

Public Educational meeting be held on Tuesday evening.

Rev. Dr. Cramp read the Report on the State of the Denomination as follows:—

THE STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

The statistics of the Churches, as given in the Minutes of the Associations, furnish the following results:—

NOVA SCOTIA.			
	Churches	Baptisms	Members.
Western Association	65	169	8532
Central do	45	129	5675
Eastern do	56	129	3814
	168	418	18,021
NEW BRUNSWICK.			
	Churches	Baptisms	Members.
Western Association	70	162	4789
Eastern do	66	174	5727
	136	316	10,516
P. E. ISLAND.			
	Churches	Baptisms	Members.
	14	32	820
	14	32	820
Total	318	766	29,357

According to these returns there is a nett increase of 380, which would be equal to 1 1/2 per cent. But an analysis of the Reports greatly modifies that estimate, showing that there is apparently no increase in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, and that the increase in Nova Scotia is very little more than half per cent.

In 113 of the churches there were altogether 766 baptisms, being an average of 6 2/3 to each of those Churches. But in the remaining 205 churches no accessions by baptism during the last Associational year are reported. The Committee call the attention of the assembled brethren to this fact, as deserving very serious consideration. The churches referred to have "wrought no deliverance." The gospel has been preached among them, and the members of those churches are professedly witnesses for God and truth; but the testimony has been delivered, as far as appears, without effect. Ought not a review so saddening to produce "great searchings of heart," not only in the churches themselves, but also throughout the Convention? Should we not immediately institute inquiry into the causes of this lamentable state of things, and be prepared to admit any conclusions that may result from such inquiry, however unfavourable they may be to ourselves?

It is believed, however, that many of these unfruitful churches are small and feeble, destitute of pastors (upwards of a hundred are so reported), or situated in districts which might be advantageously placed under home missionary supervision; and it behoves the Baptists of these Provinces to consider the propriety of establishing general agencies, whereby the condition of such Churches might be accurately ascertained, and some provision made for the supply of their spiritual wants. The addition of a judicious plan of colportage may be also suggested; the persons employed in that department of labour, if carefully selected, would not only circulate useful literature, adapted to Baptist families, but would hold meetings for prayer and exhortation, and thus become instrumental in reviving drooping energies and directing languid zeal into channels of usefulness. There is a large amount of unemployed talent in our Churches, which might by this means be brought into profitable action. The teachings of the New Testament in regard to the use of the gifts which the Lord bestows on his people appear to have fallen into neglect in many places.

Eleven brethren have been ordained since the last meeting of the Convention, viz:—

- Oct. 3, 1872. George N. Balentine, Brookfield, Queens Co., N. S.
- " 10. " O. Keith, First St. John's, N. B.
- Jan. 16, 1873. Donald N. McDonald, Newport, N. S.
- Feb. 22. " B. A. Herriot, Trites Mountain, N. B.
- May 22. " H. J. Coy, Canterbury, N. B.
- June 22. " J. D. Eatman, Carleton, St. John, N. B.
- July 6. " J. B. Lewis, Coondals, N. B.
- " 24. " Daniel McLeod, North Sydney, C. B.
- " 24. " Wallace Lucas, Second Hammonds Plains, N. S.
- Aug. 3. " William F. Armstrong, North Sydney, C. B.
- " 12. " George Churchill, Hebron, Yarmouth N. S.
- " 20. " Rufus Sanford A. M., Biltown, Cornwallis, N. S.

Five new Churches have been constituted—at Carleton, St. John, N. B.; Tiverton, Long Island, N. S.; Lockport, N. S.; Lawrence town and Valley West, N. S.; and Ottnobog, Hampstead, N. B.

New Meeting houses have been opened at Dundas, P. E. I.; Coverdale, Little River, N. B.; Pleasantville, La-Have, N. S.; West Wood's Harbour, N. S.; Barrington, N. S.; Canard, Cornwallis, N. S.; Weymouth, N. S.; New Canada, N. S.; Tremont, Aylesford; and probably at other places.

The Committee cannot but congratulate the Convention on the financial prosperity of the Foreign Mission cause among us. The contributions of the

year now ending will be found far in advance of any previous year. The general average of contributions among all the Churches of the Convention, for the year 1872, was 19 1/2 cents per member; but taking the Provinces separately, the averages are different, being, for Nova Scotia, 22 1/2 cents—for New Brunswick, 13 1/2—and for Prince Edward Island, 21 1/2. In Quebec and Ontario, the average is almost 13. The general average for the United States, including North and South, is 20 1/2 cents; but for the New England states it is 53 cents. In these last-mentioned states an attempt is to be made this year to raise the average to a dollar. A contribution of fifty cents per member for the churches of this Convention would furnish an income, according to our present numbers, of 14,678 dollars. May it not be hoped that this result will be reached?

The Committee have observed with pleasure the increased liberality of the Baptists of these Provinces in the matter of Education. The endowment of Acadia College is steadily advancing. Were the contributions of the other Provinces equal in proportionate amount to the sum raised by the churches of Prince Edward Island, where it averages two dollars per member, the prospect would be still more encouraging. The Governors of the College are doubtless desirous of making ample provision for instruction in all the branches of modern education; in doing so, they reasonably expect to be sustained by the denomination at large; but if that expectation should be disappointed, the denomination would soon sink below its proper level—a catastrophe to be most earnestly deprecated.

When the slow progress of evangelical truth is contemplated, as shown by the small number of conversions to God, in other denominations as well as our own; and when, besides, we think of the alarming spread of scepticism and infidelity, and the Romanizing tendencies among large numbers of the Anglican clergy, the inquiry will naturally be made, "Is there not a cause?"—and since it is conceded on all hands that Christian success is to be ascribed to truth and power—gospel truth, and the power of the Holy Spirit—it is surely incumbent on ministers and churches, in the first place, to be very watchful lest the exhibition of truth be faint, or dim, or partial—for no blessing may be expected, if "all the counsel of God" be not declared:—and, in the second place, to institute anxious inquiry respecting the manner in which the doctrine of the Spirit's influence is held and treated. It is confessed by our Churches that the conversion of sinners is accomplished "by the power of the Holy Ghost," and that growth in piety is the fruit of the bestowment of the same blessing. The actual enjoyment of the blessing is dependent on prayer, and the success of prayer is dependent on faith. Do we pray believingly? Do we expect gracious answers to our prayers? Do we feel the truth which we profess to believe, and reckon on results as certainties? Do we not only acknowledge our dependence on Divine power, but look for the practical issues of Divine faithfulness? In a word, have we forgotten that harvest follows seed-time, and that God has said, "The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save?"

The Committee commend these thoughts to the consideration of the brethren, and close by the usual recommendation, that the churches be requested to set apart a day for special prayer to "the Lord of the harvest."

Respectfully submitted,  
J. M. CRAMP, Chairman.

It was agreed that the last day of the year be recommended to the churches throughout the Convention to be observed as a Day of Special Prayer. The following resolution was introduced by Rev. Dr. Cramp, and adopted by a unanimous rising vote:

Whereas, At the last meeting of this Convention held at St. Stephen's, N. B., the following resolution was passed, viz. That the establishment of a non-sectarian system of common school education in New Brunswick, is regarded by this convention with great satisfaction as the only system adapted to the wants of a mixed population and in harmony with the principles of religious freedom, and that it is earnestly to be hoped that a similar system will be introduced and maintained in every Province of the Dominion.

Therefore Resolved, That the said resolution be now re-affirmed, and that in the judgment of this Convention it is in the highest degree important that the maintenance of the Free School system in its integrity should be secured against all opposition, direct or indirect, and especially against any interference with the independence of the Legislatures of these Provinces, in this matter by dictation of the Dominion Government or otherwise.

The Report of the Board of Governors of Acadia College, and the Treasurers account were read by the Secretary, Rev. W. S. DeBlois.

In consequence of sickness, Rev. S. March was unable to preach on Sunday morning, as appointed, and Rev. Mr. Carey of St. John, N. B., occupied the pulpit. Notwithstanding the stormy weather the congregations at each of the services were quite large.

The Convention sermon preached on Monday morning by Rev. Dr. Spurden was from Psalm ii. 7, 8, subject, "The inheritance of Christ." The heathen and all nations were shown to be his by right, and by redemption and sovereignty.

After reading the Missionary Report, an exceedingly interesting conversation arose on the mode of proceeding in locating the mission and carrying on the work in Siam. This filled up the morning and was continued through the afternoon.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION.

The third annual Sunday School Convention of the Maritime Provinces was held at Charlottetown, P. E. I., on Thursday, Aug. 14th, and two following days; Sunday being set apart for a children's gathering and a farewell meeting. Eighty-one Schools were represented by delegates, besides which there were superintendents and clergymen; making together a total of over a hundred visitors, including a few ladies. Of these about twenty-five were from Halifax; and they, in common with all who visited the Convention, speak in terms of deepest gratitude of the hospitable manner in which they were treated by the kind people of Charlottetown, who not only threw open their houses to the delegates, but took a lively interest in the work of the Convention.

The first meeting was held in Zion Church (Presbyterian) at 2 1/2 p. m. on Thursday; the first half hour being spent in devotional exercises, as also were all subsequent meetings, these services being well attended and much enjoyed. At three o'clock the Convention organized, and a letter of welcome was read from the Presbyterian Church of Charlottetown, expressing great sympathy with, and confidence in, the work in which the Convention was engaged. J. S. McLean, Esq., of Halifax, who presided, made a few earnest, practical remarks in retiring from the Presidency of the Convention, in the course of which he sought to impress on his hearers that whatever might be the machinery employed by Sunday-school workers, it must be ever remembered that all power be- longeth unto God.

The following were elected as officers for the ensuing year:—

Mr. Wm. B. McNutt, of Halifax, President; Messrs. Wm. Warwick, of St. John, F. W. Hales, of Charlottetown, John Hilton, of Yarmouth, J. Matthews, of New Glasgow, and Alex. Stewart, of Georgetown, Vice-presidents; Messrs. R. M. Barratt, of Charlottetown, and J. E. Uleak, of Shubenacadie, Secretaries; and Mr. J. Mathewson Treasurer.

At six o'clock, by the kind invitation of Judge Young, the delegates proceeded to that gentleman's grounds, where tea had been provided for them. Here a very pleasant hour was spent, and it is difficult to say whether the host or the guests enjoyed themselves the most. Before leaving the grounds, several Sunday School pieces were sung in front of the house.

At 7.30 o'clock a welcome meeting was held in the Wesleyan Church (the largest but one, we believe, in the Dominion of Canada), and at this meeting a very large number of people were present. Judge Young presided, and in his opening remarks, he extended a hearty welcome to the Convention. The first Convention at St. John was a great success; that at New Glasgow was a grand success, and he hoped the present one would be a brilliant success; and in order that success should attend their labors, they must be taught of the Spirit.

Charles Palmer, Esq., presented an address of cordial welcome on behalf of the "Right and Tight Little Island" and was followed by the Rev. Mr. Webber (Bible Christian) who extended a welcome on behalf of the clergy of Charlottetown and P. E. Island, whose aims and rewards were the same as those of Sunday School teachers. In the course of his remarks he said there still lingered a blessing in Charlottetown as the effect of the Young Men's Christian Association Convention held there three years ago, and he trusted the same hallowed blessing would attend the present Convention. F. W. Hales, Esq., welcomed the

Convention on behalf of the P. E. I. Union of Sunday School Teachers. They, he said, realized the difficulties and responsibilities of the work; and their welcome might almost be termed a selfish one since they hoped as a result of the meetings their hearts would be warmed to a greater zeal in bringing young ones to the Saviour.

Rev. Mr. Currie (Wesleyan) spoke a word of welcome on behalf of the children of the Island; and dwelt on the important responsibility resting on parents to see that their children were fed with spiritual food, and trained up for Jesus.

Rev. Dr. Bell (of Ontario) extended greetings from the Sunday School Convocation of Ontario and Quebec; and in a very able address, dwelt on the importance of Sunday-school work, which was not merely that of the conversion of children, but also the building up of the soul. The proper age at which children should attend Sunday School was, he thought, from 3 to 80; and not until the whole Church was engaged in this work would the Sunday School have attained its true position. The writer regrets that the limited space allotted to him prevents a more extensive reference to Dr. Bell's address as also to that of the Rev. G. M. Grant, in response to the words of welcome.

Hon. Mr. Shannon (of Halifax) in returning thanks for the kind and hearty manner in which the Convention had been welcomed, spoke of the grandeur of the work of teaching the young about Jesus; and gave some useful hints to teachers relative to their work.

Rev. G. M. Grant spoke in a very pleasing strain of his former connections with the people of Charlottetown and the Island generally; and then very earnestly and forcibly dwelt on the object for which the Convention had assembled. They had come to take counsel together, and to catch the spirit of each other and the spirit of the Master in relation to this great and difficult work of Sunday School teaching—a work better understood the more those engaged in it labored. As a child was trained, so he grew up to manhood; and hence the importance of proper training. The speaker urged on parents the duty of home training, as being an essential accompaniment to that of the Sunday School. The uniform system of lessons now adopted in most of the Schools was doing much to break down all prejudices of sectarianism; and as the hopes of a nation were built up on the young of the nation; he looked upon the present condition of the Sunday School as a good token for the future.

On Friday, in the morning session, the following question, opened by J. Grierson, Esq., (of the Halifax Industrial School) was discussed: "How can we retain our elder scholars in the School?" In opening the subject, Mr. Grierson said the question implied a very sad fact, viz., that we were losing our youths from the Sunday School; and how to remedy this would be the subject of discussion. A boy between the ages of 10 and 12 was very easily to be led, but as he advanced into youth there came a desire for freedom, and the lad began to visit the oyster-saloon, bar-room, and theatre. It was at this age that he wanted especially to be looked after; and he took it as a hopeful sign that the Church was awakening to the fact that a special effort was required in this matter. He divided the subject into two parts—the human and Divine. If the teacher first got firm hold of the scholar's affections, it would be an easy matter to lead him to love the Saviour also.

In the afternoon session the following subject occupied the attention of the Convention: "Teacher's Meetings; their necessity, and the best means of conducting them." This was opened by J. S. McLean, Esq. He started on the principle that Sunday Schools were the Church of God teaching the Bible; and no teacher could be successful who had not an experimental knowledge of the truths he taught. The teachers' meeting should not be merely for the studying of the lesson (although this was important) but it was also important that the teachers should get thoroughly acquainted with each other and with the needs of each class, and that prayer should be offered for a blessing on their work.

In the evening the Rev. Mr. Currie opened the discussion on "The Relation of Church Members to Sunday Schools"; on Saturday morning Dr. Bell introduced the subject of Normal Classes for Teachers; and in the afternoon "The Teaching of the Bible" was opened by Principal Anderson.

The discussions were both interesting and profitable; but want of space forbids reference to them.

The cheering side of Sunday School labor was presented on Saturday evening, when many incidents of success attending Christian effort were related, much to the encouragement of all Christian workers. The children's mass meeting Sunday afternoon presented a grand spectacle, there being over 1000 present.

An immense gathering attended the farewell meeting. Addresses, full of Christian love and earnestness, were given by Dr. Bayne, Pictou; Messrs. Heard and Stewart, Charlottetown; May, St. John; Hill, New Jersey; and Grierson, Halifax. At the close, the whole of the delegates clasped hands and sang "Shall we gather at the River?" and thus was concluded a series of meetings which we feel sure will be the means of great blessing both to the delegates themselves and to the people of Charlottetown, in stirring all up to more earnest labor in the Master's vineyard.

THE TRUE GROUNDS OF CHRISTIAN UNION

is the title of an excellent article in the last number of the *Baptist Quarterly*, by Rev. W. H. Marsh, A. M., of Salem, Mass.

Christian Union has too often been held up as antagonistic to the position taken by Baptists in their church organization. The writer of this article deals with the subject in a light somewhat different. He commences by quoting the following as one of the vital questions of our day:

"How shall the followers of Jesus Christ, now ranged under different banners, be rallied and united under one standard, when party names shall be known no more, the distinctions they represent pass away, and whatever of reproach or of hindrance to more extensive and aggressive work arises from existing separations will be removed, their cause having ceased to exist?"

He acknowledges that the solution of the problem is most difficult. The writer says:

"It has been repeatedly attempted, but no generally satisfactory conclusions have yet been reached. That it will be solved we believe. But this is certain—such union cannot be forced. The various organizations of Christ's followers cannot be compelled to disband and merge themselves into another in which all the truth they hold in common shall be retained, and their points of difference either ignored and buried, or else entering into a compact to allow perfect freedom of opinion with reference to them, thus agreeing to disagree."

Neither can any one body of Christians claim infallibility, and therefore, refusing to discuss points of conscientious dissent with others, require unquestioning submission to their standards."

The whole article is good and well worth the price of the Quarterly. A few extracts will enable our readers to see the drift and to partake of the spirit of the article in a concentrated form.

"We lay it down as a fixed principle, that the most perfect freedom of the individual conscience must be respected in all endeavors to practically realize Christian union. It must spring from within. It cannot be enforced from without. It must come from liberty of thought, of investigation, of feeling, and of conscience. Before it is realized, men must 'see and flow together,' just as the streamlets from the hills and mountains flow perfectly free toward, and finally into, one another, mingling their waters and forming the river."

Now, in observing the progress of the discussion of the question before us in the last few years, it has seemed to us that those who have written upon it, and others who have spoken on it in union meetings, have measurably lost sight of the position just stated. They have written and spoken in a dogmatic, peremptory tone. They have made demands which, if complied with, require on the part of some portions of evangelical Christians the surrender of what they most conscientiously hold to be the truth of God.

Schaff, Schmusker, and Barnes, each lays down a plan of union which respectively he judges will solve this problem. Their common and essential principle is, that the ministry and membership of each denomination shall be recognized by all the others; that no member shall be expelled from any confederated denomination for holding or practising anything enjoined by the creed or ritual of another; and that there shall be free sacramental and ministerial communion."

So far as the popular mind may be regarded as having any well-defined theory on our subject, it is the staple on which all draw, when it is thought desirable to produce a sensation on the subject, or to hold

(Remainder of Editorial on 7th page.)