

S E V E N S U P P L E M E N T A R Y

R U L E S .

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION AND ARTICLES OF FAITH
OF THE OLD BAPTIST UNION; READ BEFORE THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
AND UNANIMOUSLY PASSED INTO LAW, APRIL 1898.

H. A. SQUIRE

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SEVEN SUPPLEMENTARY RULES.

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INTRODUCTION.

After more than fifty years experience in the work of God, I have felt for some time past a GREAT NEED for something MORE DEFINITE for us as a PEOPLE TO REFER TO, in the FORM OF RULES written to the POINT, that we could ALL FULLY SANCTION for our GUIDANCE, MUTUAL BENEFIT, and MORE PERFECT UNDERSTANDING; therefore I have written these SUPPLEMENTARY RULES, after much earnest careful prayer - watered with tears of sincerity before God - for light and guidance, and I fully believe they have been DICTATED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT for all concerned with the Old Baptist Union, that we may escape all MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND DIVISIONS, with their awful consequences, which separate God's people, please the Devil, and grieve the Holy Ghost.

The object of these RULES is not to add BURDENS to God's people but to REMOVE THEM, to make the way MORE EASY, and the BURDEN LIGHT.

"That all things may be done DECENTLY and in ORDER, for GOD is not the author of CONFUSION, but of PEACE, in all Churches of the saints." - 1. Cor. XIV. 40, 33.

The desire and prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ is, that all who believe on Him, should be ONE, as He, God the Father, and the Holy Ghost, are One.

God, help us, that we may all work together in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for the glory of God, and the good of men, henceforth and for ever. Amen.

.A. Squire

FIRST RULE.

Conditions, eligibility and qualifications necessary for the Presidency of the Old Baptist Union, and for membership of the Executive Committee.

That the President of the Union and members of the Executive Committee, shall consist of Elders, properly qualified and ordained ministers of the Old Baptist Union, and shall be elected to Office annually at the August Conference. That the Executive Committee shall consist of six Elders, who shall act in conjunction with the President (or his substitute), as an undivided Executive Committee; so that six persons shall assist the President in taking the responsibility of the Union as Councillors, that fairness may be dealt out to all, and perfect justice administered henceforth in the fear of God.

Conditions for electing the President of the Union.

That the President of the Union shall be nominated to the Presidency by a majority of members of the Executive Committee before they retire from Office, which nomination shall be laid before the Conference, and must be seconded by one of the presiding Elders who is not on the Executive Committee, and afterwards must be supported by a majority of votes of the Elders, Deacons or Officers, - all the representatives of the Union who are present at the set time for voting in the President.

Order of electing the Six Elders on the Executive Committee.

All Presidents of Churches or Missions of the Old Baptist Union, shall be entitled to vote for the six members on the Executive Committee, either in person, or by letter (when such ministers cannot be present), when a majority of votes for the candidates shall decide their election.

SECOND RULE.

Duties and Conditions of Meetings of the Executive Committee.

That meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held on one day, or two, as the amount of business may require, before each General Conference, for the purpose of carefully considering all business matters - temporal and spiritual - which are to be settled at the Conference. The President (or his representative) and the Executive Committee, shall carefully inspect all papers that may be sent in, relative to the business of the Union, so as to recommend their judgment on all matters of importance, to assist the Headquarters' Committee of Representatives (which consists of all ordained officers of the Union) in their final decision in voting for or against, all things necessary to be done, and their decision shall be an end of all controversy. Also Executive Committee Meetings may be held between Conferences, when special needs require them. And the President and Executive Committee shall have power to settle all difficult matters that may arise, which the President alone may not feel justified in handling, and which cannot be deferred until the next Conference. The President of the Union (or his substitute) shall convene all such meetings and preside over them. Minutes of the proceedings of these meetings shall be taken by a Secretary chosen from among themselves pro tem, or by the Secretary of the Union. But the Secretary of the Union shall have no power to vote, except he is elected on the Executive Committee.

Minutes of all such meetings shall be read at Headquarters, to the representatives of the Union, at each General Conference.

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THIRD RULE.

Conditions and stipulations to be observed
at General Conference.

Should the President, or any member of the Executive Committee, or of the Committee of Representatives, or any other person, desire to bring any matter before a General Conference, all such information or suggestions shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Union, at any time between Conferences, but not later than seven days before each General Convention. The Secretary shall send a synopsis of all such information to the President, and each member of the Executive Committee on the fifth day before each General Convention, that proper time may be given them for close and careful consideration, before the Executive Meeting is called. And in all business meetings no person shall be allowed to speak on any matter more than twice, and not more than five minutes each time, except by special permission. All alterations and appointments of ministers to various fields of labour, and receiving new churches or ministers into the Union, and all business matters, temporal and spiritual, of every name and nature, necessary to be done in the Old Baptist Union, shall first be brought before the President and the Executive Committee in due course, for their consideration, and all such matters shall be recommended for decision to the Representative Committee of the Union, and thus the business of General Conferences shall be facilitated.

FOURTH RULE.

Preparation for General Conferences by Prayer and Fasting.

Let all ministers, deacons, and others holding office in the Union, with all other members who wish, set a portion of one day in each Conference week apart for fasting (until the noon is past) and solemn prayer to God, for the President, and all other ministers, workers and members, who may assemble; that the special blessings of the Lord may powerfully rest upon the Conference; and that God's Holy Spirit may make one in our midst, and supply all needful wisdom and grace, and reign in us, the Prince of every motion, that the will of God may be done: so that all our works may begin, continue, and end in the Lord, for His glory.

Nature of Monthly Prayer Meetings throughout the Union.

Special Prayer Meetings should be held in every Church and Mission throughout the Old Baptist Union, on the evening of the Last Monday in every month throughout the year henceforth. And the minister of each church or mission shall preside over all such meetings, either in person or by a substitute, to earnestly seek God by fervent prayer for needful blessings in his own church, and to uphold in prayer every minister, church worker, and member of the Union. Also we should faithfully pray for our ministers on Foreign Missions, that the pure gospel of Christ may spread through the earth, and sinners come to repentance; and that we as a people might be holy, in word and deed, children of God clothed with humility. God help us to live for the things for which we pray, and look not on circumstances, but to God only, for all things we need temporally and spiritually; that the Union, as a whole, may be united in the Word and Spirit of God, henceforth and forever.

FIFTH RULE.

Conditions for the Representation of Churches and Missions at General Conferences.

It is absolutely necessary for the enlightenment and better understanding of us all, that we should arrive at a more perfect knowledge of what each Church and Mission is doing throughout the Union, for the benefit of all concerned. That this good object may be accomplished, it will be necessary at all our General Conferences, that every Church and Mission shall be briefly but faithfully represented, by each presiding minister in person, by his substitute, or by letter; plainly pointing out what has been done during the four months. It must be reported if new missions have been opened or not, and the prospects of the work in general, temporal and spiritual; how each church stands financially, if in debt, how much? or if money in hand, how much? the number of meetings held indoors, and the number of meetings held in the open-air; the number of professed conversions, the number of members added to each church, the number of believers who have been baptised during the term, and the amount of means sent in by the four-monthly collection from each church, to assist our ministers labouring in poor districts, with the account of how many collecting boxes each minister has out in his Church or Mission to help our Home and Foreign Missions. With this knowledge before us, the President, the Representatives of Churches, and every Elder, Deacon, and Worker in the Union, will have a proper understanding, in detail, of the whole of the work at every Conference; and thus each one will be prepared to take an intelligent active part in all things necessary to be considered and done, for the benefit of the whole of the Union.

SIXTH RULE.

The right, power, and duty of the Head-quarters' Committee of Representatives, at August and other Conferences; and of Presiding Ministers of Churches, etc.

Articles of Faith, No. 18, reads "That the Union shall be governed by a President, and Head-quarters Committee of Representatives. The said Committee shall consist of all ordained officers of the Union."

The President of the Union, and Head-quarters' Committee of Representatives at Conferences, have power (when needs require it) to ordain Ministers and appoint them over Churches. By virtue of that legal appointment, each Minister has the right to preside over, and take entire charge of his church, including Elders, Deacons and other Workers, and all other matters.

Also, the presiding minister has the right, in connection with the church, to appoint his Working Committee at each Local Conference, from among the officers or members, and appoint a Secretary, Treasurer etc., to assist him in his duties, under the care of a District President (if any) and the President of the Union. The Head-quarters Committee of Representatives, at each August Conference, has the right to appoint a President of the Union, according to the Articles of Faith and the First Rule of this Supplement. But after the President is elected by the Representatives, they have no more power to interfere with him in any of his duties in the Union, than they have to interfere with the Presidents of Churches in their duties. The President of the Union has a perfect right to appoint a Private Secretary to assist him in writing, and in other matters if required. From the time the President of the Union is elected (whoever that man may be) he, or his substitute, has the right by that appointment to preside over the Conference, and all other matters pertaining thereunto, the Executive Council, the Representative Committee, and all other authorities in the Union. If the President of the Union, through any justifiable cause, should not be able to preside at a General Conference, it will be his duty to appoint a substitute to take his place pro tem. At the same time, the said person should remember that he is acting for his President, and not for himself, therefore duty should compel him (under such circumstances) to be careful not to exceed his instructions, and to do no more than is just and necessary. But if at any time the person thus acting should exceed his duty, by introducing new measures or alterations of any kind, it will be the duty of the Committee of Representatives to stop such proceedings at once, and defer all such matters until the President can meet with them in person. Neither the President, the Committee of Representatives, nor any other person or persons in the Union, have any power or right at any time to

break the Rules of the Union. But if it should be found necessary to abolish any rule or rules, a proper legal course must be taken, as mentioned in the Rules. Also, if at any time the Minister of a Church should fall sick, so as not to be able to attend his duties at a Quarterly Local Conference, or on any Sabbath Day, the person appointed by the sick minister should be careful not to exceed his duty in any matter trusted to his care, as he is not acting for himself, therefore should do no more than is justly required.

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's."

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SEVENTH RULE.

Conditions and Covenants connected with the Seven Rules

That the President of the Union, and each member of the Executive Committee, shall publicly declare and affirm before each other and the Conference, at their election, that, by the help of God, they will seek with all their hearts the light and guidance of God's Holy Spirit, in all matters concerning the work of God in the Union; and will discharge their duties faithfully towards God and man; that they will stand by the truth, the Word of God, as revealed in the old and New Testament, and will themselves deliver the whole council of God, by preaching the fulness of the Gospel henceforth, and will faithfully contend for all the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the power of the Gospel as promised by Christ and His Apostles, and will endeavour to teach all others to do the same, and fully embrace the New Testament for faith and doctrine, and thus "Live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Also be it understood by all the Faithful in this Union, that no man shall henceforth and forever be elected as President, or Councillor on the Executive Committee, in the Old Baptist Union, who will not confess and declare from his heart his determination to act up to the letter and spirit of these Seven Rules, dictated by the Holy Spirit, and herein written, and read before this General Conference, April the 9th, 1898.

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M.B. The Secretary of the Union shall read the whole of the Seven Rules to the President and six members of the Executive Committee for their affirmation, after their election at each August General Conference, when each one of them shall affirm what has been read in his hearing, by saying "Amen".

April 1898.

HENRY AUGUSTUS SQUIRE.