

For the Christian Messenger. Theology at Wolfville.

No. 5.

The arguments, if such they may be called, against providing adequate Theological instruction at Wolfville for the rising ministry of these provinces, instead of leaving our young men to seek such instruction abroad, or go without it, will be considered in subsequent papers. For the present I confine myself to the task of adducing yet other arguments in favor of this provision.

3. It might be shown, in the third place, that hereby would be secured the largest development of denominational strength. And the increase of strength to do good is a most desirable object. To make the one talent two and the two ten in order to greater usefulness, should be the aim and endeavor of all christians, and christian churches; for thus only can they properly serve the purpose for which the Master condescends to employ them. But on what principle, it may be asked, can we become denominationally stronger, produce a larger number of ministers, and so enter more largely and efficiently into the work which demands our attention, with a Theological school at Wolfville than without one? On the principle, I reply, that strength is developed by exercise,—a principle holding true in the intellectual and moral worlds as well as in the physical. The smith's arm, the scholar's memory, the poet's fancy, the philanthropist's benevolence, are all strengthened by use. And so of those energies and forces, material or moral, which constitute the power and means of usefulness of a church or denomination. It is by observing this universal law, and acting in harmony with it, that individuals and societies make the most of their resources and opportunities. Thus in the matter of Foreign Missions, our people believing that the raising of more means, the sending out of more men, the performance of a larger amount of missionary labor, and the development of a more enthusiastic missionary spirit would result from complete reliance on their own energies, resolved to sever their connection with the American Missionary Union, and take the control as well as the support of their missionary operations into their own hands. Previously to this they might furnish men and provide the means of their support, but could have no voice in directing their labors. The arrangement gave them, in fact, no missionaries whom they could call their own. The relation they sustained to their American brethren was a dependent one,—a relation imposing little responsibility, and demanding little exertion. The energies of the denomination consequently lay dormant, for there was nothing to awaken them and call them forth.

It came finally to be clearly seen that for the Baptists of these provinces this was anything but the wisest foreign missionary policy; that if the strength of the body was not more fully exercised in this direction, so far from increasing it would diminish, or become weakness itself, like an imprisoned limb. Hence the ground of independence was taken; the denomination resolved to stand upon its own feet, to engage in an enterprise demanding greater efforts and promising better results. A mission was planted among the Telooquoos.

But the same arguments which may be advanced for independence in our Foreign Missionary affairs, seem also to justify independence in our educational. If the cause of missions is better served, and if it is every way better for our people themselves to take the sustentation and control of their missionary operations into their own hands, why would not this also hold true of their educational operations? It may be said in reply, that it does indeed, hold true of our educational affairs, so far as the higher secular or general education is concerned. We can no more afford to let our brethren in the United States take charge of this for us than we can afford to put our Foreign Missionary affairs into their hands. But why discriminate, as some are wont to do, between higher general education—the education that is needed to fit our young men for the different professions of secular life, and the Theological training that is needed to qualify them for the ministry? The education that is required for the more ordinary occupations of life is provided, as indeed it ought to be, by the state. Liberal provision is made by our different provincial governments for common schools and county academies. For the training that is needed beyond what these can give, why not let our youth go abroad? Why spend over a hundred thousand dollars, and put up ex-

pensive buildings, and incur a heavy debt, for the sake of having a College on our own soil, when we can have one for nothing at Colby or Brown? Because, as every reflective mind must perceive, by having a college of our own, we shall more largely and healthily develop the educational spirit among us, shall better meet the educational wants of our common country, and act more consistently with the respect which we owe ourselves as an independent, progressive people.

The truth is, if the necessity were laid upon us of having an efficient Theological school or the College proper, but not both, it would be better to choose the former; but happily no such necessity exists: we may have both these institutions, and it is better for each that they should stand side by side and flourish together.

Our brethren of the other denominations understand this matter well, and in their several Theological schools are pursuing the path and policy of wisdom. The Methodists might send their young men to Boston, where they might not only sit at the feet of able Theological instructors, but—a thing of immense importance in the minds of some—come into contact with Boston thought as well; but they prefer to send them to Sackville.

The Presbyterians might send theirs to Princeton, where instruction is dispensed by such giants as Hodge and McCosh, but they think it better to maintain a Theological Hall for them in Halifax.

In the area embraced by the Convention there are now about 35,000 Baptist Church members, representing a Baptist population four or five times as large. This population is thought by some persons to be too small to warrant the existence of a Theological school for itself alone. It is often taken for granted that the largely endowed, largely officered, and largely patronized Theological schools and Colleges necessarily do the best work and produce the best men. But it is a great mistake, as I will show hereafter.

We have already population enough and resources enough, for an efficient Theological school of our own. But we expect that our numbers and resources will grow. In fifty-years hence our present church membership ought to be more than doubled, with a corresponding increase of Baptist population generally. What a spectacle should we then exhibit, dependently looking for Theological instruction to New England! Even as a loyal Canadian, to say nothing more, my head and heart rebel against it.

D. M. WELTON.

For the Christian Messenger. Church Polity.

No. VIII.

ADMISSION OF MEMBERS.

The contrast between Christian Churches in the first century, and those in the nineteenth, in the matter of form, is very affecting. Take for instance the mode of admission to membership. In the first century, all that was requisite was for the candidate to "come out from among them," make a declaration of discipleship, be baptized, and then to take his or her place among the members. There were no rules, or orders, or ceremonies to be observed on the occasion. What a sublime simplicity appears in the evangelical narrative! "The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved" (Acts. ii. 47.) It was God's work, and the fruits were manifest, giving joy to all. But in many modern churches there is no joy. The ministers and elders undertake the whole case of examining candidates. The church has nothing to do with it, and so the benefits of sympathy and union are wanting.

Cases of deception were very rare in the early church. Ananias and Sapphira at Jerusalem, and Simon Magus at Samaria were the only recorded instances for a long period. Many of the conversions were instantaneous, while the change wrought in the individuals was literally a moral revolution. Yesterday they were wallowing in all uncleanness; to-day they are "washed, and sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Baptist Churches profess to be societies of spiritual persons. They plead for a regenerated church membership. It may be asked, what course should be adopted to secure that blessing? Some are satisfied with the candidates' own avowal of the change that has been experienced, and so proceed to baptism immediately; others think that there should be some delay, in order to give

time for enquiry and examination, and there is frequently an interval of a month or more between the application and the reception into the church. As none of us have the gift of "discerning of Spirits," it is obvious that care should be taken to prevent the admission of unqualified persons. The instances so often pleaded in favour of promptitude of admission (such as, the Ethiopian eunuch, the Jailer and his family at Philippi, and the Samaritans) cannot be fairly adduced till similarity of circumstances can be proved, which is out of the question.

The problem is how to prevent the admission of members from falling below the level of genuine conversion. No uniform rule can be prescribed, and sometimes all rules will fail. Those churches are most likely to be exempt from disappointment in which special pains are taken on the side of carefulness. Whether the candidate shall be required to speak personally before the church or whether friendly conversation with an examining committee, affirmed by a written statement, shall be deemed sufficient, is comparatively unimportant. The question is, Has the candidate given himself or herself "to the Lord?" That must be answered, to the satisfaction of the church, before the baptism and the fellowship.

I am apprehensive that if a judicious and scriptural revision of the list of members were undertaken, it would be found that our churches lack sufficient care in this matter. And I would respectfully and affectionately suggest to the Pastors the importance of close examination of the members of the churches (all of them) at least once a year, recording the results in some suitable memorial, for future use. See Acts xx. 28; 1 Peter v. 3, 4.

J. M. CRAMP.

For the Christian Messenger.

"His Appearing and His Kingdom." 2 Tim. iv. 1.

"When from any cause some vital doctrine of God's Word has fallen into neglect or suffered contradiction and reproach, it becomes the serious duty of those who hold it, not only strongly and constantly to re-affirm it, but to seek by all means in their power to bring back the Lord's people to its apprehension and acceptance. The precious doctrine of Christ's second personal appearing has, we are constrained to believe, long lain under such neglect and misapprehension.

In the Word of God we find it holding a most conspicuous place. It is there strongly and constantly emphasized as a personal and imminent event, the great object of the Church's hope, the powerful motive to holy living and watchful service, the inspiring ground of confidence amid the sorrows and sins of the present evil world, and the event that is to end the reign of Death, cast down Satan from his throne, and establish the kingdom of God on earth. So vital indeed, is this truth represented to be that the denial of it is pointed out as one of the conspicuous signs of the apostasy of the last days."

The foregoing are the opening paragraphs of the "Call" issued last summer for a conference upon the subject of "the personal pre-Millennial advent of Jesus Christ, which conference was held at New York at the end of October last.

Since that time, more than before, many writers and speakers have found occasion to address the people upon the subject, deeming it incumbent upon them to oppose the views held and promulgated by the pre-Millennialists, as erroneous, unscriptural and practically antagonistic to the growth of true religion. In these Provinces, both the Messenger and Visitor have editorially frowned upon the pre-Millennial doctrine; the latter has published several able articles by Dr. Heman Lincoln, arguing against the creed of the Prophetic Conference; the columns of the former have contained a series from the still vigorous pen of Dr. Cramp, and another from that ever-ready writer, Rev. John Brown. Besides this, the pastor of many a church has raised his voice in the pulpit to teach his hearers to believe that the Lord will not come to raise His Church to glory, and to judge the world, until after the conversion of the world and the Millennial period of peace.

Now I believe and propose to show that the doctrine thus condemned is not only the doctrine of Scripture, but that of the Church of Christ in all ages. I mean to say that the belief in the "visible and external sovereignty of Christ upon earth" for a thousand years, after the resurrection of the departed saints and the gathering together of all

his elect in glory, being clearly taught in Scripture, has been cherished by the better part of the Christian world ever since the days of the Apostles. If such be really the case, there are few of the readers of the Messenger who would not wish to know it.

With your permission I shall take up the subject briefly, next week, and continue in a few short letters presenting the testimony of eminent Christian authors upon this important truth.

LUKE.

June 22, 1879.

For the Christian Messenger.

Additional Remarks on Ecclesiastes, iii. 2.

My Dear Sir,—

Our venerable friend, Rev. Dr. Tupper, has favoured your readers with some observations on Eccles. iii. 2. I beg to offer a few additional remarks, by way of supplement.

The Book of Ecclesiastes is the most difficult Book in the Bible. "I must say," observes Dr. Adam Clarke, "the language and style puzzle me not a little." The critics differ greatly in their opinions respecting it. Some think that it was written by Solomon, others, that it was the work of a Jew who lived after the Babylonish Captivity, and who published it in the name of Solomon to give popularity. Granting that it was written by Solomon, it seems to be an autobiographical tract containing an account of the doubts and difficulties which perplexed him at one time of his life, and involved him in the mazes of scepticism. Whether he was ever fully restored is hard to prove.

Joseph Gurney, Esq., Editor of the "Revised Bible," proposes to insert the word "eternity," instead of the word "world," which word according to Canon Cook, Editor of the "Bible Commentary," assigns to the Hebrew word a sense which it never bears in the language of the Old Testament, although found in Rabbinical Hebrew.

Canon Cook translates the clause thus:—"Also he hath set eternity in their heart." This is explained by Delitisch in the following words:—"God has placed in the inborn constitution of man the capability of conceiving of eternity, the struggle to comprehend the everlasting, the longing after eternal life." It is a merciful arrangement that the Word of God is for the most part clear, and that those who think as they read, and "compare spiritual things with spiritual," and seek the aid of the Great Enlightener, find difficulties vanish before them. "The meek will He guide in judgement."

C.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., July 9, 1879.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

Our Baptist brethren on P. E. Island are not the most numerous of the religious bodies, but in some respects are more active and enterprising, and certainly do more towards the support of our institutions in proportion to their numerical strength than many of the churches of the larger provinces. A visit to the Island Association has always been pleasant and inspiring. One comes back from such a visit, feeling that the tie which unites us is more than a mere formal recognition of agreement in sentiment that exists between them and the N. S. brethren—that it is a real fellowship of kindred minds—and that one heart and soul animates us in Christian work. All that constitutes true Christian union binds us together, so that no opportunity of a renewal will in future be allowed to pass unimproved.

With this feeling we left Halifax on Friday last, and reaching the Depot, found Rev. J. W. Manning, and Rev. S. B. Kempton, on the same expedition with us, ready to convey the greetings of the N. S. Central Association to our P. E. I. brethren, in Association assembled. Arriving at Truro, Bro. W. Cummings made no small addition to our band. On to New Glasgow, Rev. G. N. Ballentine enlarges our company.

At Pictou Landing, the good steamer St. Lawrence with her excellent appointments was in waiting, and in a few minutes we were plowing the Straits of Northumberland. But after about an hour or so a change comes over the heavens. Suddenly it becomes about 30 degrees colder, the wind blows a stiff breeze, rain falls in torrents, and the waves dash against the steamer making a little more than an agreeable motion. Still we are only delayed about an hour

longer than usual in the time of our arrival. At Charlottetown the city pastor is on hand with kind invitations from the brethren to abide till the morning.

On Saturday morning we were all ready to start, when we learned that by some error in mooring the steamer "Southport," by which we expected to reach West River, she had filled with water and had become partially submerged. We had therefore to get carriages and drive round about 12 miles. A beautiful drive, through a lovely country of land and water alternating every mile or so. The sun bright and cheering but no dust.

We reached the place of meeting between 11 and 12 o'clock, and found that brethren had elected Rev. E. F. Fosbary, Moderator; Rev. J. B. Woodland, Clerk; and M. G. McLeod, Assistant Clerk; James DesBrisay, Esq., Treasurer; J. S. Brown, Ass't. Treasurer.

Brethren Simpson, Selden and — were requested to read the letters. These shewed varied experience and gave an addition by baptism of 81. Two letters were yet to be read. After the letters and some routine business, reference was made to the work of God on the island and in the other provinces, and suitable exhortations were given by several brethren.

THE WESTERN NEW BRUNSWICK BAPTIST ASSOCIATION held its 32nd Annual Session on Tuesday, the 24th ult. and following days, at Rockland, Carleton County. The Rev. J. G. Harvey was elected Moderator, Rev. J. T. Eaton, Clerk. The Associational Sermon was preached by Rev. Joshua T. Eaton from Colossians iii. 3. Theme, "the twofold aspect of the Christian life."

By a mistake in the last year's Minutes with reference to the brother appointed to write the Circular Letter, none was prepared.

The Committee on Denominational Literature consisting of Brethren Hickson, Hopper, Cahill, Munro, May and Hall tendered their resignation, and a new Committee was appointed consisting of Brethren G. Armstrong, T. Todd, B. N. Hughes, J. March, and T. L. Hay.

A spirited and enthusiastic discussion of Home Missions was held on Wednesday evening. Rev. Isa. Wallace gave a deeply interesting account of his work. Other speeches followed from Brethren Cahill, Todd, Armstrong, Hayward, Coy, Young, Hamah, and Hughes. In the Report on the subject the Committee say,

1. That this Association express its judgment on the question of union in Home Mission work in the Maritime Provinces, referred to in the Annual Report of the Missionary Board, so that the Society at its Annual Meeting next month may, in deciding the matter, act with a knowledge of the view entertained by this body on that subject.

2. Notice the vast extent of field open to and requiring Home Mission labors; it includes a large portion of the Province in which our lot is cast. The Society has no Missionary in Madawaska, Victoria, Carleton, Restigouche, Gloucester, and Kent Counties, while Missionary work is needed in many parts of the following Counties: Charlote, Kings, Queens, St. John, Westmorland, Albert, Northumberland, Sunbury, and York. The ministers and churches in Carleton and York have earnestly carried on and sustained a missionary in each of those Counties through local organizations.

3. Necessity exists for a liberal supply of funds to carry on evangelistic work vigorously in this large and inviting field. So extensive and promising a field for usefulness and growth demands and should receive, proper care and cultivation from us.

4. By the total inadequacy of the funds contributed by the churches to meet the expenditure, even on the present contracted scale of our Home Missionary operations, a considerable amount is yet due to our missionaries for work performed in the year just closed.

5. The amount received by the Board during the year was only \$667.69; and of this meagre sum \$387.50 came from the Trustees of the Estabrooks Fund, leaving the very small sum of \$280.19 as the contribution to our Home Mission by the churches of our two Associations in this Province.

A resolution was adopted recommending that the churches be cautioned against persons claiming to be Baptist Ministers who are not furnished with credentials.

One new church was received into the Association.

The Report on Education commends the movement to review the Theological Department in Acadia College, and recommends students for the ministry to take advantage of