

those that are literary, a mission to the Highlands appears invested with the kind of interest one feels in things beyond the Grampians. This Home Mission does nothing, or next to nothing, in the more populous districts of the south. In whatever way this fact is to be accounted for, that it is the simple fact cannot be denied. Hitherto it has aided little or nothing in establishing or extending Baptist churches in the more populous cities and towns of the kingdom.

With regard to what is called the Baptist Association—it was instituted seven years ago. It is not an association of churches, but simply of individuals. Partly diversity of opinion as to many things, and partly the instinctive love of perfect freedom on the part of the individual churches, rendered it inexpedient to attempt a union of churches. The object at which this society aims is threefold: first, to promote the revival of spiritual life in the churches; secondly, to aid, by pecuniary contributions, churches unable efficiently to sustain the ministry of the Word; and, thirdly, to educate young men of ability and piety, and who give promise of apparent usefulness in the service of the Lord. The last department is the one that has been chiefly sustained. Several students have already gone forth, and are now occupying spheres of usefulness at home and abroad; and at present nine or ten are receiving education in connection with the University of Glasgow and otherwise.

These are the combined agencies which, in conjunction with the churches, are at present in use in attempting to extend the principles held by Evangelical Baptists in the northern part of Great Britain. Of course any amount of agency put forth cannot accomplish sudden changes. Scarcely is it in anything that men—not only the ignorant and superstitious, but the intelligent—change more slowly than in their religious opinions. And especially is this the case when change of opinion necessitates change of ecclesiastical association, and above all when the change is one so obvious and startling as that of the immersion in water of one come to years of maturity, and somewhat of Christian experience.

In the Presbyterian communities, their ministers have, in general, received a very competent education; their congregations, especially in the larger towns and cities, are respectable, influential, and frequently wealthy; and there are many among them who are men of enlarged benevolence and sterling piety. To a fractional body of Baptists, consisting of a score or two, here and there; or in two or three of the larger towns, of several hundreds—this Presbyterian kingdom of the north does not present a field of easy conquest. Infant baptism is the undoubted faith of the mass; then their system of church-government works with seemingly greater smoothness than the pure democratic independence of the Baptist churches; and, above all, they are taught by a body of educated evangelical teachers. In these circumstances, rapid progress, startling and crowning advance, on the part of the Baptists, is a calculation that could not at present be wisely entertained.

And yet the whole living religious movement of the north is towards the ground on which, as Baptists, we take our stand. The great religious dissension, which, in the Church of Scotland, led to the Free Church, and widely affected the whole religious life of the northern kingdom, was an assertion of the paramount authority of the Word of God, of the liberty and rights of the Christian people, and of allegiance to their one great and eternal King. Though stopping short, in its movement, of what we apprehend as the obvious condition of the churches of the apostolic age, it was an advance towards that position, and so far could not but be hailed by us as a tribute to that interpretation of the Divine word, which we and our predecessors have ever maintained. And indeed, wherever found, North or South, this activity of Christian ministers and of Christian laymen to spread the Word of God, to diffuse the knowledge of the Word, to increase the reign of active piety and spiritual life, is an activity in perfect harmony with the drift and bearing of all the principles held and acted on by evangelical Baptists. We hail, the strong assertion of the necessity of the spiritual change, the use of the means of its attainment, and of the clear line of demarcation laid down between the changed and the unchanged, as tending towards the organisation seen on the pages of the New Testament, and, consequently, to what we cannot but hold as the truly catholic import and bearing of the New Covenant Scriptures.

In order, however, that the due influence of Baptists in the northern part of the island, at least, be put forth and maintained, it will be necessary that they uphold an increasingly high standard of education in their teachers. The growing intelligence of men will not

stand still, and reverently bow to priestly dictation, merely that pious ignorance may preach. Men know more than they did a hundred years ago, as to science, as to literature, as to politics, as to commerce, and so on. Various sections of the Church are awake to the advancing activity of mind: and hence their enlarged educational training. As Baptists, in the north, we may not stand still. Our teachers must be educated, and that well. Our principles bear the light, and can only be borne forth by men who themselves have looked at truth under many aspects, and whose capacities have been trained to the fair use of the intelligence God has given them. Our Book, as the book of all Christians, demands it. Our principles, as involving the free use and untrammelled application of right reason to that Book demand it: and our free, earnest, unqualified allowance of the same liberty to all others, calls for a mind rightly furnished with the helps of as complete a course of training as the exigencies of the present age can command, or its advancement bestow. And thus, though few and scattered, and seemingly insignificant, we may yet have that power which proceeds from enlightened mind; and taken in conjunction with what appears to be the plain meaning of the Word of God and the promised grace of the Holy Spirit, we need not fear the absence of the blessing of Him who is Lord of mind, and absolutely Lord of truth. Our cause is that of the unfettered use of the holy oracles of God.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, JUNE 24, 1863.

Western Association.

WE have received from a friend, the following brief but satisfactory summary of the proceedings at this annual gathering of our brethren:

"We had a very pleasant Association—the weather was fine—the churches well represented—letters from nearly all of them—more money than usual—large gatherings of people—plenty of accommodation for them—upwards of forty ministers present—the preaching and speeches good."

Central Baptist Association.

The season of religious anniversaries again calls Ministers and messengers of the Associated churches from their various localities, to assemble at the appointed places, there to recount the experience they have had during the year of the operations of Divine grace amongst them. The advances of time are indicated by the absence each year of some who had been accustomed to attend these gatherings from year to year. In each place of meeting, however, may be seen many coming up to fill the places of the fathers who have passed away.

Whilst there is some similarity in the general character of the reports of one year with that of another, yet the difference in the personnel of which the gatherings are composed, renders them always new and attractive. Viewed as a representative institution, and the Delegates as elected by their brethren in the churches they represent, the aggregate is a power in this world of the highest importance. We acknowledge Christ as King in Zion, and his word as the text book of the churches. The extension of His kingdom far and near, is the great design of these annual Assemblies. Cherishing this great idea, the brethren come and recognize each other, not only as fellow servants and disciples, but as the representatives of Christ upon earth, left here to exhibit his character and to spread his truth in the world.

A trip to the country in the leafy month of June, is of itself most exhilarating. The beauties of nature are ever fresh. The endless variety which greets the eye, and the music of the tiny warblers, call forth constant expressions of joy at the evidences of wisdom and goodness in the works of our Heavenly Father.

But here we are at Ayles'ord, and the number of vehicles approaching from every direction and standing all around, lead to apprehensions that there may be some difficulty in finding room in the neat sanctuary belonging to the Baptist Church here. We enter and find it already nearly filled before the time named for commencing. The hour arrives, and the Moderator of the past year, Rev. Dr. Cramp calls the meeting to order by giving out the hymn,—

"We love thy kingdom Lord."

After prayer by Rev. H. Angell, the names of the delegates present were obtained from the letters, and the vote for Moderator taken. Rev. Dr. Pryor was declared elected. Revs. E. O. Read and R. R. Philip were chosen Secretaries. The letters from the churches

were read by Revs. Dr. Cramp, D. Freeman, and G. Armstrong. These epistles exhibited the usual warm expressions of interest in the progress of the cause of Christ—some shewed an earnest desire for a more general manifestation of God's power and goodness, while all rejoiced in the accounts which have from time to time appeared in our pages—of sinners saved and brought into the kingdom of Christ upon earth. The additions by baptism to the Association amounted to above 300.—The deaths and exclusions would however diminish this in the general results.

Arrangements were made for preaching in eight different places of worship on Lord's day, and for the further sittings of the Session. These exercises being finished, the pastor of the Yarmouth Church, Rev. H. Angell was requested to inform the assembled brethren, something concerning the Western Association just held in that town. He did so, and greatly rejoiced the assembly by informing them that there had been a series of services during the session unexampled in any former period—a congregation of 1000 or 1200 had attended, and continued to attend the meetings up to the close, and manifested the deepest interest in the subjects brought forward for consideration—that upwards of 500 had been received into the churches, and a spirit of revival seemed more or less to spread over all the Association. Great harmony had prevailed, and it was believed the delegates would return to refresh the churches with the relation of what they had seen and heard at Yarmouth.

Aylesford has but a small part of its population residing on the main road. It comprises several villages, two or three of which are on the road from Kentville to Bridgetown, about 20 miles from the former place. It has not many points of interest to one passing through, but by a drive of a few miles either north or south to the mountain ranges, running parallel on either side, magnificent scenery may be found. It has several churches, three of which are near our present place of meeting. The Baptist sanctuary is the largest, and will contain about 500 persons. The Methodist is a very neat building not quite so large, and the Episcopal somewhat smaller, is perhaps the best specimen of church architecture of the three.

The two former were supplied respectively with preaching on Lord's Day, by ministers of the Association. Dr. Cramp, and Rev. Geo. Armstrong in the first named, and Dr. Pryor, and Rev. H. Angell, in the Methodist church. Each place was filled with large and attentive audiences. Dr. Cramp preached from John xxi. 20-22, illustrating the subject of love to God being the impelling principle in his service, by considering the text as containing a useless question—"Lord and what shall this man do?" and an instructive reply, "What is that to thee, Follow thou me."

Mr. Armstrong preached from Ephesians v. 18, "But be ye filled with the Spirit," showing that the presence of the Holy Spirit was the great leading feature of the Christian dispensation. And inasmuch as the people of God seek for and are abundantly supplied with spiritual influences they accomplish the will and purposes of God.

Ministerial Enthusiasm.

The following important observations are extracted from the "Introductory Address" delivered at the recent Annual Meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, by the Rev. Enoch Mellor, A. M., of Liverpool.

"Let me further observe, that, if we would make our ministry a power, it must be marked by enthusiasm. This ought to arise from our faith in the truth we preach. No minister has a right to expect that his work will be effective except it is with him a controlling and all-mastering passion. Unless we have entered the ministry of our Heavenly Master as ambassadors feeling that the spell it exerts upon us is such as no other manner of life can exert, the sooner we abandon our sacred, or desecrated, office the better, both for ourselves, and for the people among whom we minister. If there be any office in the world which claims enthusiasm as its natural ally, it is the ministry of the Gospel. It demands not only the soul, but the soul in its most fervid heat, and its highest action. The spirit which is proper to us is the spirit of Him who said, 'Zeal for Thine house has eaten Me up;' 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work.' And we find that spirit re-appearing in the Apostle of the Gentiles, when Festus confounding human lore with Divine love, could say to him, 'Thou art beside thyself; much learning has made thee mad.' When I speak of enthusiasm I do not mean a rampant fanaticism, which, mistaking frenzy for faith, and noisy declamation for spiritual earnestness, excites the derision and the hostility of those whom preaching is designed to conciliate and to save. I mean the entire consecration of the man to his work, as the work which, because of its nature and ends, he esteems to be the noblest on earth. If there be one now holding a commission from His Lord who would exchange it for any secu-

lar position, however elevated, let the unworthy feeling crimson his face with shame. If we feel that to be wealthy as a millionaire—to be Prime Minister of the Queen, or her ambassador abroad—the generalissimo of her forces by land, or her chief admiral at sea—to utter with authority the last and highest word of science—to compose the poetry which shall crown us with a laureate's wreath, or the music which, with its linked sweetness, and its deep and subtle harmonies, may thrill the soul with a new and wondrous ecstasy, is to achieve a higher honour, to render a nobler service, and to enjoy a purer happiness than we feel to be associated with the post we now occupy in the spiritual kingdom, are we not in the garb of ambassadors without credentials and seal, and are we not running without being sent? A minister of Christ without enthusiasm! one who has to preach the most glad tidings that ever came forth from Heaven's gate, without enthusiasm! A rower in the lifeboat of which Christ is the heavenly pilot, and which has to rescue struggling, drowning souls, from the foaming breakers of sin, without enthusiasm! We are told that there are elements to damp it. Enough assuredly, both within us and without us. Natural indolence in some, an unchastened will in most, benumbing habit, personal sickness, ungrateful and even cruel treatment from others—friends transmuted into enemies, harvests scanty or long deferred, and mingled with tares—thwartings from men and temptations from the Devil—numberless distractions and harassments arising from our social life—all these are the wintry clouds which often empty themselves upon the fire of a minister's zeal. But then the more we have of this dismal, discouraging rain, the greater the necessity for keeping the fire blazing with a fervent heat. The more we have to resist us, the more internal force we must have to press on.—If the vessel has both wind and tide against it, the more needful it is that its motive power should be great. If we can neither drift into heaven as Christians, nor drift onward in our work as ministers, if progress involve struggle, and resolution, and nerve at every step, what prospect of success has he who begins the ministry without heart, or with lukewarmness? It is well when a gale rises immediately on his leaving the harbour, and sends him back with fear, and compels him to abandon a mode of life for which he was so poorly qualified.

"Brethren, let us learn enthusiasm from others who, in temporal matters, are not ashamed of it. The manufacturer who has set his heart on riches, teaches us a lesson. He is resolved to be wealthy, and he cares not who knows it. He rises up early, lies down late, eats the bread of carelessness, and wastes not a farthing idly. He keeps his eye upon every passing event, for it may affect for better or for worse his hopes of a fortune. Politics are not without interest for him, especially if they have a monetary bearing; he strives to master international affairs, for they may affect trade, and it is by trade that he is to become rich. Discoveries in chemistry attract his regard, not because he understands the science, but because new colours may be made or old ones fixed, and in either case may turn his fabrics into gold. If he be dumb or stammering on any other point, on this the one imperial, all-absorbing ambition of his life, he is as eloquent as the Greek that shook Philip's throne. This enthusiasm may be called vulgar. Be it so; but it is vulgar because it is misplaced. Is it vulgar if its object be worthy, and was it vulgar in an Apostle who could say, 'This one thing I do?' Men can pardon enthusiasm which can spend years in deciphering inscriptions on a fragment of some ancient stone; or which can chase through flood and fell, and wood and brake, with dripping garments and lacerated flesh, some new moth which entomology has never recognised and classified before, or which can give half a lifetime to the recension of some obscure and unimportant manuscript, or which can dwell with rapture on some master stroke of the pencil of Raphael, or of the chisel of Thorwaldsen, or Canova, or which can encounter death itself in seeking, amid mist, and storm, and snow, and thick-ribbed ice, a passage through Northern seas to the Eastern world.—And is the pulpit the only place in which enthusiasm is an unpardonable sin? Is tameness to be its highest level—a studied coldness its intensest warmth, a persevering monotony its most attractive tone, a wearying iteration of the same common-places its greatest variety—a nervous fear of even seeming to be in earnest its most fervent zeal? Brethren, other enthusiasms are concerned with perishable things.—The merchant's gold shall drop from his hands—the noblest painting shall rot—the finest group of marble statuary shall turn to dust—all the works of man which a carnal enthusiasm has erected shall be burned up, but the enthusiasm of the true minister of Christ has relation to things which cannot perish. If he be a good master-builder, his work shall abide. The souls which, under God, he saves shall be 'his joy and crown of rejoicing.' If he turn many to righteousness he shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever. And surely there is in the Gospel no lack of fuel to feed perennially the fires of a true godly enthusiasm. Its truths which first enkindled our love abide the same. Our chief danger is lest we become so familiar with them that we cease to know them—handle them until we cease to feel them—live passively in their presence until they seem to fade from our view. It is needful to remind ourselves of what we know—to freshen up by living and constant meditation our sense of the great realities with which we have to deal.—Unless this be done, such words will be far ahead of our thoughts—our thoughts still farther ahead of our convictions, and sympathies, and thus, instead of being inspired with an earnestness in which the heart is warmer than the tongue, we shall be guilty of using language tropical in its

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