

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, AUGUST 29, 1860.

The Baptist Convention.

SACKVILLE, N. B., on Thursday last, was the centre to which the Delegates forming this body were brought from various parts of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

FROM HALIFAX TO AMHERST.

Several brethren went from Halifax. After about 3 1/2 hours ride by railroad, we came to TRURO. Here were still some traces of the late loyal demonstration and remains of the cultivated taste of the people of this classic little town. Every visit to Truro shows some addition to its buildings and some new marks of the progress its inhabitants are making in wealth and architecture. From this point diverge the roads to Amherst, Pugwash and Pictou, and here are coaches in waiting, for each of these towns. The trains, just arrived, supply them with a living freight, and in anticipation of a pretty long drive in either direction, all are soon off by a locomotive power formed of bones and muscle instead of fire and water and the puffing of the iron horse. Passing along, we proceed across the new bridge to Onstow, and on through this fine fertile district to Londonderry. Passing through the villages of Folly and Great Village, we come to parts of equal fertility, but of less cultivation. Why the inhabitants of the former have adopted a name which indicates so little respect for their locality, we know not. We could see nothing that deserved such an appellation. It is not difficult to conclude why the name was given to the latter village. Its commanding position, and the marks of prosperity and advancement shew that this will, at no very distant period, be a city of no mean proportions.

And now we ascend the mountainous district of Westchester, and on either side of the road for several miles are steep declivities, covered with thick woods. Instead of the spruce and hemlock, here are the beech, the maple and the birch. Occasionally as we rise to an eminence, we look over, and as far as the eye can reach we see nothing but the deep solid foliage of the forest. The cultivated portions of this part of the country being out of sight on the banks of the rivers, it appears as if the hand of man has never yet invaded the vast tangled territory of portions of the County of Cumberland. One is inclined, on observing the indications of a fine soil, to wish some of the surplus population of some of the older countries of Europe were brought over and located in this promising region, so as to render this wilderness a fruitful field and make the desert here rejoice and blossom as the rose. Through the lumbering region of River Philip we pass into the beauties of AMHERST, and here we find ourselves again in the midst of a progressive people, who, occupying the border of the two provinces, possess the advantages of both, and the stimulus afforded by ready intercourse with either. A cordial welcome here from many of its good people and from some who had preceded us, banishes the weariness of a long day's drive.

FROM AMHERST TO SACKVILLE.

A comfortable night's rest prepares us for a further advance across the extensive marshes of Cumberland and Tantamar, where Sam Slick says the people are accustomed to run 12 miles after a horse, when out to feed, for the sake of having him to carry them two miles. The historic incidents connected with these parts render the drive of ten miles over a dead level and in a straight line, one full of interest. On the New Brunswick side we come to Cole's Island. Here, close to parts often below the level of the sea, efforts to obtain wells of good water have been made, and it has been found necessary to go to a depth of 300 feet before finding it. And now we come to Sackville, which forms a striking contrast with its neighbour, Amherst. Whilst the latter has its Corner and is a compact centre of the surrounding populous neighbourhood, the former is one continuous street of four or five miles in length. The handsome structures which appear on every hand are not surpassed by many larger towns. But few towns anywhere have more variety in the buildings of which it is composed. At the head of all are the Wesleyan Academy Buildings with Lingley Hall between those for the male department and the female, or Mount Allison Seminary, on the brow of the hill.

SACKVILLE has long been the field of Baptist labour. The first Baptist Church in New Brunswick was formed here in 1784. Here are two spacious Baptist Chapels. Around the one of which Rev. David McKeen is pastor were a number of carriages, for which this part of the country is famed, indicat-

ing plainly that a large number of brethren had already assembled.

THE CONFERENCE MEETING.

We entered and found that the introductory services, which were of a devotional character, had commenced. The progress of the work of Christ and the loss of valued ministers were leading topics. The Rev. Mr. Bill was speaking upon the recent death of brother McLearn. Several other speakers afterwards referred to the same event, and the loss they felt we had sustained by his removal.

THE CONVENTION

was organized by the President, Rev. Dr. Tupper, calling for the names of Delegates. After this a Committee of Nomination brought in a Report with a list of officers. Rev. I. E. Bill was chosen President, and the Rev. S. W. DeBlois and Rev. Isaiah Wallace, Secretaries.

Whilst the Board of Governors held a meeting, with other Delegates, invited in the upper meeting house, the Rev. R. R. Philip preached in the lower house which was attended by a large congregation.

THE CONVENTION SERMON.

On Friday Morning, Rev. D. M. Welton preached the Convention Sermon from 1st. Corinthians xvi. 2, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

The discourse was an eminently practical one and well suited to the occasion.

Two objections he said existed against taking such a subject as systematic benevolence on which to preach before the Convention. 1st. Its being one so trite and commonplace and so often dwelt upon at our annual gatherings, and also by the religious press. 2nd. The suspicion which always attends an appeal where it affects the pocket or purse. But he deemed these not worthy motives to prevent a representation of the truth on this or any other subject. The unwillingness of Christians to hear about the means required to carry on the work of the Lord should not set it aside, but they should rather feel themselves complimented by being allowed to devote their means to so high and honorable a use. The text contained three principles. 1st. As to the time specified "the first day of the week." 2nd. As to the persons "every one of you," and 3rd. As to the amount "As God hath prospered him."

1st. The primitive christians were accustomed to meet together on the first day of the week—the Lord's day. By attention to this and the continued practice of benevolence it would become habitual and no forgetfulness would be likely to deprive the collection of its proper and regular contribution. The love of accumulating is a growing habit and it is well to have some check, or we become by its indulgence the poor sordid miser whom we formerly despised. There is a disposition in all to deter their benevolence. If this is allowed to develop itself, it shuts up the heart in selfishness. Some think a collection on the Lord's Day an intrusion on pious feelings and an impropriety which they would prefer to put aside from their worship, but the apostle appears to have had no such scruples. People often prefer prayer to giving. It is so much cheaper to pray than to give. Those who do this show that they love their possessions more than they do the cause of Christ. The believer is born into the possession of eternal things and earthly riches have for him lost their attractions. Some persons endeavour to interpret this passage as if it intended that they were to lay by in store and still keep it in their own possession at home. The meaning of the original is that they were to lay up and put into the treasury. The object being to avoid collections on the arrival of the apostle, it is evident that a common treasury was intended.

2nd. The term "every one" is very comprehensive, not only the rich but the poor themselves were to be contributors. The amount might have been realized without them, but they would have been deprived of the benefit of giving, if they had not been included. The united amount of "every one" would not only produce a larger sum but would bring out the piety of the whole body and render it far more effective than if the contribution had been from only a few favored ones. There is no monopoly in God's arrangements, but it is the duty and privilege of all to receive with thankfulness his air, his sunshine and the beauties of the field and garden he has sent to cheer and enliven his creatures. So in this luxury the poor must not be excluded. The apostle, it is evident, had not the money before him as the principal object he sought by this direction, but he deemed it as a religious service which would confer great advantages on each individual and also on the united body. It would have a three-fold benefit. It would exhibit and

stimulate their love to Christ, to each other, and to their poor brethren living at a distance from them. It was not the amount of the gift which rendered it valuable. The small contribution of the widow was as desirable and far more effectual than the rich man's abundance. The young were not excepted. They doubtless aided, and it would train them to habits of industry, economy and benevolence were they expected to aid in this work of contributing.

3rd. The measure given to contributions by the text, "as God hath prospered him" is one capable of universal application. According to the means is the rule here applied. The possessions of men appear then as now to have varied but this meets them all. Some may have only their health and power to labor. These gifts are perhaps the most valuable man can enjoy. Others may have the ability to enter upon responsibilities and enterprises of various kinds. It is necessary that they should be no less disposed to make themselves responsible to the cause of Christ. Men too often hold their engagements to each other as binding on them far more than their engagements to the cause of Christ and make their deductions from this with more readiness than from their expenditures for themselves or their own families.

The simplicity of the apostle's plan is a plain indication of its divine origin. The machinery of it "let every one on the first day of the week lay by, &c." is so simple that it may be worked by the smallest church. It is by some supposed that the object being to contribute towards the necessities of the poor saints, the plan is not applicable to things relating to the spiritual interests of God's house. Instead of that it seems just an evidence of its adaptation to all the benevolent operations of Christ's Kingdom. What mighty results might not follow the adoption of this simple but Divine principle. If for instance in commencing Acadia College, the first sum of £150 was all that could then be raised for it, what might not the twenty thousand Baptists of these provinces accomplish in sustaining this, and all their other institutions and efforts, if they but acted on this principle.

The preacher occasionally pursued a strain of remark, which, whilst it was a keen satire on the niggardliness of some professors was so nicely veiled that those least inclined to adopt the principle, and practice the doctrine could but admire it as one of Divine appointment. He proceeded to guard the text from applications which might be given to it but which were foreign to its spirit.

Membership in christian churches could not be the result of purchase. The payment of money could never effect that which faith in Christ alone must secure. The gospel must first be received and then exemplified. We give the gospel but afterwards seek for free-will offerings. This powerful instrument of systematic benevolence is of such delicate construction that it needs the hand of a master to touch it so as to produce harmony. Its nerves require carefully nursing, and a peculiar talent he must have, who can make men feel their responsibility and at the same time secure their confidence and favor. Several illustrations were then given from the Word of God, which shewed that the people of God had on some occasions been invited to voluntary efforts, and had so complied with the invitation that it had been found necessary to restrain them in the exercise of their benevolence.

Mr. W. then adverted to some of the applications which might be made of christian liberality. Some had devoted definite sums towards a given object, others had undertaken to sustain a missionary for a certain time or wholly, others again had endowed a professorship in a Collegiate institution, and so in various ways the principle, as God hath prospered him, may be practically exemplified and brought to bear on the work of Christ on earth, whether it be on behalf of the "poor saints" or the poor sinners around us, or in the distant nations of the earth.

EDUCATION, ACADIA COLLEGE.

Having occupied so much space with our very brief notes of this excellent discourse, the whole of which is worthy of a permanent place in the archives of the denomination, we must more briefly notice the business of the Convention.

Immediately after the Introductory discourse the Annual Report of the Governors of Acadia College was read, giving the various items of information respecting its operations during the year.

At the request of the President the Hon. J. W. Johnston addressed the Convention on the subject of Education. He referred to the discourse just heard from one of the sons of Acadia as an illustration of the success of the College. He spoke of the numerous occasions he had had of speaking on this subject as depriving him of new matter. He could

say nothing but such as would appear to all as "a twice told tale." He thought the time had passed when it was necessary to argue on the value and necessity of education. He thought too that the discussions of a former day as to whether education in its higher departments should be in the hands of the state or of the people need not now be revived. Not only is it now in the hands of the people, but in the hands of religious people. The Sons of Nova Scotia can now secure the more advanced stages of their educational course where the good counsels of their parents would not be disregarded.

It was, he conceived a most happy circumstance that the denominational principle had been sustained and had produced such good results. He thought too the feelings of Baptists towards other bodies who had emulated them in their work had not been of a jealous but of a fraternal character. He looked with pride on the institutions at Sackville. He deemed them second only to those at Horton. He rejoiced that the Methodist body had been so successful in their work, and was pleased to recognize the female training accomplished at the Sackville Academy as a most happy example which we might well imitate. He believed it would be an easy work for the Baptist body to follow in this good work and they would by so doing confer an incalculable blessing on their own families and on the country. He thought the sermon they had just heard an admirable development of a great principle. The satire was cutting and severe, and the sarcasm just. If we could but adopt the plan of giving as God has prospered us, the occupation of the Financial agent would be gone. None he believed would rejoice more in such a consummation than brother Freeman himself. For his own part he knew not how he (Mr. F.) bore up under the discouragements and still went on his way. He considered that from the misconceptions of many persons, and the indifference of many more, the sufferings of Mr. F. were such that he might well be termed the Baptist martyr, and still he pursued his good work without flinching or discouragement. We have had the long pull, and the strong pull, and now all that is required to place the institutions of the body on secure ground is the pull altogether.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

The afternoon session was devoted exclusively to business connected with the College, examination and explanation of its financial matters, &c. &c. A resolution expressing the hearty thanks of the Convention to the Governors for the vigor with which they had conducted the College during the past year, and, also, to the Financial Agent for his devotion to its interests, was passed.

The following is a list of the ministering brethren who attended the Convention:

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| <i>Nova Scotia:</i> | <i>New Brunswick:</i> |
| Rev. J. M. Cramp, D. D. | Rev. I. E. Bill, |
| A. S. Hunt, | Isaiah Wallace, |
| W. G. Parker, | J. A. Smith, |
| E. F. Foshay, | A. D. Coleman, |
| J. E. Balcom, | A. D. Thompson, |
| James Parker, | J. H. Hughes, |
| S. W. deBlois, | James Wallace, |
| R. S. Morton, | J. E. Goucher, |
| E. O. Read, | L. H. Marshall, |
| James L. Reed, | G. F. Miles, |
| D. Freeman, | D. Lawson, |
| D. M. Welton, | James Herritt, |
| C. Tupper, D. D., | D. McKeen, |
| R. R. Philip, | J. Newcomb, |
| I. J. Skinner. | A. Mutch, |

FOREIGN MISSIONARY MEETING.

In the evening a crowded audience assembled for the purpose of holding the Annual Foreign Missionary Meeting. Rev. Dr. Tupper, the Secretary of the Society, read the Report, after prayer by the Rev. I. E. Bill. The Treasurer's account was also read. Six Native Missionaries are employed in various parts of Burmah. We may, however, refer our readers to the letter of Rev. A. R. R. Crawley on another page, received by the last mail, for further information concerning them. We regret exceedingly that we are unable by want of space, to give the speeches of those who advocated the Missionary cause, or a copy of the Resolutions passed. Quite a number of warm-hearted excellent addresses were given. The following is the order in which they arose voluntarily to speak to the resolutions presented: Rev. D. Lawson, Rev. W. G. Parker, Rev. G. F. Miles, Rev. R. S. Morton, Rev. J. A. Smith, Rev. Isaiah Wallace, Rev. S. W. deBlois, Rev. Dr. Cramp, Rev. J. Hughes, Rev. J. Herritt, Rev. James Parker, and Rev. A. S. Hunt.

The principal new feature in the resolutions was that the Secretary was instructed by them to communicate with the Baptist Missionary Union respecting the Society in these Provinces undertaking an independent mission, instead of its having its native Teachers under one of their missionaries.

Rev. I. E. Bill afterwards spoke of the necessity of immediate action. Life was uncertain as several had been called away during the year, so it was likely that some would not be permitted to come to the next meeting of this Convention.