

# MIDNIGHT'S MUSINGS.

ATTENDS THE GREAT NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION WHICH MET IN TEXAS.

Thinks It Was The Greatest Convention of Colored People This Country Has Ever Seen—Baptists Do Mind Mud And Water But Do Not Like Rain—Governor Talked About His "Black Mammy"—"Mammy and Daddy" Class Does Not Come Into Competition With White Men—Some Of The Folks He Met.

Paris, Texas.—I have been to the National Baptist Convention and I was so busy looking and shouting all of last week or rather the week that the convention met that I forgot to write a letter to you, but I am glad to say that I am still on praying ground and pleading terms of the Gospel, and that I am well at present and as happy as can be and hope when these few lines which I have sat myself down to write to you, come to hand they may find you the same.

I suppose you are waiting now to hear some convention news, and you want to know what made me shout so, and since you are interested enough in me to know of course I will have to tell you so you will please listen at what I have to say, and when I get through then I am sure that you will be better posted than you are now. It was the finest convention I have ever visited since I have been in this country.



REV. J. J. CAMPBELL.

The convention opened in Austin, Tex I reached that city from Houston. I went down to LaMarque to see my private secretary and get some new ideas from her. Well I received them, and thought that I was in position to walk and talk with all them big Baptist men. While in Houston I had the pleasure of seeing Rev. F. L. Lights and family. I am going to tell you right now that Dr. Lights is the greatest colored preacher in Houston and you may say what you like about him. He is a great man, and he is doing a doing a great work in that part of the country. I wish you could drop in and see his church on Sunday night and you would know better what I am talking about.

I reached Austin over the H. & T. O. carriage line in company with many delegates from Louisiana and Texas, and I talked with them all the way up except when I went to sleep. Well Austin was reached and I was assigned to the home of Mrs. Versa, and was to be the guest of Mr. J. H. Tatnell, a deacon in the church over which Rev. J. B. Pius presides as pastor. Mr. Tatnell was up in Virginia, but Mrs. Versa told me to be at home. I did not go around very much, but even with the little going around I met Hon. N. J. O. Johnson the county clerk of Logan Co., Oklahoma. He shook my lily black hand told me that his wife and children were very well, and that he was present for the purpose of enjoying the convention, and I believe that he did enjoy it. Well it is always a pleasure for me to see Mr. Johnson.

Now I must get to the opening of the convention. It was raining hard when I left my stopping place to go to the park where the convention was to be held. Many people went there just the same through the rain. The Baptists as a rule don't mind walking through the

mud and water, but dislike to have it rain on them. We were not consulted and had to accept the weather as we found it. It strikes me that there were fully 3,000 people present to witness the opening. The convention opened in great shape. It was called to order by Rev. E. O. Morris, D. D., of Helena, Ark. The devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. A. J. Stokes, D. D., of Montgomery, Ala., who claims a membership of 7,000 in the church; he pastors, and who is one of the active men of his church. His style was a departure from the old style of opening and was therefore interesting.

Prof. E. L. Blackshear, of Prairie View Normal and Industrial college, was introduced and delivered a fine address of welcome. Gov. Lanham was like most white men who talk to large conventions of our people, especially Southern white men. He told about his "old black mammy," how she had nursed him, and how he loved her, and had shed a tear over her grave when God called her home. White men tell how they love this class of people, and I am real glad to know this, but they are not the people who come in touch with them in matters of county, township, state or national importance. The "mammy" and "daddy" class don't compete with the white man. It is the new Negro he fears, it is the new Negro who is just behind him, in fact so close to him until he is throwing dust upon his back. Well the Governor made almost as good a speech as President Blackshear, but not as good, and I know this because the white folks said he did not.

I will tell you that Mayor White made an address and many others, but time will not permit me to tell you about them all. Rev. H. M. Williams, of Sherman made a good speech as did J. T. Brown and many others. As I listened to the addresses I shouted out, "Is this heaven and is I here?" I thought that I had really left the earth. If you have never attended the convention I would like for you to go for more than one reason. I will not take up your time with this. I am now busy getting ready for the next convention myself.

In the afternoon was the address of President Morris, and I wish you could have heard what he said and how he said it. He told some good things, and the people enjoyed them. My head is too thick for me to try even to tell you the big things he said so I am not going to try just now. Dr. Morris is a great man, and I am proud of him because he is a great man. Then others had some

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few things to say and I shall never forget them. Prof. J. A. Booker was there. Rev. R. M. Gaver, who was said to be the youngest editor present. Mr. Gaver is editor of the Baptist Vanguard in Little Rock. He is making a good editor. He is already a good editor and is using what he knows.

I saw something I have never seen before in my life. The papers of the town and State wrote up the convention. They wrote about the women also, and did not fail to call them "Miss" and "Mrs." They gave the convention more than a whole page each day. I tell you Miss Nannie H. Burroughs is fast taking the place as the leading colored woman in this country. She is making her way little by little, and when she speaks to the people she has something to say to them. One day the Austin Statesman used the entire first page for the Negro Convention and put Miss Burroughs picture which covered over two columns on the first page. What do think of this? I have never seen anything like it, and would advise that you buy one of the papers.

Well in company with many people we left Austin on Monday night, but before I leave I would be worse than an ingrate if I did not tell you that Rev. L. L. Campbell, of Austin, furnished the best entertainment the convention has ever had since it has been a convention. He is a great man and has the confidence of all the people of his race and the white people too. The white men there think if Campbell said it is true. He has so lived in his town as to have the people say nice things about him. I would mention the fact that the pavilion where the convention was held cost \$4,000 and it was erected only for the convention. Texas headquarters consisted of a mammoth tent which would seat 2500 people, and the Masons had headquarters there, in which ice cream and cake were served all Masons and members of the Eastern Star free of charge, also lemonade and other nice things. Paper, pen and ink, envelopes, and nice chairs and tables were in the headquarters. Then the post office opened a special office out there and placed it in charge of Mr. Majors one of the best clerks in the service.

I suppose you know Charles Stewart? Well he was assisted by his wife who has learned shorthand. He wrote all the papers published. Mr. McCall reported for one or two papers. He is one of the coming young men. I will ask the editor to put in Rev. Campbell's cut. Rev. A. E. Edwards and his wife were on hand. He desires that the paper is sent to him in Greenville, Miss. His wife is a fine woman. She is talking about going to Wilberforce to learn shorthand.

I left Austin in company with many people as I started to tell you a few minutes ago. Among those who were on board was Rev. C. S. Morris, D. D., of New York City, who is a great man. I know you have heard of Rev. C. S. Morris, and to say you do not know him means that you do not belong to our race. Well we had some trouble on the "Katy" but not much, and I will not mention it this week, because I am going to "cuss" a few of them out next time. I have a few things that I am holding back to say to you another time. I am in Paris, but will not talk about the town now. Look out for me next week.

J. O. MIDNIGHT.