

For the Christian Messenger. The Convention Scheme.

Mr. Editor,—

As a people, we Baptists live in the atmosphere of great expectation. Votes at Associations and Conventions projecting great movements, are proposed and carried with eager unanimity. Often it is feared, to remain inactive on the records of the meeting where passed. A few years since a vote was carried to raise in all our churches twenty-five cents per member to sustain (or endow) Acadia College. It might have been acted upon by a few churches, but they were so few, as to let the matter sink almost unnoticed. Some four years ago at Sackville with enthusiastic approval, a vote at the Convention made it almost certain that one hundred thousand dollars endowment would be raised for Acadia College. Time has shown that the treasury of that Institution has received but little benefit from the vote so heartily given. At Truro, at the last Convention, with equal haste and approval, the vote to raise thirty-six thousand dollars, from the churches of the Lower Provinces, equal to a dollar for each member, was passed. The enquiry I would now make is, Will this prove like other similar resolutions, a mere record on the Minutes of the Convention? I will answer my own question and say, I fear it will. The reason is, that it was a hastily conceived and too hastily adopted scheme. Had the representatives of the churches present gone over, each the church he was a delegate from, and considered whether it was probable it would raise the proportion suggested, I think there would have been less unanimity in the vote, as, whilst so many churches by their representatives adopted the scheme; we hear of but a very few being at work carrying it into effect. I do not wonder at it, as on a calm review it would be found that the sum aimed at is an impossibility, I mean as an ordinary measure to sustain our benevolent operations. I say impossible in the sense that is usually applied, that is, the churches as a whole, are scattered and poor, the most of which, are struggling to sustain a pastor with a small salary, the remainder trying to raise funds to procure preaching a part of the time. To which add sustaining Sabbath Schools, building churches, parsonages, &c.—These claims are first and permanent ones, after which it is not to be supposed that the sum voted can be raised. Then a subsequent vote of ten cents per member was passed to be something in addition, to which, may be added the contribution by the Women's Aid Societies, to which no reference is made. The scheme may be a wise one, still it was a measure of too much importance to be passed so hastily as to leave it undecided by those present whether the last two items were to be included in the dollar per member or not. There is nothing which comes before our Convention of more importance than its financial matters, and time and investigation should be given to every measure brought forward in connection therewith. The Minister of Finance at Ottawa bases his prospects of future revenue on the experience of the past. We could do no better than pursue the same course; and what has been our past history in the contributions from our churches? The Convention accounts for 1879, show for the five objects named in the Convention Scheme the amount received of \$5,848. New Brunswick Home Missions is not reported, assuming it to be \$1,152, we have a total of \$7000 in which is included receipts of Women's Aid Society \$1,690. This is less than twenty cents a member. Now was it reasonable to suppose that some sudden transition of the churches' financial standing would result in such a startling advance? I think that the records of no denomination of Christians will record a sum equal to a dollar a member for their ordinary measures of Christian benevolence. We needed no new scheme proposed, but we did need plans and stimulating powers brought to bear on our churches to work out those we already have. The Union Society, so-called, embraced all the objects now contemplated, only it had this advantage; it allowed contributors to select one, two or more of the objects presented; whilst the present plan gives no option, as the funds are to be rigidly divided according to a fixed rule. The effect of fixing a certain amount as standard for contributions, will likely have two injurious effects. First, it will cause the few churches, able to do more, to remain satisfied in contributing its quota of a dollar per member. Sec-

only, the large number of churches unable to rise to so high a standard, will pause and do nothing as they consider that a sum no less than this is expected of them. It is not said in the Convention Scheme that each church should contribute in this measure, but somehow this is the impression and I fear results will be unfavorable in consequence.

But money is wanted, and how shall it be obtained. The question is easier put than answered, yet it is not too late to suggest to the churches to go to work and to raise all they possibly can; and if not a dollar a member, let it be fifty, twenty-five, or five cents, a vigorous effort, reaching to each member of a church and congregation even in small sums will accomplish a great deal. In this way I think our contributions might be brought up to ten or twelve thousand dollars, but it is unreasonable to hope for the thirty-six thousand dollars as voted at the Convention.

J. W. BARSS.

Wolfville, March 16 1880.

For the Christian Messenger. Our Home Missions.

Dear Brethren,—

The Board wishes to call attention to the fact that the estimated expenditure for Home Mission work in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and P. E. Island, for the year ending July 31st, 1880, was \$7000.00. It may be possible to keep the expenditure as low as \$6000.00, but promises already made forbid the hope of further reduction.

Seven months of the year have now passed and the total receipts to March 8th, 1880 was \$1023.11. We shall need therefore, nearly \$5000.00 between this and the end of July to enable us to close the year free from debt.

In behalf of the Board.

A. COBURN, Cor. Sec'y.

Hebron, March, 12, 1880.

For the Christian Messenger. SANDY COVE, 3rd Feb., 1880.

Dear Brother,—

If you will turn to the Christian Messenger of April 26th, 1871, you will find the following notice of a baptism performed at Sandy Cove, by the Rev. Mr. Brown, Wesleyan.

"The Rev. Mr. Brown, Wesleyan, of Digby, baptized four persons in the waters of our beautiful cove yesterday, and put some water on the heads of two others.—Query. Does the Rev. Mr. B. believe in the 'one baptism'?"

I am, as ever,

Faithfully yours,

J. C. MORSE.

Sandy Cove, April 21st, 1871.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., March 24, 1880.

DEATH OF THE REV. A. J. STEVENS.

Soon after we had gone to press last week we received the sad intelligence that brother Stevens had departed this life on Monday evening. The paragraph in the MESSENGER respecting our brother's illness will have prepared our readers somewhat for this announcement.

Although Brother Stevens had been so short a time in the ministry he has left an excellent record. He was widely and favorably known in this province, having frequently preached in Halifax and other places. His entrance upon the ministry was under circumstances of deep interest, his aged father Rev. James Stevens officiating at his ordination. It was then supposed that the father must in the nature of things before very long be called away to his rest, and it seemed that the father's mantle was already falling upon the son, and it was hoped that he too might be spared many years—even to old age to serve the Master, who had been so long the father's strength and support. But the ways of God are not as the ways of men, and we have but to wait in silence the wonderful development of His inscrutable wisdom and love, believing that His designs are for the benefit, present and eternal, of all concerned. Where we cannot trace the marks of his infinite goodness and grace, we must trust and patiently wait for Him to make it plain.

Mr. Stevens received the full course of study in Arts at Acadia College and graduated in the Class of 1875. After his ordination at Kentville he went to Newton for Theological studies. In June, 1878 he entered upon his pastoral work at Fredericton and continued to grow in the esteem and affection of

the people. He had already received numerous seals to his ministry, whilst others are prepared and now waiting to follow the Saviour's command and example, having been led to trust in Him as their Lord and Master by their now departed friend and minister. He was but thirty-one years of age and one of a number of able young men whom we might be led to say could not be spared from the service of the church upon earth. Yet our wisdom is but foolishness, and He who gave our brother and made him what he was can supply all deficiencies and make up the loss sustained by the church and by the relatives now so sorely bereaved.

He leaves a young widow, daughter of Henry Lovett, Esq., of Kentville, and one child.

It seems somewhat remarkable that the last sermon Mr. Stevens preached was from the text, "To die is gain." How solemn and forcible and yet how full of consolation must the recollection of that discourse be to those who heard it. To know that with so much around him to make life desirable in the highest sense of those words, yet to die would be gain, will shed a halo around the remembrance of him that will greatly comfort the surviving friends. To the aged and highly esteemed father it will be a severe trial. We tender our warmest sympathy and condolence.

The following letter from Rev. Geo. Armstrong may appropriately follow this notice:

St. John, N. B., March 18, 1880.

Dear Brother,—

You doubtless have heard ere this that Rev. A. J. Stevens, the beloved pastor of the Baptist Church at Fredericton, has departed this life. The sad event occurred on the 15th inst. His illness was of short duration and his demise unexpected. But his work is done; he has entered on a new and glorious career of knowledge and service to God and the Lamb in a sphere infinitely higher and more favorable to progress and perfection than can be obtained in this poor, pent-up life. His church, his companion, parents and friends will greatly miss and mourn him; but God is wise, holy and merciful; and however mysterious and inscrutable his operations are, we are assured His Providence never fails to carry out his purposes of love and mercy in the best possible way, so that all things work together for good to those who love and trust Him.

The remains of Brother Stevens arrived in this city per train from Fredericton, and will leave in the morning for Wolfville by the Intercolonial Railway.

Mrs. Stevens, accompanied by her father, Brother Lovett, of Kentville and Miss Lovett, travels homeward by the same train, with a burden of sorrow upon their hearts under so heavy a bereavement, but yet comforted by faith in Christ and another life, the memory of departed worth, and the recollection of the great Christian kindness and regard exhibited by the Baptist Church of Fredericton and the people generally of all denominations in that city. It is believed that church stands pre-eminent among the churches in these Provinces for the love and care it has shown to its pastors. To-night in company with my friend Rev. G. M. W. Carey, pastor of Germain Street Baptist Church, I called upon Brother Lovett and his children, and was glad to witness their Christian composure, and the spirit of hope and confidence that inspired them amid their trials. They have the sympathy and prayers of thousands; and above all the care and good-will of God.

I do console with my venerable bro. Rev. James Stevens and his companion, in the great and sad bereavement which has come upon them in the death of the faithful and beloved pastor of the Fredericton Church; and pray that they may be sustained and comforted in this time of sorrow and loss.

Yours truly, GEO. ARMSTRONG.

The Funeral of Mr. Stevens took place at Wolfville, on Saturday last, immediately after the arrival of the morning train from Halifax. A procession formed at the station and went to the cemetery in the following order:

- Students of Acadia College.
Officiating Clergymen.
Six Theological Students—(acting as pall-bearers).
HEARSE.
Mourners.
Faculty of Acadia College.
Friends.

The services at the grave were conducted by the Rev. S. W. deBlois and Rev. Isa. Wallace, the latter offering a very earnest and appropriate prayer. On Tuesday morning a funeral sermon was preached by Mr. deBlois to a very large and solemn congregation, from Psalm xxxix. 5. Rev. Mr. Williams assisted in the services. The aged father and the widow of the deceased were present, besides a large number of other relatives.

At the close of the discourse, Mr. deBlois briefly reviewed the life and career of the dear brother so myster-

iously called away, and paid a feeling tribute to his many virtues and excellencies as a Christian minister.

Brother Durkee's letter, calling in question our sentiments in College matters, naturally tends to foster two fundamental errors:—(1) that Legislative grants of money to Acadia College, involve and sanction the principle of Church and State; and (2) that the seeking and obtaining of the charter from the Legislature mean no accountability to the State. Let us see. To make it possible to have Church and State connexion, there must be the two parties, namely, the Church and the State, brought into said relation. Now, in the matter of Acadia College and Government grants, there is, beyond doubt, the State, on one side, but, on the other side, there is no church; and consequently no connexion between the two: and, for our part, we are glad there is no church possessing the college, to be brought into such unholy partnership. Our pleasure arises, not from the fact alone that there is no church in the business to be entrapped or inveigled into a wicked connexion with the State; but our pleasure is from a deeper, a more spiritual source. It is this—New Testament—Baptist—churches have neither direction nor permission, in their great guide book—the New Testament—to engage in the secular enterprise of carrying on Higher Education. How could Baptist churches possessing and conducting a College, hold up their heads in this day, to rebuke other churches for doctrines and deeds, for which no authority is found in the Book of instructions given by the Master. The Baptist Churches of these Maritime Provinces, as such, do neither own nor conduct Acadia College. They never asked for a charter, they never got one; they never asked for grants of money from the Legislature; they never received grants. Our fathers were not blind. They did not plunge the churches into secular work; they did not bind them in alliance with the State.

Men, professing the Baptist faith, united together and asked for moneys and a college charter, for the purpose of advancing higher education. They might have reclaimed themselves into a company to reform unreclaimed lands from the tide of Minas Basin, and the Legislature might have given them incorporation and money for the purpose, if it could have been shown that the enterprise would be a public benefit, but who would ever have dreamed of there being Church and State connexion in this undertaking? The Mannings, Hardings, Dimocks, Chipmans, Ainsleys, Crawleys, and Johnstons did not degrade the Baptist Churches into a worldly undertaking; they did not tether them to the State. They knew the meaning of Church and State, they had eyes for this evil, as sharp as those who fancy they discern this iniquity in our work of college education.

Further, Legislative grants of money do not imply governmental supervision of its expenditure and "control" of the institution which it fosters. The parties receiving the money, may agree to do certain work with it, and the Legislature may require proof that said work is done, according to agreement. This is good faith, this is justice, and it is true in reference to subsidized Railway Companies as well as Colleges.

THE CHARTER QUESTION.

A company of men asked the Legislature for a charter for Acadia College. They got it. They said by implication in their prayer to the Legislature. Give us the right to grant degrees in the several Faculties, and we will, by training fit young men for the honors; "and, by the powers you vest in us, we will then confer honours upon them." On our part, said the Legislature, "We will clothe you with this authority." Now it is implied that either (1) the College shall hold itself bound to give evidence that its part of the contract is at all times carried out, or that (2) it is inflexible, or that (3) it has the right to break faith with the State, and the State has no right to remonstrate.

The College has, in fact, asked the Legislature that its graduates shall stand on a level with the graduates of the Government University—Halifax University—in the matter of license for High Schools and Academies. That is granted. Suppose Acadia College were a "Dotheboy's Hall," would the Legislature have no right to enquire, by commission or otherwise, into this high handed work of ignoring obligations, and of imposing upon the Legislature and so upon the public.

Let a company get a charter to con-

duct a Steam Ferry; let them use old boats and wheezy cast-off boilers, let there be frequent loss of life and property, and said company will soon find that it is not only accountable to the Courts of Law, but to the Legislature which would have an undoubted right to take away its charter, as an individual would have the right to bring the nuisance to an end by an injunction from the courts.

The people associated together in conducting the Institutions at Horton, we are assured will not ignore their obligations to the body of law-makers and charter-donors, i. e. the public; neither need they be frightened with the false alarm of Church and State, when there is no Church in the business. They may decide as a matter of expediency to decline to take money from the Legislature; but they will regard themselves entitled to it as long as it is given to the other bodies; and further they will always, we believe, hold the right to take that part of the grant to the Institutions at Wolfville given in lieu of a grant to sustain an Academy in Kings County, as they give in the other counties of the province. But we trust both in respect for the memory of the pious dead, and for the honour of all the churches, and also in the interests of truth, that the cry of Church and State will not be again heard, for we repel, with all our hearts, the imputation, that our Baptist Churches as such in these Maritime provinces are now or ever were in any connexion whatever with the State; or that they are engaged in work of a secular character.

Our readers will see, that the clearing away of the fog and fiction from this all important subject is a sufficient apology for giving so much space to the matter as we have now done.

We have not had our esteemed friend—brother Durkee alone in our mind, while discussing this subject; but we remember various occasions when the alarm of Church and State was heard.

We are not strangers to this subject. A part of our life was spent where its hateful effects were patent on all hands. We consequently early learned to oppose it, and withstand it as a giant foe to both civil and religious liberty.

QUESTIONS AND REPLIES.

- 1. When one or more brethren accuse another before the church, (without previously labouring with him,) and fail to substantiate the charges preferred, the church fully exonerates the accused. What is the duty of the accusers, to both the church and the one wrongly charged?
2. In a matter of discipline is a church justified in expelling a member (not for immorality) when the vote stands as follows:
11 For expulsion.
6 Against do.
About 40 Not voting.
57 to 75 total number present.

1. We think the accuser should acknowledge his error in bringing the matter into the church prematurely, and especially offer an apology to the brother accused for not going first to him about the matter. The accused brother should thank the brother who brought the accusation, for affording him an opportunity of removing the wrong impression from the minds of his brethren, and it may be of establishing his innocence. All should rejoice to find that things are not so bad as it was supposed, or feared they were, and a full and free forgiveness should be exercised on all hands, so that peace and love may again prevail.

2. It is usual we believe to take the silent votes as assenting to the motion unless they subsequently vote against it. This, however in some cases might be very unsatisfactory, and would indicate that there remained some indecision, which a re-consideration of the vote might remove. The reception of a member must be by a unanimous vote, and the expulsion should, if possible, be by a similar vote.

The departments of a newspaper whether secular or religious are now-a-days pretty well defined and understood by the intelligent public. Whatever appears as editorial writing it is evident the responsible editor holds himself bound to sustain and defend, as much as if his proper name were appended to it. He may not himself write all that appears in the editorial columns. Indeed every paper of anything like a representative standing is understood to have others associated with the editor, so that in his writing he is entitled to use the plural "we" for himself and those he represents. Any criticisms on editorial writing should therefore be divested of personality—at least, other than the responsible one. Whilst some may fau-