry, and dated 1864, added: "Brother Berg became interested in Italy from my directing his attention

²² Min., MBA, 1862, p. 13.

²³ Religious Herald, Feb. 13, 1862.

to it, and wrote to the Freeman (London), which caught the eye of two English Baptist preachers, Clark and Wall. They issued an appeal to the British public and a mission has been commenced."²⁴ The suggestion of Franklin Wilson led not only to the beginning of an English Baptist mission in Italy, but it also resulted in the subsequent establishment of a Southern Baptist mission in Rome.²⁵

At the end of the war, the Maryland Baptist churches started out on the road to recovery. Funds began to come in more freely about 1866. The report of the treasurer showed receipts for work in Maryland to be a little more than \$5,000.00 in that year, and the disbursements were about the same.²⁶ The income for the next several years, however, remained nearly stationary. While the denomination was able to take up some of the work that had been dropped, it was not possible to launch many new projects. In 1866, two liberal contributors were lost by death, William Crane and F. A. Levering.²⁷ In an optimistic spirit, the Executive Board had started out the post-war work by the appointment of new missionaries and by engaging a General Agent. However, it made commitments beyond its ability to pay. The finance committee, having reported an increase in the contributions in 1866,

²⁴ Life Story of Franklin Wilson, pp. 60-61.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 73-74. Also, H. A. Tupper, op. cit., p. 21.

²⁶ Baptist Visitor, Dec., 1866.

²⁷ Ibid., Dec., 1866.

nine male missionaries and two female ones were engaged, as was also a General Agent.²⁸ But expectations exceeded the income of the next year, and the finance committee had to report at the Associational meeting, in 1867: "It is the unpleasant duty of your committee to report that not only is the Treasury empty, but the Treasurer has advanced nearly \$2,000.00."²⁹

Before continuing to trace the development of post-war work, it may be helpful to give a survey of the situation as it appeared in the year following the close of the war. Such a perspective of the Baptists in Maryland is given in the Report of the Executive Board in 1866:³⁰

But when we compare our numbers with the whole population of the State and District, and look at the scattered locations of our churches, and their feebleness, we are almost appalled at the sight. Out of 21 counties, the following twelve had not, in 1865, a single Baptist church in any of them: Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, and Caroline on the Eastern Shore, and St. Mary's, Calvert, Prince Georges, Anne Arundel, Harford, Howard, and Washington on the Western Shore. These counties had a population in 1860 of 236,638.

Only three of the county seats have Baptist churches in them. Carroll, with a population of 25,000 has but one Baptist church at Vienna, with 41 members. Somerset and Charles have but two little churches in each county. While Allegany, Montgomery, and Worcester have but three each. Frederick

²⁸ Ibid., Dec., 1866; Min., MBUA, 1866, p. 15.

²⁹ Min., MBUA, 1867, pp. 15-16.

³⁰ Ibid., 1866, p. 14. Also see the map at the end of chapter 10. With one or two exceptions, the churches were the same in 1865 as they had been in 1860.

has two or three feeble churches not connected with this Association. The strength of the denomination is concentrated almost entirely in Washington and Baltimore, but even there it is comparatively weak. In Washington, with its 100,000 inhabitants, we have but four churches with 714 members. In Baltimore, with its 300,000 inhabitants, we have but ten churches, seven white and three colored, all numbering 2,842 members. All our country churches together number but 989 members, averaging 47 to a church.

We have but 23 active pastors, to preach to our 35 churches. Are not these facts eloquent?

In view of the situation revealed in this survey, it seemed that the time had come to review the previous policies of the Association, with a view to making some changes. As a result, some changes were made, and there were attempts to foster new types of work. For one thing, the policies of the Executive Board with respect to the support, or partial support, of pastors had not been as productive as was desired. Churches which allowed the Board to furnish support for their ministers indefinitely were not likely to ever become self-sustaining. Therefore, it was recommended that, "If, at the end of three years, a field fails to become self-sustaining, and there be no reasonable prospect of its becoming so, we will withdraw our contributions from it."³¹

In the past, the employees of the Board had been allowed to follow their inclinations without much direction from anyone. Now it was determined that more direct supervision of the work of the missionaries should be given.

³¹ Min., MBUA, 1867, p. 9.

Accordingly, the Executive Board sent a set of instructions to each of its missionary employees. For one thing, it required that a missionary give his whole time to the work of the ministry. Also stipulations were made with regard to visitation, preaching, maintaining Sunday Schools, prayer meetings, and the distribution of religious literature.³²

Another effort to promote work, which did not involve additional expense, had been started during the war. That was an attempt to get the pastors and churches of the city to reach out beyond their own doors by establishing missions and holding outdoor services. A committee had been appointed to encourage this type of work in 1863. However, little response was elicited from the churches. That the plan met with little success is gathered from the report of the committee in 1868:³³

Your Committee on City Missions and Out-Door Preaching respectfully report,

That they have found, by observation, but little interest in this department of Christian labor. But few of our churches want to be troubled by attending to mission-stations, and none of our city Pastors seem to love out-door preaching. . . .

Since the churches throughout the state, nearly all of which had at some time been aided by the Board, were slow to help support the work of the Association, it was decided to exert a little pressure to induce them to contribute to

³² Ibid., 1867, pp. 9-10.

³³ Ibid., 1868, p. 22.

the mission funds of the body. A plan to apportion a quota to each church was worked out, and persons were appointed to be responsible for urging each church to try to meet its quota. While such a system could not be enforced, it was hoped that this method would bring in more money than did general appeals for help.³⁴ Although the Association voted to adopt the plan, it seems to have been unsuccessful. Baptist churches with a strong tradition of independence were not likely to accept any plan which had the least savor of dictation. The hopes of those who proposed the idea were disappointed, and the method was soon abandoned.

Another idea was directed to the end of aiding churches in the building of suitable edifices. One of the difficulties involved in beginning a new church, which might soon become self-supporting, was that of securing a house of worship. Often a building would be put up with only a small part of the cost in hand; then the church would struggle with an indebtedness for several years. In such cases, a church would naturally feel that the burden of its debt freed it from any responsibility to contribute to the mission funds of the Association. Consequently, it was believed that, if aid were given in the erection of meeting houses, then new churches would soon begin to support the larger work of the Association. The Church Extension Society had been begun

³⁴ Ibid., 1869, p. 15.

in 1854 for this purpose, but by this time it had become inactive. There were some who felt that the previous policy of that Society had been a mistake. For it had not sufficiently encouraged a spirit of independence on the part of the congregation which had so much given to it.³⁵ A church which received too much help from outside of its own membership was apt to be slow to develop a sense of responsibility for its own self-support, to say nothing of an obligation beyond its own immediate concerns.

Nevertheless, some plan was needed to aid churches in the construction of buildings. For, without a church house, a congregation could hardly hope to become permanent. In 1869, a Building and Loan Fund was started, and each member of the churches of the Association was asked to contribute at least ten cents a year to its funds.³⁶ The money was to be lent on easy terms to churches which needed it. At first, the plan did not receive much support from the churches, for, in 1871, it was reported:³⁷

We regret to report that this important object, which, if faithfully attended to, would accomplish great good at a most trifling expense, has been almost entirely ignored in the contributions made hitherto. We earnestly hope that it will not be so in the future.

In the ensuing years, while the plan did not meet with over-

³⁵ See chapter 10 regarding the Church Extension Society.

³⁶ Min., MBUA, 1869, p. 24.

³⁷ Ibid., 1871, p. 8.

whelming success, it did manage to provide some assistance to several churches.³⁸

Increasing attention was paid to the education of ministers during the years following the war. The idea of an educated ministry had found almost universal acceptance, and it seemed desirable that some institution nearer home for theological training should be established. As it was, a young man who wished to study for the ministry had to go a long way from home to attend a seminary. As a result, he would usually locate in a field outside of Maryland, after he had graduated. Also, a theological school in their midst would help to furnish training for some older ministers, who were deficient in education, and a ready supply of pastors would be available for the Maryland churches. So, in 1867, there was talk of starting a theological school in connection with Columbian College.³⁹ The suggestion that a theological department be added to the college was carried out in 1868, and there were 21 students enrolled during its opening session.⁴⁰

The interest in the education of ministers led to the appointment of a Committee on Ministerial Education. Five persons were selected to correspond with the pastors of the Association, urging them to seek out young men of promise

³⁸ J. F. Weishampel, op. cit., p. 206.

³⁹ Min., MBUA, 1867, pp. 24-25.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 1868, p. 18.

in their congregations and to take up annual collections for the support of ministerial students. Most of the support for this enterprise came from Baltimore and Washington.⁴¹ In 1866, three students were being aided, and promises of further assistance had been given.⁴²

Slow as was the recovery from the slump of the war years, yet there was a definite upward trend in the Baptist work in Maryland. Between 1866 and 1871, nine churches were added to the Association, although some of them had only brief existences. During these six years, over 2500 baptisms were reported by the churches.⁴³ The number of churches had increased, and they were so widely scattered, that the task of keeping in touch with one another had become a problem. Hence a proposal was made to divide the churches into District Associations.⁴⁴ These were not intended to be a substitute for the Maryland Baptist Association. They were smaller units, the work of which was to supplement that of the larger body. In other states, an opposite process had taken place. Elsewhere district associations had been formed first, and these were subsequently united in state conventions. Now the organization of Maryland Baptists was like that of most

⁴¹ Ibid., 1869, p. 20.

⁴² Ibid., 1866, pp. 17-18.

⁴³ See Table XI, p. 181.

⁴⁴ Min., MBUA, 1870, pp. 10, 25.

other states, except that the name "Union Association" was retained instead of "state convention." Four district associations were organized as a result of the recommendation of the committee which was appointed in 1870.

TABLE XI. Growth of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, 1861-1871.⁴⁵

| Year | Ministers | Churches | Baptisms | Members |
|------|-----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1861 | 26 | 34 | 363 | 4295 |
| 1862 | 20 | 34 | 66 | 4015 |
| 1863 | 22 | 34 | 150 | 4137 |
| 1864 | 26 | 34 | 207 | 4315 |
| 1865 | 22 | 35 | 315 | 4545 |
| 1866 | 27 | 39 | 405 | 4842 |
| 1867 | 35 | 38 | 482 | 5070 |
| 1868 | 34 | 39 | 278 | 5124 |
| 1869 | 33 | 40 | 332 | 5324 |
| 1870 | 33 | 38 | 664 | 5544 |
| 1871 | 33 | 43 | 342 | 5434 |

While the churches to the south of Maryland were experiencing great difficulty in recovering from the effects of the war, Maryland soon returned to "normalcy." Financial recovery was not very rapid, but it came about more quickly than in most of the other states of the Southern Baptist Convention. However, just as they were getting well over the results of the war, new financial problems arose. That part of the story will be resumed in chapter fourteen.

⁴⁵ Min., MBUA, 1860-1871.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

NEGRO BAPTIST CHURCHES OF MARYLAND¹

Little has been said up to this point about the Negro Baptist churches of Maryland, because it seemed best to devote a separate chapter to them. Prior to 1860, there were only four of these churches, and their total membership was not more than 300 by the latter date. After the Civil War, the Negro Baptists increased so rapidly, that by 1890 their number approximated that of the white Baptists of the state.² Because of their low social, educational, and economic status, they naturally could not contribute much to the constructive work of the Maryland Baptist Union Association. Between 1882 and 1902, they gradually formed a separate convention.

It was not until 1836 that a Negro Baptist church was organized in Maryland. Although there had been a colored preacher at work among his people in Baltimore as early as

¹ The material in this chapter is largely based upon A. B. Koger, History of Negro Baptists in Maryland. Most of his statements have been checked by other sources, and his work seems reliable. There are some bits of information contained therein, which give the Negro side of the picture, that have not been found elsewhere. Since his history is brief, it has not been thought necessary to cite page numbers of this booklet. Wherever other sources have been used, they will be indicated.

² Their growth continued in the twentieth century. In 1936, there were 62 Negro Baptist churches in Baltimore, as compared with 61 each of Catholic and Methodist Episcopal churches. U. S. Census of Religious Bodies, 1936.

1817, nothing is known about his work.³ Baptist work among the Negro population can be traced from the year 1835. At that date, Moses Clayton, an ex-slave, was invited to come to Baltimore to preach among the colored people. In 1836, he was ordained, and the First Colored Baptist Church of Baltimore was organized. Although the white Baptists contributed something towards the support of his work, Clayton had to spend a good deal of his time working as a carpenter to earn a livelihood. Consequently, the results of his work were small.

The slow growth of Negro Baptists in Maryland and the other southern states was due to legal restrictions which were placed upon all Negroes in the South. A separate Baptist church among the colored people had been organized at Savannah, Georgia, in 1788. There were at least fifteen others in various states by 1836.⁴ In 1831, after fears had been aroused by the Nat Turner insurrection, Maryland passed more rigid measures than had been force before that time. The legislature enacted laws forbidding Negroes, free and slave, to hold meetings, unless a white person attended them. An act of 1842 required "all persons, especially Constables or Sheriffs and other peace officers, to disperse any and all such assemblages," which were not attended by a white person. Any officer who failed to enforce this law was sub-

³ Charles Thomas, a colored man, was ordained to preach among his people in 1817. Minutes, First Baltimore, July 28, 1817.

⁴ American Baptist Home Mission Society, Jubilee, 1883.

ject to a fine of not less than one hundred dollars.

The existence of such laws, even though they were sometimes carried out half-heartedly, made the assembling of Negroes for any purpose a hazardous undertaking. The Baptists were at a disadvantage in such a situation. The Methodists, Catholics, and other denominations could appoint someone to attend meetings of the colored people. In this manner several congregations had been formed by the Methodists, Episcopalians, and Catholics, before the Baptists undertook such work among the Negroes of the state. Of course, there were Negro Baptists in Maryland before 1836, but they were members of the white churches.

Free Negroes were numerous in Maryland from an early time. There were about 8,000 of them in 1790. By 1830, their number had increased to over 52,000; and at the outset of the Civil War there were 83,942 of them. Although, in theory, these were free men, in actuality they were greatly restricted. They were forbidden to aid slaves, to read certain types of literature, to engage in some occupations, and to do many other things. Slave masters feared the free Negroes more than they did the slaves.

The white Baptists of Maryland took little interest in the organization of separate churches for colored people before 1836. Reference has already been made to William Crane's invitation, which brought Moses Clayton to Baltimore, and to the subsequent organization of the First Colored Baptist Church of Baltimore. A few years later, Crane

and others arranged to bring Noah Davis to Baltimore as a missionary of the Association.⁵ Davis, who was a slave, had to spend a good deal of his time in raising money to purchase his freedom and that of his family.⁶ However, within a year of his coming to Baltimore, he had organized another congregation of colored Baptists. The growth of the church was slow, but this man laid the foundations for the future development of Baptist work among the Negroes of Maryland.

In 1849, Moses Clayton resigned the pastorate of the First Colored Baptist Church, and Reverend John Carey was called to succeed him. Dissensions in the church during the first two years of Carey's pastorate led to financial problems, which resulted in the sale of the church building. Therefore, Carey resigned his charge and formed another church. This congregation, the Union Baptist Church, was the first one to be organized independent of white auspices.

About 1854, William Crane and a few other men conceived an idea for a Negro church and school to be located in Baltimore. The plan called for the erection of a four-story building, which would have adequate space for both a church and a day school. Built at a cost of about \$18,000.00, Crane

⁵ Min., MBUA, 1847, p. 13; and 1848, p. 5.

⁶ Ibid., 1848, p. 5 (refers to his raising money to buy his freedom). In 1858 and again in 1860, he was in Philadelphia trying to get money to liberate his daughter. Robert G. Torbet, Social History of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, p. 104.

gave \$5,000.00 as his contribution to the project. Other white persons subscribed that much more. A balance of over \$8,000.00 remained to be paid by the members of the new Saratoga Street Church over a ten year period.⁷

The school was opened in 1855 and continued in operation for about five years.⁸ William Crane gave \$600.00 a year towards the support of a teacher,⁹ and at first it appeared as though the ambitious plan might be successful. At one time, three teachers were employed, and there were about 100 pupils in attendance. With the coming of the war, the support previously given by the Southern Baptist Convention had to be suspended, and the school was closed. Although the church continued for another six years, yet the members were unable to pay even the interest on their debt. In 1866, the building was sold, and the church disbanded.¹⁰

Only the four churches mentioned above were organized prior to the war, but after the conflict ended, new attention was focussed on work among the colored people. The Association appointed a Committee on the Colored People, which reported in 1866 and thereafter. The reports of this committee pointed out the needs of the colored population in matters of education and religion and encouraged the es-

⁷ G. F. Adams, op. cit., pp. 26-28.

⁸ Supra., p. 132.

⁹ G. F. Adams, op. cit., p. 27.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 27.

tablishment of schools and churches.¹¹ The American Baptist Home Mission Society and the Freedman's Bureau also lent aid in founding schools and churches. Three missionaries and at least fifteen workers under the Freedman's Bureau had been sent to the state prior to 1871. Most of these centered their efforts in the counties, rather than in Baltimore. During the two decades following the Civil War, numerous churches were started in Baltimore and in several counties of the state. In 1866, Wayland Seminary (at first called the National Theological Institution) was founded at Washington for colored ministerial students.¹²

The president of Wayland Seminary, Dr. G. M. P. King, recommended Reverend Harvey Johnson as pastor of the Union Baptist Church in 1868. The coming of Johnson to Baltimore marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the Negro Baptists of Maryland. From that time on, there began to be a change from the "chair-back" variety of ante-bellum preachers to the college-trained preacher and civic leader. From the time of Johnson's arrival in Maryland until the time of his death is regarded by Mr. Koger as the "Golden Age" of the Negro Baptists of the state. Dr. Johnson was one of the first to believe that the colored people would fare bet-

¹¹ Min., MBUA, 1866, pp. 25-26, and for the several years following.

¹² Andrew Rothwell, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

ter, if they were less dependent upon the aid of the white Baptists. When he became the pastor of the Union Baptist Church, he refused the help formerly extended by the Maryland Association, and the church never accepted such assistance thereafter.

By 1882, there were twenty-two colored Baptist churches in Maryland. About ten of these were in Baltimore, and the others were scattered in various parts of the state as far apart as Cumberland and the Eastern Shore. The Negro ministers were so encouraged that they met at Frederick in that year to organize the Maryland Baptist Convention.¹³ At first, the white Baptists regarded the Convention with some concern, However, it soon recognized this body as one of the District Associations and allowed its president to rank as one of the vice-presidents of the Maryland Baptist Union Association. The new Convention had not been intended to become entirely independent of the white Association, but it was designed to enable the colored Baptists to carry on missionary work in the counties. But this was the first step in the process of the establishing of separate organizations for the Negro and the white Baptists.

In the contest which was developing over the country for the recognition of Negroes' rights, the church could hardly avoid becoming involved. By 1892, the Negro Bap-

¹³ Minutes, Maryland Baptist Convention, 1882, p. 2.

tists had become nearly as numerous as the white ones. Prior to that time, all of the colored churches had belonged to the Maryland Baptist Union Association. That year marked the beginning of strained relations, which culminated in the complete separation of the two races in 1902. Dr. Johnson addressed a letter to the Maryland Union Association in 1892, pointing out certain anomalies in the existing relationship. He asked that the same recognition and respect be shown to the colored ministers as to the white ones. It was not enough that the Negro preachers be "humored and tolerated;" he insisted that they were to be treated with absolute equality.

Naturally the demands contained in this letter were disturbing to the white leaders. The letter of grievance was referred to a special committee, but there was no indication that the white Baptists intended to concede all that Dr. Johnson demanded. In the following year, two of the colored Baptist churches, Union and Calvary of Baltimore, withdrew from the Association. This incident marked the end of the harmony which had previously subsisted between the white and colored churches. Not many of the other churches were willing to sever their ties with the Association, however, because they were receiving financial aid from the whites. In spirit, they were with Dr. Johnson, but they wavered between loyalty to their race and the need of pecuniary aid.

In an effort to ease the tension which had been created, the Association suggested the formation of another conven-

tion. Accordingly, the Lott Carey Convention was organized in 1894.¹⁴ It was provided that the work of the Maryland Baptist Union Association should be carried on through the new colored convention, but the Executive Board of the white body held a veto power over the decisions of the colored one. Such a plan was unsatisfactory to Dr. Johnson and a few others, who favored the complete independence of the Negro churches. So, in 1898, these men organized the Colored Baptist Convention of Maryland. In 1902, the Co-operative Convention was formed, which combined the older Maryland Baptist Convention and the Lott Carey Convention, and the separation of the white and colored churches became complete. However, the Johnson faction and the Colored Baptist Convention remained aloof from the new organization, until 1927, when the latter was merged with the Co-operative Baptist Convention.

From the viewpoint of the whites, everything had been done which could reasonably be expected. The salaries of Negro pastors had been paid, and a number of colored students had been aided in attending Wayland Seminary and other schools. In 1891, it was reported to the Maryland Baptist Convention that the white people had contributed over \$40,000.00 to the colored churches in the state within the previous twenty-five years; and an additional \$20,000.00 had been contributed to the support of colored ministers.

¹⁴ Min., MBUA, 1894, pp. 17, 67; 1895, pp. 17-18.

Negro representatives had been appointed on several committees and boards; and in a few instances, their ministers and laymen had been placed on the Executive Board. Two or three Negroes had been elected to offices in the Association.

From the point of view of the Negroes, however, there was still one thing lacking. That was that the colored people should be treated on a basis of complete equality. Representation on boards and committees had not been in accord with their numerical strength. The more important offices of the Association were always held by white men, and matters which concerned the colored people were handled through a sub-committee of the Executive Board. Moreover, at social gatherings which sometimes followed meetings in the city, the Negroes were segregated. It was humiliating to be treated as inferiors by those who were supposed to be Christian brothers. Yet, until 1902, the desire for financial help was strong enough to make most of the colored ministers swallow their pride and remain affiliated with the white Association.

In 1902, the division became complete. Thereafter, while the white Baptists sometimes gave some assistance to the Negroes, for the most part each group went its own way. It was unfortunate that the desire of the colored Baptists to be treated as equals was not recognized. From a standpoint of Christian ideals, they had a right to expect such

treatment. However, considering the southern background of the Maryland Baptists, it is not surprising that they refused to recognize any claims to equality. Perhaps, though, this cleavage did lead the colored Baptists to become more self-reliant and to develop their own initiative to a greater degree.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN
FINANCIAL PROBLEMS
AND THE
WITHDRAWAL OF THE D. C. CHURCHES
(1873-1882)

Having recovered from the effects of the war by the end of the previous period, the Baptist churches of Maryland began another decade as though they meant to achieve great things. However, they lost some strength by the withdrawal of the churches of the District of Columbia in 1877. Their progress was also retarded by the financial panic which swept over the country around 1873. During this ten-year period, 25 new churches were admitted into the Association, but 18 churches were dropped for various reasons. So the net gain was only seven churches. Nearly 10,000 baptisms were reported by the churches, but many of these were lost by the withdrawal of churches.

During the opening years of this period, reports were made to the Association which gave much ground for encouragement. It appeared as though unprecedented records would be made along all lines of work. In 1872, a General Missionary was employed, and the Association set a financial goal for state work of \$10,000.00., which was double the receipts of the previous year. Although this objective must have seemed to sanguine to many people, it was actually achieved. The Executive Committee reported, in 1873, that,

"More money has been expended, and more missionaries have been employed during the past year than during any previous year in our history."¹ The accomplishments of the General Missionary met with all expectations. Many new Sunday Schools were organized, revival meetings were held, and the churches were stimulated by his visits.²

Counting upon the growing interest and increased giving of the past year, the Association looked a bit overconfidently to the future. In 1874, a financial goal of \$12,000.00 for mission work in the state was set.³ But by the time that the Association met in 1875, financial depression had begun to affect the country. As is often the case, the churches were among the first to feel its effects and the last to recover from it. Instead of the \$12,000.00 which had been made the basis of the budget, receipts for the next year amounted to less than half of that amount.⁴ For the next several years, the Association received only about \$4,000.00 annually. Many of the churches, in their letters to the Association, referred to the business depression which had affected them.⁵ As a result, it was necessary to make retrenchments in the work of the Association.⁶

¹ Min., MBUA, 1873, p. 6.

² Ibid., 1873, pp. 8-9.

³ Ibid., 1874, p. 18.

⁴ Ibid., 1880, pp. 23-28, (Financial Review).

⁵ Ibid., 1876, Digest of Letters.

⁶ Ibid., 1876, p. 7.

A word of caution was given in 1874 about the starting of new churches. In the past a good many churches had been organized with a handful of members in neighborhoods which offered little prospects of substantial growth. Some of these had not become permanent churches, so that funds had been invested without tangible results. It was no longer considered a desirable policy to organize churches, unless it seemed likely that they would have a promising future. Hence the Executive Committee admonished the constituency of the Association not to start new projects, which had little likelihood of success. The report concluded: "No such enterprise ought to be undertaken. . . . without the approval of a council of neighboring churches or of the Board."⁷

This was a deviation from the usual practice of Baptists of earlier years. Most of the early churches in Maryland had been begun in the manner that was being discouraged. Many of them had eventually become extinct, but others gradually developed into self-sustaining churches. Such a policy might be attributed to the effects of the Age of Big Business which was coming into being after the War, but it appears to have been more the result of the nature of Baptist work in Maryland after 1836. After that date, Maryland had developed along lines similar to those

⁷ Ibid., 1874, p. 8.

of a mission field. Nearly all of the churches existing in 1874 had been the results of the activities of missionaries of the Association. The nature of the work made it incumbent upon the Executive Board to invest funds where the returns would be greatest. Ordinarily the best prospects for new churches were to be found where the population was dense, and the policies of the Board account for the trend towards a predominance of urban churches. This trend has continued to the present, when there is scarcely a rural field among the Baptists in the state.

By 1876, the financial panic was in full swing. Churches were complaining of the "hard times," which they were experiencing. All plans for new advancement had to be abandoned, and efforts were concentrated on holding the old lines. Only one white church was begun between 1875 and 1882. With funds reduced, the number of missionary employees had to be cut down. "The past year," remarked the Executive Committee in 1877, "has been one of unusual barrenness in our field of labour, both financially and spiritually. . . . In scarcely any previous year of our history have the visible results borne so small a proportion to the amount of labor."⁸

The economic distress made it necessary to devise means of expansion which did not entail financial outlay. One of

⁸ Ibid., 1877, p. 7.

the expedients which was suggested was the development of "lay-preachers," who could serve in the place of missionaries. The secretary of the Executive Board was instructed "to request the white churches in the city and vicinity to select such pious, zealous, and discreet brethren as they shall deem capable to expound the Scriptures to edification, and report their names to the Board."⁹ A meeting of such persons was arranged, and they were organized into a "Lay-Preachers' Association." Several of the churches acted on this request, and the policy met with moderate success.

Another attempt was made to interest the pastors of the city in street preaching in order to extend the evangelization of people who did not attend the churches. The response was no better than it had been a decade earlier. The Committee on City Missions and Out-Door Preaching observed, in 1878, "There does not seem to have been any Out-Door Preaching, nor do we know of any during the year by our denomination." This committee then suggested that "Out-Door Preaching" be dropped from its title.¹⁰ Another idea which was proposed in conjunction with city mission work was the purchase of a tent, which might be used for evangelistic services in various sections of the city. The idea was put into effect, but after a brief experiment, the tent

⁹ Ibid., 1876, p. 7.

¹⁰ Ibid., 1878, p. 26.

was sold.¹¹

The strength of the Association was further depleted in 1877 by the dismissal of the six white churches of the District of Columbia, which formed a convention of their own. No doubt, they felt that their connection with the Maryland Association was of little benefit to them. Their contributions could be better used in their own city instead of being scattered over the state of Maryland.¹² So they requested to be dismissed for that purpose in 1877.¹³ The eight colored churches of the District, which were connected with the Maryland Association, did not apply for such dismissal, although it was suggested that they do so at the time that the white churches left. In the following year, when it appeared that they still did not intend to comply with the suggestion, a constitutional change forced them to accede. At that time an amendment to the Constitution was proposed that "This Association shall be composed of members of regular Baptist churches only, in the state of Maryland."¹⁴ The parliamentary maneuver which compelled the Negro churches to leave the Maryland Association was not due to any objection to having colored churches in the Association. It was explained that they would be apt to fare better, if they

¹¹ Ibid., 1876, p. 7.

¹² The growth of these churches was more rapid thereafter.

¹³ Min., MBUA, 1877, p. 25.

¹⁴ Ibid., 1879, p. 2.

were affiliated with a body in their own locality.¹⁵ It is probable that there was a feeling that since most of them were dependent upon the white churches, the ones in Washington ought to be responsible for their own colored brethren.

In 1878, there was some evidence that the business depression was lifting in the commercial world. In the Maryland Association, the practice of close economy enabled the body to pay off its debts, which had been incurred in the previous years.¹⁶ The goal for the coming year was set at only \$6,000.00, and this proved to be too high, for the receipts were \$4,442.55.¹⁷ Some new life was instilled into the churches as a result of meetings which were held in the city by Dwight L. Moody. Several of the churches, in their letters to the Association, referred to the beneficial effects of his services.¹⁸

It will be recalled that, in 1871, four District Associations had been formed. However, these had not proved as successful as was hoped. The intention had been to bring the scattered churches into smaller, more compact groups, which could meet conveniently and help to unify the work.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1879, p. 24.

¹⁶ Ibid., 1878, pp. 20-21.

¹⁷ Ibid., 1879, p. 27.

¹⁸ Ibid., 1879, Digest of Letters.

of the churches in the state. The chief obstacle to their effectiveness was the difficulty of finding suitable lines of division. The churches of Baltimore constituted a natural geographical unit, but if they were placed in a District Association by themselves, some of the other District Associations would have been too weak. Therefore, the Baltimore churches were separated, so that some of them were assigned to each of three Districts. It was inconvenient for some of them to be connected with churches on the Eastern Shore, others with churches in Western Maryland, and still others with those in Southern Maryland. Consequently, many of the churches did not send delegates to the meetings of these District Associations.

In 1881, a Committee on More Efficient Organization was appointed. Instead of recommending a realignment of the churches, this committee urged that all of the churches cooperate in making the existing plan work. The plan was not very successful. In 1882, the committee reported:¹⁹

It has been about twelve years since this Association recommended the formation of District Associations in this state, with a view to a more thorough organization of the Churches in Christian work. We have nominally three District Associations, whose growth and effectiveness have not kept pace with the years. With the exception of the Middle, there has not been much progress, the Eastern Shore not keeping up with its annual meetings; and your Committee again urge upon the Churches to

¹⁹ Ibid., 1882, pp. 30-31.

take their places in some one of the three Associations; and adhering to the original policy, we recommend that the Churches in Baltimore city east of the Falls, and the Churches of the Eastern Shore, meet as soon as may be for the purpose of reorganizing the Eastern District Association. . . .

The other Districts were exhorted in similar fashion, and it was explained that the best possible division had been made. All of the colored churches were urged to join the Maryland Baptist Convention, which would serve as the fourth District Association.²⁰

The Maryland Baptists had been spurred on to new interest in foreign missions during the years of the war and its aftermath. This quickened interest continued to be fairly strong during the period under consideration. The women of the Baltimore churches were organizing societies to promote the cause. Although the economic depression caused some decline in giving, the Maryland Baptists were contributing more proportionately to missions abroad than the other states of the Southern Convention.²¹ In 1875, the Baptists of Maryland gave \$6,337.00 to the Foreign Mission Board of the Convention, which more than was given to the work of the state Mission Board.²²

²⁰ The original fourth District Association had been made up of the churches in the District of Columbia.

²¹ H. A. Tupper, op. cit., p. 906.

²² Min., MBUA, 1875, p. 30.

Interest in the work of the Domestic Mission Board of the Convention did not grow apace with that of the Foreign Board. In 1875, Maryland Baptists gave seven times as much to the latter as to the former.²³ The smaller interest in this phase of denominational work can be accounted for partly by the fact that the pressing problem of developing Negro churches and schools was being met more adequately by the northern organization, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, than by the agency of the Southern Convention. Many of the Maryland Baptists were sending contributions to the Northern Baptist agency, instead of to the Domestic Mission Board of their own Convention. In consequence, a mild reprimand was administered to those who were doing so:²⁴

But perhaps the chief difficulty in the way of securing from the churches of our Association united support for the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention appears in the fact that all of the brethren represented in this body do not regard that Board as our Board, ours to be most cherished and ours to be first taken care of. We are here upon the utmost borders of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the contributions of many of our members go into the treasury of the Northern Societies. . . . But since every church connected with this body is within the geographical area occupied by the Southern Baptist Convention it seems to your Committee that the cause of the Redeemer would best be promoted if there could be a universal rallying around the Boards of the Convention.

²³ Ibid., 1875, p. 30.

²⁴ Ibid., 1874, pp. 21-22.

There was not much temperance activity among the Baptists of the state during the years being considered. The Committee on Temperance, which had been dropped from the list of standing committees in 1864, was revived. However, there was not a fresh upsurge of the crusading spirit. The opinion had become prevalent that suitable legislation could not be expected, because "The government which derives so large an amount of revenue from the production of whiskey, will not look beyond that glittering bribe."²⁵ It was even questioned whether legislative measures were a fit subject for the consideration of the Association:²⁶

. . . . Is appropriate legislation the solvent of this weighty problem? It may be; but, assembled here as representatives of Baptist Churches, it is not in our province to discuss prohibition.

By 1880, there was some evidence that interest in this subject was being revived, but it took several years more for the old zest to be recovered.

In the matter of education, little progress was made. From what has been said earlier, it is apparent that, while there was strong interest in ministerial education, there was not much enthusiasm for higher education on the part of the rank and file members of the denomination. The economic status of the average Baptist family was not suffic-

²⁵ Ibid., 1876, pp. 30-31.

²⁶ Ibid., 1876, pp. 30-31.

iently high to enable them to send children to college. In 1874, W. W. Corcoran, of Washington, offered to give the sum of \$200,000.⁰⁰ to Columbian College, on the condition that another \$100,000.00 be raised by January 1, 1857.²⁷ An appeal was made to the Maryland Baptist Association, but little response was elicited. In 1877, the Association was warned: "Not many years of apathy and neglect can elapse, before the opportunity which is ours at this moment, will pass from us beyond our recovery."²⁸ These were prophetic words, for, in 1904, Columbian College became independent of the Baptist denomination.²⁹

There was also a continued indifference manifested towards female education. Suggestions had been made earlier that a female school be established by the Baptists of Maryland. A similar proposal was made again in 1872.³⁰ After the matter had been discussed during the next three years, a committee reported the following resolution to the Association, and it was adopted:³¹

We do not recommend the establishment, during the coming year of additional schools among us, but we do urge the more cordial patronage and support of those already existing.

²⁷ Ibid., 1874, p. 19.

²⁸ Ibid., 1877, p. 24.

²⁹ Maryland Baptist, Dec. 15, 1904.

³⁰ Min., MBUA, 1872, p. 15.

³¹ Ibid., 1875, pp. 25-26.

Towards theological education there was not nearly so much unconcern. The increasing interest in the education of ministers has been noted in previous discussion. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary,³² which had been closed during the war, was reopened in 1865. The ensuing twelve years witnessed a struggle on the part of the institution to survive great financial difficulties.³³ In 1837, a plea for financial assistance was made to the Maryland Baptist Association. In response to this request, a collection was taken which amounted to \$1,385.00 in cash and pledges.³⁴ Five years later, the Seminary moved to Louisville, Kentucky, and the Maryland Baptists agreed to raise \$30,000.00 for the endowment of the school.³⁵

Another educational interest which received some support from the Baptists of Maryland between 1873 and 1882 was the Wayland Seminary in Washington. With the freeing of the Negroes, colored Baptist churches had sprung up rapidly over the state. It therefore devolved upon the Association to take an interest in providing these churches with trained leaders. Wayland Seminary had been started in 1865,

³² Two Maryland pastors had been among the leaders who established this seminary -- G. W. Samson and J. W. M. Williams. B. F. Riley, History of the Baptists in the Southern States East of the Mississippi, p. 252.

³³ A. H. Newman, op. cit., pp. 465-467.

³⁴ Min., MBUA, 1873, p. 15.

³⁵ Ibid., 1878, p. 24.

under the auspices of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, for the purpose of preparing future pastors of the Negro churches.³⁶ This school was kept before the attention of the Maryland Association through the reports of the Committee on Education. To what extent the Baptists of Maryland aided that institution directly, it is difficult to ascertain. However, it was largely their interest in this school, which led them to give more to the home mission board of the Northern Baptist Convention than to that of their own Convention. It is sure that they supported quite a few colored students who attended there.³⁷

TABLE XII. Growth of the Maryland Baptist Union Association, 1873-1882.³⁸

| Year | Ministers | Churches | Baptisms | Members |
|------|-----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 1873 | 37 | 49 | 746 | 6756 |
| 1874 | 51 | 54 | 1085 | 7773 |
| 1875 | 46 | 60 | 545 | 8659 |
| 1876 | 50 | 60 | 1031 | 10271 |
| 1877 | 51 | 60 | 893 | 9224 |
| 1878 | 38 | 54 | 531 | 5847 |
| 1879 | 38 | 54 | 865 | 8306 |
| 1880 | 42 | 45 | 393 | 8755 |
| 1881 | 42 | 45 | 690 | 9353 |
| 1882 | 42 | 50 | 792 | 9807 |

The rounding out of the decade, 1873-1882, found the Maryland Baptists somewhat stronger numerically than at the end of the previous period, despite the losses which

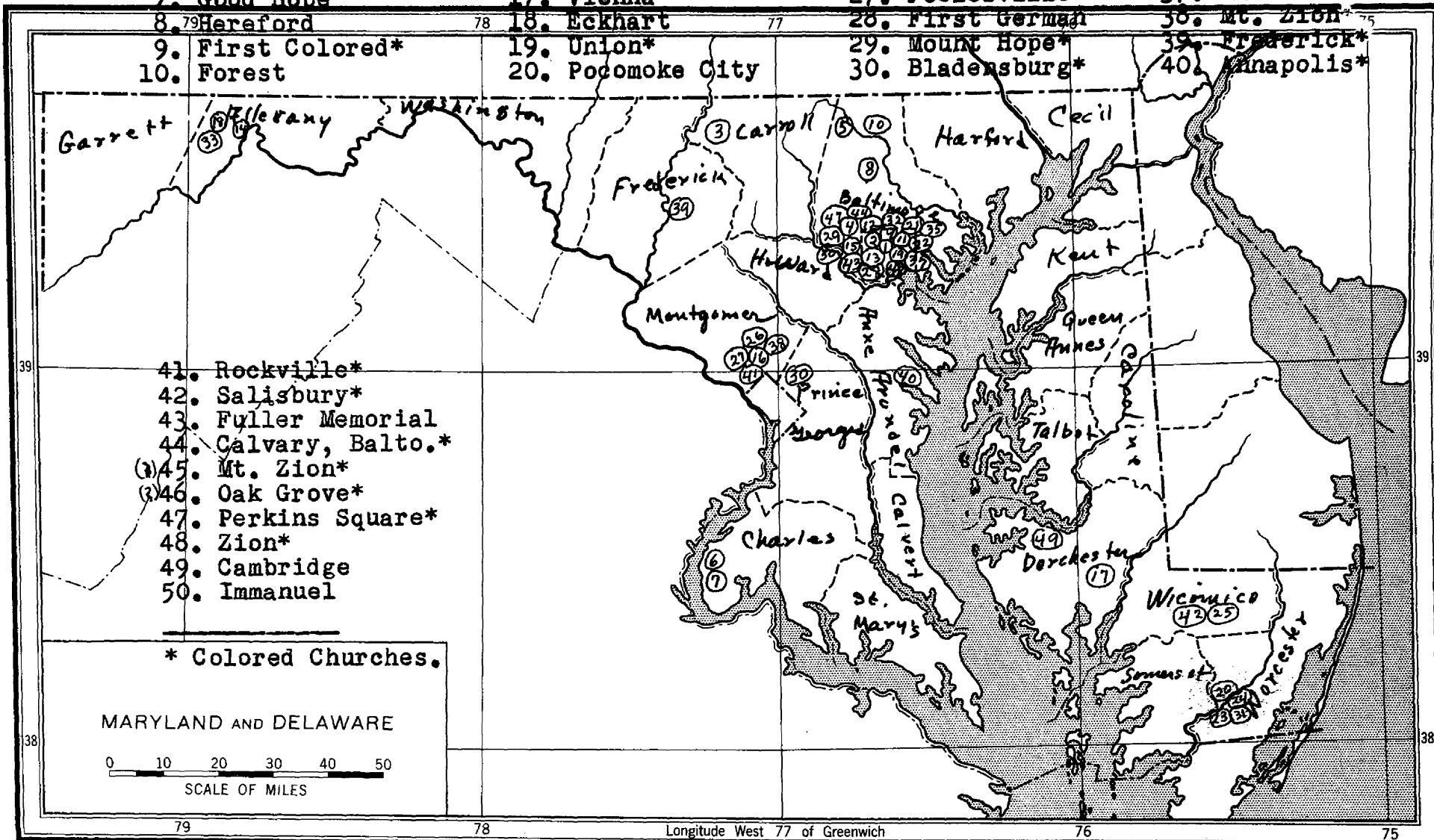
³⁶ Ibid., 1878, p. 22.

³⁷ A. B. Koger, op. cit., p. 27. And Andrew Rothwell, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

³⁸ Min., MBUA, 1873-1882.

attended the withdrawal of the District of Columbia churches. The increase in numbers had not brought a corresponding growth in financial strength, for a large proportion of the new members and new churches were among the Negroes, who occupied a low economic status. The economic depression which began in 1873 had temporarily halted all efforts towards expansion, but by 1882, the Baptists were getting ready for another forward movement.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 2. High Street | 12. Huntingdon | 22. Lee Street | 32. Eutaw Place |
| 3. Taney Town | 13. Second Baltimore | 23. Rehoboth | 33. Frestburg |
| 4. Pikesville | 14. Cumberland | 24. Pitts Creek | (?)34. Forest Hall* |
| 5. Gunpowder | 15. Rockdale | 25. Salisbury | 35. Leadenhall St.* |
| 6. Nanjemoy | 16. Rockville | 26. Germantown | (?)36. Longwood* |
| 7. Good Hope | 17. Vienna | 27. Poolersville | 37. Macedonia* |
| 8. Hereford | 18. Eckhart | 28. First German | 38. Mt. Zion* |
| 9. First Colored* | 19. Union* | 29. Mount Hope* | 39. Frederick* |
| 10. Forest | 20. Pocomoke City | 30. Bladensburg* | 40. Annapolis* |



NYSTROM SERIES OF DESK MAPS

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Location of Churches in the Maryland Baptist Union Association in 1882

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

CONCLUSION

The story of the Maryland Baptists has been traced over a period of 140 years. Having made a poor start during the latter part of the eighteenth century, when the Baptists in other southern states were growing rapidly, their progress was retarded by a controversy over missions during the third, and part of the fourth, decades of the nineteenth century. After the disruption of the Baltimore Baptist Association in 1836, a new beginning had to be made. As new methods of expansion were adopted, the number of churches and members began to increase gradually. Although financial difficulties and the coming of the Civil War hampered their growth, the Baptists increased considerably between 1836 and 1882. In 1877, the churches of the District of Columbia formed a separate convention, and five years later the Negro churches organized the Maryland Baptist Convention, which was the initial step towards their becoming a separate body. Thereafter the work of the Association was confined to the white people of Maryland.

There were many differences between the churches of the early nineteenth century and those of 1882. Instead of small, one-room buildings, most of the churches had structures which were adapted to educational and social purposes. Prior to 1836, there had been practically no ministers who

had any formal education, but by 1882 most of the pastors had been either to college or seminary, or both. While the salaries of ministers were often small, yet by the latter date the remuneration of pastors and missionaries was accepted without question, and some of the churches permitted their preachers to take vacations in the summer. Musical instruments had been introduced into the churches, and some of the churches had paid choir directors and song leaders. Revival meetings were still held by many churches annually, but they were no longer accompanied by a noisy emotionalism. Church organization had become more complex, with the multiplication of auxiliary agencies of various kinds and purposes. After the Civil War, the business meetings of the churches were less concerned with the discipline of members, and people were admitted into membership with less inquiry into their beliefs and practices. As the churches increased in membership, the relationships between the members became less personal, and in the largest ones many of the members were unacquainted with one another. The majority of the churches were in urban communities, whereas the older ones had been predominantly rural. The latter fact probably accounts for many of the changes which had taken place.

To a person whose life spanned the two periods, these changes seemed almost revolutionary. Such a man was Daniel Wilhelm, who published some of his impressions of the new day that had dawned. Lamenting the passing of the "good old

days," he wrote in 1883:¹

The church did not have to employ colporters and pay them in those revivals [those of William Laws and Elder Knapp]. There would be numbers of young converts that would go out to hold prayer meetings from house to house and do a great deal of good.

There was none of this going to the Springs for recreation in the hot summer like there is at present. Baptists held camp meetings in those days. . . . In those days there was no music used in the churches; the brethren and sisters did all the singing; they sang in the spirit and prayed in the spirit; they had not to hire men of the world and pay them to lead the singing; . . . the Churches had not become so mixed up with the world as now. Then you could tell a person by his dress.

. . . He [William Laws] did not take the seekers from the bench and tell them they had religion; he let them remain down till they knew for themselves. . . . He did not mind how loud they cried or how many tears they shed, he was not afraid of what people call excitement.

. . . If the churches cannot support their pastors now without the aid of the Board, I cannot see when they ever will. Look at the wages working men get \$2.00 and \$2.50 a day, and women get \$20.00 a month. . . . Now come up and take your minister off the Board; be a free people.

Now I must close this book by saying that all the money I ever received for my labors and travelling expenses was \$2.40. . . . my wife had to attend to my business when I was out labouring for the Lord. . . .

The changes which took place between 1836 and 1882 were much greater than those which came about in the ensuing sixty years. Although no institution remains entirely static for that long, yet there have been few significant

¹ Daniel B. Wilhelm, Recollections of "Uncle Daniel," pp. 21-22.

changes since that time, except that trends which had already begun were strengthened. The policies and methods inaugurated by that time have continued to the present. Growth has been gradual, and the trend towards the predominance of urban churches has continued. In general, theological opinions and attitudes towards social questions have not been noticeably altered. Interest in higher education and in missions has followed the patterns set by 1882. With a brief survey of subsequent developments with respect to these matters, this study will be concluded.

In the matter of theology, the views of the churches before 1836 had been mostly ultra-Calvinistic. By 1883, the older views had been considerably modified, although theology was still mildly Calvinistic. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when some churches elsewhere were agitated over Darwinism and higher criticism, the Maryland churches were little disturbed by these questions. In more recent years, they have been little affected by the controversy between modernism and fundamentalism. This was partially due to the fact that few Baptists went to college where they might come into contact with modernistic ideas. It was also owing, in part, to the fact that most of the Maryland pastors have come from the South, where this controversy has not yet created the stir that it has among the Northern Baptist churches. There has been a departure such practices as "close communion" and the refusal to recognize the validity of "alien immersion," but this is true of

other southern states generally.² In general, the theological opinions of a typical pastor of 1882 would be acceptable to the average Maryland Baptist minister today.

So far as attitudes on social questions is concerned, there has been no great change either. For the most part, the tendency of Maryland Baptists, as of the denomination generally, has been to avoid taking official stands on social issues, except those which have direct religious and moral bearings. Some interest has been shown in the welfare of dependent classes of society, such as orphans and aged people. In 1891, an orphanage was started, but financial difficulties closed its doors in 1898. Thereafter, the Children's Aid Society has confined its efforts to placing orphans in foster homes. There was also a Home for the Aged for a number of years, but it, too, succumbed to the problem of securing adequate financial support. Towards the end of the century, some interest was shown in immigrant peoples, but this was mainly from the standpoint of evangelising them. In 1929, a Social Service Committee was appointed by the Association, but its efforts are limited to making annual reports. In these, temperance, divorce, and crime are frequently mentioned. On rare occasions, labor problems, racial issues, and questions relating to war have been dis-

² The former of these terms applies to the practice of allowing only Baptists to participate in the observance of the Lord's Supper. The latter refers to the reception of members who have been immersed by other than Baptist ministers.

cussed. However, such references have always been couched in general terms, which would not be offensive to the constituency of the Association. Generally speaking, the churches of the Maryland Association have not manifested much more social consciousness since 1882 than they did before that time.

In the matter of education, there has been little change in the trends which were evident in 1882. Ministerial education is considered a desideratum, and the pastors and missionaries without college and seminary training are fewer than in other states of the Southern Convention. Funds are provided by the Association for the support of ministerial students, but no provision is made for other needy students. Not many of the Baptist families send their children to college. In 1943, there were only 152 Baptist young people attending institutions of higher learning, including those in business school and nurses in training. Of these, 92 were from Baltimore. From time to time, proposals have been made to start a Baptist college, or junior college, but such an enterprise has never been undertaken. The neglect of Baptists to support Columbian College resulted in the severing of its denominational ties in 1904. Since that was the only Baptist college in, or near, the Maryland Baptists, it was the logical one to receive their support. However, it was of little interest to them, and they seem to have been little concerned over its being lost to the denomination.

The interest in foreign missions which had developed during the Civil War continued to be a major interest of the Maryland Baptists. Soon after the war, the women of Baltimore began a missionary society, which in 1871 developed into a movement known as "Woman's Mission to Woman." One consequence of this was the spread of interest in missionary societies over the South, which resulted in the formation of the Women's Missionary Union in 1888. It also served to stimulate Maryland Baptists to give more money to foreign missions. In 1897, they contributed 76¢ per capita to this cause, as compared with 8¢ per capita for the other states of the Convention. Although that ratio has not been maintained, Maryland Baptists still rank near the top in the contributions to missions, proportionate to membership.

The policy of expanding into new fields through the employment of missionaries by the Association has been continued to the present. There are few Baptist churches in the state today, which have not thus been aided. As the number of missionaries increased, it became necessary to have someone to superintend their work. Accordingly, a General Secretary has been employed since 1903, when E. B. Hatcher was chosen to fill the post. The necessity of investing funds in fields where prospects of growth were the greatest has led to the result that practically every new field has been located in some urban or suburban center. Of the 100 churches existing in 1946, only three were in the open country. The

growth of the Baptists of Maryland has been very gradual, with an average of one new church each year between 1882 and 1946, and an average increase in aggregate membership of less than 300 a year. In 1882, there were 50 churches and 9,353 members; in 1946, there were 100 churches with 26,778 members. At present the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention is taking an interest in expanding the denominational work in the state. Several of its employees have been placed here, and others probably will be soon. Perhaps this will lead to a more rapid growth than has been experienced in the past. However, there is little likelihood that the Baptists of Maryland will ever have numerical strength comparable to that of the other Southern Baptist states.

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