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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

Sabbath in the Country.

The creaking waggon's in the shed,
The busy flail is heard no more;
The horse is littered down and fed;
The harness hangs above his head,
The whip behind the door.

His leathern gloves and hooked bill
To-day the woodman throws aside;
The blacksmith's fiery forge is still;
The wooden wheel of the old mill
Sleeps in the mill-dam wide.

The miller's boat is anchored where,
Far out, the water lilies sleep;
You see their shadows mirrored there,
The broad white flowers reflected clear
Within the mill-pond deep.

The harrow 's in the garden shed;
Hoe, rake and spade are put away,
Unweeded stands the onion-bed;
The gardener from his work hath fled—
His holy Sabbath day.

Upon the wall the white cat sleeps,
By which the churns and milk-pans lie;
A drowsy watch the house-dog keeps,
And scarcely from his dull eye peeps
Upon the passer-by.

And sweetly over hill and dale
The silvery sounding church-bells ring;
Across the moor and down the dale
They come and go, and on the gale
Their Sabbath tidings fling.

From where the whitewashed Sabbath school
Peeps out between the poplars dim,
Which ever throw their shadows cool
Far out upon the rusty pool,
You hear the Sabbath hymn.

From farm and field, and grange grown gray,
From woodland walks and winding ways,
The old and young, the grave and gay,
Unto the old church come to pray,
And sing God's holy praise.

in lively exercise will render all legislation on boundaries unnecessary.

This question of boundaries was brought forward in another form in 1840, when the following resolution was passed:—"That the Association advise that in the case of a Licentiate from one church labouring within the limits of a sister church, to the dissatisfaction of a majority of the members of such church, he be affectionately admonished to desist, and if he do not that he be reported to the church to which he belongs." Some local contention or personal dislike, probably, gave rise to the resolution. It is surely very hazardous to place restrictions on the exercise of the gifts which the Lord has bestowed. The laborers are still "few." We should rejoice in their increase, and encourage all who desire to bear witness for Christ and his truth. If a preacher's services prove unacceptable, or if some attempt to preach, who, in the judgment of their brethren, are not as yet qualified for the work, a friendly hint, given in faithfulness and affection, will be commonly an effectual remedy. The exercise of church discipline should not be invoked in such matters, except in cases of absolute necessity, and these, it may be believed, will rarely occur.

At the same meeting the churches were recommended "not to license or ordain any of their members as christian ministers, without the advice of a Council of ministers invited from sister churches." I cannot help thinking that the Association stepped out of its way on this occasion. It is our general practice, and the observance of it is salutary, to call a Council previous to ordination. But the attempt to shackle the churches, by requiring (though in the mild form of a recommendation) that a Council should be called previous to giving a licence, was a stretch of power which should have been resisted. The freedom and independence of the churches are too precious to be lightly surrendered. Our Associations are valuable, but we must take care that they do not become *Synods*.

Another subject came before the Association that year, on which an observation or two may be made. It was the conduct of the British and Foreign Bible Society towards Baptist missionaries. The views of the Association were expressed in the subjoined preamble and resolution:—

"Whereas it appears that for some years past the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society have refused to aid in the circulation of those versions of the Scriptures in foreign languages which have been made by Baptist Missionaries, solely because our brethren have faithfully translated the word baptize by words which signify to immerse:—

Resolved—That this Association do respectfully memorialize the Parent Society, through its agent the Rev. J. Thomson, requesting that such restriction be removed, and that Brethren Crawley and Robinson be appointed a committee to prepare such memorial, and that they be hereby authorized to sign it on behalf of the Association."

This is a standing grievance, and likely to remain so. For many years the British and Foreign Bible Society had given £500 sterling towards the publication of every new version of the New Testament. Dr. Carey and his coadjutors at Serampore had availed themselves of this generous arrangement, and by securing the best literary aid had succeeded in producing excellent translations. But Pædobaptist missionaries lodged a complaint against them, because the words relating to baptism were transferred, as they are in the English and some other versions. The result was that the Committee of the Bible Society yielded to the pressure that was brought to bear upon them, and refused to grant further help to our missionaries, unless their translations were made conformable to the English model. As they could not conscientiously do this, that source of supply was cut off. Vigorous efforts were made to avert the mischief, by the presentation of Memorials, in which the whole question was ably argued, and the inconsistency of the Committee exposed. But uncharitableness and bigotry prevailed, and the noblest of modern societies was shorn of its glory. The establishment of the Bible Translation Society, in England, and of the American and Foreign Bible Society, in the United States, followed. Those Societies have done much good. The latter was re-

presented at the Association in 1843 by Dr. Babcock, and in 1845 by Dr. Maclay. The communications of those brethren were listened to with deep interest. Arrangements were made for the collection of contributions, and from year to year considerable sums were raised for the object. It has been always regarded with much favour by our churches. The fundamental rule of the American Society, that in versions of the scriptures executed under its auspices or assisted by its funds "no words shall be transferred which are capable of being faithfully translated," must commend it to Baptist sympathy.

A resolution passed in 1841 might have been appropriately repeated every year, that the subject to which it relates might be held in constant remembrance. It is as follows:—"Whereas it is a matter of the utmost importance to the future prosperity of the churches of Christ in this province, and the salvation of souls, that every possible assistance and encouragement should be afforded to young men who have been called of God to preach the gospel, and whose qualifications in this respect have received the approbation of their brethren; and whereas those who possess the most promising gifts are very frequently those who need most to be cherished and brought forward;—It is therefore resolved, That a Circular be drawn up and addressed to the churches, and published in the Christian Messenger, affectionately calling on the churches to use their best endeavours to call forth and encourage any of their young brethren whom they may believe to be solemnly impressed with the duty of preaching Christ to their perishing fellow-sinners, to improve their gifts, and also to consider the responsibility resting on the churches of God to contribute liberally towards assisting such young brethren to prepare for the great work to which they are called, either in fulfilling the duties of pastors of churches, or preaching the gospel to the destitute among ourselves, or in going forth as missionaries to foreign lands:—and that it be recommended to the respective churches to offer up their fervent prayer to God, that he would send forth labourers into the harvest, and also pour a spirit of prayer and liberality on the churches of our land, that they may be alive and active in coming up to their duty in this important matter." This resolution is as needful now as when it was first introduced. The fields are "white to the harvest," but the number of reapers is small.

I copy another resolution of the same year:—"That it be earnestly recommended to those young men, whether connected with our churches and congregations or with other denominations, who feel desirous of instruction, to attend the Institutions at Horton, for the purpose of receiving such amount of education as may fully qualify them for the purpose of conducting the schools in various parts of the province—as the necessity of fit teachers, both for the Grammar and every class of Common Schools, is hourly becoming more urgent throughout all parts of the country, and many applications have been lately made at the Institutions, which they have been unable to meet." It may be supposed that the establishment of the Normal School at Truro has now sufficiently provided for the instruction of Teachers, and that they have only to reside a few months there in order to be fully equipped for their work. That is a mistake. A Teacher must be educated, and the more complete his education the better it will be both for himself and his pupils. Those who aspire to Grammar Schools should take a College Course. I would therefore advise all our young friends who think of adopting the Teacher's profession to attend our Institutions at Wolfville, and obtain as thorough an education as their means will allow. They can then spend twelvemonths at Truro to much greater advantage, the special object being to learn the art of teaching.

The secret history of a resolution passed in 1842 has not transpired, so that we know not the reasons which induced the Association to accept and publish it. It is—"That it be strongly recommended to the churches composing this Association, to select from among their number such brethren as delegates to represent them at our annual meeting, as from their ability for business, depth of judgment, and general weight of character, shall conduce most to the interests of this body."

There can be no doubt here. The delegates to our Associations should not be chosen on account of their station in society, but for their fitness. The choice should not be regarded as a compliment, but as an appointment to duty. Whether there had been any injudicious selections at the time alluded to, I cannot say; but generally, the brethren who represent the churches are fair specimens of the membership of those churches, and the business is transacted by them in a creditable manner.* As deliberative bodies, our Associations will compare, quite advantageously, with similar gatherings in other parts of the world. Common sense and godliness are excellent prerequisites for the orderly management of affairs.

A special Association was held at Nictaux in January, 1843, an account of which will be given hereafter. One of the resolutions passed by the assembled brethren indicates their conviction of the value and importance of ministerial education. "Resolved, To recommend to all the churches, and to all ministers and other brethren hereafter composing Councils called to consider the propriety of ordaining to the office of the ministry, that in all cases in which the Council so called shall be of opinion that the candidate for the ministry, in such case, is deficient in needful information, such Council shall refuse ordination, unless the church over whom the candidate is proposed to be ordained shall solemnly pledge themselves that, in case they shall at any time come to be unwilling to continue their connection with such candidate as pastor they will then call a further Council; and if such Council shall be of opinion that such Church has become disinclined to continue such connection, on account of the want of mental improvement in their pastor;—that then, in that case, such church will afford the necessary means to enable such candidate to obtain needful information, to the satisfaction of such Council,—and this for the purpose of guarding against hasty ordinations." It is a wearisomely long resolution, and the propriety of the course here recommended may be questioned; but the spirit and design of the measure are manifest.

In 1844 the thanks of the Association were given "to the Rev. Charles Tupper for his able work in vindication of the principles we hold on the subject of christian baptism":—the churches which were "favoured with the unspeakable blessings of a permanent gospel-ministry" were recommended to be "willing to the utmost possible extent to dispense with the services of their pastors, in order to enable them to minister to the spiritual wants of any such feeble churches as may be situated in their vicinity";—and the brethren J. W. Johnston and J. W. Nutting were appointed to prepare an Address to the English Baptist Union, "setting forth the present position and statistics of the Baptist churches in this province, the nature and extent of our great denominational efforts, and whatever other circumstances may be necessary, to interest their sympathies in our favour, and obtain their assistance in furtherance of our present efforts in our educational struggle."

The subject of registration of births, deaths, and marriages was brought before the Association in 1845, and a plan was proposed, which, if it had been generally adopted, would have been highly beneficial. The following resolutions were passed:—

"1. That each congregation belonging to this Association be recommended to provide books with printed forms, as hereto annexed, to be kept by the minister for the time being, and properly filled up and signed by him.

"2. That the Petition to the House of Assembly now read, requesting them to make the said Registers, or attested copies thereof, evidence in all courts of law and equity, be signed by the Moderator and Clerk on behalf of this Body, and that the Hon. the Attorney General be respectfully requested to present it."

*[Rev. D. W. C. Dimock, of Truro, happening to be in our office as we were reading the above, informs us that he was present at the session of the Association referred to, and believes that the reason for passing the said resolution, was, that in many cases, the churches sent no delegate but their pastor, and the absence of a sufficient number of brethren to represent the body was found to be an obstacle to the practical co-operation of the churches in the denominational efforts. "Menno" will pardon us for preferring this solution of his enquiry.—Ed. C. M.]

Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD VII.

From A. D. 1838 to A. D. 1850.

LETTER LVI.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION. BOUNDARIES—LICENTIATES—ORDINATIONS—BIBLE SOCIETY—ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRAACHERS—SCHOOL TEACHERS—FITNESS OF DELEGATES—MINISTERIAL EDUCATION—THANKS TO REV. C. TUPPER—REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, &c.

My Young Friend,

I will now call your attention to some miscellaneous transactions of the Association, reserving Foreign Missions and Education for separate notice.

The subject of boundaries between churches came up for discussion in 1839, in answer to a question by the Second Cornwallis church. It was resolved, "That the Association conceive it may be desirable for ministers to agree to boundaries between their respective churches, and that when such boundaries are agreed on no minister should hold meetings within the other's bounds without his consent; but they would at the same time earnestly and affectionately exhort their brethren to cultivate such a spirit of love, harmony, and good will, as would make all local boundaries unnecessary."

This resolution, you will observe, is cautiously expressed, as was befitting. There can be no boundaries in towns or cities; why they should be insisted on in the country, I know not. A rigid observance would be in many cases an unwarrantable interference with the right of private judgment and choice. To require A. B., who lives on the North Side of the road, and within a stone's throw of a meeting-house on the South side, to join a church which worships in a meeting-house two miles distant, because that meeting is on the North Side, and the road is the boundary line between the two churches, appears to me utterly unreasonable, to say the least. Is it not also an infringement on christian freedom? And is it likely that such enactments can be carried into practice? The latter part of the resolution is excellently worded. Christianity