

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL.

(Concluded)

(D.)

HALIFAX, NOV. 16th, 1874.

To the North Baptist Church, Halifax.

DEAR BRETHREN,—We take this opportunity to inform you that a Council of Ministers will be present at College Hall, Gerrish Street, on Thursday evening next at 7 P. M. to consider the propriety of organizing the names that are on the requisition with others given in to us since that time into a church of the same faith and order. And you are respectfully invited to send a delegation.

Yours respectfully,

JAS. E. IRISH,  
WATSON EATON,

In behalf of the Requisition.

To the North Baptist Church,—

DEAR BRETHREN,—The Communication of a Committee from your body dated 2nd Decr., has been duly received and was read at an adjourned meeting of the Council held last evening 3rd inst. The following resolution was unanimously passed by the Council, and in accordance with my instructions I have now to transmit a copy of the same for your consideration.

Resolved, The Advisory Council convened by the Brethren who have taken steps to obtain their dismissions from the North Baptist Church of Halifax, for the purpose of forming a new church, having heard the statements made by the representatives of said body, as to the causes which have prompted them to take such action, and as the said North Baptist Church against which certain charges have been made by the dissentients, has not been represented before this Council, and consequently has had no hearing, but has commenced a correspondence which is likely to be protracted, therefore this Council does here by resolve to recommend to the North Baptist Church, and to the before mentioned Brethren unitedly to agree in calling a Mutual Council, to which all pending difficulties may be referred.

The earnest prayer of this Council is that God may influence the minds and hearts of both parties, so that the advice thus tendered in the interests of Christian love and harmony, may be received in the spirit in which it is given, and be speedily adopted.

In compliance with the request of the Council at its last meeting, a document containing the original signatures of those seeking their dismission, has been furnished this Council which is herewith transmitted to you.

The Council has adjourned to Thursday evening the 10th inst., to receive your reply to the suggestion contained in the resolution now submitted.

By order and in behalf of the Council,

R. N. BECKWITH,

Secretary.

Halifax, Dec. 7th, 1874.

HALIFAX, Dec. 5th, 1874.

To R. N. Beckwith, Esq., Secretary of an Exparte Ecclesiastical Council, called by virtue of a Requisition signed by J. E. Irish and Watson Eaton, claiming to act for themselves and others, members of the North Baptist Church.

Dear Brethren,—

The Committee on behalf of the North Baptist Church, appointed for this purpose now beg to acknowledge receipt of a Resolution forwarded by direction of the Council dated 4th December, but (enclosing a list of names purporting to emanate not from the Council, nor to be by them in any way authenticated)—which Resolution among other things, conceding that the North Baptist Church, against which serious charges had been preferred by the dissentients, had not been represented before the Council, and consequently had had no hearing &c., &c. recommends that the Church and its dissentient members, should agree in calling a "Mutual Council" to which all pending difficulties may be referred.

The Committee in charge of this matter appreciating their motives, nevertheless regret that this Exparte Council before they passed their Resolution of the 14th ult., virtually summoning the North Baptist Church to answer, and furnish reasons for their past procedure herein, had not thought themselves, that the North Baptist Church could be expected to acknowledge any jurisdiction in a Council so called. But when under protest the North Baptist Church has satisfied even this Council by proof undeniable and conclusive that the requisition under which

they were convened, contains grave and serious charges against the North Baptist Church, which are utterly void of truth or foundation—charges which have been printed and circulated among thirteen, it would seem, of the forty-five churches composing the Central Association—kindly as this recommendation may be intended—the committee acting on behalf of the North Baptist Church are of opinion that to overlook so grievous an injury, without the charge being unconditionally retracted on the part of the offenders, and the retraction circulated as widely as the offensive charge, would be to countenance and encourage a course of conduct, irreconcilably at variance with all true christian faithfulness and discipline.

In one paper, that of Oct. 15th, these dissentients set forth as reasons for their conduct, that "unhappy feelings exist among the members of the North Baptist Church and congregation"—and without a single cause assigned for these, or showing that they themselves are not the sole occasion of them, they ask for letters of dismission to form a new Church.

Then in their printed Requisition, another and totally different reason, one so at variance with fact, that it is difficult properly to characterize it, is given. Under such circumstances, this Committee are at a loss to know upon what grounds this Exparte Council recommends a "Mutual Council." What would be its functions? What the charges which the Church would be required to meet, or such a Council be expected to examine into, or report upon? Would existing charges be withdrawn,—would new ones be formulated and submitted? Or does this Exparte Council consider that when any number of dissentients combine to demand letters of dismission, first for one pretended reason, then for another, in order to form an opposition church, in the same neighborhood, (thus multiplying weak churches), and so near that the congregations would be meeting and passing, and threading through each other at every public service—having libelled their own Church with printed papers containing defamatory charges, as in the present instance—that the case is then ripe for a mutual Council? If so, this Committee on behalf of the Church they represent regret that they fail to see aught else in such a course, if adopted, but a precedent dangerous to, and destructive alike of the discipline, existence and peace of every Baptist church in Nova Scotia. The case of the North Baptist Church of Halifax to-day, may be that of any other Church to-morrow.

When new churches require to be formed from old ones, this Committee respectfully intimate it as their opinion, that instead of written papers got up and privately circulated by party leaders, among unsuspecting and often well meaning members for their signatures, as done in this case by the paper of October 15th, the Church itself and its meetings are the proper arena for submitting and disposing of all matters affecting its interests and well being.

With these remarks, we propose to close our present correspondence. On behalf of the Committee appointed for this purpose, whose names are already with the Exparte Council, and who unanimously approve of the foregoing. I subscribe myself,

Yours, &c.,

J. McCULLY, Chairman.

P. S.—Having applied to the Chairman of the Council, for a copy of the Minutes of their final meeting, he did not feel himself at liberty to furnish the same. I regret this, because if it should thereby have appeared that this Council had dwindled down to eight—three of those from the Dartmouth Church, one from Fall River, one from Sackville, and three from Granville St., and that the Council was divided in opinion and Granville Street outvoted, a better estimate would then be obtained of the value of the advice, under which the "dissentients" have since proceeded to organize themselves into a Baptist Church, "in order to apply at the next meeting of the Association for a union, &c."

J. McC.

For the Christian Messenger.

FROM CALIFORNIA.

LETTER FROM REV. T. H. PORTER.

Dear Editor,—

Believing that a number of your readers would be glad to hear from me, to save labor—a necessity just now—I will, with your permission make the dear old Messenger the medium of communication.

On Monday morning, Oct. 19th, I felt St. John for California. Was detained one day in Boston, and stopped with kind friends two days in New York. On Saturday at 1 P. M. we sailed in the Pacific

Mail Steamship *Colon* for Aspinwall, which place we reached a week from the following Monday morning, and crossed at once to Panama by rail. Here we found the good steamer *Constitution* awaiting us, and immediately went on board, but were detained three days waiting for the president of the Company. On Thursday evening, Nov. 5, we sailed for San Francisco where we arrived on Sunday morning the 22nd, having remained one night in Acapulco, the only port at which we touched on the way. We had a very smooth and pleasant voyage throughout, not one day being too warm—the thermometer ranging from 90 down to, as we neared San Francisco, about 60—and scarcely are too rough for me. A gain of four pounds on the way, and three since landing has brought me up to within ten pounds of my average weight. I am happy to be able to say that my gain in appetite and strength have been proportionable.

On Friday I had the pleasure of hearing Rev. M. Hubbert, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, to whom I had a letter of introduction from Rev. Dr. Thomas, of Brooklyn, N. Y. During my stay of three days in San Francisco, I met Rev. T. Edwin Brown, of Rochester, who is supplying one of the city Baptist pulpits, and also seeking health; Bro. Bynon, the publisher of the Pacific Baptist, formerly from P. E. Island, and several friends from New Brunswick. I will not need to go there a stranger again.

On Wednesday morning we started in the steamer *William Tober* for San Pedro, the nearest port to Los Angeles. We touched at San Simeon, San Luis harbor, remained a night at Santa Barbara and a day at San Buenaventura, and on Saturday morning took the train, and after a run of twenty five miles, found ourselves in this Eden of the world—after the fall.

I have found kind friends in, and a good home with Dr. and Mrs. Hobbs, who, I am sorry to say, have within a month lost a dear little girl, their youngest child. They have furnished a home also to other Nova Scotians, so that when in the house we almost forget that we are not now dwellers on the sacred soil. Bro. Francis and wife are also now here, expecting to make this, for a time the headquarters of their mission work, and perhaps render aid in building a place of worship here, which is much needed.

Dr. Hobbs has written so fully of the place that I need not add at present, further than to say that the weather since I came has been like the finest part of our May or September, and we are revelling in all our Summer products, with grapes a drug and oranges soon to be, and other semi-tropical fruits abundant.

As respects my future I can say yet say nothing, further than that I hope to receive permanent benefit from my stay here, however long or short it may be.

Wishing still to be kindly remembered by the friends I love so well, rejoicing in what is being done, and desiring continued prosperity to the cause and interest near to my heart. I am, as ever,

Yours very truly,

T. H. PORTER.

Dec. 5th, 1874.

P. S.—Will you and my correspondents please address me until further notice, at Los Angeles, California, care of Rev. Dr. Hobbs.

T. H. P.

(Christian Visitor please copy.)

For the Christian Messenger.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES.

MR. EDITOR,—

Some references that have been made to the past, have led me to review our history for the last two years, and by this means I have reached something like a "realizing sense" of the responsibilities which we, as a denomination, now have upon us.

At the meeting of the Convention in 1873, we were fully committed to the support of a separate mission in Asia. The lowest estimate that should be put on the expense of this mission is \$10,000 a year, \$6000 of this must be raised in Nova Scotia.

The Home Mission work is increasing and larger contributions must be made for it. The Board should receive, for its general work \$10,000 a year; but let us fix the necessary expenses for the year at \$8,000. At the meeting of the Home Missionary Union in Parreboro, the Society voted to undertake the support of an additional Theological Professor at Acadia, and this will require that \$1000 a year be raised by subscriptions for this special purpose. The salary of the Scientific Professor at Acadia, as appears from the Minutes of the Con-

vention, is largely dependent on special subscriptions. We may put this sum at \$600. By the direction of the Convention, the annual contributions from the churches for the College are to be continued, and these are expected to amount to at least \$1000.

The Governors of the College, in June last, gave their endorsement to the proposal to raise at least \$25,000 for a Ladies' Seminary. The plan was discussed and approved at the different Associations, some stock was subscribed, and the Governors, at the meeting of the Convention, again gave their sanction, and appropriated four acres of land for the Building.

The Governors, also, at the same time appointed a Committee to raise and expend \$10,000 for enlarging the boarding accommodations in Horton Collegiate Academy. The Committee have already expended some four thousand dollars, and the whole must be raised, or what has been expended will be of no use.

The amounts to be collected by the Ministerial Education Board and the Infirmary Ministers' Board we will fix at \$1200,—too small a sum by half.

Now if we omit the estimates for Buildings, we find nearly \$20,000 to be raised this year for well defined public objects.—We may not expect the buildings to be completed within less than two years; calculating, therefore, for that time, we find the snug little sum of seventy or eighty-five thousand dollars that is to be paid by our people for a few definite public objects within the two years running from the first of last August.

Ought this money to be raised? I do not see any thing that can be left out and all will admit that we have gone too far with regard to all the objects to retreat with honor.

Can the money be raised? Undoubtedly it can, if unanimity is preserved among the people, and if the different parties to whom different parts of the work are committed, manage their affairs discreetly and faithfully.

Will the money be raised? That depends very much on the action of each one of us. But the magnitude of the undertaking, and the serious consequences of failure are certainly enough to constitute a wholesome restraint on all prudent minds to keep them from proposing any more great projects at present.

MENTOR.

From the Yarmouth Herald.

SCENES AND INCIDENTS IN SIAM.

LETTER FROM REV. G. CHURCHILL.

"What sort of a place is Bangkok?" "What kind of people are the Siamese, and how do they live?" are the first questions that our people at home would ask of one who had been living here.

Now, while it is difficult in a mere pen sketch to give such a description of any place or people as will afford a good answer to such questions, it is especially so with regard to Bangkok and the Siamese. Almost everything here is very different from what we have at home, while there are many things here with which we have nothing at home to compare them. For instance, we speak of Bangkok as a city of five hundred thousand inhabitants, and it is quite natural that we at once associate with it such ideas as we have of some large city in Europe or America. There is, however, in fact, but very little resemblance between this city and any I ever saw in America. This is true of all cities in the tropics. They are quite different from European or American cities.

Bangkok, the principal city of Siam, is on the Menam river, something more than twenty miles from its mouth. The land, in approaching the mouth of the river, is very low, and it is not until quite near that it can be seen. The first impression one gets of it is of trees growing in the water. And this is really the fact. The land about the head of the gulf is being constantly built up and extended by the immense quantities of sand and mud carried down by the rivers. As soon as this land is high enough to be uncovered at low water, the mangrove trees take possession. These peculiar trees can grow right in the salt water. The trunk of the tree is usually above the water, standing on a mass of roots four or five feet long. Among these trees are usually multitudes of monkeys, which go down at low water to dig shell fish.

We reached the mouth of the river just at night, so saw but little between Paknam, the port of entry, and Bangkok. But the general features are the same all the way.

The banks are very low, only a little above high water at any season, while during the latter part of the rains the land is flooded at high water. The principal part of Siam, the whole valley of the Menam, is of this character, a low level plain that has been formed by the mud brought down from the interior of the country. At one time, the gulf of Siam must have covered the country away above Bangkok. It is necessary to dig down but a few feet to find in any part of the city, shells and salt water. As the land is very soft and wet, it is a matter of much difficulty to get a foundation upon which to place a heavy building. The banks of the river are lined by gardens, where fruits, such as oranges, cocoa nuts, palm fruit, pine-apples, &c., are raised. Among these may be seen the huts of the natives, looking at a distance like the camps of our Miomac Indians. Back of these gardens are immense fields of rice and sugar some of them extending for miles.

As we approach the city the houses become more numerous and larger. Some three miles below the city are some large rice mills owned by Europeans. Here the rice is hulled and put up in sacks for shipment. Above these, we pass, at intervals, on the right hand, the American, French, English, Portuguese, Austrian and German consulates, and anchor at length a mile or two below the walls of the city proper.

Two things that first attract attention in approaching the city, are the multitudes of boats going in every direction, and the floating houses along the sides of the river.

As for the boats, they are almost innumerable and of all sizes, from the smallest skiff that will barely hold a child, up to the large country boats that have come down the river laden to the water's edge with produce. There is, also, a great variety in them. The native boats are quite unlike any we ever saw at home. Some of them are merely dug out made from the trunk of a tree, and very homely. The most, however, are of teak boards, and neatly made, but very peculiar in shape. Those used by the better classes are usually made of the trunk of a large tree cut out in the right shape for the bottom, and the sides built up with teak planks, with a small covered house in the centre to protect from the rays of the sun. In the small boats the people usually sit down in the bottom and paddle, like our Indians, but in the larger ones they stand up and row, with their faces toward the bow of the boat. It is very common to see one person rowing a boat in this way with a single oar. It seems impossible that they can row straight and rapidly in this way, but they do. They are used to a boat from childhood, and become very skillful. Men, women and children, all alike, learn how to swim and row, the first thing. It is as common to see the women on the river as men, perhaps even more so. The necessity of being thus familiar with boats may be understood when we consider that the river and canals are to Bangkok what streets are to any other city. The river may well be called the main street, for the principal part of the travel and traffic of the city is done upon it. All through the low and level valleys of Siam, the rivers and canals have a very important place, as they afford almost the only means of travel. This naturally attracts most of the population to the rivers and canals, and has much to do in giving peculiarity to the cities and towns of Siam.

It is this desire to be as near as possible to the river that has led the people to build floating houses in Bangkok. They procure a large number of bamboos, which they lash together in rafts from four to six feet in depth, and as long and wide as the house is to be. On these the floor is laid and the house built. They are usually small, from twenty to thirty feet square, and quite low. They are built as if in two parts, with two sharp roofs parallel to each other, and joined at the eaves. The front part is usually occupied as a store, and the back as a dwelling house. There are some, however, very finely fitted up as dwelling houses, in which some of the nobles live. They are fastened to the shore by chains and cables, and also to stout posts driven into the mud. These houses line the banks of the river for six or seven miles, one tier deep, and there must be thousands of them. The most are owned by Chinese, who do almost all the trading as well as other work in Bangkok. It seems a strange idea to talk of going shopping in a boat, but so it is here. You step out of your boat into the shop or sit still and let the shopkeeper bring out what you wish. These are the cleanest houses occupied by the natives, because all they have to do is to throw all their dirt and filth into the river.

The people who live on land live for the