

bers. Now, there are 212 Churches, containing 17,831 members. "What hath God wrought?"

2. The desired additions to the articles were made, and duly reported at the meeting of the Association in 1802.

3. The "Danbury Association," above referred to, was in Connecticut, on the borders of the State of New York. It was formed in 1790.

4. Were Enoch Townner now alive he would rejoice in his freedom. Vexations and annoyances of the kind alluded to have long since ceased to exist. There is no Church Establishment in Nova Scotia, and there are no Dissenters. All men are "free and equal" here. May the blessedness be soon enjoyed in every other part of the world!

5. Our associated brethren began well. They did not meet for the sole purpose of personal enjoyment. They believed it to be desirable to "do good" as well as to "get good." Hence the sending of supplies to Newport, and the practical sympathy and aid extended to New Brunswick. This was the home missionary spirit, early developed.

Yours truly, J. M. CRAMP.

Acadia College, June 21, 1856.

For the Christian Messenger.

Have Nova Scotia Baptists "Changed Materially?"

DEAR BRETHREN,

Considerable surprise has been expressed, and some dissatisfaction manifested, at the insertion of a letter, in your issue of the 11th inst., subscribed, "One of the Old School."

Some of your readers wondered that there was not an editorial disclaimer of the views advanced by the writer. Others have supposed that his communication was inserted, not because it was approved, but because you desire the Christian Messenger to be the channel of free discussion on all points affecting the interests of the Denomination, reserving, of course, the right of putting a stop to any discussion, should it threaten to occupy too much space, or be conducted in an improper manner.

Your correspondent brings heavy charges against us. He says, "Conformity to the sentiments and usages of Paedobaptist churches and of the world are very prevalent among us at the present day. How is it that we have changed very materially in doctrine, mode of preaching, order of divine worship, manner of making converts, and in the government and discipline of our churches?"

If these charges can be substantiated—if we have "changed very materially," in all the above-mentioned respects, the Baptist Denomination can be scarcely said to exist in Nova Scotia.

The brethren generally regard "One of the Old School" as guilty of gross calumny. Still it may be proper that he should be heard. With your permission, therefore, I call upon him for proof. Let him substantiate his charges, if he can. But let him do it by stating facts; mere opinions will not meet the case. I append my name to this communication, and invite "One of the Old School" to do the same.

Yours truly, J. M. CRAMP.

Acadia College, June 26, 1856.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, JULY 2, 1856.

THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.

We had promised ourselves much of enjoyment in meeting with our brethren at the Anniversaries during the past week. It was our intention to be present at the meetings in connection with the close of the session at the College at Wolfville, so as to be able to give our own report of the proceedings. The brief account given by "A Spectator" last week must suffice, and will doubtless afford the friends of the Institution evidence that although it has still much to contend against, yet by the steady perseverance of its Professors a vast amount of good is being affected. The large attendance showed that no diminution of interest in its operations is felt by its friends. The number of students too, there being

upwards of thirty, indicates that it still retains a large measure of public confidence.

We purposed to pass on to Chester and join our brethren of the Central Association, but the sudden affliction with which we have been visited obliged us to change that determination, forego all the happiness we anticipated and submit to bitter disappointment in this as well as the blighting of our future prospects. How uncertain is life with all its joys! "Here we have no continuing city: we seek one to come."

The following account of the Association furnished by a friend who was present may be received by our readers with equal satisfaction to any we might have given:—

The Association at Chester.

AFTER a pleasant drive through the enchanting scenes depicted by the pencil of nature, we arrived at Chester in time to witness the opening of the Central Association, at 2 o'clock, on Saturday, June 21st. Brother James Parker was called to act as Moderator. The necessary officers were appointed. A good degree of interest was manifested on the reading of the letters from the various churches. We could but think it a rich spiritual feast for the ministering brethren who have been preaching to their flocks for the last year, now in their turn to be fed by listening to the warm-hearted addresses of the churches. These letters breathed for the most part an encouraging spirit, whether we consider them, as proposing questions on church government to be solved, gratitude for the blessings of the past year, prayers for the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom, or for the outpouring of the Spirit upon those assembled. After the reading of the letters a committee was appointed to propose the other committees on the various topics embraced in the Minutes. The delegates then adjourned, after receiving from the friends of Chester, through their young and energetic pastor, a hearty welcome to their hearts and homes. But when others had left, Elder Chipman might be seen lingering with his Committee on Female Education, declaring what God has lately done for his church in Pleasant Valley, and especially for the Female Seminary in Berwick, which has enjoyed the most distinguished marks of the divine favor. He dwelt on the necessity of continuing and enlarging a school so much needed, so auspiciously begun, and so well suited to our wants, by taking proper measures for the erection of a building to accommodate the pupils. It is pleasing to see an aged and honoured servant of God, living again in the youth of the present and succeeding generations. May he be enabled, by the co-operation of his brethren to leave behind him a good female seminary, as a monument of his disinterested zeal.

On the Sabbath, meetings were held in the several places in the town and neighbourhood. In the chapel where the Association met, the subjects presented by the preachers showed a connection. In the morning the text was "What hath God wrought?" The subject, "The mighty power of God in redemption." After dwelling upon this the preacher very naturally passed to what God has done for the cause of truth among ourselves. In the afternoon the subject was, "the character of the Comforter promised by Christ to carry out this great work." The preacher's aim was to set forth the person of the Spirit as testified in His own word, and to vindicate Him from the aspersions of wicked men, who would degrade Him to a mere natural influence. In the evening the preacher dwelt on the future establishment of Christ's Kingdom, when the knowledge of God would cover the earth. He showed the nature of this knowledge, and urged the motives for diffusing it.

On Monday the various committees having met at 8, the Introductory sermon was preached at 10 by the Rev. Wm. Burton. It was a clear, glowing and most impressive representation of the formation, progress and glory of the Christian character, through the word and by the power of the Holy Ghost. Would that all could have heard it! The afternoon of Monday was devoted to Domestic Missions. The usual prolixity and confusion on this subject prevailed, except the very interesting accounts given by the French and Gaelic missionaries. The audience responded in a speech of Ten pounds for brother Ross's Chapel, and a like sum for brother Chute's Mission-house. A resolution was also passed requesting the Home Missionary Board, to present at the

next Association some better scheme for future operations than that which now exists. It evidently needs revision. The present system might answer for 1814, when the missionary society was first formed at Chester; but not for 1856. Then the first contribution was a doubloon thrown down by a brother in the gallery. Now the people are quite as willing to throw down their offerings, if they could only feel that their money were prudently expended. Let not ministers complain of the avarice of our people till they wipe away our inefficient system of Home missionary operations, and substitute a better.

On the forenoon of Tuesday various reports were presented. Among these were reports on Education, which drew forth many interesting remarks on the state of the Academy and College. A soul-stirring appeal was also made in behalf of Sabbath Schools. On the afternoon a lively discussion was elicited on the report of the Christian Messenger, recommending it as the organ of the Denomination. The report of the Committee in behalf of Female Education was also presented. Such a measure carried into effect cannot fail to touch cords of feeling and to call forth energies among our people never before awakened.

A vote of thanks to the kind people of Chester was passed. Prayer was offered by Dr. Cramp. The union hymn was sung. The Association then adjourned after a harmonious and profitable session. Chester, June 25, 1856.

The letter from Dr. Cramp in another column demands from us a word or two by way of explanation. We thought the position we occupy with respect to sentiments expressed by our correspondents was generally understood.

Whilst we consider it our duty as journalists representing the Denomination to discountenance sentiments or statements opposed to its best interests and to exclude from our pages whatever we believe will be injurious to the cause of truth, or will interfere with the progress of the churches, or disturb their harmony, we do not think it necessary for the purpose of accomplishing this, to suppress everything which brings into discussion the views and practices of the body.

Such churches as allow no free enquiry and demand submission to priestly dictation on the part of their people, may find it necessary to stifle the voice of complaint and investigation; but whilst we think that every member of our churches should "hold the truth in love" and be prepared to "give a reason for the hope that is in him," we also think that he should examine carefully the foundation of his hopes, and at the same time cultivate a deep interest in whatever affects the welfare of the churches generally.

We have too much confidence in the manliness and ability of our ministers and brethren to think them incapable or unwilling to meet erroneous statements, when they are made from a deficiency of information, from prejudice, or from a want of charity. We believe our brethren perfectly competent not only to expose such sentiments, but to make them the means of instruction and benefit to all our readers.

With regard to our giving an editorial disclaimer to the sentiments of the article in question, we would simply say that we thought it unnecessary. We supposed the "conformity to the sentiments and usages of Paedobaptist churches and of the world, &c." referred to by the writer, merely meant that there is not now as formerly in many places, a portion of the time of public worship occupied by the exhortations of the brethren; we could think of no other conformity to the sentiments and usages of Paedobaptist churches he could mean; and perhaps that experimental religion is supposed by him to be less dwelt on in the pulpit now, than it was by the old ministers, now in heaven. However, as Dr. C. has called on "One of the Old School" for facts in proof of his assertions we will not anticipate his reply, but leave him to make his own defence.

We have never inserted the common notice at the head of Correspondence, "We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our correspondents" as we considered our readers advanced beyond such a piece of information.

We were under the impression and are still of opinion that our subscribers have sufficient confidence in us to know we have

no sympathy with those who would bring reproach on the christian body to which we belong and so wound the feelings of our best friends, and therefore we left the said article to make its own impression.

There are doubtless some advantages in editorial remarks being made on communications, particularly when we wish to call special attention to them, or think it unsafe to let the sentiments go forth without some disclaimer. But unless some strong reason exists for doing so we feel it would be a want of respect to the judgment and intelligence of our readers to forestall them by expressing thoughts upon them such as would strike the mind of every sensible christian.

This might have been more necessary formerly, when the readers of the Christian Messenger were less accustomed to discussion by means of the press, but we are of opinion that at the present day there exists no necessity for placing guards around every letter which appears in our columns lest it should convey some wrong impression.

We desire to make the Christian Messenger fully meet the wants of the Denomination and are thankful that we have been so far successful. Our anxieties in view of the responsibility of our position have been very considerably diminished by the forbearance of our brethren and by the liberty accorded to us in the communications of our numerous and highly respected contributors.

* OLD times and old ways have a strong attraction for old people. We could not but feel this truth on reading over the very acceptable contribution to our pages in the Minutes of the First Meeting of the Nova Scotia Baptist Association at Granville. Often do we remember to have heard the late Father Manning, who, as Clerk of the Association, penned those Minutes, describe the early meetings, and characters, and labours of some of the excellent men who took their part in that primary-assembly of our churches. But how many are there among us, still living, but whom age and infirmities have almost confined to the limits of the domestic circle, who will remember with deep emotions of pleasure this reminiscence of the early history of Nova Scotia Baptists! Dr. Cramp rightly observes that the germ of the missionary spirit was beginning to be developed in the earnest action of the few Baptist Churches then in existence, to communicate the Gospel to Newport and other places destitute of the blessing. In truth the very spirit of the great command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," was engraven, as it were by fire, on the very hearts of the men whose names appear on this first roll of the Baptist Evangelists of Nova Scotia. In that early day, as is well known to those acquainted with the history of our Province, the Gospel properly so called, was confined to the preaching of the few brethren, New-light, Methodist or Baptist, who were accustomed, amid hardships and privations, to coast the rugged and thinly-settled shores, or thread the long and difficult bridle paths, through the unbroken forest. It may very appropriately be asked, Have our zeal and our industry in diffusing the saving truths of the Gospel increased in proportion with our means, our knowledge and our facilities for extending its triumphs—in proportion especially to the vast growing numbers of our population, as much in need of salvation by grace as those to whom the Mannings, the Dimocks, and the Hardings and their fellow-workers first made known the words of Eternal Life. It is a question which it deeply imports us to answer as we ought, and not to allow the more abundant labours and self-devotion of our fathers, with their scanty means and privileges to rise up and condemn us. Be our deficiencies in this respect what they may, we have, nevertheless, much to be thankful for at the present moment, in the increase of our churches, and the genuine Christian character with which, we sincerely believe, they are to a large extent replenished—blessings which under God we rejoice in believing are among the most precious results of the early labours of those men of God, who in June in the year of our Lord, 1800, first met in Association in Granville.

Meeting of Baptist Associations in 1856.

NEW BRUNSWICK. The Eastern Association, with the 2nd Sackville Church, on Saturday, July 12th. The Western Association, at Jackson town, on Saturday, Sept. 6th.