

For the Christian Messenger.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY BOARD.

An adjourned meeting of the Foreign Missionary Board was held this evening in the Committee Room of the Leinster Street Church at 7 30 o'clock. Members present: Hon. A. McL. Seely, Chairman, Revs. I. E. Bill, W. P. Everett, G. M. W. Carey, Bro. A. W. Masters, the Secretary, and Bro. Z. G. Gabel, Treasurer.

Prayer by Rev. J. Spencer. Minutes of last meeting read and approved.

A note was read from Messrs. C. & E. Everett, offering the use of the room in their building in King Street for meetings of the Board.

Resolved, That this generous offer be accepted, and that the thanks of the Board be presented to Messrs. Everett.

A letter from Rev. A. R. R. Crawley to the Treasurer was read, in which he states that he is obliged on account of impaired health to discontinue his connection with this Board as their financial agent in Burmah.

Resolved, That the American Baptist Missionary Union be requested to take charge of and remit funds provided by this Board for the support of our missionaries in Burmah until the establishment of our independent mission.

A motion was made that the sum of \$153.00 (316 rupees) be remitted to Bro. Crawley, in consideration of his past services as our financial agent.

The above motion to lie on the table till next Board meeting.

A bill was presented from Miss Norris for \$55.00, (111 rupees) being travelling expenses, &c., incurred during missionary tours.

Resolved, That the annual allowance of \$25.00, already made to Miss Norris for travelling expenses, &c., a sufficient sum be added to pay the above bill.

Voted to adjourn till the second Monday evening in January, 1873. Prayer by Rev. W. P. Everett.

W. B. BOGGS, Secretary. St. John, N. B., Dec. 16th, 1872.

For the Christian Messenger.

Dear Editor,—

The fire, when the, so called, Hub of the World, was recently consumed, must have presented to lookers-on, a most sublime, and awfully solemn spectacle. The flames leaping, and dancing, from building to building, and from street to street, the crashing of falling walls, the shrieks of frightened women and children, the bustling of men and things, the flying in all directions, of locomotives, and all manner of vehicles, the flying cinders, and volumes of smoke, and deep anxious look, on the countenance of each person. All these things, and much more, it would be impossible to mention conspired to make the scene an impressive one.

Not only those who were the immediate spectators, alone share the anxiety. Many parents, and others far away, soon heard the thrilling news, "Boston is on fire!" And Oh! how deeply they too felt, as they thought of loved ones, in that devoted city. Are they secure? have they saved their goods? I myself, have had many anxious thoughts, and feelings, which, it would be superfluous to detail. But, as I have reflected upon the Boston fire. I have been led into the future, and my cogitations have centered around a scene foretold by the Apostle Peter, see 2nd Peter, 3rd chapter, and I have thought, if the hub of the world, i. e., the City of Boston, on fire was as one of your correspondents has said, the greatest sight the world ever saw, which by the way, I think is not quite a fact, what will it be, to see the World itself wrapt in fire. I wonder how many souls will, at that day, be stripped of all they have held dear. Every soul, who shall be found lovers of the world, or the things that are in the world, more than lovers of God, will at that day, be heard to lament, and wail, for although they may earnestly seek a refuge, they shall find none, for the Heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the earth, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Ah! poor soul! you who have treasure stored up on earth, and no Home in Heaven, how anxious you will be at that day, to share the lot of those humble children of God, who perhaps, you have, or may be, even at this moment, disdaining in your heart. Oh! yes; there will be mourning indeed, when the last fire burns all things here." Let the

despiser of Christ remember: The mourning which will then commence, shall never end. Alas! "who shall dwell with devouring fire? Who shall dwell with everlasting burning?" "O dear sinner! I beseech you, flee from the wrath to come." Seek a refuge, while it may be found, soon it will be too late. Christ is the only refuge for your soul. Accept of him, as He is offered to you in the Gospel. And do it now, lest you hear the Lord Jesus say to you at last, "Depart, for I called and you refused; I will laugh at your calamity, and mock now that your fear has come." O, think how blessed the lot of those who, having accepted of Christ, shall be able to look on the dread reality of a burning world, and lift up their joyful heads, and sing in the words of the Poet,

Then fall this earth, let stars decline, Let sun and moon refuse to shine All nature sink and cease to be That Heavenly Mansion stands for me.

And O may I be there.—Amen. R. S. MORRIS.

P. S. I wish my correspondents to address me at Millville, Upper Aylesford, and not N. B., as appears in the Western Association Minutes and Belcher's Almanac.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., December 25, 1872.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!

The auspicious morning has arrived! Christmas has come. Ten thousand little hearts are now swelling in the realization of what perhaps they had before but some very dim prospect or hopes. Parents and children in many households have to-day some new joys, the possession of which will make it to them memorable.

We are not quite sure that the observance of days having reference to our Lord's life is either scriptural or profitable. They are mostly of heathen origin, and simply pagan festivals changed by appropriating them to events in the early history of Christianity, generally without any reference to their being the anniversaries of the days or events so commemorated. And yet, nevertheless, the time-honored practice of devoting the 25th day of December to a recalling of the events of the nativity of our Lord, and the presentation of gifts, in imitation of the act of "the wise men," who brought presents of gold, frankincense and myrrh, to the infant Messiah, has so much of pleasure to old and young in connection therewith, that we prefer to extract all the good we can from it rather than to denounce the observance as having no good at all in it. Whilst however we would not shew any needless disrespect for the observance of the day, we have no idea that any New Testament doctrine or precept requires such observance. The love of God to us in the gift of his Son for our redemption is the great theme of the season, and is always profitable as a subject of contemplation and social intercourse.

If we have the opportunity of shewing that we value this Gift, and can impart to others the means of happiness, no season is more appropriate than this for so doing.

Family gatherings and friendly greetings add charms to every family circle at this time of the year. The little ones have their hearts made glad by new delights from their friends, and the older ones have the "more blessed," in being the donors, so that thrills of joy go from heart to heart, making all glad, grateful and happy. In thinking of the many joyous households into which we shall be privileged to enter and offer the cordial greeting with which we commence the present article, we would fain hope that most of our readers have by faith seen Him to whom the Star led the wise men, and are now prepared, not only to imitate them in donations to the cause of their Saviour, and also in gifts to others; but also in their homage to Jesus as their King and Lord, and have thus been made partakers of that which the angels proclaimed, and which constituted the happiness of the heavenly choir: "Peace on earth, good will to men."

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ary next as a Day of Humiliation and Prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit."

The said Report may be found on page 57 of the Minutes, which have been forwarded to the Churches comprised in the Convention, and should be read and carefully considered to enable the brethren to follow out intelligently the recommendation of the Convention. We may make an extract or two for the benefit of those who have not at hand a copy of the Minutes.

After presenting a summary of the Statistics of the Churches, shewing that in the three Associations there are 311 churches, comprising 28,977 members and that there were during the past year 804 baptisms, it proceeds:

"It must be acknowledged that the State of the Churches, as represented in these statistics, is far from satisfactory. The number of conversions during the year, indicated by the baptisms, averages nearly four to a Church in Nova Scotia, and not quite one and a-half in New Brunswick. The net increase in these two Provinces is about 2 1/2 per cent., a slight advance on last year's returns. The number of baptisms in Prince Edward Island, averages not quite three to a Church.

Nine brethren have been ordained to the Christian Ministry since the last meeting of the Convention.

Four new Churches have been constituted. An insufficient supply of ministers is still to be deplored. There are 163 Churches in Nova Scotia, but only 58 pastors; in New Brunswick there are but 45 pastors to 134 Churches. It is true, that in several instances ministering brethren spread their labors over two or three Churches, and thus endeavor (though inadequately) to compensate for the deficiency; yet still, 73 Churches in Nova Scotia and 59 in New Brunswick, are reported as entirely destitute of pastoral labour. If it be said that many of those Churches are small, and unable to support pastors, the fact may be admitted; but the inference will be that the number of home missionaries should be greatly increased, and the terms of their appointments lengthened. The home missionary work of the denomination is yet but imperfectly done. If five missionaries were permanently employed in each Province, besides occasional assistance rendered to weak Churches, there would be ample scope for energy, and the benefits to the good cause would be incalculable.

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up of partaking of intoxicating drinks, and in very many cases the habitual use of them is commenced at such seasons. Where the habit had been formed, and, after seeing the evil of it, there has been a partial reformation, it is often the case, that, being tempted to partake, and yielding, the old habit returns with all its former force, and so, at the invitation of some injudicious friend, oftentimes a lady, who thinks that friendship is promoted by imbibing of the maddening beverage, a terrible relapse follows; then the good work has to be repeated or destruction is sure.

Many good temperance ladies, on New Year's Day, provide a cup of coffee instead of wine for their friends who call to offer them kind greetings or to renew old friendships. Those who do this may have the satisfaction of knowing that they have not contributed to the downfall of any who might so indulge and suffer for it subsequently.

Many of our readers are unacquainted with our worthy brother, the writer of the following. We hope they may soon have the opportunity of becoming acquainted with him, and he with them, as we believe it will be for their mutual benefit in the service of our Lord and Master:—

WINE HARBOR, 13th December 1872.

Dear Mr. Selden,—

As a stranger in Nova Scotia, but at home with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, I beg to express my approval of the truths generally taught in the Christian Messenger, and trust its circulation may be increased ten fold.

In the last week or two your remarks and the reports from some of the young men laboring in connection with the N. S. Baptist Missionary Society are, I think not quite in accordance with the New Testament teaching, as I will try to explain.

The districts mentioned are thinly populated, dotted here and there are the homes of those who have professed to have received the Lord Jesus by faith in their hearts, and to live to His glory and praise; many of these are gathered together and form Christian Churches, and others should be centres of light, truth and goodness, around which to rally. The state of these people is in the reports intimated to be deplorable, as sheep wanting a shepherd, and the only way to get out of the sleep-state, is to send Ministers to preach the Gospel to them. Those who are already gathered into the fold, do not surely want the Gospel preached to them! As Paul said "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God." Such are babes and have need of milk. Where is the going on to perfection?

As a rule even those who profess to love our Lord, do not often meet except a minister be present, no prayer meetings, no meetings for reading God's word, and declaring what he has done for their souls, I maintain that such a state of things ought not to be countenanced by ministers, or members of our churches. Christ's people should meet together for prayer and conference, minister or no minister; as in olden time, "Those who feared the Lord spake often one to another," and the apostolic injunction "not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some." Wherever there is a man or woman in a family whose heart God has opened, from that soul the life, love and joy should burst out. The work of grace in the heart and life need not flag, and all evangelic effort, should be made in every place, by such.

If a minister come by, (and may their number be increased) receive him with all kindness, and love, but he does not preach the gospel to those in the fold, in the case he does to those outside, while his chief business is calling sinners to repentance his duty to saints is to build them up in their most holy faith.

It is too often taught that no successful work in our Master's name, can be carried on except by the Ministers, and the members therefore are exempt from work; without detracting in the least from their usefulness in the fold, yet while Satan and his emissaries are on the alert, and so wide a field remains untilled their labors I think should be chiefly confined to those outside; the ingathered ones, assisting each other in every good word and work.

While our population is so scattered, we cannot expect to have a Minister next door, then let us one and all gather fresh strength at the foot of the cross, "in all need to Jesus go," and work while it is called to day. Souls are perishing; Are we as professors doing what we ought? Are we not at ease in Zion? Multiply means and agencies. Let those who have the gift of speech, go out into the high-ways and the hedges, and sound the Gospel call. But let us also, who are in Christ, do what we can.

If such were the case, we should hear of little darkness amongst Church members, but rather burning light, love, and zeal. In this way only I think, can we be New Testament professors, and so carry out its principles successfully.

Yours very sincerely,

JOHN SPRAGUE.

We are glad that our brother has called attention to this matter. In many localities we know it to be the

practice of the churches and sections of churches, when deprived of the services of a minister still to meet together at their appointed times for reading the Scriptures, social prayer and worship; but we believe there are many more places where, in the absence of a minister there is no attempt made by the brethren to come together for the public worship of God. We commend to such the counsels of Bro. Sprague and doubt not that in many places, a large blessing would descend upon such assemblies. The promise left by our Lord is "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, them am I in the midst of them."

OUR BLIND.

We feel that no apology is needed for calling the attention of our readers and the public generally to this afflicted class of persons among us. For it must be conceded that none have a stronger claim on our sympathy, while to none possibly has less sympathy hitherto been shown. The munificent charity of the late Wm. Murdock, Esq., with the smaller sums contributed by others, and a small grant from the Legislature have indeed been sufficient to provide a building, in which a few blind persons are receiving instruction. But this Institution is far from meeting the necessities of the case. For if it were large enough properly to accommodate all the blind of the Province—which may be doubted,—only a small fraction of the number are able to meet the expenses of attending it. There are, we believe, from 80 to 100 blind persons in the Province, one half of whom at least should now be participating in the benefits of this Institution. But, as is usually the case with the blind—probably because the poor can least afford the remedial attention which a tendency to blindness requires in its incipient stages—the majority of these are among the indigent. The one dozen or fifteen now attending the Institution are there simply because they, or their friends for them, cannot command the money which is required to pay the bills. But the remaining 30 or 40, nor being thus favored, must grope their way to the grave, without even tasting the pleasure which christian art has devised for the mitigation of their sad lot.

What then is required is that the Government should not only see that a suitable building is provided, and equipped with suitable teachers and apparatus for the education of the blind, but they should also provide means of support for those who are not able to support themselves while attending such Institution. We maintain that the Government should do this rather than leave it to the fickle, spasmodic, unequal charities of the general public. A pressing appeal to the people might result in securing a sum sufficient to work the Institution for a single year; but the voluntary contributions of the people, however urgently solicited, could hardly be expected to meet its wants from year to year. And if they did, they would chiefly come from the pockets of the benevolent few; whereas all the people, and according to their means, would contribute to that which is indirectly given through the provincial treasury.

Moreover justice demands that the Government make adequate provision for the education of the blind. The principal drain upon the revenues of the Province is for the education of those who have eyes. Where then is the justice that denies such help to those who have no eyes? Surely, if discrimination is made at all, it should be in favor of those who are absolutely incapable of helping themselves. By our excellent school-law, the door of the school house is thrown open to all the school-going population, and the children of the rich and poor may sit as equals at the same desk. Why then should the blind children be virtually obliged to stay at home, or, by depending on a charitable public for the means of instruction, obtain it on the level of mere paupers?

Besides, such provision by the government is commended on the ground of economy. Nothing is more certain than that the blind, if not educated and thus qualified to obtain a livelihood for themselves, must, many of them, by and by, be supported in the poor house. And how inhuman, to say the least, to permit the blind to suffer for that for which they were in no way responsible, and which might have been largely remedied, had not their rights, as members of society, been withheld from them.

It has been trained to the mechanic arts; they are capable of some of the blind in themselves blind types or persons can read, at the possession of knowledge this process made to them. They become educated in the world all that is travels up derful that they may give up the. We hope that when will give the tion which New Br the Blind. that Provin in providi hand-somely would bette Provinces tained in e REV. A notice in one of t towards i of the retire from the p at of the after havi fully filled In a privat Rev. W. I Brother, h "My retu against the be necessary ties seeme diminish, w the full app and with t people here the Island, practical of the nomin it is purpos lee, my h completed. the labors t Church at another, I ease. I bu of body an still Pastor and Stigovi apart, and ordinate p around the unillumine one of the lately, the before. At all th and the pr ture. Our unusually vendance a being con years. I by sickness overwork, blessing of feel my justifying spare mys Brot The ven hearing th fruitful in It is the paren of the ca who have ful in ad Lord an find that have spe province our aged will gra have w Timpany among Mr. Edi Having Messenge the Misse furnish t I know was neve father w Neck in dist prin Rev. Pet Baptist life. H daughter of Weym fruits of Weym Henry S ordinatio