

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., October 15, 1878.

A. N. S. BAPTIST CENTENNIAL.

Some of the Baptist Churches of this province of Nova Scotia have observed their Jubilee or their semi-centennial, but the Church at Wolfville is the first one to observe its Centennial which is to be the subject of appropriate services on the 29th of this month, of which notice will be found in another column. The pastor has quite a faculty for gathering up historical matters and on the occasion will doubtless furnish some facts of the history of the past which will be of very great interest to all Baptist people in Kings County. We trust the weather will be fine and we doubt not there will be large gatherings of friends to congratulate the church on the completion of the first hundred years of its existence. We shall soon have to give up calling this a new or young country.

- Horton Ist.....1778
- Yarmouth Ist.....1797
- Newport.....1799
- Weymouth.....1799

The latter appears in the early Minutes of Association first as Sissiboo, then as Sissiboo or Weymouth.

We question if there is another Baptist Church in this Dominion of an earlier date than the Horton Ist. If there is we should be glad to hear of it.

SABBATH SCHOOL CONVENTION OF THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

The annual session of this Convention was held in Truro last week. It commenced on Wednesday the 9th inst., at 3 o'clock, P. M., in the classroom of the Young Men's Christian Association. The usual preliminary business was attended to and the officers for the year elected, as follows:

- President.—Hon. S. Creelman.
- Vice-Presidents.—S. J. Parsons, Rev. J. R. Hart, Hon. H. G. Calbeck, (P. E. I.)
- Corresponding Secretary.—S. Waddell.
- Recording Secretaries.—Mr. J. Gaetz, Corp. McNally, 97th Regt.

The welcome meeting in the spacious hall of the Y. M. C. A. was attended by a large audience.

The address of welcome was given to the Convention by the Mayor of the town, Israel Longworth, Esq., to which the President elect responded.

Earnest practical addresses were given, by the Rev. Mr. Burrows on Bible Methods of Teaching, and the Rev. Mr. McMillan on The Church and the Sabbath School.

On Thursday the following subjects were taken up:—The Sabbath School teachers difficulties and discouragements: What are they and how are they remedied? The Superintendent: His qualifications and duties, and how he should be chosen.—The Sabbath School Library.—The Teacher, his qualifications, aims, rewards.—Teachers' Meetings, Normal classes, etc.

Papers on the above subjects were read and the discussions were animated and interesting.

During the evening session a telegram of fraternal greeting was received from the S. S. Convention of Ontario and Quebec, then in session at Peterboro, Ont. A suitable reply was immediately sent.

On Friday the subjects were: "Reviews, and how to conduct them," "Bible reading," "Who should be scholars?" "Primary classes," "The International Lessons," "Encouragements in our work." After the paper on "Reviews," the Convention had the pleasure of listening to a review of last quarter's lessons, conducted by J. B. Calkin, Esq. The children acquitted themselves very creditably. The subjects and the golden texts for the quarter were recited with facility.

The paper on "Primary Classes," read by Miss Russell, was an admirable one, and the practical illustration of her method of teaching won the highest encomiums. The little ones answered brightly, promptly, and in some instances so characteristically as to be highly amusing.

The farewell meeting was held in the Baptist Church and was largely attended. Mr. S. Waddell exhibited formidable sheets of statistics which he thoughtfully did not inflict upon the Convention, but gave a summary of their contents. Out of about 600 schools to which circulars had been sent, only 165 had sent returns.

Considering the large number of

Sabbath Schools in the Provinces, a greater number of delegates might reasonably have been expected. Perhaps the lateness of the season accounts for this in a measure. Could not the Convention hold these meetings a month earlier, when the weather would be more agreeable and settled?

An important resolution was presented and passed on Friday evening which deserves publicity.

"Whereas, This Convention has learned that in connection with the railway system of the Maritime Provinces there is an open violation of the sanctity of the Lord's Day, and whereas such a state of things is dishonoring to the Lord of the Sabbath and highly injurious to the morals of society:

Therefore Resolved, That this Convention does hereby express its earnest protest against such Sabbath desecration, and the hope that the Government will as far as possible eradicate the evil.

It was resolved, That this Convention sympathize heartily with the Temperance movement, and would hereby express its appreciation of the Canada Temperance Act of 1878, and would urge upon Sabbath Schools throughout the Maritime Provinces the importance of earnest co-operation in endeavoring to carry out the provision of said Act.

Many Baptist Sabbath Schools were not represented at the Convention. The following resolution and recommendation may interest them and secure their co-operation:—

Whereas, The notice of the Convention was drawn to the fact that the 20th and 21st of Oct. have been set apart for Special Prayer for Sabbath Schools,

Therefore Resolved, That the delegates be requested to notify the schools with which they were connected of the following programme:—

- 1st. That a sermon for the young be preached by the pastor on Sunday morning the 20th inst.
- 2nd. That the usual S. S. services be shortened to allow time for a prayer-meeting especially for the School.
- 3rd. That private prayer be offered by all teachers on Monday morning between the hours of 7 and 8 for their classes.
- 4th. That the female teachers appoint an hour during Monday to hold a prayer-meeting together specially for their own scholars.

FRENCH MISSIONS.

Rev. M. Normondy, missionary to the Acadian French, came into Halifax on Saturday last on his way eastward. He preached in Granville Street Church on Sunday morning and in the North Church in the evening, and presented the claims of the French Mission. In the afternoon he visited the Tabernacle Sabbath School. It is his intention to remain in the city and vicinity during the present week. On Wednesday evening he will preach in the Dartmouth Baptist Church. He intends to meet with the Tabernacle congregation on Friday evening.

On Lord's Day next he purposes visiting St. Margaret's Bay Church in the morning, and the Hammond's Plains Baptist Church in the evening. He expects afterwards to visit the following places at the times stated, and will be glad if the brethren at the places named will make announcements and arrangements accordingly:

- Tuesday, Oct. 22nd.—Lower Stewiacke.
- Wednesday, 23rd.—Upper Stewiacke.
- Thursday, 24th.—Brookfield.
- Sunday, 27th.—Truro.
- " —Onslow, East & West.
- Monday, 28th.—Great Village.
- Tuesday, 29th.—Upper Londonderry.
- Wednesday, 30th.—Economy.
- Thursday, 31st.—Five Islands.
- Friday, November 1st.—Parrsboro.
- Sunday, 3rd.—Amherst.

EXUBERANT.—In the case of the Morris Street School the Wesleyan says:—

"In behalf of the entire population, especially the Methodists of Halifax, we tender sincere thanks to those members of the Board who gave their opinion and votes with so much decision on this case last week."

Our contemporary also makes a curious mistake. He supposes that the action of the Board was after his article appeared, whereas it was on the Thursday before—the day after the publication of the Messenger.

It was expected that the change of our Local Government would take place yesterday: The new ministers will probably be announced to-day. Mr. Holmes has been in town two or three days, and was probably quite prepared to name the persons to fill the several offices so soon as His Honor Governor Archibald should call on him so to do.

The 13th Annual Session of the Free Baptist Conference of Nova Scotia, was held at Canning, Cornwallis, commencing September 12th and ending the 16th.

The opening exercises were conducted by the retiring Moderator, Rev. F. Babcock.

There were 11 ministers and 2 licentiates present, with 14 other delegates.

Rev. W. C. Weston was elected Moderator; Rev. G. E. Sturgis, Assistant Co.; Rev. J. I. Porter, Clerk, and Rev. J. M. Lowden, Assistant Clerk.

Delegates from the Free-will Baptist bodies in the United States were present.

Prof. Foster presented the request of Dr. Cheney, President of Bates College, who had been on a visit to New Brunswick, viz.: That our Conference co-operate with all Free-will bodies in a convention, to be held A. D. 1880, the Centennial of the movement from which the denomination arose. A Mr. Millar who had been in connexion with the Methodist body was after examination ordained to the work of the ministry.

The next annual session is to be held at Beaver River, Yarmouth Co.

The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon says:—

"A blanket placed on the bed of a poor old woman would be a better ornament to a lady's character than all the lace a dukedom could purchase."

And, in referring to expensive dresses, adds:—

"The only excuse we can think of for such dressy women is that they think themselves very ugly."

His new volume of Spurgeon's Shilling Series is on "The Bible and the Newspaper." He shews that he does not read the newspapers and forget what is in them.

He refers to the recent panic about imitation diamonds, and Mr. Streeter's test about drawing across their surface a small steel file, by which an effect is produced as highly detrimental to the spurious as it is satisfactory to the genuine article, is employed, in one of the best chapters in the book, to draw attention to "several small steel files which the Lord uses," by which pretenders are discovered with their "imitation jewellery of false religion," as compared with the brightest flashes of true jewels under the sharpest cuttings and in the darkest nights.

Our brethren in New Brunswick have lost a good man by the death of Mr. EDMUND H. DUVAL who died on the 17th of September. Mr. Duval had been engaged in educational work in England for several years and in 1845 in answer to an application sent to the British and Foreign School Society was sent out for the purpose of introducing an improved system of schools in New Brunswick. Shortly after his arrival he commenced a Training School for Teachers and a model school for the practice of educational work. This was we believe the beginning of what has now developed into one of the most complete and thorough systems of public education.

Mr. Duval was a very useful member and deacon of Germain Street Baptist Church. He engaged in occasional preaching and Sabbath School work with intelligent zeal, and was known and highly esteemed by the denomination, especially in New Brunswick. Our acquaintance with Mr. Duval dates from a short time before his arrival in this country. We have had occasional opportunities from that time of meeting, and always with pleasure and profit. We feel in his removal the loss of a valued friend and shall miss his pleasant company at our annual gatherings. He is however, a friend "not lost, but gone before."

It appears from the report in the Wesleyan that at the recent Methodist Conference held at Montreal the Class meeting question,—Whether attendance at Class meeting should be made imperative on all members of the body, or whether absence therefrom and hostility thereto should in any case continue to be connived at,—was freely ventilated. The Halifax and Montreal Districts had asked of the General Conference for a definite test of church membership. The book of discipline, it appears, is very decided in demanding attendance at the Class meeting of all members, but it also appears that in practise a large number, amounting in some cases to more than half of the whole number of members, habitually neglect them. Several of the speakers

stated that some of those excluded for this cause were among the best of their membership. One of the lay members of the Conference said, "What he wanted was that the Methodist Church should be broad enough to receive Christians from other denominations."

Another one said:—
"From the three thousand churches in the land, only two small sections had come up asking for a change. Was this a sufficient indication of Methodist sentiment to justify this Conference in legislating on the Class-meeting question? He was astonished to see so many eminent ministers asking for the abolition of the Class-meeting test."

In speaking of his own class the same speaker said:—

"They had also persons meeting with them who were not Methodists, and who never became so. One of them was a Unitarian, who said he found something there he did not find anywhere else. The idea had got abroad that persons coming to the class must tell their experience. That was a pretty hard thing to do, for a good many persons who did not have any experience to tell."

It would therefore appear that the Class meeting test would be but an imperfect guarantee of Christian character.

After the long discussion the Conference rejected all the motions made by way of amendment, and adopted the report of the committee, and the class meeting test was left unchanged.

Notwithstanding this decision by the General Conference of the body the editor of the Wesleyan seems disposed to call in question the propriety of that decision.

It was proposed and the motion adopted that the next session of the General Conference be held at Halifax but on it being announced that it would cost \$5,000 more (we suppose for travelling expenses) than to hold it in a central city, it was reconsidered and decided to hold it in Kingston.

The Bishops of the English Church have been holding a grand session for several weeks at Lambeth, the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The result of the Conference is "A letter to the faithful in Christ Jesus," the principal points of which are for the consideration of clergymen of that communion. The questions between the Ritualistic party and the Low Churchmen are but lightly touched. The letter gives a condemnation of the attempts to introduce Auricular Confession and says that "no minister of the church is authorized to require from those who may resort to him to open their grief, a particular or detailed enumeration of all their sins, or to require private confession previous to receiving the Holy Communion; or to enjoin or even encourage the practise of habitual confession to a priest, &c." This letter, however, being without any ecclesiastical authority is not likely to deter those who have advanced Romewards, or in the other directions away from evangelical views of Bible truth and practise.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF HALIFAX.

The agent for this fine work of art, Mr. Joseph Warner, has just called on us, and informs us, that he has received nearly enough subscribers to ensure its publication. He needs about fifty more names. The parties having it in charge appear not only competent for the work, but prudent business men who will not fail in producing this valuable picture. We have seen the drawing, and on examining it with some care, we found it all that is promised. It really shews every house in the blocks we noticed. It is not a map, but answers the purpose of one and gives a distinct view of the city besides, as it would appear to a person looking down upon it from an elevated position about half a mile off H. M. Dockyard. Every street is outlined and each house shewn in its fair proportions. The design is excellent, and when engraved and printed, as the pictures of other cities have been done by the same parties, which Mr. W. has with him, it will be a very handsome ornament for hall, office, or room; and a picture that will be referred to continually by persons well acquainted with the city, and those who know less of the several localities, but wish to find them out.

It will be a picture measuring 3 ft. 4 in. by 16 inches, and will be ready early next summer.

The enterprise of the artists having this matter in hand deserves encouragement. They will supply full value for the price they ask—four dollars—for this historico-topographical picture of Halifax

THE PROSPECTS OF WAR WITH AFGHANISTAN.

The war cloud which has passed away from Turkey seems to have transferred itself to Afghanistan and threatens to involve Britain in active hostility with that power on the northern border of her Indian possessions. This is a sort of appendage of the hostile position she has occupied in relation to Russia. That power has been long suspected of having designs on British India, and this disturbance appears to be the result of the course pursued by Russia in relation to the Shere Ali the Amercer of that mountainous country.

The following from one of our exchanges gives as succinct an account of the quarrel and present position of Britain as we have seen:

"Shere Ali, the present ruler of the country, has no particular reason for having very friendly feelings towards the British. He is the son of Dost Mohammed whose name was so familiar in the old troubles of 1841-2. In general, however, he has maintained his position of neutrality with tolerable success till now. From his having received with great cordiality a Russian Embassy that was sent some short time ago to his Court at Cabul the British authorities both in India and London have thought that he had gone over to the side of his great northern neighbor.

Nervously anxious about what might be the effect of unbroken intercourse between the ruler of Afghanistan and his Russian guests, the Viceroy of India—of course with the sanction of the Home authorities lately appointed Sir Neville Chamberlain, who is Commander-in-Chief at Madras, to proceed as Ambassador to Cabul, and there do everything in his power to counteract the supposed influence of the Russians at that Court. Seeing that Shere Ali had not only received the Russian Ambassador, but had shown him special attention by giving certain grand entertainments in his honour, it was natural to have been expected that he would have replied to the letter sent him by the British Governor-General of India, requesting him to receive the Ambassador appointed, and to grant him all the privileges usually accorded to such personages. Instead of this he has allowed three letters on the subject to remain unanswered, as if he had studiously set himself to insult and defy the British authorities. Nothing remains, it has been thought, but to send the Ambassador forward in any case and at any risk. But instead of his going, as was proposed, accompanied by a small escort of 300 men, he is to be attended by a small army, but yet one thought perfectly sufficient either for peaceful display, or for warlike collision. To add to the complication, the officials who hold the Khyber Pass, so well known in the terrible retreat of 1842, have no doubt under the instructions of Shere Ali, refused a passage to the British Ambassador, and there remains apparently only the appeal to the sword. Russia professes to hold herself coldly neutral in the quarrel, but can get comparatively few people to believe her. Many seem to think that her aim is to get Britain so involved with Afghanistan that the annexation of that country to India will be regarded as necessary, and the British boundary be thereby weakened by being withdrawn from the protecting range of mountains which now guard the north-west. They say Russia feels that the further Britain is drawn from her base of operations so much the weaker she will become, and so much the more involved with weary, wasteful, distracting, and upon the whole, ignoble contests. Be that as it may, war seems all but inevitable, and inevitable because of the suspicions entertained by British statesmen of Russia's hostile machinations in Central Asia.

Shere Ali will be allowed another chance to atone by apology for his studied incivility. In any case the whole is but a poor commentary on the "peace with honour" jubilation of a month or two ago. Whether or not Russia has really been the effective agent in alienating Shere Ali from the British she will get credit for having done so all the same, while the occurrence will serve her purposes quite as well whether she planned it or not. British experience in that country from 1839 to 1842 was anything but encouraging. Whether the issue in this case will be any more so remains to be seen.

The Wesleyan in an Editorial note of last week, says:—
"We have been asked, by correspondence, to state whether the harsh terms in which Mr. Currie is publicly assailed, have any justification in fact, as, from the letters and replies, many are unable to judge for themselves. We can only reply that, were the charges alluded to made against ourselves we would meet them definitely and decisively, nor have we any reason to believe that it is not Mr. Currie's intention to do so. That he once intimated his purpose of replying, we have already stated. Beyond this we have no further knowledge."

Rev. John Williams has just recovered from a severe attack of his typhus fever. We are glad to hear of his partial recovery and trust he may soon be fully restored.