

BAPTIST BODIES

GENERAL STATEMENT

It is a distinct principle with Baptists that they acknowledge no human founder, recognize no human authority, and subscribe to no human creed. For all these things, Baptists of every name and order go back to the New Testament. And while no competent Baptist historian assumes to be able to trace a succession of Baptist churches through the ages, most of them are of one accord in believing that, if we could secure the records, there would be found heroic groups of believers in every age who upheld with their testimonies and, in many cases, with their lives, the great outstanding and distinctive principles of the Baptist churches of to-day.

As soon as the Reformation gave men opportunity to interpret the teachings of the Scriptures for themselves, and to embody their convictions in speech and act, persons holding Baptist doctrines immediately began to appear. In the first quarter of the sixteenth century, they were found in Germany and Switzerland, and were called Anabaptists (Re-baptizers), because they insisted that persons baptized in infancy must, upon profession of conversion, and in order to gain admission into church fellowship, be baptized again, although they do not appear to have insisted always on immersion. These early Anabaptists were in the main of high character, though in some instances they held doctrines which led to fanatical outbreaks which aroused no little prejudice against them.

Gradually, in spite of severe persecution, the Anabaptists grew in numbers. Some of them, driven from Germany, found refuge in the Low Countries and these were gathered, under the lead of Menno Simons, into the groups of Mennonites¹ who passed over into England, and doubtless played an important part in giving currency to Baptist principles. To their influence, in all probability, the English Baptists owe their first churches, established in Amsterdam in 1608 and in London in 1611. Glimpses of them appear in the days preceding the Commonwealth, and during the Cromwellian period they became more prominent. It was due to this Mennonite influence that the early Baptist churches in England were Arminian rather than Calvinistic in type, and were termed General Baptists, indicating belief in a universal atonement, in distinction from Particular Baptists, indicating a limited atonement. The first Calvinistic or Particular Baptist church was formed in London in 1638, its members seceding peaceably from an older Separatist congregation. In 1641 a further secession from the same Separatist church occurred, and the new group became convinced from study of the New Testament that the apostolic baptism was immersion. They sent one of their number to Holland, where he was immersed by a minister of the Collegiate church at Rhynsburg, where the practice of immersion had been introduced, and on his return the rest of the church were immersed. Gradually this practice was adopted by all the Baptist churches and became in the popular mind their distinguishing feature. The General and Particular Baptists were united in 1891.

The first Baptist church in America was probably established by Roger Williams, the "Apostle of Religious Liberty," in Providence, R. I., in 1639, although this honor is disputed by the First Baptist Church of Newport, R. I., organized, it is claimed, with John Clarke as its pastor, the same year or shortly after.

¹ See Mennonite Bodies, p. 842.

Roger Williams was a Separatist² minister who came to the Massachusetts Colony in 1631, and was banished from that colony because "he broached and divulged new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates." Having established himself at Providence, he adopted essentially Baptist views and soon gathered a number of converts to this faith. As there was no Baptist church in existence in America at that time, he baptized Ezekiel Holliman, who thereupon baptized him. Williams then baptized 10 others, and this company of Baptist believers organized themselves into a church. John Clarke came from New Hampshire to Newport about the same time, and, apparently without any connection with the work of Williams, established a Baptist church in that town.

These early American Baptist churches belonged to the Particular, or Calvinistic, branch. Later, Arminian views became widely spread for a time, but ultimately the Calvinistic view of the atonement was generally accepted by the main body of Baptists in the Colonies. The divisions which now exist began to make their appearance at a relatively early date. In 1652 the church at Providence divided, one party organizing a church which marked the beginning of the General Six Principle Baptists. The Seventh Day Baptist body organized its first church at Newport in 1671. Arminianism practically disappeared from the Baptist churches of New England about the middle of the eighteenth century, but General Baptists were found in Virginia before 1714, and this branch gained a permanent foothold in the South. As a result of the revival movement, generally known as the New Light movement, which followed George Whitefield's visit to New England in 1740, the Separate Baptists came into existence and at one time were very numerous. The Free Baptists,³ in 1779, once more gave a general and widely accepted expression in New England to the Arminian view of the atonement.

Soon after the Revolutionary War, the question of the evangelization of the Negro race assumed importance, and a Colored Baptist church was organized in 1788. With the general revival movement at the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, to which the Free Baptists owed no small part of their growth, there developed, especially in the mountain sections of the Middle West and in the Southern States, a reaction toward a sterner Calvinism, which, combined with the natural Baptist emphasis upon individualism, produced a number of associations strictly, even rigidly, Calvinistic, some of them going to the extent of dualism, as in the doctrine of the Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Predestinarian Baptists.

About the same time, as missionary work became organized into societies, many of these associations opposed, not so much mission work itself, as its organization, through fear of a developing ecclesiasticism. These were variously termed "Old School," "Anti-Mission," "Hard Shell," and "Primitive" Baptists; but gradually the term "Primitive" became the most widely known and adopted. In contradistinction to these, the associations, or churches, which approved of missionary societies, came to be designated Missionary Baptists, though there was no definite denominational organization under that name.

The denominations mentioned, however, do not represent all who hold Baptist views, for during the revival period just referred to, the Disciples of Christ, or Churches of Christ, arose, who in practice are essentially Baptists, although they differ from the other bodies in some interpretations. With them also may be classed the Adventists, the Brethren (Dunker, Plymouth, and River), Mennonites, and certain other bodies. The Armenian and Eastern Orthodox Churches practice baptism by immersion, but do not limit it to those of mature years.

² See Congregational Churches, p. 453.

³ In 1926 the Free Baptist churches are included with those of the Northern Baptist Convention.

It thus appears that a survey of Baptist bodies should include not only those which make the term an integral part of their title, but some which are not ordinarily classed with them. It is also evident that among those who accept the name Baptists there are many differences, some of great importance. Seventh Day Baptists agree with other Baptists bodies except in regard to the Sabbath, but the distinction between Primitive Baptists and Free Will Baptists is much more marked than between Baptists and Disciples. Any presentation of the strength of Baptist denominations must take into account these divergencies.

By far the largest body of Baptists, not only in the United States but in the world, is that popularly known as "Baptist," though frequently referred to, and listed in the census of 1890, as "Regular Baptists." Other Baptist bodies prefix some descriptive adjective, such as "Primitive," "United," "General," "Free Will," etc., but this, which is virtually the parent body, commonly has no such qualification. Its churches, however, are ordinarily spoken of as "Northern," "Southern," and "Colored." This does not imply any divergence in doctrine or ecclesiastical order. All are one in these respects. It is rather a distinction adopted for administrative purposes, and based upon certain local or racial characteristics and conditions, the recognition of which implies no lack of fellowship or of unanimity of purpose. Should these distinctions cease to exist, there is nothing whatever to prevent the same unity in matters of administration which now exists in belief, fellowship, and ecclesiastical practice.

STATISTICS

The denominations grouped as Baptists in 1926, 1916, and 1906 are listed in the table below, with the principal statistics as reported for the three periods.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR BAPTIST BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
1926								
Total for the group.....	60,192	3,440,922	52,281	\$469,827,795	54,145	\$98,045,096	47,889	4,654,241
Baptists:								
Northern Baptist Convention.....	7,611	1,289,966	7,297	185,370,576	7,380	34,318,486	6,999	1,052,794
Southern Baptist Convention.....	23,374	3,524,378	21,128	173,456,965	22,338	42,904,563	19,882	2,345,630
Negro Baptists.....	22,081	3,196,623	19,833	103,465,759	20,209	19,475,981	18,755	1,121,362
General Six Principle Baptists.....	6	293	6	20,500	5	3,046	5	229
Seventh Day Baptists.....	67	7,264	58	668,200	65	132,068	57	4,033
Free Will Baptists.....	1,024	79,592	765	1,156,743	872	252,613	643	38,199
United American Free Will Baptists (Colored).....	166	13,396	142	308,425	158	67,773	144	5,077
Free Will Baptists (Bullockites).....	2	36	1	1,500	1	100	1	15
General Baptists.....	465	31,501	353	706,325	440	113,825	295	18,797
Separate Baptists.....	65	4,803	43	63,650	41	9,292	37	1,782
Regular Baptists.....	349	23,091	233	647,550	223	55,610	65	4,690
United Baptists.....	221	18,903	139	144,665	147	15,094	30	2,005
Duck River and Kindred Associations of Baptists (Baptist Church of Christ).....	98	7,340	75	51,175	46	5,262	14	795
Primitive Baptists.....	2,267	81,374	1,037	1,730,348	776	166,847	5	181
Colored Primitive Baptists.....	925	43,978	87	171,518	111	39,419	24	2,278
Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Predestinarian Baptists.....	27	304	24	19,350	20	473		
Independent Baptist Church of America.....	13	222	6	12,000	10	2,499	6	146
American Baptist Association.....	1,431	117,858	1,054	1,832,546	1,303	482,045	918	56,228

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR BAPTIST BODIES, 1926, 1916, AND 1906—Contd.

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
1916								
Total for the group	57,828	7,153,313	50,716	\$198,364,747	51,797	\$40,027,119	46,168	3,946,886
Baptists:								
Northern Baptist Convention.....	8,148	1,232,135	7,748	94,644,133	7,848	16,082,462	7,517	1,028,952
Southern Baptist Convention.....	23,580	2,708,870	19,268	58,348,373	21,078	15,063,743	17,555	1,665,996
National Baptist Convention.....	21,071	2,938,579	20,117	41,184,920	19,988	8,361,919	19,909	1,181,270
General Six Principle Baptists.....	10	456	10	25,850	6	2,483	6	278
Seventh Day Baptists.....	68	7,980	59	307,600	64	67,095	66	5,005
Free Baptists.....	171	12,570	159	670,720	153	123,363	141	11,642
Free Will Baptists.....	750	54,833	656	517,240	612	75,835	390	22,421
Colored Free Will Baptists.....	169	13,362	164	178,385	168	36,647	87	4,168
Free Will Baptists (Bullockites).....	12	184	6	3,450	3	275	1	12
General Baptists.....	517	33,466	390	421,837	424	64,698	305	18,545
Separate Baptists.....	46	4,254	40	47,565	33	9,468	30	1,711
Regular Baptists.....	401	21,521	189	141,480	143	11,855	50	2,587
United Baptists.....	254	22,097	82	52,147	69	4,837	16	701
Duck River and Kindred Associations of Baptists (Baptist Church of Christ).....	105	6,872	49	40,600	67	2,518	8	399
Primitive Baptists.....	2,142	80,311	1,580	1,601,807	964	96,270	-----	-----
Colored Primitive Baptists.....	336	15,144	164	154,690	170	22,881	87	3,201
Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Predestinarian Baptists.....	48	679	35	23,950	7	170	-----	-----
1906								
Total for the group	54,707	5,662,234	49,329	139,842,656	-----	-----	41,165	2,898,914
Baptists:								
Northern Baptist Convention.....	8,247	1,052,105	7,795	74,620,025	-----	-----	7,346	851,269
Southern Baptist Convention.....	21,075	2,009,471	18,672	34,723,882	-----	-----	14,371	1,014,690
National Baptist Convention.....	18,492	2,261,607	17,890	24,437,272	-----	-----	17,478	924,665
General Six Principle Baptists.....	16	685	13	19,450	-----	-----	9	414
Seventh Day Baptists.....	76	8,381	68	292,250	-----	-----	67	5,117
Free Baptists.....	1,338	81,359	1,092	2,974,130	-----	-----	1,059	65,101
Free Will Baptists.....	608	40,280	554	296,585	-----	-----	263	12,720
Free Will Baptists (Bullockites).....	15	298	8	6,900	-----	-----	1	25
General Baptists.....	518	30,097	380	252,019	-----	-----	230	11,658
Separate Baptists.....	73	5,180	59	66,980	-----	-----	45	1,962
United Baptists.....	190	13,698	75	36,715	-----	-----	21	1,360
Duck River and Kindred Associations of Baptists (Baptist Church of Christ).....	92	6,416	86	44,321	-----	-----	9	402
Primitive Baptists.....	2,878	102,311	1,953	1,674,810	-----	-----	-----	-----
Colored Primitive Baptists in America.....	787	35,076	501	296,539	-----	-----	166	6,224
Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Predestinarian Baptists.....	55	781	32	21,500	-----	-----	-----	-----
United American Free Will Baptists (Colored).....	247	14,489	151	79,278	-----	-----	100	3,307

Certain changes are to be noted. Under the "Negro Baptists," in 1926, are included the former National Baptist Convention, now the National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., and the National Baptist Convention of America; the Lott Carey Missionary Baptists; and the colored Baptist churches that were formerly reported with the Northern Baptist Convention. The Free Baptists of 1916 are now a part of the Northern Convention. A new body has recently completed its organization, under the name Independent Baptist Church of America, and a new denomination has come out of the Southern Baptist Convention, called the American Baptist Association.

SEPARATE BAPTISTS

STATISTICS

Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.—A general summary of the statistics for the Separate Baptists for the year 1926 is presented in Table 1, which shows also the distribution of these figures between urban and rural territory.

The membership of the Separate Baptist churches includes persons who have been admitted to the local churches, by vote of the members, upon their acceptance of the articles of belief and baptism by immersion:

TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: SEPARATE BAPTISTS

ITEM	Total	In urban territory ¹	In rural territory ¹	PER CENT OF TOTAL, ²	
				Urban	Rural
Churches (local organizations).....	65	1	64		
Members.....	4,803	60	4,743	1.2	98.8
Average per church.....	74	60	74		
Membership by sex:					
Male.....	1,821	30	1,791	1.6	98.4
Female.....	2,388	30	2,308	1.3	98.7
Sex not reported.....	646		646		100.0
Males per 100 females ³	78.0		77.7		
Membership by age:					
Under 13 years.....	103		103		100.0
13 years and over.....	3,766	60	2,706	1.6	98.4
Age not reported.....	934		934		100.0
Per cent under 13 years ⁴	2.7		2.7		
Church edifices:					
Number.....	46	1	45		
Value—Churches reporting.....	43	1	42		
Amount reported.....	\$63,650	\$2,000	\$61,650	3.1	96.9
Average per church.....	\$1,480	\$2,000	\$1,468		
Parsonages:					
Value—Churches reporting.....	1		1		
Amount reported.....	\$1,000		\$1,000		100.0
Expenditures during year:					
Churches reporting.....	41	1	40		
Amount reported.....	\$9,292	\$509	\$8,782	5.4	94.6
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$7,799	\$300	\$7,499	6.4	93.6
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$1,368		\$1,368		100.0
Not classified.....	\$125		\$125		100.0
Average expenditure per church.....	\$227	\$500	\$220		
Sunday schools:					
Churches reporting.....	37	1	36		
Officers and teachers.....	259	11	248	4.2	95.8
Scholars.....	1,782	90	1,692	5.8	94.0

¹ Urban territory includes all cities and other incorporated places which had 2,500 inhabitants or more in 1920, the date of the last Federal census; rural territory comprises the remainder of the country.

² Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

³ Ratio not shown where number of females is less than 100.

⁴ Based on membership with age classification reported.

The data given for 1926 represent 65 active Separate Baptist churches, with 4,803 members. The classification of membership by sex was reported by 51 churches and the classification by age was reported by 43 churches, including, however, only 17 which reported any members under 13 years of age. There was no debt on the churches or parsonages reported in 1926.

Comparative data, 1890-1926.—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926, 1916, 1906, and 1890.

TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1890 TO 1926: SEPARATE BAPTISTS

ITEM	1926	1916	1906	1890
Churches (local organizations)	65	46	73	24
Increase ¹ over preceding census:				
Number.....	19	-27	49	
Per cent ²				
Members	4,803	4,254	5,180	1,599
Increase ¹ over preceding census:				
Number.....	549	-926	3,581	
Per cent.....	12.9	-17.9	224.0	
Average membership per church.....	74	92	71	67
Church edifices:				
Number.....	46	41	60	19
Value—Churches reporting.....	43	40	59	
Amount reported.....	\$63,650	\$47,565	\$66,980	\$9,200
Average per church.....	\$1,480	\$1,189	\$1,135	
Debt—Churches reporting.....			4	
Amount reported.....		\$110	\$380	
Parsonages:				
Value—Churches reporting.....	1			
Amount reported.....	\$1,000			
Expenditures during year:				
Churches reporting.....	41	33		
Amount reported.....	\$9,292	\$9,468		
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$7,799	\$8,005		
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$1,368	\$1,463		
Not classified.....	\$125			
Average expenditure per church.....	\$227	\$287		
Sunday schools:				
Churches reporting.....	37	30	45	
Officers and teachers.....	259	237	312	
Scholars.....	1,782	1,711	1,962	

¹ A minus sign (-) denotes decrease.

² Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

State tables.—Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the statistics for the Separate Baptists by States. Table 3 gives for each State the number and membership of the churches classified according to their location in urban or rural territory and the total membership classified by sex. Table 4 gives the number and membership of the churches for the three censuses from 1906 to 1926, together with the membership for 1926 classified as under 13 years of age and 13 years of age and over. Table 5 shows the value of church property, for 1926 alone. Table 6 presents, for 1926, the church expenditures, showing separately the amounts expended for current expenses and improvements, and for benevolences, etc., and also gives the data for Sunday schools.

Ecclesiastical divisions.—Table 7 presents, for each association of the Separate Baptists, the more important statistical data shown by States in the earlier tables, including number of churches, membership, value of church edifices, expenditures, and Sunday schools.

TABLE 3.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, AND TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX, BY STATES, 1926: SEPARATE BAPTISTS

GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION AND STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY SEX			
	Total	Ur- ban	Ru- ral	Total	Ur- ban	Rural	Male	Female	Sex not re- ported	Males per 100 females
United States.....	65	1	64	4,803	60	4,743	1,821	2,336	646	78.0
East North Central:										
Indiana.....	18	1	17	1,640	60	1,580	772	868	-----	88.9
Illinois.....	9	-----	9	541	-----	541	200	301	40	66.4
East South Central:										
Kentucky.....	28	-----	28	2,078	-----	2,078	849	1,167	62	72.8
Tennessee.....	10	-----	10	544	-----	544	-----	-----	544	-----

TABLE 4.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, 1906 TO 1926, AND MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926, BY STATES: SEPARATE BAPTISTS

STATE	NUMBER OF CHURCHES			NUMBER OF MEMBERS			MEMBERSHIP BY AGE, 1926			
	1926	1916	1906	1926	1916	1906	Under 13 years	13 years and over	Age not re- ported	Per cent un- der 13 ¹
United States.....	65	46	73	4,803	4,254	5,180	103	3,766	934	2.7
Indiana.....	18	17	24	1,640	1,698	2,201	62	1,472	106	4.0
Illinois.....	9	5	15	541	477	1,076	21	480	40	4.2
Kentucky.....	28	19	28	2,078	1,859	1,765	20	1,814	244	1.1
Tennessee.....	10	5	6	544	220	138	-----	-----	544	-----

¹ Based on membership with age classification reported.

TABLE 5.—VALUE OF CHURCH PROPERTY, BY STATES, 1926: SEPARATE BAPTISTS

STATE	Total number of churches	Number of church edifices	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES	
			Churches reporting	Amount
United States.....	65	46	43	\$63,650
Indiana.....	18	17	15	24,250
Illinois.....	9	8	8	14,500
Kentucky.....	28	21	20	24,900
Tennessee.....	10	-----	-----	-----

TABLE 6.—CHURCH EXPENDITURES AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY STATES, 1926: SEPARATE BAPTISTS

STATE	Total number of churches	EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR					SUNDAY SCHOOLS		
		Churches reporting	Total amount	For current expenses and improvements	For benevolences, missions, etc.	Not classified	Churches reporting	Officers and teachers	Scholars
United States.....	65	41	\$9,292	\$7,799	\$1,368	\$125	37	259	1,782
Indiana.....	18	15	3,432	2,869	563	-----	15	104	693
Illinois.....	9	7	2,104	1,812	292	-----	8	73	333
Kentucky.....	28	19	3,756	3,118	513	125	14	82	756
Tennessee.....	10	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

TABLE 7.—NUMBER AND MEMBERSHIP OF CHURCHES, VALUE OF EDIFICES, EXPENDITURES, AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS, BY ASSOCIATIONS, 1926: SEPARATE BAPTISTS

ASSOCIATION	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
Total.....	65	4,803	43	\$63,650	41	\$9,292	37	1,782
Ambraw.....	9	541	8	14,500	7	2,104	8	333
Indiana Central.....	12	1,324	10	15,100	11	2,399	10	483
Mt. Olivet.....	10	544	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Nolynn.....	11	1,331	9	14,500	10	2,465	4	276
North Indiana.....	6	316	5	9,150	4	1,033	5	210
South Kentucky.....	17	747	11	10,400	9	1,291	10	480

HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION¹**DENOMINATIONAL HISTORY**

The term "Separate," as applied to church bodies, had its origin in what is known as the "Separatist Movement" in England toward the close of the sixteenth century and early in the seventeenth century. It indicated primarily a withdrawing from the Anglican Church, without implying any specific doctrinal or ecclesiastical character. Among the churches which thus withdrew were some distinctively Baptist churches, though the first definite date appears to be that of 1662, when a church called the "English Puritan Separate Baptist Church" is said to have been organized. This, in common with some of the other independent churches, was compelled to emigrate to the colonies and came to America in 1695.

In the early part of the eighteenth century a somewhat similar condition existed in New England. The revival movement in which Whitefield took so prominent a part, and which culminated in The Great Awakening, caused sharp discussion. Those who indorsed the revival were called "New Lights," and were opposed bitterly on two specific points; one was the use of lay preachers, and the

¹ This statement, which is substantially the same as that published in Part II of the Report on Religious Bodies, 1916, has been revised by Morgan Scott, clerk of the General Association, and approved by him in its present form.

other the refusal to retain on church rolls those who were regarded by them as unregenerate because they had not experienced conversion. Denominational lines were not drawn, both the Congregational and Presbyterian churches, the latter under the lead of the Tennents, sharing in the controversy, which resulted in the withdrawal or "separation" of a number of churches. In all of these "separate" churches there were Baptists, and of 31 ministers ordained as pastors from 1746 to 1751, 5 were Baptists before they were ordained and 8 became Baptists, among the latter being Isaac Backus, the famous Baptist theologian and historian. These Separate Baptist churches were distinguished from the Regular Baptist churches by their milder Calvinism and their willingness to receive those who practiced infant baptism, even though they themselves preferred the form of immersion. As a result the Regular Baptists refused to recognize them, and for some time there was more or less hostility between the two branches. This, however, gradually disappeared, and in New England the two bodies coalesced, though there was never any formal act of union.

Among the more prominent leaders of the Separate Baptists was Shubael Stearns, a native of Boston, who was baptized and ordained in Tolland, Conn. In 1754 he left New England and settled at Sandy Creek, now Randolph County, N. C., where he made his permanent residence. With him had come 8 families, 16 persons in all, and there the same year he organized the first Separate Baptist church in the South. Before long it contained 606 members, and Daniel Marshall, Samuel Harris, and others soon became influential coworkers with Mr. Stearns. In 17 years the southern Separate Baptists had spread westward to the Mississippi, southward to Georgia, and eastward to the sea, and had 125 ministers and 42 churches. Their first association, the Sandy Creek, was organized at Stearns Church in January, 1758. As early as 1776 they were found in Kentucky, and in 1785 organized the South Kentucky Association, which is still in existence. In 1815 they crossed into Indiana Territory, established a church on Indian Creek, and in 1830 organized the Sand Creek Association. The first association in Illinois, the Shelby, was organized in 1845, and the Ambraw, one of their strongest associations, was formed in 1869. At present they are found in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

In 1787 the Regular and Separate Baptists in Virginia formed a union, adopting the name "United Baptist Churches of Christ in Virginia." In course of time similar unions were formed in most of the other States in which the southern branch of the Separate Baptists had organizations. A few Separate Baptist churches, however, refused to join in this movement, and have maintained distinct organizations until the present time. Owing largely to difficulty of communication, some practically kindred associations, such as the Duck River Association and others of similar character, have not identified themselves with the distinctive Separate Baptist body. Individual members of these associations have expressed their willingness to be classed with the Separate Baptists, but no official action in that direction has been taken.

DOCTRINE AND ORGANIZATION

Separate Baptists reject all creeds and confessions of faith, but the various associations publish, in the minutes of their yearly meetings, articles of belief. These are not always worded exactly alike, but in the main are in substantial agreement. The declaration of the General Association, which may be taken as an illustration, emphasizes the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God, the only safe rule of faith and practice; the existence of three divine personages in the Godhead; and three ordinances—baptism, the Lord's Supper, and feet washing. The immersion of believers is considered the only proper mode of baptism,

They hold that regeneration, justification, and sanctification take place through faith in the life, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession of Christ; that both the just and unjust will have part in the resurrection, and that God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world by Jesus Christ.

The strict Calvinistic doctrines of election, reprobation, and fatality have never been accepted by the Separate Baptist churches, the special points of emphasis in their preaching being the general atonement of Jesus Christ and the freedom of salvation for all who will come to Him on the terms laid down in His Word. In the statements of some associations the doctrines of "adoption by the Spirit of God" and the "perseverance of the saints" are included. The Lord's Supper is observed in the evening and is regarded, not as a church table, but the Lord's table. Each one who partakes is expected to follow the scriptural rule, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup."

In polity the Separate Baptists are thoroughly congregational, recognizing the autonomy of the local church, the purely advisory character of the association, and the rights of the individual Christian.

WORK

In the line of home missionary work each association, independent of any other, conducts its own work, but the amount of money expended for this object is not reported. No provision has as yet been made for foreign missionary work.

Although the denomination has no established institution of learning, education is firmly believed in. Sunday schools are very generally maintained throughout the different associations and are usually prosperous.

The denominational paper, *The Separate Baptist News*, is published at Edinburg, Ind.