

For the Christian Messenger.

Eastern N. B., Baptist Association.

Mr. Editor,—

Will you allow me a space in your esteemed paper for a brief account of this Association.

On Thursday, at ten o'clock, A. M., a goodly number of delegates were gathered together. Two hours were spent in devotional exercises, during which a list of delegates was made from the letters of the churches by the Clerks, and then the Association was called to order by the preceding Moderator. The choice fell on Rev. Mr. Todd of Sackville, Rev. Mr. McDonald and Rev. W. A. Corey, clerks.

Reading of the letters, and nomination of Committees occupied nearly the remainder of the day, from which it appears that 230 were baptized. It was evident that much darkness prevailed in many places, and was deeply regretted, a change for the better was as generally desired. The frequent and urgent request for missionary aid was expressed with earnestness. Perhaps if help was not so eagerly sought from the Missionary Board, there might have been too little use of means within their reach. It is often a happy result of christian effort, even where there is no ministerial labor, that churches and communities are materially benefited by such effort.

Friday morning, the annual sermon by Dr. Hurd was delivered. Not having the privilege to hear it, your correspondent can only refer to its unanimous commendation. It is to enrich the columns of the *Christian Visitor* and will thus be welcomed to the households and hearts of thousands that could not have the pleasure of hearing it. Embracing for its theme, the important subject of Missions, a most desirable influence, doubtless, will be exercised by its circulation.

The afternoon was devoted to the subject of Education. The report of the N. B. Baptist Education Society, on the whole presented an encouraging aspect. The number during the year in attendance at the Fredericton Academy was one hundred and fourteen. An insignificant debt (as to its amount) remained against the the Institution for the transactions of the year. It should have been met before the Association adjourned its afternoon Session, and would have been met if in another point of view it had not been significant of the want of a heart-felt interest in the noble aim and object of the Institution—the education of a people; wanting only this, to make them masters of the facilities God has given them to become great and good in the highest sense of the terms. Yet even this want of interest might, so far as raising some hundred and eighty dollars was concerned, have been overcome, if there had not been a prodigal waste of time and opportunity in speaking. Let the blow come while the iron is hot, is a maxim of importance. In the present case the time was all consumed, the principal effect was the iron over-heated.

Should we not learn from this, the importance of wisely timing all the necessary parts of a measure to effect its object. Nurturing the harvest after it is ripe will not prevent its falling to the ground, it should, when ripe, be gathered. So when an audience is brought to see the import of an object and to feel their obligations to render it their support, then that support should be secured.

That there was no reference to the interests of Acadia College in the numerous speeches on Education, with one exception, and that by a stranger, was also a significant fact, and will tell its own story, wherever the relation of that College to this Association is known.

The evening session, missionary in object, was very largely attended. The evident want of arrangement was a neglect not easily accounted for. The report shewed a commendable zeal and large amount of labor for the amount of money expended. The system of payment is worthy of consideration. The missionary is paid a certain sum, in addition to which he receives whatever is raised in the field in which he labors for that purpose. There are some disadvantages it may be in this method, but it certainly has great advantages. The people are stimulated to liberality that they may have the missionary's labor, and the missionary to reciprocate their love thus manifested, by identifying his own interests with theirs. Besides we may not blink the fact that having to rely on the contributions of the people in part for his salary, he will be more likely to teach the Apostolic doctrine, no less necessary now than formerly, that "they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." Here, as in our own Province, much more should be done for the destitute regions. And it is pleasant to see a goodly number of young men devoted and devoting themselves to the work of missionary labor among the destitute in remote portions of the Province, thus emulating the spirit of the Fathers whose praise is in the churches.

That you may have this in time for your next issue,* I must mail this before the Association closes. If any thing further is necessary I will add it in another letter.

So far, the present session has been one of interest, and compares favorably with those of past years. Although one may observe the absence of many hoary heads once in our midst, they may at the same time see many youthful ambassadors filling the places of the departed, carrying forward the embassy of mercy. Thus we have the ranks filled and increased, while the same spirit is manifest, the same Christ presented, and the same object contemplated.

ACADIAN.

* It did not arrive till Wednesday morning, after our last issue was out.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, JULY 24, 1867.

Young Men's Christian Associations.

A charm surrounds whatever is young. It is the delight of even those who have advanced to grey hairs occasionally to associate with the young, and persuade themselves that they are but a little farther ahead, and that they still have young hearts beating in their breasts.

Changes take place in the operations of Christian zeal and liberality, at one time assuming one form and at another quite a different one. This appears to be the age of Young Men's Christian Associations. The term "young," however, in very many cases, as applied to them, reaches into the ranks of more advanced life. Still it is a favorable sign of the times. With proper care that the activities of the church are not entirely merged in such general movements, vast good must result. When Christian spirituality and maturity are combined with the vigor and activity of early manhood it may be anticipated that the results will be of such a character as not to disappoint the most sanguine anticipations.

The late Anniversary meetings of these Associations at Montreal, appear to have been most deeply interesting. Nearly six hundred delegates were there from various parts of the United States and the British Provinces, and were hospitably accommodated amongst the christian people of different denominations in that city, during the sessions of the anniversary. The meetings occupied three days. Several of them were specially for prayer. No prayer or address was allowed to exceed five minutes, and towards the close of the convention, when so many wished to speak, the time was limited to two minutes for each person.

We shall not attempt any extended notice of the many interesting matters connected with these gatherings, but we cannot refrain from presenting two or three short speeches to our readers.

The first meeting was for prayer:

Immediately after the prayer meeting, H. Thane Miller, of Ohio, President of the last Annual Convention, took the chair, and gave out the hymn, "Am I a soldier of the Cross?" He then called upon Rev. Dr. Stevenson, of New York, to read a portion of the scriptures. The Rev. Dr. read the 12th chapter of Romans, and afterwards engaged in prayer. After the singing of another hymn, the chairman welcomed the assembled brethren to this 12th Annual Convention. He said, Jesus often manifested his presence in an especial manner in times past, and he felt he would do so to-day. He gave a short account of the beginning and extension of Christian Associations of Young Men, remarking that 141 were reported at this Convention. He hoped they would take the example of Jesus to guide them in this very important meeting. He came into the world to save sinners, and their object was the same. He feelingly referred to the fact that he had been stricken with blindness since the last convention at Albany, and could no longer behold the faces of his brethren. Yet his heart was filled with a continual song, he was so near to God.

The eyes of many were filled with tears at this affecting recital.

After a few moments of silent prayer the Convention united in singing, "Nearer my God to Thee."

The Meeting of Welcome was presided over by Major General Russel, C. B.

After the devotional exercises

Major-General Russell rose and said, he felt deeply the responsibility of his position, which was one so novel to him. They had sung the praises of the Redeemer and invoked his presence, and he believed that, though unseen by bodily eyes, he was as surely there as when centuries ago, he appeared amongst his disciples, and showed them his hands and his side. He trusted that this feeling, that Jesus was here, would be present with them at all the meetings of the Convention. He would bid the delegates from the United States and from British North America welcome in the sense in which it had been pronounced, that, "Blessed is he that

cometh in the name of the Lord"; he would welcome them on account of the increase of power found in them for the cause of Christian love and unity, also for their own individual sakes, and for the good of the Association. He welcomed them on all these accounts, but he would offer an especial welcome to the delegates from the United States, in the name of Canada, and in the name of the cause that bound man to man, and gave him reason to exclaim, in the language of scripture, "How blessed is it for brethren to dwell together in unity!" But the words of welcome which he now offered were but a poor expression of the feeling of Montreal towards the delegates to this Convention, whose coming deliberations he trusted the Spirit of God would guide. But these feelings would be better expressed by the devout and noble men, the speakers who would succeed him, and who would tell of the good derived from these annual gatherings. For, though he was not unfamiliar with certain names in England and the United States, connected with this good work, yet he had no precise knowledge of the working of this Grand Association. Indeed, when he was asked to preside at the present meeting, he would have declined, but he thought his declining might seem as though he undervalued their association, and the task which they had to perform. He knew that there were Union Prayer Meetings, and there was an Evangelical Alliance; but he did not know that these had resulted in united action against the common enemy. But here we had the young men of different churches, enlisted to serve in the same ranks, and marching together shoulder to shoulder, moving with combined action, and showing that they had one head, and were members one of another. It had been most pleasing that afternoon to listen to the account of the progress these Associations had made, compelling those who listened to mentally exclaim, "What hath the Lord wrought?" One thing more he would say; namely, that the young (the members of these Associations) should strive after personal holiness, and in their walk and conversation seek a coincidence with the whole will of God. Let them look to their own conduct, and not be conformed to the world, but present their bodies a living sacrifice; let them place their powers on the altar, themselves being the priests, so that the counsel they gave to others might be exemplified in their own lives ordered by consulting the word of God; so that in each town and village where they dwelt there might be a true Bible Society. Let them be given to prayer; for between prayer and holiness there was a real connexion. Prayer was nothing without holiness, and there was no holiness without prayer. He had, however, come there not to speak, but to receive instruction from those who would be able to impart it. Still, that afternoon, two names were mentioned, namely, Winslow and Judson; two names known to him, and, in connection with them, he would take the present occasion to express his obligations to the United States. He had been forty years in the service of Her Majesty, and had twice served in Burmah, and had there known the American missionaries, Judson, Simmons, Stevens, Binney, Kincaid, Mason, Brayton, Osgood, and Howard, to some of whom he owed a deep debt of gratitude. He also had known Mr. Dray, Mr. Winslow, and the Scudders; also Hunt, the Prince of Teotalers,—of the American Mission of Madras. He now mentioned these honored names in order that, if amongst the American delegates there should be any who came from the same parts as these men, and who might know their relations, they might inform them that there was now in Montreal a British officer, who remembered with gratitude the obligations he was under to these missionaries for their instruction and godly counsel to him on the banks of the Irawaddy and Salween.

After several other speeches expressing great warmth of christian sympathy had been given by gentlemen from various parts, The Rev. Dr. Denholme, of Londonderry, Ireland, was called on by the chairman to come forward and speak a few words. He was not, however, amongst the audience, as it had been supposed that he was; and whilst his appearance was being waited for, the chairman stated that the name of a British officer had been so kindly mentioned, that the son of that officer, Sir Henry Havelock, requested to be allowed to say a few words. (Applause.) Sir Henry Havelock then rose amidst deep silence. He said he had not intended to speak, for he was, indeed, no speaker. But the heart must be cold indeed that could have sat silent and listened to the words which he had heard, and to the way in which they had honored the name of his father, without giving thereto some response that would be in union with, and a response to, the sentiment of his whole life. He (Sir Henry Havelock) would say that, by their kindness, he already experienced some of that benefit, of which he expected to obtain yet more before the closing of the Convention. He would say that, not until he heard the shouts with which they received his father's name, was he aware of half the honor that had come down to him. He had received much of this in England, but not even when he obtained it from the lips of Her Majesty, did it so touch his heart, as when, to-night, and in that place, he heard it indored by the best part of the American nation. (Great applause.) He would wish to call their attention to, how, in the case of his father, God had fulfilled his promise,—"He who honoreth me I will honor." His father now seemed to speak from beyond the tomb, and to-night, through him, his son, proving that the word of God was stable and sure. Again he thanked them for the manner in which his father's name had been greeted. If that name had any especial significance, it was in its pointing out that in no case shall he who devotes

himself to the service of God lose, or come short of his reward. (Loud and long-continued applause.)

The speech of Sir Henry was listened to with deep interest, and was as beautiful, solemn, and encouraging, as, in some sense, it was unexpected, yet welcome.

Dr. Denholme proved not to be present, and H. Thane Miller delivered a brief address. He began by relating an anecdote, telling how, some years ago, a barge laden with immigrants had arrived at Cincinnati. Crowds flocked to meet them, asking for letters, &c., for themselves or friends. At length there was but one poor man, of all the immigrants, left on board the barge, and he cried out: "If there be any one here who loves the Lord Jesus Christ I am his brother;" and there were soon more homes offered him than he could accept of; and so it was now in Montreal towards the American visitors. But he did not rise, he said, at the late hour, to make a speech, but to ask all to come and listen to the proceedings in the Convention, for they had there their elder brother, Jesus Christ.

We are pleased to be able to inform our readers that a series of meetings is under contemplation in Halifax having a similar object in view—to promote the formation of, and interest in, Young Men's Christian Associations. We doubt not that much good will be done. They will probably take place next month. Notice will shortly be given of the time and place, and other arrangements.

Church Records.

It has come to our knowledge that defects exist in some of our churches in keeping a record of their proceedings, and in properly registering their membership. We should hardly like to state publicly how far this has gone in some churches. We do not apprehend that there exists any disinclination to have such matters properly attended to, but believe it has arisen in some cases at least, from a want of knowledge of the best method of doing it. This is one of the difficulties which we may hope to have removed as education advances.

There are, however, we doubt not, in most communities, church members who are fully capable of keeping such records and of preserving a history of what takes place amongst them for the benefit of future generations. A properly prepared system is required by us, so that there may be some degree of uniformity amongst the churches for the purpose of supplying and preserving correct statistical information.

Baptist and other congregational Churches may be supposed to labor under some disadvantages in these respects arising from their independent character; no superior court, synod or ecclesiastic having the authority to overhaul their proceedings or the right to find fault with the mode by which a church, however feeble or imperfect, may choose to keep its records. There is however no reason why this should be a disadvantage to any. Indeed we may find it far otherwise, for feeling that we are free from any trammels we are at liberty to adopt whatever plan may appear best adapted to these purposes, and we therefore have no obstacles to overcome, such as may exist in some bodies, but may adopt what appears most in accordance with our necessities and an enlightened judgment.

How often do we find discrepancies in the information given in our Minutes of Associations, as regards the membership of even well informed churches. These things ought not so to be, and greatly need a remedy. We believe that they arise almost wholly from the want of a good method of keeping the register of membership, and the records of church business. We have long had this on our mind. With a view of aiding our brethren in remedying it, we propose meeting the desideratum by providing Blank Books properly ruled for church purposes, which may be procured at a moderate cost, and in which such records may be properly kept. Applications have been frequently made for something of this kind. This has led us to think about the matter, and, having consulted several ministering brethren on the plan proposed, and made modifications for the purpose of adapting it more fully to our circumstances, they have expressed approval and ordered a book to be sent as soon as ready. We shall be glad to hear from brethren in reference to this matter, and from any who require a church book; with any suggestion on the subject generally, which may render such book more efficient.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND IN NOVA SCOTIA.—An attempt was made some time since to establish a Divinity Hall in Halifax, in connexion with the Church of Scotland in this province. It was supposed that aid would be given from Scotland to assist such an institution. At the recent session of Synod held at Charlottetown, the Committee appointed to take charge of the matter gave in their report,