

tenderness towards God, His glory and goodness that shall make dullness and deadness abhorrent to all just views of acceptable worship.—But while thus our creed may be, in this respect, quite unexceptionable, it is, I suppose, very possible that we may have much still to learn as regards the way in which formalism may possess the soul without our being duly sensible of the fact, or awake to the danger to which the cause of God and our own souls may be thereby exposed. It may be well, therefore, by way of application of the subject to our personal profit to notice, that

Formalism may exist where nothing is used in worship which men ordinarily mean by forms: the truth is, however, that except in the case of entire neglect of all worship something of form is unavoidable. We may have no rosaries, no feast and fast days, no confession to priests, no solemn garments; but we must have times and utterances of prayer; they may be private or public; even in our loneliest moments, if we pray, there must be the language of utterance, thought of, if not expressed; and in all these cases private or public, most retired or when we mingle with the multitude in the solemn assembly, the worship rendered may be merely physical,—words only—without any corresponding emotion, without any real spirit of prayer. Are we not in such case formalists, possessed, at the time, of that same disposition of mind that led to the warning, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

And if we, at other times, are conscious of a better spirit, ought not this experience to make the temper of formalism, at any time, all the more hateful in our view?

When we think of this, and then remember what long dreary periods often occur in which churches and individuals confess they are not revived; that they are in a dull, dead state; have we not reason to fear, that during these periods, the gross sin of formalism is becoming alarmingly multiplied. How many meetings are held; how many prayers are offered and yet the people are not revived. They know indeed, and they confess, that it ought not to be so; that they ought not to mock God with worship merely physical, worship without spirit, without life; but does their knowledge of the sin they commit lessen or increase the guilt of the sin? I think no one will say it lessens it, and there is something truly awful in the condition into which individuals and communities may fall in this respect; so that when we remember, as we have seen, how hateful this spirit is to God, and with what terrible judgment He has shown His indignation against it, we can hardly be surprised that He should say in His word in reference to that condition of heart which is formal, dead, neither cold nor hot, "I will spue you out of my mouth."

At the present time, gathered as we are, in solemn assembly, to consider some of our special interests as a people, shall it not be admitted as quite appropriate to the occasion that we consider certain responsibilities that bear with special peculiarity on us as Baptists in regard of the subject we have been considering.

I understand the mission of Baptist churches in the world to be, not merely the rescue of the initiative ordinance of Christianity from the dust of ages; from the uncertainties, the doubts, and the unauthorised innovations that had crept in with regard to that ordinance,—but much more than this, I conceive God has set us to stand, in a peculiar manner, for spiritual religion instead of the religion of forms; for a spiritual worship, which the baptism of believers, that is of those professing a religious spirit, and of those only, necessarily involves. It is of far greater moment to stand for the necessity of a religious spirit, or the evidence of it, as essential to baptism than to contend merely that baptism is the immersion in water of an adult in the name of the sacred Trinity. And we are called to stand for that spiritual aspect of the ordinance, when we acknowledge that the only fitting subject of the ordinance is a baptised believer.

These remarks will not be taken to affirm that no christians of other classes or denominations are zealous for spiritual worship but ours. It is my exceeding joy to be assured that many in other communions acknowledge no other religion to be of value: but while this is joyfully admitted, I am constrained to hold that no other religious body besides Baptists are bound by their entire system in doctrine and in ordinances, but particularly by the very form or mode of the initiative ordinance, to acknowledge nothing as religious worship but that which is spiritual. We make the acknowledgement that we are thus bound when we hold that none but believers are fit recipients of baptism, because believers only can render spiritual worship, and that therefore, to believers only is the ordinance limited in the Scriptures.

Now, it is a solemn matter thus to stand by

the act of Divine Providence for a truth so vital. Is it not plain that we only do in effect fulfil the solemn appointment as we live in the exercise of that spiritual worship which the baptism of a believer supposes? If we live otherwise; if we are dead and cold in our worship—then judge ye, if we are not up-saying, in the most effective manner, the principle we are especially appointed to uphold? The Jews fell miserably, because, with a system which pointed to Christ, they perceived not Christ when he came; what judgment shall fall on us my brethren, if, with a system demanding at the foundation spiritual worship, we be found denying, in our lives, that, without which, our very system expires—if we hold to spiritual worship in order to entrance into the church of God; and then, having entered the church with that profession, become formal and dead as any who make no such profession!

Is it not plain, that deadness in a Baptist church or member is an intolerable evil? It ought to awake the utmost distress, and such uneasiness and grief, and such abounding prayer, as must render the long continuance of such an evil impossible.

Some people say that baptists are found in our land who neglect private, and family, and social prayer; others say that immoralities are indulged among them that even virtuous and honorable men of the world condemn. I know not if it be so; but this I know, I think we all know, that spiritual worship cannot subsist without prayer, nor with indulged immorality. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, oh Lord, thou wilt not hear." How much less will He hear, if I practise iniquity in my life.

It, then, it be true as alleged by some, that various immoralities are known to exist unrebuked; if there are men among us intensely covetous, selfish, and time serving; men who grind the faces of the poor—who are hard and unfeeling; on whom the finger of the world even is pointed as those whose lives give evidence of a devotion to the world as supreme and absorbing as that of any avowed worldly; if there are men who carouse and drink and blaspheme; who are envious, jealous of petty privilege, proud and self-seeking; un pitying men, without natural or kindly affection, or regardless of the just rights and claims of other men; men deceitful in promises, unfair or fraudulent in business—in a word, if any habits are indulged contrary to sound doctrine, and these things have gone unrebuked, how plainly the ministers of Christ are called upon to raise their voices loud and constantly against such things, as subversive of the fundamental principle of our churches which claim to be collections of spiritual worshippers—are called upon to preach minutely and pointedly moral duties, affirming and evincing that virtue is the great evidence of faith, and that the practice of a mere show of religion, without virtue, is an empty form, the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, of which we are so solemnly warned to beware.

And not only ministers, my brethren, but all of us are called, the text calls us, our profession as Baptists calls us, Christ calls us, to deep searchings of heart; and to that renewed and earnest religion of the affections—of the spirit, which, wherever it exists, will at once make the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Let us, then, all solemnly pledge ourselves to one another and to God, that we will endeavour henceforth to worship Him only in the spirit—then formality and deadness will flee, and immorality become a thing impossible; and let us rejoice with gratitude that God has been pleased to give us a system of truth that constantly shames us at every step, if we wander from it; that seems constantly to recall us to Christ, and by which there ever hang over us clouds of mercy and love and reviving grace, ready at every moment that we earnestly and believingly seek God to burst in immeasurable blessings on our heads.

## Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, JULY 17, 1867.

N. S. Eastern Association.

ON THE WAY THERE.

In travelling from the city, either eastward or westward, especially the former, it is necessary to make an early start. It is perhaps needless to have such an arrangement for the accommodation of those parties and the mails which are going to the more distant parts of the province, but this circumstance doubtless interferes with many persons who might otherwise make use of our railway facilities. Having to rise before five o'clock in the morning after passing a restless night for fear of losing the train, interferes somewhat

with the pleasure of a trip into the country. The afternoon train has other drawbacks which would not attach to one letter in the morning. For those who have to go on business, the present is perhaps a convenient arrangement, but, for others who might wish to make a trip to the country for the benefit of the change, it is we believe not at all the most desirable or convenient. If our railway authorities would seek to promote travelling, and encourage the use of the railroad, we would advise them to think of this matter and see what can be done.

The city railroad, too, is doubtless a convenience when you once get seated in the cars, but the chance of having to wait a quarter of an hour or more in the street, before six o'clock in the morning, is not much inducement to make use of that mode of reaching the depot.

Once under weigh, however, and we begin to ascertain whom we have for travelling companions! Amongst them are valued christian brethren on the same errand as ourselves, but the larger number are Methodist ministers returning from the Conference. One of these, the Rev. Dr. Taylor, of Montreal, affords much interest by his relation of incidents in his extensive travels in Europe, Asia, Africa and America. A walking stick cut by himself from a cedar on the mountains of Lebanon supplied a topic and key note for many enquiries respecting that ancient country.

In due time we arrive at Truro and here we find fraternal christian feeling commencing its abounding—several of the brethren being on hand ready to assist us "after a godly sort." An hour or two in this pleasant tasteful village and we are helped forward to

UPPER LONDONDERRY, the locality appointed for holding the Eastern Association this year. The church edifice is not of the latest style of architecture. It is held in common by the Presbyterians and Baptists. The wide flat galleries are better adapted for preaching occasions than for a deliberative assembly, still the house afforded pretty good accommodation. The time having come, before we arrived, the session was commenced by the pastor of the church, Rev. J. E. Balcom. The letters received were examined and the names of the Delegates read. After which the Rev. D. W. C. Dimock was chosen Moderator; Rev. T. H. Porter, Junr., Clerk, Bro. T. B. Layton, Assistant Clerk, and Bro. H. Upham, Treasurer.

The N. S. Eastern Baptist Association has more of Missionary characteristics than either of the similar bodies in the central and western parts of the province. The more populous parts of this jurisdiction have not been so much under the influence of Baptist principle as the localities of the latter bodies. The churches have to contend with more opposing influences. The bulk of the population being strongly imbued either with Presbyterian or Roman Catholic sentiments, the growth of Baptist churches has been less rapid than where these impediments do not exist. In many parts, however, the sentiments of the people consist of but little more than the names of those bodies—indifference and irreligion prevailing to a large extent.

These circumstances add to the interest of their letters missive, these being in many cases the only occasions during the year when communication is held between them.

Three brethren, Rev. J. Davis, T. Blackader and S. Selden being appointed to read the letters, the remainder of the afternoon was occupied in learning from them what had been the experience of the various churches from Amherst to Sydney and throughout P. E. Island.

It was thought desirable to give every family, or, as nearly as possible, a knowledge of the transactions, the number of copies was consequently increased 25 per cent.

The population of the place being so scattered it was not deemed desirable to have more than two sessions each day. It was therefore resolved that the early morning prayer meeting should be at 8 o'clock, a. m. Committees met at 9, and the public services at 10. On Lord's Day Rev. Isaiah Wallace and Rev. Joseph F. Kempton were the preachers. Other ministers preached in neighboring places of worship Great Village, Brighton, (Folly Village,) Folly Mountain, Truro, Onslow, &c., &c. The rain during the night laid the dust very nicely and ceased just in time to allow a large number to gather in all the churches.

On Monday morning the Associational sermon was preached by Rev. D. A. Steele (the alternate of Rev. G. F. Miles) from Psalm cxix. 105. Thy word is a lamp to my feet, &c., the subject being "The luminous side of Revelation." It was a discourse having much vigor of thought and striking illustration, well suited to a Baptist congregation, calculated to make the hearers consider the position they occupy as a distinct body of christians, and

value the principles committed to them.—We need make no further comment on this discourse as it is probable that we shall have the manuscript shortly to lay its instructive teachings before our readers.

Education was taken up on Monday afternoon, on which subject the report and the speeches were all tending towards a raising of the standard of excellence required in the Academy and the College as well as in the Ladies Seminary.

It was remarked by Rev. John Davis that now we had not to fight on behalf of education and Acadia College as our Fathers had. All admit its necessity. The only question now is shall it keep pace with the march of progress or stand still, which would be really going back.

Rev. J. E. Balcom warmly advocated an addition to the staff of professors, and regretted that he had not a fortune that he might endow one or more professorships himself.

Prof. Higgins alluded to the seasons of peril and trial through which the College had passed, and shewed that this is a season of such a character, arising from the general diffusion of education and the advancement in other institutions. Rev. G. F. Miles expressed his belief that the circumstance of our union with the other province called loudly upon us to go forward in our education race, so that we might maintain our advanced position. He believed the Educational Law to be one of our greatest blessings. We know not what positions we, and our sons and daughters, may be called to occupy.

Rev. J. Chase thought the Baptists only required to be shewn the necessity for further provision for Acadia College, and means would be forthcoming to sustain their long cherished institutions.

Rev. H. N. Beckwith shewed that in former times it was necessary for young men to go to the United States to obtain an education. By so doing the best of them were lost to the province, as they almost invariably remained there. He had himself left near forty years ago for this purpose, and had spent the larger portion of his life in that country.

W. Faulkner believed that we had much to do in preparing influential men to occupy important positions not only for Nova Scotia, but for the New Dominion, and probably for the other countries in the far-west that would unite with us before many years. He moved the following resolution, which was unanimously carried:

"That the Endowment of Acadia College is of great importance to the Baptist Denomination of the Lower Provinces, and that the ministers and Delegates attending this Association do pledge themselves to use their influence in their several churches to consummate this great object."

Rev. Jas. Reid and Rev. H. Eagles also spoke to good effect on this subject.

Some difficulty had existed in the Onslow Church arising from the transaction of business in two sections. The circumstance of a letter being sent from each of these sections rendered it necessary to hold a private session of the Delegates on Tuesday morning. The result of which was a resolution recommending both sections to seek advice from judicious brethren and unite in harmonious action with as little delay as possible. Some of the others from the Prince Edward Island churches indicated a desire for a separate but fraternal Association being formed in P. E. Island. A resolution was agreed to requesting the island churches to send an expression of their wishes in relation to this subject in their letters next year.

On Tuesday morning, after the Sabbath School Convention had held its session, the question of Colportage came up for consideration. Some good speeches were made and the following report unanimously adopted:

The Committee on Colportage beg to report, That in the past they have witnessed great good resulting from efforts performed by persons in this department of christian labor. And in view of wants and demands in connection with this Association, we see the importance of engaging at once in this work.

If we cannot send the living preacher to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, let us not fail to scatter God's word faithfully translated, and books and periodicals containing doctrines and ordinances, dear to us as a denomination, enforced upon every believer in Christ, as set forth in the word of divine truth.

In the afternoon the Home Missionary Society held its Annual Meeting. The Report was presented and various addresses given shewing the need for missionary labor and the blessings which follow. The officers and Board of Managers were elected; after which the Association resumed and completed the business of the session, closing with the Union Hymn and prayer.

The people of Upper Londonderry—Baptist and Presbyterian—manifested the greatest readiness in providing for the accommodation of the Delegates. Although it was the first