

STORY OF OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS

section occasionally and baptize converts on the Choctaw side of the river.

At a Creek Council in 1845 a chief made a long speech in favor of enforcing the law against praying. "When God made all things he made white people and black people to pray but he never required the Indian to pray to him." Another Indian, not a Christian, arose and said: "The chief who has just addressed you spoke angrily about the praying people and warmly insisted that the law against them should be enforced, but he never once alluded to whiskey nor to those who drink it. When God made all things he made white people and black people to drink whiskey, but he never made his red children to get drunk on bitter water. Whiskey is doing the Creek man more harm than preaching and praying. Now stop and consult on the whiskey law." The case was carried over to the next council. The first chief who spoke was afterwards baptized by H. F. Buckner.

Joseph Islands left a good house and moved into a small log cabin and gave the better house for a place of worship. The American Indian Missionary Association offered him \$50 for his services, but he declined at that time to accept it, for fear such gift might prejudice the unsaved Indians against him. All about him Indian converts were being whipped. He was threatened but went on with his work undismayed. For several years he served as pastor of the North Fork Church. He made a profound impression on the Creek Nation. His genuine Christian character and his courageous spirit broke the force of the persecutions and a great revival swept through the Creek Nation. On March 8, 1848, a few months before Buckner came on the field, Joseph Islands answered the call of his Lord, "Come home."

Jesse Bushyhead

When the Cherokees were driven West in 1838, one contingent was led by Jesse Bushyhead, a Cherokee chief who was a Baptist preacher. Religious services were conducted by him every Sunday on the long journey West. Back in the

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old nation he had translated parts of the Bible into the Cherokee language.

He was born in September, 1804, in East Tennessee, and was baptized in 1830. He was ordained in 1833. He and Oganaya, another Baptist preacher, were appointed to go to Washington to help settle the Cherokee difficulties. In 1837 he was appointed a member of a Cherokee deputation to mediate between the United States Government and the Seminole Indians.

When the time came for the deportation of the Cherokees, Jesse Bushyhead and Evan Jones, Baptist missionaries, visited the Cherokees who had fled to the mountains and persuaded them to surrender to the United States troops. On the arrival in the new country Bushyhead established a camp which was later named "Baptist" near where Westville now stands. Late in 1840 he was elected chief justice of the Cherokee Nation and served in that capacity until his death, July 17, 1844.

In the *Cherokee Messenger* published a month later was an account of his death from which we quote: "His mind seemed to be enraptured with a view of the teachings of God . . . Sometimes he had an intense and satisfying view of the glory of God's sovereign power. Speaking of his sickness he said, 'If it be his will to raise me up, He can do it. He will do it through your labor and efforts. But if it is His will not to raise me up I am satisfied.'"

In the Journal of Ethan Allen Hitchcock (edited by Foreman) is this tribute to Bushyhead: "He is universally respected and beloved. His mere opinion in the Nation has great weight and his persuasions upon almost any subject can win the people to his views. He is a fair-minded sensible man and if he can be satisfied the Nation ought to acquiesce. If he is not satisfied, it may suggest a doubt whether some concessions may not be proper." William Gammell wrote: "The ablest and most successful of the native preachers and one of the ablest and most energetic men of the nation to which he belonged. He was one of its earliest pioneers in civilization, and one of the noblest exemplifications of Christian character it has ever produced." He was said to be the only man of any consequence among the Cherokees who habitually traveled among his people in the troublous period unarmed except for his Bible.

The Missionary Jubilee: Account of the fiftieth anniversary of the
Ame. Baptist Missionary Union Phila., May 24-26, 18
New York: Sheldon & Co., Boston Gould & Lincoln, 1869

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preaching places, some of them 150 miles apart. From March 19, 1837, to Jan. 10, 1838, a period of ten months, 107 were baptized, of whom 104 were Cherokees, and 39 of them males. In 1838, agreeably to the treaty of New Echota, the removal of the Cherokees by the United States Government was enforced. Mr. Jones removed with the people. Religious services were continued on the progress of the journey, which lasted several weeks, and during this year 170 were baptized. The name Valley Towns was lost by the removal.

Church Constituted.

CHEROKEES.

On the arrival of the Cherokees at their new home, Mr. Jones endeavored to collect again the scattered members. The native assistants numbered 6. Temporary arrangements were made for preaching, and in two years after their removal more than 130 were baptized and a new church organized. The members in the several Mission churches in May, 1841, were set down at 600. Only a portion of the Scriptures had as yet been translated into Cherokee. Mr. Jones, with his family, was re-established with the nation June 25, 1841. In five months, 94 persons were baptized, and 150 during the year. The members of all the churches were estimated at 1000. Stations, 3; out-stations, 2; native preachers, 5. A school-fund was established by the Cherokee National Council, sufficient to maintain a system of common school education, in which the Bible was to have precedence.

Mr. Frye and Misses Morse and Hibbard joined the Mission near the close of 1842, all to be occupied in the teaching department. This year the Mission was visited, in behalf of the Board, by Rev. Joel S. Bacon. Ten public schools were maintained. Added to the churches in twelve months, 218. All the churches have meeting-houses, and a printing-office was furnished at the expense of the Cherokees; also a building for a female high-school.

The two Messrs. Upham arrived at Cherokee in July, 1843. A printing-press, with English and Cherokee type, was also received before the close of the year. A brick structure for meeting-house and school was erected at Cherokee, and opened December, 1843. Additions were made to all the churches, and a commencement was made in printing, both in Cherokee and English.

Jesse Bushyhead, a native preacher, highly esteemed, died July 17, 1844. A. L. Downing was installed pastor at Flint, in his stead. Oganaya was ordained associate pastor of the church at Delaware, Sept. 22; Mr. Willard P. Upham was ordained Oct. 13. The churches were gradually enlarged and new ones constituted, and the schools were increasingly prosperous. The territory occupied by the Baptist portion of the Cherokees extended north and south 100 miles, and east and west, four or five. A monthly periodical, "The Cherokee Messenger," was commenced in July, 1844, in an edition of 1000 copies. Genesis entire was translated by Mr. Bushyhead, besides several tracts, portions of the Psalms, "Pilgrim's Progress," &c.

Mr. Frye relinquished the school at Cherokee in April, 1846. The national schools were increased to 24; there were also several private schools. Luke's Gospel and a "Book for Mothers" were printed, and six numbers of the periodical. One female assistant was transferred to Shawanoe in 1846, and another removed into the States, the increase of national schools abridging the demand for the services of female teachers. Three meeting-houses were built, making in all ten for the accommodation of worshippers. The translation of the New Testament into Cherokee was completed. In 1847, 122 were baptized in nine months, including four children of Mr. Jones. Mr. Upham's school numbered 41. Printing executed from the beginning, 945,500 pages, of which 730,550 pages were in Cherokee, and 480,000 in tract form for distribution. The whole number of baptisms in 1848 was 121. Members estimated at

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1100; stated preaching places, 14, at each of which was a meeting-house erected by the members, at an expense of \$3890.

In 1850 two native preachers were ordained, the council being composed of Mr. Jones and 5 native ministers. Baptized in a little over six months, 86; during the year, 118. For several years the people manifested a tendency to remove westward. Additions to the church in 1851, 158; the school taught by Mr. Upham held rank with district schools in New England. In 1852 two native preachers died. Baptisms occurred every month in the year, numbering in all 48. The churches, in a few instances, were approximating the condition of self-supporting bodies. In January, 1854, another native preacher was ordained. Rev. John B. Jones, son of Rev. Evan Jones, became a laborer in the Mission in 1855. Another native was licensed to preach. The churches contributed during the year \$409; 100 Cherokees were baptized. The congregations numbered from 30 or 40 to 400, 500, or 600. The younger Mr. Jones devoted himself to the revision of the New Testament and the translation of parts of the Old, and to the instruction of the native preachers. In 1856, 92 Cherokees were baptized. There were 6 churches and 7 branches, besides several other preaching places. The first native preacher, John Wickliffe, died, Nov. 22, 1857, after a faithful service of 26 years.

In 1858 the church members numbered about 1500. One or more collectors were appointed in every church, to visit the members individually, to converse on Missions, and to solicit contributions. A new printing-office was erected at the expense of the people, and "The Cherokee Messenger" recommenced in June, 1858. In September, 1860, Mr. J. B. Jones was forced by persecution to leave his field of labor, and retired into Illinois. Baptized in 1860, 82. Mr. Upham resigned his connection with the Mission in February, 1861, after a residence of nearly 18 years. In 1862 Mr. Jones, Sen., also retired from the Mission, and took up his

residence at Lawrence, Kansas. In 1863 the church members numbered by estimate about 1500. The Rebellion and the war seriously interrupted the missionary work in the United States, and the women and children were reduced to poverty and starvation.

TINSAWATTEE (CHEROKEES).

Tinsawattee, formerly an out-station of Valley Towns, 60 miles distant, was made, in 1824, an independent station. It was situated on the High Tower River, Georgia. The school commenced operations April 30, 1821. The station had in 1827 a church of 15 members and a school of 27, under the charge of Rev. D. O'Bryant. In 1829 the school was removed to Hickory Log Town, Ga. The members of the church, about 30 in number, expected Mr. O'Bryant to divide his pastoral labors between the two places. In 1831 the church was dismissed from the Association to remove to Arkansas, and the school closed, Nov. 1831, preparatory to the emigration.

CHEROKEES WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

In 1833 the requisite buildings were erected, the school commenced at Hickory Log continued, and some added to the church. Emigrants from east of the Mississippi continued to come in. Rev. D. O'Bryant died Aug. 25, 1834, and his place was supplied, Dec. 24, by Rev. Samuel Aldrich, who soon recommenced the school and supplied three preaching places. But Mr. Aldrich died, Nov. 22, 1835, after laboring only one year. Rev. Chandler Curtiss commenced his labors in June; but in consequence of the hostility of some residing in the vicinity, Mr. Curtiss shortly afterwards left the station.

men of respectable education, and a still greater number of men whose talents would not suffer by comparison with talented men of our nation, and, what is worth more than all things else which can be said in their favour, between five hundred and one thousand are believed to be genuinely pious.

To the Cherokees, also, the United States are bound, to a considerable extent, to furnish assistance in their march of improvement. A majority of them have recently emigrated to their present location, a few of whom have become settled.

It is much to be regretted that in June, 1839, an angry discussion occurred in a general council, respecting the future organization of the Cherokee Government, between the original settlers (including those who had yielded to the treaty last held between them and the United States) and the majority, which embraced the later immigrants. The parties separated with unpleasant feelings, and within a very few days, John Ridge, Jun., John Ridge, Sen., and Elias Boudinot, all distinguished men of the smaller party, were murdered under shocking circumstances. These difficulties are yet unsettled; on which account we shall leave to a future historian the task of stating them in detail.

The Presbyterians have long had several missionary stations in this country, the most extended and useful of which is Dwight; the minister at which is Rev. C. Washburn, who is associated with Mr. Orr, and Messrs. J. and A. Hitchcock. Rev. Messrs. Palmer and Worcester, and Mr. Newton, respectively, occupy other stations in the Cherokee country. The Dwight station has always sustained a large boarding school, which has given to it stability of character, and opened the way to every part of the nation for imparting religious instruction, by preaching and otherwise, to the extent of the whole time of the missionaries. They have a printing press in operation at one of their stations. The Methodists, also, have missions among those people.

The Baptist mission to the Cherokees was commenced in their original residence, on the east of the Mississippi, in 1817. The first missionary was Rev. Thomas Posey, who did not long continue before he retired from missionary labours, as did also several others who united in the mission soon after its commencement. The Rev. Evan Jones persevered, and has had the happiness of reaping a rich religious harvest. His religious instructions have been greatly blessed. Two Baptist churches have been constituted, which embrace more than five hundred hopefully pious members, and among them several native preachers, the most noted of whom is Rev. Jesse Bushyhead.

The spiritual blessings which have descended upon the labours of Mr. Jones and his native coadjutors, furnish materials for an interesting volume, which we hope will not be long withheld from the public. The members of the church belonged to the party constituting the majority of the nation, and opposed to emigration to the West. The aversion of the party to removal being so great that they made no preparation to depart until compelled by the presence of the United States' troops, there was reason to fear that in the vexations and calamities of this world they would think little about preparing for the next, and that even Christians might lose much of their spiritual-mindedness. But it was not so. Up to the time of their assemblage for removal, the labours of Mr. Jones and Mr. Bushyhead were blessed with improving success. Attendance on preaching improved, Christians became more zealous and united, and conversions and baptisms more frequent; and after they were assembled in encampments, necessarily under many sufferings of body, rich blessings continued to descend on their souls, considerable numbers were baptized, and comfortable communion seasons enjoyed.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Bushyhead were each made conductor of a party of Cherokees. The former, after accompanying his people to their country, in the Indian territory, returned to the east side of the Mississippi, and whether he will again resume his labours among the Cherokees is yet undetermined. But his loss to that people would be great, and it is hoped that they will be favoured with a continuation of his useful ministry. Mr. Bushyhead continues his labours among his people in their new home, in which he is assisted by his native brethren, John Wickliffe, Oganaya, Dsawala, Doyanungheeskee, and Oole-dastee.

The Choctaws are estimated at fifteen thousand, and are the most southern tribe; they adjoin the State of Arkansas on the east, and Texas on the south and west. The Chickasaw tribe, numbering five thousand five hundred, is merged with the Choctaw, making the whole number twenty thousand five hundred. These are justly entitled to the appellation of a civilized people. Before the late difficulties, the Cherokee nation was allowed to be in advance of all others. But the Choctaws having had time, since their settlement in their permanent home, to organize their civil government judiciously, must be said to be, at this time, in advance of every other tribe. We say more: No Indian tribe, since the discovery of America by white men.

very interesting character. Some of the most influential men had joined the mission church. Opposition from Indians and Romish priests was giving way. "In the midst of this apparent prosperity," says Mr. Mecker, "God has seen fit to try their faith, permitting the floods to break in upon them and sweep away their houses, and growing crops, and nearly every thing they possessed." Calamity succeeded to calamity, and many of the Indians were scattered abroad to obtain a present subsistence. Relieved by the generous benefactions of their white brethren, and the liberal appropriations of the U. S. government, they have, at length, resumed their accustomed employments; the usual religious services are maintained, and, of late, with increasing interest; and several have "found peace in believing in the Lord Jesus." The number of Ottawa church members is thirty. Seven have been added by baptism since February, 1844, and one restored; two have been excluded, and one has died.

MISSION TO THE CHEROKEES.

CHEROKEE, (three miles from the middle of the east line of the Cherokee territory).—*F. JONES*, preacher; *T. FRYE*, *Miss S. H. HIBBARD*, teachers; *H. UPHAM*, printer; *Mrs. JONES*; *Mrs. UPHAM*.

FLINT, (thirteen miles south-west of Cherokee).—*Levis Downing*, native preacher. Out-stations, *Bread-town*, *Skin Dayou*, (thirty miles south, near Arkansas river); *Ping*, (fifteen miles south of Cherokee.)

TAQUOHEE, (twenty-five miles north of Cherokee).—*W. P. UPHAM*, preacher and teacher; *Mrs. UPHAM*, *Tancnot*, native preacher.

DSIYOHEE, (thirty miles from Cherokee, and six north-east of Taquohee).—*Darius Lee*, native preacher.

DELAWARE, (forty miles north of Cherokee, fifteen from Dsiyohee).—*Miss E. S. MORSE*, teacher, *John Wickliffe*, *Oganaya*, native preachers.

Out-stations, *Honey Creek*, *White Water*.
5 stations and 5 out-stations; 1 preacher, 1 preacher and teacher, 1 teacher, 1 printer, 2 female teachers, and 3 other female assistants; 5 native preachers.

The death of the Rev. Jesse Bushyhead, late a valued member of the native ministry and pastor of Flint church, occurred July 17. On the 4th of August Lewis Downing was installed pastor in his stead. Oganaya was ordained associate pastor of the church at Delaware, Sept. 22, on account of the increased infirmities of Mr. Wickliffe, and the great extent of territory over which the church is spread. Mr. Willard P. Upham was set apart to the ministry of the gospel Oct. 13.

The accounts from the mission, generally, are of the same cheering character as those reported at our last anniversary. The churches are gradually enlarged, and new churches constituted. Sixty-one were baptized previous to Sept. 27. Of these the Cherokee church received twenty, Flint ten, Taquohee nine, Dsiyohee one, Delaware ten, and White Water eleven. The annual report of the mission has not been received.

The schools are increasingly prosperous. The national school, at Cherokee, in charge of Mr. Frye, has been well at-

tended, especially by the older class of pupils. More *full* Cherokees attend than formerly. To the studies before pursued, history, geography, and English grammar have been added. Some of the pupils are pious. The school is in high repute with the Cherokees, and is distinguished for accuracy and thoroughness of instruction.

Miss Hibbard's school has been continued with its wonted success throughout the year, except a few weeks vacation in summer. Several new branches of study have been introduced, but the general course of instruction is essentially as last year. The "native class" is doing well. They read the gospel in course, both in English and Cherokee; and are deeply interested.

The Sabbath school connected with the station, under the superintendence of Mr. H. Upham, has been regularly attended by a large number of pupils, and with great interest. A female prayer meeting is connected with it, sustained specially by mothers. There is also a monthly prayer meeting, at which contributions are regularly made, held by a female Missionary Society.

The school at Delaware labors under some embarrassment from the want of suitable school-books in the native language. All the pupils, on entering the school, understand Cherokee only. Oral instruction is given by Miss Morse in arithmetic, geography, scripture history, &c. The pupils are also taught the English language, and about fifteen are able to read and write Cherokee. Miss M. expresses a lively interest in the school, and gratification with the proficiency of the pupils.

Mr. Upham devotes his time specially to the national school, at Taquohee, but has also in charge the Taquohee and Dsiyohee churches. His location in that neighborhood is peculiarly opportune. The territory occupied by the Baptist portion of the Cherokees, extends north and south 100 miles, and east and west four or five; and is so intersected by the river Illinois, that during several months of the year, while the river is swollen with rains, all communication between the north and south divisions is necessarily cut off. Mr. Jones resides on the south side of the river, and the northern district is committed to the immediate care of Mr. Upham. The progress of religion in this neighborhood has been gratifying. About thirty have been baptized since Mr. Upham's settlement at Taquohee, some of whom are in the "dew of their youth," and members of Mr. U.'s school.

The printing department is conducted by Mr. H. Upham with ability, and gives great promise of usefulness. A monthly periodical, the "Cherokee Messenger," has been in course of publication since July, in an edition of 1000 copies, 8vo. The work contains translations of portions of Genesis, Psalms, Pilgrim's Progress, &c. The book of Genesis entire, was trans-