

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.
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HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 1862.

WHOLE SERIES.
VOL. XXVI. No. 21.

Poetry.

Crown and Cross.

It seemed a crown of cruel thorn,
It seemed a crown of bitter scorn,
I bent my suffering brow to wear,
I raised my feeble arms to bear.

I might have cast away the crown,
But hands I loved had crushed it down,
And pressed its stinging points of pain
Through quivering nerve and bursting vein.

I might have shunned the cross to bear,
But One—the Master—placed it there;
And, failing the appointed task,
No other service I might ask.

As on my weary way I passed,
Ready to faint and fall at last,
The burden under which I bent
Became the staff on which I leant;

And blossoms for the thorns had place,
Upon my head a crowning grace,
That brought me through the burning hours,
The cool and healing touch of flowers.

My crown was love maintained through loss,
And truth upheld through scorn, my cross.
Englishwoman's Journal.

Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD VI.

From A. D. 1838 to A. D. 1860.

LETTER LVIII.

IMPORTANCE OF UNION SOCIETIES. SUGGESTIONS.
SPECIAL ASSOCIATION. REMARKS. THE CONVENTION.
REFLECTIONS. JUBILEE OF THE ASSOCIATION.
ITS DIVISION. CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

My Young Friend,

In my last I stated the results of the operation of the Union Societies immediately after their complete organization in many parts of the province. It has always appeared to me a subject of deep regret that the excellent plan on which those societies were established was not generally adopted, and that it has been for some time almost in a state of abeyance. The rate of subscription is so low that nine-tenths of our church members could keep their names on the lists; and by collecting the money quarterly or half-yearly, as might be found most convenient, the payment would never be felt as a burden. Another and great advantage would be the excitement of general interest in our denominational enterprises, which would be continually brought under the notice of all the members of our churches, so that the plea of ignorance in excuse for non-contribution would be altogether taken away.

The pecuniary results of the general adoption of the Union Society scheme would be most important and encouraging. At the last meeting of the Convention our numerical strength was reported to be 14,838 members; call it 15,000, now. It cannot be too much to suppose that one-half of this number might become members of the Union Societies. Let the annual subscription, for convenience of collection, be a dollar and a quarter. Then, 7500 subscribers would contribute 9375 dollars, or £2343 15s. 0d. Currency. This might be distributed in the following proportion:—37½ cents each to Home Missions, Foreign Missions, and Education, and 12½ cents to the Infirm Ministers' Fund. The apportionment would stand thus, in Currency:—Home Missions, £703 2s. 6d.—Foreign Missions, £703 2s. 6d.—Education, £703 2s. 6d.—Infirm Ministers' Fund, £234 7s. 6d.; Total, £2343 15s. 0d.

This would enable us to keep six home missionaries continually in the field; to support two missionaries in Burmah, with a full corps of native preachers; to pay the salaries of two Professors in Acadia College, until the completion of the endowment, thus rendering extra appeals to the churches unnecessary—and give liberal aid to all candidates for the ministry, while pursuing their studies; and finally, to afford ample assistance to infirm or superannuated ministers.

It seems a large sum; but being contrib-

ed by so many persons, no one would feel the pressure. On the contrary, it is to be hoped and believed that many brethren would add to their subscriptions in the form of liberal donations to those objects in which special interest might be felt.

All that is required is that the matter should be zealously taken up by the pastors. No paid agency is necessary. The only expense to be incurred would be the printing of a sufficient number of collecting papers, or (which might be preferable) books, which could be distributed once a year, at the Associations. Then, if each Association appointed a Union Society Committee, (a standing Committee, I mean), the secretary of that Committee would take charge of the collecting papers or books, and divide them among the churches. He might also watch over the working of the machinery, and assist in keeping it in good order.

Perhaps it may be advisable to add, that those who are unable to subscribe a dollar and a quarter annually might be invited to contribute any smaller sum, which might be set down as a donation to any of the objects of the Society, at the option of the giver.

Our benevolent undertakings are at present for the most part sustained by the few. The Union Society arrangement appeals to all, and invites universal co-operation. It is admirably adapted to the social condition of the people of this province.

Among the public transactions of the denomination in this period, the "Special Association," held at Nictaux, Jan. 18 and 19, 1843, claims brief notice. Brief it must be, as most of the parties concerned are still living, and it would be unwise and improper to rake up old grievances and revive bitter feelings. It will be sufficient to state that serious differences had arisen between Mr. Howe, who printed the *Christian Messenger* during the first four years of its existence, and the Editors of that paper, respecting the final settlement of the accounts. In the course of the discussions on the subject, grave charges had been hazarded which appeared calculated to injure the whole denomination, and to bring it into disrepute. Vindication was necessary. In compliance with a requisition signed by a number of brethren, the Clerk of the Association summoned a special meeting of that body, which was held at the time and place above indicated. A full statement of the matters in question was laid before the meeting, which was afterwards published, accompanied by resolutions, amply vindicating the accused brethren, and declaring the unimpaired confidence reposed in them by the denomination. This "Special Association" was attended by one hundred and five delegates, representing twenty-six churches, which churches contained a considerable majority of the whole number of church members in the province. Twenty-one of the delegates were ministers.

In the document published after the meeting the regret of the assembled brethren is expressed at attempts which had been made "to divide the Baptist body on political questions." "In regard to this," it is observed, "they will only say, that whatever difference of opinion may possibly exist among individuals on subordinate points of practical government, they have no hesitation in declaring their conviction, that it appears to them utterly impossible for any true-hearted member of the Baptist body—the first confessedly in the world that ever conceived the unfettered idea of religious liberty, through its great champion, Roger Williams—to have any other political sentiments than those of which the foundation and whole fabric consist of every thing that is most valuable in civil and religious liberty." On that point there can be no doubt. To whatever political party a "true-hearted" Baptist may choose to attach himself, and by whatever political name he may be called he can never be recreant to the principles of civil and religious liberty, nor indifferent to the progress of society. The religious position he has assumed declares his independence. He is the friend of freedom, and the foe of all tyrants. As he is determined not to be imposed on, so he is careful to avoid all tyrannous imposition on others, and ready to help those who have suffered in this way. His professed object being to free christianity from the abuses which in the course of ages have been introduced, and thus to restore the church to primitive purity, he is in that res-

pect a high conservative; for he judges that those abuses could not have crept in, if men had maintained a proper regard for scriptural antiquity. On the other hand, the system with which he is identified is distinguished by its liberal tone and tactics. He claims no authority over his fellow-men in things religious. He gives to all the freedom which he demands for himself. He pleads for equality of rights, and is as hostile to oligarchy as he is to despotism. He does not hold that "dominion is founded on grace," nor would he deprive any man of rank, power, or office, or eligibility thereto, on account of his religious opinions. He reverently listens to the words of the Lord, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." And these principles guide and govern him in all his movements. He must be true to them everywhere and under all circumstances.

The establishment of the Convention was another event of considerable interest and importance. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Associations had maintained friendly intercourse after their separate organization, by sending messengers to each others annual meetings. A closer union, with some definite objects in view, was thought desirable. The first step was taken in 1844, when brother Charles Tupper was appointed messenger to the New Brunswick Association, and the following resolution was passed:—

"That it is recommended to the Messenger who is appointed to visit the N. B. Association, to express to that body the earnest desire of this Association for increased intercourse and union between the churches of the two Provinces, and that they would beg to suggest the inquiry, whether the two Associations might not usefully unite their efforts in the cause of Education; and to state the conviction of this body that the interests of both Associations would be greatly advanced by such a measure."

At the meeting of the Association in 1845 certain brethren were appointed delegates, to meet any brethren who might be similarly appointed by the New Brunswick Association, for conference on the proposed union of the provinces. They met, and framed a constitution, which was submitted to the Association in 1846. The Convention was organized at St. John, N. B., on the 21st of September in the same year, under the title of "The Baptist Convention of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island," and its objects were declared to be, "to advance the interests of the Baptist denomination, and of the cause of God, generally; to maintain the religious and charitable Institutions hereinafter mentioned; to procure correct information relative to the Baptist body; and to advise and carry out such measures as may, with the divine blessing, tend to advance the interests of the Baptist denomination, and the cause of God, generally." The practical measures committed to its charge were Foreign Missions and the Bible cause, and the Infirm Minister's Fund, for the management of which the Convention had the power of appointing Boards, at its annual meetings. At the meeting in 1847 the Constitution was amended and enlarged. Domestic Missions and Education being added to the objects contemplated, and Boards appointed accordingly. The transference of Acadia College to the Convention will be referred to when I give the history of our educational efforts during this period.

The meeting of the Convention were held as follows:—

- 1846. St. John, N. B. Preacher, E. A. Crawley, D. D. Text, John xvii. 22.
- 1847. Nictaux. Preacher, C. Spurden. Text, 1 Cor. xiv. 20.
- 1848. Fredericton. Preacher, E. D. Very. Text, Rom. x. 17.
- 1849. Bridgetown. Preacher, S. Robinson. Text, Psalm cii. 13.
- 1850. Portland, N. B. Preacher, I. E. Bill. Text, Mat. xxiv. 14.

The following Table contains returns of the number of delegates that attended the meetings of the Convention:—

Year	Province	N. S.	N. B.	P. E. I.
1846	St. John	10	35	—
1847	Nictaux	68	11	—
1848	Fredericton	3	14	—
1849	Bridgetown	25	9	—
1850	Portland	14	32	—

The desirableness of a general union of the Baptists of these provinces effectively sustained, will be admitted. The benefits resulting from it, however, will fail to be realized unless each province is well represented at the annual meetings. It must be extremely discouraging, on such occasions, to see a meagre attendance of delegates, the deliberative body consisting almost entirely of residents in the province in which the meeting is held. There should be a great gathering, at those times, from all parts of the united provinces. A little trouble and expense should not be regarded, nor should time be grudged for that deliberation which the objects embraced in the Constitution require. Our denominational interests are far too valuable to be hurried over in hot haste, as though we desired to get a premium for despatch. The farms and the merchandise will not suffer from the consecration to the cause of God of the hours or days which may be necessary for the management of its affairs.

The Jubilee of the Association was celebrated in 1849, when the annual meeting was held at Woltville. Thirty-seven ministers and ninety-one other delegates were present, representing seventy-five churches. The Jubilee sermon was preached by father F. S. Harding, father Manning, who had been appointed to preach, and was present, being unable through bodily indisposition to discharge the duty. The text was Psalm lxxviii. 11. "This sermon," it is observed in the Minutes, "together with the numerous addresses which followed, conveyed much valuable information respecting the early Baptist history of these provinces."

The Jubilee sermon was preached on Lord's day morning. On Monday an historical sketch of the Association, which had been prepared, in accordance with an appointment to that effect, by brother S. T. Rand, was read, and ordered to be printed, "as a permanent record of important denominational history."

After this, addresses were delivered on the following topics:—

Providences in the History of Christian Missions for the last fifty years.

Prominent indications and obligations of the present moment of the world's history, in its relation to the kingdom of the Saviour.

Causes of humiliation and rejoicing, as found in the history of Baptists in these provinces, during the half century past.

Gathering claims and responsibilities, and demanded energies, of the present and the future, in connection with the Baptist denomination of these provinces.

The speakers were Dr. Crawley, Hon. J. W. Johnston, Rev. A. D. Thompson, J. W. Bairs, Esq., Rev. E. Manning, and T. S. Harding.

A subscription was then opened "for the formation of a Jubilee Historical Fund, having in view the following objects,—the collection of materials of Baptist History in these provinces, whether oral or written; the procuring of books of Baptist history generally; of works on Ecclesiastical history; and of materials and books giving information of the early secular history of these provinces. To which, if practicable, it was intended to add the framing of portraits already in possession, and the formation of some emblematical device, by which especially to commemorate this Jubilee year.

The reference in the above is to the portraits of the four venerable men to whom, under God, our denomination in this province owes so much, viz. Joseph Dimock, Edward Manning, Harris Harding, and T. S. Harding. By the zealous exertions of Professor Chipman a fund had been raised, the proceeds of which were applied to that purpose. The services of a native artist (Mr. Valentino) were employed, and the portraits, handsomely framed, were deposited in the Library of Acadia College, where they attract the attention of numerous visitors, and doubtless often awaken emotions of gratitude, and revive recollections of former scenes of enjoyment.

Three brethren who were present at the formation of the Association, in 1800, viz. Messrs. E. Manning, T. S. Harding, and W. Chipman, attended the Jubilee meeting. There was another survivor, G. Dimock of Newport, but he was marked as absent. Now, only he and W. Chipman remain.

On the title-page of the Minutes this ex-