

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Our Associations.

I attended this year but one of these denominational Anniversaries, the Eastern Association. What with the presence of a large number of Presbyterians and our own people, the gathering at Great Village on the 5th, 6th, and 7th of July was one of unusual size; it was also, probably, one of the most stirring and interesting sessions the Eastern Association has had. Its prayer-meetings were a feature of peculiar interest, the attendance being large and the spirit pervading them earnest and heavenly. I thought several times that the morning meeting contributed much towards the vitality and accord which,—perhaps it may be justly affirmed—characterized in a good degree the subsequent meetings of the day.

It is true that our Associations for this year have been held, and the time just previous to our denominational gatherings of next year might therefore be thought the more suitable in which to call attention to any of their defects and suggest reforms. But our Convention of the present year is yet to occur, which, though now conducted with a good measure of order and decorum, may, I opine, profitably bear a few hints. Besides I am induced to say a word on this subject now by the indirect suggestion of a friend, who, as I think, wisely remarked a few days since that it would be well to have our faults in this direction, with their remedies, brought to our remembrance and notice now, and again impressed a short time before we meet in a similar capacity next year. Then to the point in hand. Brethren, there is a felt and an acknowledged want in our denominational proceedings of more system and method. We professedly believe that God is a God of perfect order, and that Christ has given the command to his Church that "all things be done decently and in order." Yet as a "member in particular" of Christ's spiritual "body" we in many respects—I say it with reverent sorrow—do not sufficiently "pull together." Perhaps this was never more deeply felt or frankly admitted by us than at the close of the Eastern Association of this year. As one, I retired from that large gathering sadly impressed with these two thoughts—

we Provincial Baptists greatly lack in systematic plan and action; and in a proper sense of the transcendent importance of the cause and kingdom of our Divine Redeemer, and of our obligations and responsibilities to Him. On the first of these thoughts let me here dwell a little longer. Now we do well if we imitate the excellencies of our Pedo-baptist brethren. Apropos to this remark, I have been lately informed that the Presbyterian Synod are accustomed to have the principal topics and the order of their annual business arranged beforehand, and presented to each member of the Synod at the beginning of its session in the shape of printed programmes. I think we should adopt a wise measure, if we were to pursue some such method as this. There may be no occasion for us to be quite so precise, or to incur such an item of annual labor and expense. But I earnestly suggest that some brother come, to our Eastern Association at least, next year, with a well-digested plan for the order of our business, and that that order be inserted in the Minutes, or in some other way be not merely tacitly understood as such, but carefully adhered to from year to year.

I know that now the business of the first day is appointing Committees and reading letters from the Churches; and that there is a tacit understanding that on Monday, after the Introductory Sermon, the subject of our Educational enterprises shall be presented and discussed; in the evening of that day a general Missionary meeting be held; and the remainder of the session be devoted to the consideration of reports and other general business. But how seldom is this order strictly followed; how sadly—and disastrously to our Associational harmony and efficiency at Great-Village—was this order of exercises there broken in upon. An unusual cause of such disturbance came up in that session; but were not brethren in fault for introducing, and other brethren for allowing such disarrangement? And were the order of our business down in white and black before us, should we and the cause have been likely to suffer what we did suffer? But, in addition to the inauguration and enactment of more system, we must, if, like Christ when on earth, we would "be about our Father's business," feel our high vocation more sensibly, we must be more pervaded with the thought that it is in truth our Heavenly Father's business which we meet to-

gether annually to devise the best methods and gain new impulses for executing, we need more fully to imbibe the spirit of that great truth, that we may be "laborers together with God." And with the "sacramental hosts of God's elect," we need to become more deeply impressed on such occasions with the fact that we are Christ's "witnesses," his "stewards," and to hear more audibly his voice commanding us to "occupy till he comes."

As one means of gaining this consciousness of our exalted calling, and of becoming more pervaded and controlled by a sense of our obligations and duties, and responsibilities, we must not hurry through the denominational business or away from such gatherings. Here again, "let all things be done decently and in order." Brethren, it is a burning reproach upon us and greatly frustrates our usefulness, dissipates our efficiency, in the holy cause in which we are engaged, that we make so much haste to get away from our Associational meetings, and that many of us appear to esteem it a chief excellence in a Moderator to "put our business through with a rush."

Here also, I think, we might do well to take a chapter from the book of our Presbyterian brethren. They hold their Synods from six to eight days, and I have been credibly told that both their lay-brethren (or ruling elders) and ministers give their attendance until the business is orderly and thoroughly done, even if the time for its completion extend into the midnight of the last day. That example is worthy of more than our admiration.

Now it is vain for us to attempt to do justice to the various subjects that come annually and publicly under our notice in any less time than two full days and a half. That period should rather be prolonged than—as is often done—clipped short. A few years ago a minister of our body, now deceased, while at a house on his return from an Association, remarked, if my memory serves me, to this effect—that the Baptists reminded him of the ancient Israelites.— We meet together annually to do business pertaining to the kingdom of God and remain in convocation scarcely two days when the cry would seem to be heard, "Every man to your tents! O Israel." But lo, that brother himself was then a fugitive from the post of duty. Thus it is, our lay-brethren are not alone guilty of such shameful haste.

But, my brethren, let those of us who shall be spared till our next Anniversaries begin a reform in this respect. For the sake of consistency—that rare but bright jewel—for the sake of the objects we profess to advocate, for Heaven's sake, let us no longer slight and insult the cause of Temperance, of Bible-circulation, of Sabbath Schools &c., by doing little more annually on their behalf than to record their names in our Minutes. Each of those objects demands from us at least an hour's public and earnest discussion at our Associations. They absolutely require that amount of consideration if we would impress their importance on our body for the ensuing year. Is there more business now claiming our attention than in former years? Let us gladly make the greater sacrifice for our Master's kingdom.

I intimated at the beginning of these remarks that a little ventilation would not, in my humble opinion, injure our Convention. That meeting has, however, been got into a pretty good shape. Yet how long is it since Tobacco, Temperance, and other general objects were sought to be introduced into the Convention? thus making it simply a repetition on a large scale of our Associations. It is perhaps well for us to remember that the administrative and executive talent of Dr. Cramp, since he came among us, has done very much towards making Acadia College and Foreign Missions the chief and grand objects of our Conventional consideration. Possibly some improvement might still be made in the way of punctual attendance throughout the session of our Convention.

I might speak of other things besides greater system in the conduct of, and more faithful attendance throughout, our Anniversaries, which have occurred to me as desirable reforms. A short time since I read an excellent article, with the suggestive heading; "Dead flies in ointment." It was written by a Baptist in another country, in reference to their annual convocations. The two principal "dead flies" or evils he felt it his duty to point out were these: The frequent predominance of the social over the religious or spiritual element, and the absence of deep solemnity and true devoutness. Have there not been such "spots in our feasts of love?"— Have we not too often forgotten that while the social feature of our Anniversaries is an interesting feature, it is an incidental one, and our great object should ever be, in coming up to such

gatherings, the gaining of individual spiritual refreshment and of new impulses in the social enterprises of Christian benevolence?

I hope these lengthy remarks will not be regarded as dictated by a spirit of carping, croaking criticism. I have, consciously, no relish for such employment of pen or human tongue. In many respects I am proud of our Denomination, was far from feeling ashamed while recently attending one of its annual sessions in presence of a large number of Presbyterians, in a Presbyterian House of Worship.

In conclusion, might we not hope most successfully—to restore, if lost—at least to guard and elevate, the spiritual tone of our Associations by a return to the good old way of our fathers in the ministry, viz.; that of spending the Saturday chiefly in devotional exercises? If more business is now pressing upon us, let us prolong the Sessions, incur any burden, make any sacrifice rather than bring these our Annual meetings down to the level of secular business meetings. And do we not owe it to the communities in which we thus annually assemble, to hold, for their special benefit, at the close of our Associations, a Temperance or strictly religious meeting?

All which is respectfully submitted.

For the Christian Messenger.

The precious promise.

"All things work together for good."

We hear much said about an over-ruling Providence. When one whom we love is suddenly snatched from our embraces by the hand of death, we feel that God is drawing near, and listen for the voice that shall explain the hidden meaning of the stroke. Or when property is swept away, and the rich man left in poverty, we can realize a hand unseen, guiding in a way unknown, and hear a voice saying "Be still and know that I am God."

It is well that in such trying seasons the soul may rest upon its God and feel that "He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind." Some, pass through life, however, without meeting those striking events—and to most they seldom occur. All feel the weight of little cares. Atoms fill the cup of life. These minor vexations form a great part of the heavenly discipline of the soul. How necessary then to feel that not only in a general, but in a particular sense, "All things work together for good to those who love God."

To realize with fullest extent the meaning of this sweet promise, of the Heavenly Promiser would make us new creatures. The pillar of cloud that now often hides our Heavenly Father when we approach him in prayer, is made up of these little trifles, that we deem too small to cast at his feet, because we do not receive them as sent by him. So with wandering minds and distracted hearts, we offer up prayers for things we think we ought to want, making no mention of those we really do desire. Ah! would we make the promise ours, and for those little trials, as refining fire purging and purifying "working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." This cloudy darkness, would become a glorious light to guide us over the sands of life's desert.

God in Christ would be known as the soul's familiar friend, each trial poured into his ear, then would we learn to pray without ceasing, the atmosphere of our souls would become clear and settled. The mind freed from worldly care, would soar away to the higher themes and nobler considerations of religion. The interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, the salvation of the world, how we could win souls and send the light of Bible truth to the heathen, would fill our thoughts. Then would we be a diadem of glory and shew forth the praises of Jesus. Then would sinners see in Jesus a beauty to desire him. I have often thought that Christians by anxious looks and down-cast-faces spread a pall over religion, the sinner cannot see any light beaming forth, and shrinks from such gloom.

Let it no longer be so. Arise Christians, "for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Be not careless and troubled, "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. Thy Marahs as well as thy Elims are appointed by him."—"Blessed be his name," says a tried believer.— "He maketh my feet like hinds feet, he equalleth them for every precipice, every ascent, every leap."

Jesus felt that all his awful sufferings, were needed and appointed. Every drop in his bitter cup was mingled by his Father. Hear him say, "This cup which thou givest me to drink, shall I not drink it?" Let the word of a gracious

Saviour dry every tear. Let us remember, "All things work together for good, to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose."

"Thy word is very true, therefore thy servant loveth it"

M. B.

For the Christian Messenger.

An Appeal.

MR. EDITOR,—

In traveling through River Philip a few days ago I went three miles out of my way, to visit the grave of the late Rev. John E. Cogswell.— I felt very sad to see the last resting place of a Baptist Minister, who had preached the Gospel faithfully for nearly if not quite twenty years, and often for very little remuneration, without a suitable Grave-stone; I then and there resolved to make an effort to obtain funds to procure one. I suppose thirty dollars would be sufficient for the purpose. The plan I would suggest is, to give one dollar myself and take the matter in charge, if others in the Counties of Cumberland and Colchester, where his labours were chiefly confined, and those elsewhere who may be interested will remit to me, by letter, or otherwise or hand to the Pastors of the Churches who, I trust, will interest themselves in the matter and forward any sums that may be given for the purpose; and I would say that should any more come into my hands than would be required I will send it to the Home Missionary Board.

Believing there are many who will avail themselves of the opportunity of shewing their respect for the memory of that esteemed servant of God,

I remain yours truly,

HANCE MILLS.

Little Forks, August 6th, 1862.

For the Christian Messenger.

Obituary Notices.

INGRAM JUDSON BLACKBURN,

Son of Felix and Mary Blackburn, of Newport, was born August 12th, 1843. From an early age he lived with his grand-parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Armstrong, of Lower Aylesford.— The writer being often at their house, took notice of him, as a pleasant and interesting youth; and frequently admonished him, and gave him little books or tracts. Though he did not make a profession of religion, yet he appeared to be seriously exercised during the gracious revival in the year 1859.

In 1861 young Blackburn made a tour to the States. While there he was induced to enlist in the Federal army. He joined the 6th Maine Regiment, and belonged to Company K, under Capt. Theodore Casey. He seems to have served principally in Western Virginia.

The last letter that his mother received from him was dated March 1st, 1862. He had just come out of a sanguinary engagement. They marched nine miles in the morning, and came in contact with the enemy, 1500 strong, at 9 o'clock. The conflict raged till 4 P. M. when the Federals became victorious. He remarked in his letter, "The battle-field is a hard looking place." He had been in four engagements, and had remained unharmed. On the 9th day of April, however, while on a reconnaissance, he received a wound in the neck, of which he died on the 12th. He was buried on the 13th, with military honors, in a beautiful Elm Grove, selected by the General.

Letters of condolence were addressed to his relatives by Capt. Casey and Lieut. Withell.— They stated that Judson was beloved by both soldiers and officers; that he suffered but little pain, and appeared quite resigned to death; and that the Chaplain who attended him, expressed a confident hope, that "he died a Christian."

This bereavement is said to have been improved by a sermon in Newport. At the request of the grand-parents and other relatives, a discourse was delivered by the writer, in the new Methodist Chapel, Lower Aylesford, kindly afforded to accommodate the large congregation that attended. Occasion was taken from this case, which had filled many hearts with deep grief, to notice the calamitous effects of war—for exemption from which we have great cause of thankfulness—from the words of Jeremiah, (iv. 19.) "My bowels, my bowels. I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me: I can not hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war."—Communicated by Rev. C. Tupper.

MRS. SARAH ROOD,

Wife of Capt. John Rood, died at Indian Harbor, St. Mary's, July 15th, 1862, in the 85th year of her age. Our sister had for many years been a member of the Baptist Church. She had been troubled with an affection of the nerves for about three years and had been confined to the house most of that time, yet she was a great reader of the Bible and other good books. She was reading the Sixth Series of Spurgeon's Sermons when she died. I visited her a number of times during her illness, and was pleased to find her mind constantly resting on Jesus and ready to talk about him. As wife,