

POLICE CALM BAPTIST RIOT

PANDEMONIUM REIGNS AT BAPT. CONVENTION

Fists Fly, Knives Flash
as L. K. Williams is
Re-Elected.

COPS CALLED IN

Claim J. C. Austin was
Tricked Out of Race.

CHICAGO. (ANP)—While much of the bitterness, exposes, and even bloodshed expected to culminate at the Golden Jubilee of the National Baptist Convention was sidetracked, near casualties developed at the election of officers when followers of the Rev. J. C. Austin sought to establish the fact that he had been tricked out of his right to run in the election.

A battle, in which chairs and fists, were used, and knives brandished, and women fought with pocketbooks, ended when six policemen, answering a riot call, rushed to the scene. In twenty minutes order was restored.

The convention adjourned Monday after voting to hold the 1931 session in Atlanta, Ga. Philadelphia also sought the meeting.

Williams Re-elected

With only 1,034 of the 15,000 delegates entitled to vote for president, the Rev. L. K. Williams, of Chicago, was re-elected for the ninth term, defeating the Rev. J. C. Austin, who was ruled in default because Pilgrim Baptist Church, of which he is the pastor, had not paid its dues. The nomination of Dr. Austin brought to the front the chairman of the finance committee, the Rev.

Dr. Williams W. S. Graham, who announced that the Pilgrim pastor had not paid his registration fee and was not, therefore, eligible for nomination.

Deacons Drew Weapons
This technicality, intruded at such a time, set the partisans, on what the prizefight writers call "their ears." Pandemonium did break loose. Patience was lost among the Lord's leaders. Throughout the hall, wrangling prevailed. On the platform, a fight is said to have started. The participants in this struggle were of Rev. Mr. Pope, of Cairo, Ill., and of Mr. Laden, a deacon in Pilgrim Baptist Church, formerly a minister, but now in the tailoring business.

Many Crushed in Stampede
But the attack of the Rev. Mr. Pope on Mr. Laden was only a highlight. It precipitated a rush toward the doors in which scores were crushed, and overshadowed a number of lesser quarrels in which slaps were exchanged and chairs flourished.

After about twenty minutes of demonstration quiet was restored with the aid of police officers, and the announcement was made by

Continued on Page 17, Column 1



PANDEMONIUM REIGNS AT BAPTIST

Continued from Page One

Prof. R. B. Hudson, the secretary, that the Rev. Mr. Williams had been re-elected.

Many members are still in the dark as to when this election was held.

Many Lay Down Arms

The re-election of Dr. Williams was not achieved without a struggle. The usual procedure of electing a president at one of the early opening days of the convention was sidetracked this year until what was thought to be a "convenient season" had arrived. Many "secret" conferences were held in order to build up the proper kind of election atmosphere. At some of these conferences, the recalcitrants and "unduly alarmed" who have been pepping it up in the journals of the land for several months, had their ruffled feathers smoothed by appeals to their loyalty to the denomination.

"Let's don't break up things, now, brothers." ran the burden of the pleas.

In response to these appeals, a number of the brethren agreed to lay down their arms and try to obtain the changes in organization program and management in other, more peaceful ways.

It was after they had made these pledges that it was thought safe to hold the election.

Election Sudden

Quietly, and suddenly to most persons, the matter of electing a president was brought up Wednesday afternoon with the Rev. R. B. Roberts, of Memphis, Tenn., treasurer of the convention, in the chair. The Rev. J. R. Poe made the customary motion to suspend the rules and re-elect the president by acclamation. His motion was met with cheers, and with jeers from the assembled delegates who had not been fed the soothing syrup of the "secret" conferences.

So significant was the action of the delegates that Dr. Williams felt it necessary to announce that he was quite willing that others be placed in nomination. This apparent invitation was seized quickly by the Rev. H. P. Hawkins, formerly an assistant pastor under Williams, who dismissed him.

The Rev. Mr. Hawkins has been one of the most active persons organizing ministers in Chicago to espouse the fortunes of the Rev. J. C. Austin, pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Church. Sometimes it has been felt that Brother Hawkins was carrying Brother Austin along much faster than he desired to go. At any rate, the supreme moment for the Rev. Mr. Hawkins seemed to have arrived, and he arose quickly to place the name of Dr. Austin in nomination.

In all truth, it must be written that there was great cheering from the floor, despite the fact, as some allege, that hundreds of members of Dr. Williams's church were massed in the front of the hall, in contravention of the rule that delegations should sit by states.

Bid Made for Union

Some effort to bring about a peace-re-union was made after the election, by the Rev. Williams, who thanked the convention for re-electing him and had a word to say regarding Dr. Austin. Dr. Williams told the delegates that Dr. Austin was not against him and Dr. Austin replied by telling them that Dr. Williams was not against him.

However, it did not disabuse the minds of Dr. Austin's followers of the belief that he had paid his registration dues. He exhibited receipts for twenty dollars paid in for registration and \$100 for the foreign mission board. They still feel that Dr. Austin was unjustly dealt with.

Convention Highlights

The chief occurrence at the convention so far have been:

The singing of the great Golden Jubilee Choir under the direction of George Garner and his wife, Mrs. Netta Paullyn Garner.

The splendid pageant of progress of the Baptist Church presented Tuesday evening under the direction of Mrs. Manet Fowler of Texas.

The insistent plea in the speeches of all the general officers present that immediate steps to be taken to restore the denomination to peaceful normalcy.

The circulation of rumors of trickery on the part of members of the board by unorganized partisans of certain candidates.

The circulation of a pamphlet by Dr. A. M. Townsend, secretary of the publishing board, explaining why he is not in attendance at the convention.