

For the Christian Messenger.

TO THE CHURCHES OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Dear Brethren,—

The Missionary Board has sent us more men to preach the Gospel this year than ever before. They are labouring faithfully in all parts of the field and with good success. Many souls have been won to Jesus through their instrumentality, and the good seed, which shall yet bear fruit, has been sown in many hearts. These dear young men must soon leave us to resume their studies, and they must be paid. But the contributions of our churches to Home Missionary purposes are inadequate to meet the demands. It is unjust for us to ask more of the Board than we give them. As high spirited Islanders we cannot do such a thing. Yet more money must be raised. How? Evidently, by our churches. Dear brethren, will you not take collections to make up the deficiency at your earliest convenience. We want the money now. Bills are coming in, and they must be paid at once. Will not our brethren in the ministry take this important home matter in hand, take collections or circular subscription papers within a few days, and forward the amounts to James DesBrisay, Esq., Charlottetown, the local Treasurer of the Board. Brethren in Christ! This is our work and we must maintain it. Brethren in the ministry! You are naturally the leaders of the people, will you not lead at this crisis? For our own sakes, for the sake of the precious souls who are hearing the word, nay, for Jesus' sake, do your duty, in the sight of God, in this matter.

Yours in the Gospel,

D. McDONALD.

Montague, P. E. I., Aug. 24th, 1875.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE CONVENTION.

No. 1.

Mr. Editor,—

If you have not already exhausted all the available space for the present issue of your paper, perhaps you may consider this communication worthy of admission there.

I should like to say a word or two about Bear River itself—the village I mean—so pleasantly, and withal so cozily situated on the declivities of the respective hills, and in the valley at the foot, where a tidal stream which gives its name to the locality, ebbs and flows,—but I fear to enlarge too much. It looked to me so Swiss like, the white cottages perched here and there on the sharp slopes, and the closely packed shops and dwellings on the flat, I was greatly pleased with the scenery. The population of the village and the suburbs, if I may so call the outlying settlements was given me, as upwards of three thousand. The Baptists have it nearly all their own way here it would seem. The Wesleyans have a neat little chapel, and a small congregation. They have had their troubles, in times past, but are worshipping unitedly, I understood, at present, under the pastoral care of a very worthy minister of the Conference, who kindly placed his chapel at the disposal of the Convention for Sunday services. It is pleasant to witness such friendly interchanges of courtesy and amenities among the several denominations. May it long continue to be so, notwithstanding any little local interruptions which are but like the mere ripples of the tide flowing on to its destiny.

The Pastor of the Baptist Church, Rev. Mr. Cox, does not look as if he enjoyed very rugged health, but his capacity to engineer a Convention successfully, will not soon be forgotten by any of the many delegates that presented themselves on the occasion.—His efforts seemed to be unceasing, in order that every want, of every stranger, should be suitably provided for, and his people and church nobly vied with each other in the dispensation of their boundless hospitalities. And the houses and homes of others than Baptists, were, I learned, thrown open equally. The weather was delightful. Every thing propitious. The Convention opened auspiciously, proceeded harmoniously, and terminated satisfactorily. In another number, I may discuss some of the many subjects brought under the consideration of the Convention. I may criticise—I may offer words of commendation where deserved. I may tender advice. I may review the past, and prospectively regard the future—but whatever I do or say,

unless I can offer sound sensible reasons therefor, I shall make but little impression upon the minds of those whom I address. This much I know. And yet any case presented through your columns to the denomination backed up by sound solid reasoning, is sure to command respect, and win support. With this conviction meantime I am Sir, your obedient servant. A DELEGATE.

The Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N. S., SEPTEMBER 1, 1875.

THE BAPTIST CONVENTION.

Since the brethren have returned from the Convention at Hillsburg we have felt more deeply than before how much we were deprived of in being kept at home during the late session, the harmonious character of the meetings and general satisfaction felt by all with the proceedings and general cordiality of the people, rendered it one of the best sessions of the Convention since its formation.

THE MINISTERS' INSTITUTE

commenced on Wednesday evening by a sermon from Rev. Dr. Cramp, text Heb. xii. 11 "Not slothful in business, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord." It was felt to be a very timely practical discourse. Whilst it inculcated industry and earnest work, it shewed that even business must be Christian, and every calling of the believer such as would be beneficial to the souls and bodies of his fellow men. Not only must time be allowed for the observance of religious duties but they should be attended to with fervency and zeal, not with the mere fragments of time and strength, but with the heart and soul. Whilst industrial pursuits must characterize Christians they must not absorb all their attention. A spirit of full consecration is demanded by Christ, and every thing that is doubtful will then be renounced by the follower of the Saviour at once, and with full dependence on the Lord to provide and to bless efforts to do whatever the hand may find requiring to be done. In the exposition of "serving the Lord" it was shewn that it has reference to the time, and acting according to the necessities of the case. Seeing that our time in this world is so soon to be brought to a close, and our opportunities of doing good to our fellowmen will soon come to a close, we must act accordingly.

Several other ministers spoke on the subject, and enforced its spirit and teachings with appropriate exhortations. One fact is worth noticing in reference to this service—that the poor unfortunate woman, Mrs. Robbins, who was murdered the next morning was present and heard this: the last sermon she was to hear before suffering a violent death by the hands of her cruel, wicked husband. The election of officers of the Institute followed the devotional exercises. Rev. D. W. C. Dimock was chosen president, and Rev. T. A. Higgins, Secretary.

The Institute met on Thursday morning at 10 o'clock. After devotional exercises, Rev. J. D. Pope, of St. John read an able paper on "The Annihilation of the Wicked." We copy a summary of the argument from the Visitor: The Scriptures teach the fact that the wicked will be subjected to punishment. Some hold that at the last the wicked will be passed over to endless torment; some that after a certain amount of punishment the wicked will be restored to everlasting happiness and heaven, some that the wicked will be utterly annihilated. It was upon the latter error that the paper was founded.

The rise and progress of the idea was set forth. His theory is that the death which became the doom of our race on account of sin, is utter extinction. Eternal life is given to those who believe in Christ. Thus, at the judgement, it is not at death, the souls of all who have not received eternal life, literally die, or cease to exist. The following are especial texts upon which they found their theory:—Gen. ii. 17; Ezekiel xviii. 4; Rom. viii. 13; Deut. xii. 15-19; Rom. v. 21; Rom. vi. 23; James i. 15; Psalms cxlv. 20; Ps. cxlii. 7; Acts iii. 23; Job xxi. 30; Matt. vii. 13; Rom. ix. 22; 2 Thess. i. 9; John iii. 26; Phil. iii. 19; Heb. vi. 8; Ps. xxxvii. 10; Isaiah xlii. 11, 12; Malachi iv. 1; Matt. iii. 12. From these it will be found that terrible judgements are threatened against the wicked. Annihilationists claim that they teach their doctrine. Now God will be true to His Word, and will execute just what he says, and the question is this, "Is life eternal simply a continuation of life, and eternal death a continuation of being?"

There are two errors in this theory— 1. That death is cessation of being. 2. That the terms used must be taken in a literal and not in a figurative sense.

Death does not mean cessation of being—nor life continuance of being simply; a dead body is in existence still. That words really define the state or condition of the spiritual being. Life is living to glorify God; death is want of his favor. The figurative expressions of the scriptures were carefully gone over and their meaning clearly set forth.

The metaphysical features of the question were also treated on and the ground taken that certain mysteries are beyond the comprehension of mortals and need not and ought not to be made subjects for question. The result of such a belief were shown in the lives of the Epicureans, and the revolting debaucheries and bloodshed of the French Revolution.

Speakers followed referring to the subject, and endorsing the opinions of the essayist. These were Revs. J. M. Curry, Dr. Cramp and Dr. Sawyer.

In the afternoon, Rev. Dr. Sawyer read a well-written essay on "Education in its relation to the People and the State." The proper sphere of the parent, the State, and the Church, in the matter of the education of youth is a subject on which much difference of opinion exists. These differences were discussed with much intelligence, ability, and freedom, and the proper place for religion in the public school system was carefully considered. A combination of the three was regarded as the most desirable condition for an enlightened community. The sentiments expressed in the essay called forth remarks from Rev. Dr. Cramp, Rev. G. D. Cox, Mr. John March, and others.

On Thursday evening Dr. Cramp read his valuable paper on "The Deaconship." He noticed the New Testament teaching on the subject, and referred to the voice of history, going back to the writings of Justin Martyr who states that till A. D. 147, the deacons of the churches had been the officers specially required to attend to the aged, the feeble, the poor, and the sick.

Systematic Effort was the subject of a paper written Rev. Dr. Day. He shewed that by proper system being observed in every church, in financial matters, much larger sums for benevolent objects might be obtained and a deeper interest would be taken in the spread of Christ's kingdom.

The Question was subsequently raised, Whether it is desirable to continue to hold the Institute at the same season as the Convention?

Rev. Dr. Day, Dr. Cramp, W. H. Warren, J. C. Kempton, S. March and John Hughes were appointed a committee to consider and report upon the matter.

The work of Friday we noticed last week together with the general organization of

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on Saturday morning.

Of the requests for the names of delegates to be sent in advance by mail, 67 were returned. Of these 40 were correctly filled up, 5 returned too many delegates, and 18 without the names of delegates, 102 names were returned as delegates.

The opening prayer was offered by Rev. D. A. Steele.

The following brethren being present were invited to sit with the Convention:

- Rev. Dr. Fyfe, of Woodstock, Ont.
Rev. Dr. Marshall, of Worcester, Mass.
Rev. Dr. Adams, of Holyoke, Mass.
Rev. R. D. Porter, of Milltown, Maine.

Besides the officers noted in our last:

- Dr. Rand, President.
Wm. Faulkner, Esq., Vice President for Nova Scotia.
Rev. Dr. Spurden, Vice President for New Brunswick, and
Rev. Jos. Murray, Vice-President for Prince Edward Island.

Professor Higgins was appointed Secretary, and John March, Esq., Assistant Secretary, and W. Nicholl, Esq., Treasurer. The precise words of the telegram from India read by Judge McCully were: "Cable. President Convention, Hillsburg, Nova Scotia. All here. Expect Miss Armstrong. Joyfully working. R. Sandford, 12 Cocanada." The word "Expect" should probably have been "except." It would seem that the telegram had left Cocanada on the 12th Inst. This will be satisfactory thus far to the friends and relatives of our brethren and sisters in the foreign field, as well as to the friends of the mission.

After the reading of this the new President took the chair and the usual routine of appointing Committees &c, proceeded.

A letter was read from Rev. J. L. Campbell introducing and commending Rev. Dr. Fyfe as a deputation from the Foreign Missionary Board of Ontario and Quebec.

Judge McCully introduced Rev. R.

D. Porter as a deputation from the State Convention of Maine.

Dr. Rand communicated to the Convention the resignation of Rev. T. H. Porter as one of the Governors of Acadia College on account of his ill health. A resolution was adopted expressive of much regret at the necessity for such resignation and high appreciation of the service rendered by Bro. Porter during his term of office.

Judge McCully tendered a resignation of his position on the Board of Governors as he had been unable to attend the meetings. A resolution was passed requesting him to withdraw his resignation; which he did.

A committee was appointed to prepare an addition to the Constitution of the Convention providing for special meetings. The arrangements for preaching on Lord's Day, were:

- Hillsburg Baptist Church.—Morning, Rev. Dr. Fyfe. Afternoon, Rev. Dr. Adams. Evening, Rev. W. P. Everett.
Methodist Church.—Morning, Rev. I. E. Bill. Evening, Rev. Dr. Marshall.
Clementsvale.—Morning, Rev. E. O. Read. Afternoon, Rev. P. Gallaher.
Goat Island.—Rev. W. L. Parker.
Waldeck Lane.—Bro. C. H. Lavers.
Annapolis.—Morning, Rev. W. A. Corey. Evening, Bro. E. M. Kierstead.
Granville Ferry.—Rev. J. C. Bleakney.

Closed by prayer by Rev. Dr. Cramp.

The following is a brief synopsis of Dr. Fyfe's sermon, preached Sabbath morning at Hillsburg.

John iii. 16. Mysteries meet us at every step. It is a great mystery that God should have loved us so. The "fullness of the minuteness of the proofs of His love" seems to have been considered necessary to enable us to believe the mystery. God is love in name and nature. Three points were considered. (1) What God gave—His only begotten Son. That he gave Him is prima facie evidence that no other way was possible, that no other ransom was sufficient. (2) To what did God give Him? To the death of the Cross, the baptism of agony. (3) For what did he give Him? That whosoever should believe might not perish but have everlasting life.

On Saturday afternoon the election of two new Governors for Acadia College took place. Several matters of routine business were attended to. After which the question of inserting "Home Missions," in the objects of the Convention received earliest discussion, some contending that there was a natural and necessary connection between Home Missions, Foreign Missions and Education, and that all the churches should have one common heart to carry on the work effectually. Others said the continual effort to change the base of our operations, and so produce a condition of unrest, operated very injuriously, and that we have not a sufficiency of time to consider the two matters now before us, and should have difficult complications if we attempted to divert Home Missions from their present and proper condition. Ultimately a committee was appointed to consider the matter and report next year. The following to be said committee: Revs. Dr. Cramp, Dr. Day, J. D. Pope, E. M. Saunders, Dr. Sawyer, W. P. Everett, I. E. Bill, E. Hickson, T. Todd, Dr. McDonald, Dr. Rand and Judge McCully.

On Monday morning Rev. J. D. Pope of St. John, preached the Convention Sermon from Titus i. 5: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting." The Secretary of Acadia College, Rev. S. W. DeBlois, read the Report of the Board of Governors which was laid on the table for further consideration. In the afternoon sitting, after devotional exercises, a resolution was adopted requesting Rev. Mr. Pope to furnish a copy of his sermon for publication.

A resolution of cordial thanks was adopted to Hon. Dr. Parker, A. Longley, Esq., and J. B. North, Esq., for their very able and efficient advocacy in the Halls of Legislature, of equal rights to all denominations in the matter of public support to Education. The committee of last year on Public Education was re-appointed—the name of Rev. Joseph Murray being substituted for that of Rev. John Davis.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee of Nomination, it was voted that Rev. E. M. Saunders preach the Convention Sermon next year, Rev. T. A. Higgins be his alternate. The Board of Foreign Missions for the current year was appointed, to consist of Hon. A. McL. Seely, Rev. Dr. Cramp, Rev. Dr. Tupper, Rev. W. P.

Everitt, Rev. D. A. Steele, Rev. A. B. McDonald, A. W. Masters, Esq., Rev. Edw. Hickson, Rev. G. M. W. Carey, Rev. Dr. Day, Rev. W. A. Corey, Rev. I. E. Bill, Rev. J. D. Pope, Rev. D. McLellan, and J. Harding, Esq.

After reading the College Treasurer's Report. It was resolved that Rev. I. E. Bill and Rev. Jos. F. Kempton convey the thanks of the Convention to friends in England and the United States for their liberal donations to the Endowment Fund of Acadia College.

Monday Evening was a Public Educational Meeting for addresses, on the subject of education generally. After the preliminary exercises the President Dr. Rand made some appropriate remarks, shewing that no subject could be more deeply interesting in whatever phase it might be considered. He had a strong conviction that we were losing ground somewhat by forgetting what education really is. Twelve years ago he had visited this place and could not congratulate the people on the progress that had been made in educational matters. He saw many young men here who had received the benefit of our schools, and he believed would before long find their way to Acadia College. We have one grand object—to supply advanced Education to young women and young men, to establish an efficient Academy for both, and to keep the College in the highest possible state of efficiency. There was no doubt about the ability of the Baptists to do this all that was necessary was the will, and unanimity in carrying it out and on to completion.

We have been obliged to defer making use of the notes we have of the excellent speeches made by Dr. Fyfe, Dr. Adams, and others, at this meeting, so that we might place before our readers the following report on

THE STATE OF THE DENOMINATION.

The following is the report on the state of the Denomination:—

The Statistics furnished by the Association Minutes give the following results:—

Table with columns for Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and P. E. Island, showing Churches, Baptisms, and Members.

328 Churches, 2380 Baptisms, Total M'brship, 32,942

The net increase is 5 1/2 per cent: Nova Scotia, 3 per cent; New Brunswick, 5 per cent; Prince Edward Island, 11 1/2 per cent.

Last year the average increase was nearly 8 per cent. That was an extraordinary year. Two such years rarely occur in succession. The time has not yet come for continuous prosperity, on a general scale, though individual instances do sometimes appear. But the fulfilment of Isa. lx. is sure, nor is it possible according to human calculation, that "the knowledge of the Lord should cover the earth as the waters cover the sea" till that magnificent picture becomes a reality. Meanwhile, it is cheering to observe indications of awakening energy. The ages of formality, and sloth, and selfishness, it is believed, are things of the past. Christian churches will henceforth be gardens of the Lord, producing fruit for the Master's use, and Christian professors will be much more ambitious than heretofore, of being witnesses for truth and holiness. As true religion thus advances, the divine origin of the gospel will be more generally acknowledged, and infidelity will be put to shame. Referring to the "controversy which has been agitated, whether Christianity has done most good or harm in the world," a modern writer of our denomination observes, "If every Christian had been an exemplary one, this question never could have been asked; and when every Christian shall be an exemplary one, it never can be asked again." (Hinton's Theological Works, vol. iv. p. 258).

Ten brethren have been ordained during the year, viz:—

- 1874
Sept. 22. J. Johnston Armstrong, Greenville, Cumberland Co., Nova Scotia.
26. L. M. Weeks, Isaac's Harbour, Nova Scotia.
Oct. 27. J. R. Knight, Maryland, N. B.
Dec. 4. James I. DeWolfe, Uigg, P. E. Island.
1875
Jan. 27. R. D. Burgess, Hebron, Nova Scotia.
Feb. 9. Ezekiel Hopper, Pollet River, New Brunswick.
March 17. Joseph Cahill, Upper Kingsclear, New Brunswick.