

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXV....No. 7.

Poetry.

Wait.

Christian, wait—the nations tremble,
Shaken to their utmost bound—
Kings their terror ill dissemble,
Dread and panic spread around;
There's no prophet now to call us
To behold, in vision true,
What events will soon befall us—
Wait, and see what God will do.

Christian, wait—the muttering thunder
Gathering on the sky afar
Need not bring dismay or wonder,
Doubt, or fright, or pallid fear;
Stay your soul on his protection,
He will guide you safely through—
Banish every sad dejection,
Wait, and see what God will do.

Christian, wait—Jehovah reigneth
On His throne of mercy still,
And the wrath of man restraineth
When it worketh not His will;
Be assured, the future story
Of the days now dark to you
Will record His work of glory—
Wait, and see what God will do.

Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD IV.

From A. D. 1809 to A. D. 1821.

LETTER XXVII.

THE LOST ASSOCIATION. THE ASSOCIATIONS OF 1819, 1820, AND 1821. STATISTICAL TABLES.

My Young Friend,

In my twentieth letter I stated that I had not been able to ascertain the place at which the Association was held in 1806. Brother B. C. Manning of Bridgewater subsequently placed in my hands a journal and some letters written by James Manning, his father. One of the letters is dated "Chester, June 24th, 1806." It is addressed to his wife. He says:—"The Lord has conducted my steps to this place for good. I have no doubt in my mind but our coming to Chester will be had in eternal remembrance. There was a church-meeting on Saturday, and the Lord was very present; with many it was a time of refreshment from the glorious Lord. Likewise on the Lord's day;—I think it was one of the best Sabbaths I ever saw in my life. Mr. Chipman preached in the forenoon, and I strove to preach in the afternoon. Mr. Chipman spoke very well. The people were much affected, and in the intermission, the saints of God, at least come of them, felt their souls delivered. You could scarce see a dry eye in all the house. And so in the afternoon, and in sacrament time. The people staid almost till night at the meeting-house. It was hard to get any sleep at all. On Monday a very great audience attended, and the people were very solemn, but there was no great appearance of any thing very extraordinary. But after business was over the fire broke out on every side. Saints rejoiced indeed, and poor sinners were all in tears; and some backsliders [were seen] with sorrow and joy interwoven in their countenances. I think it was one of the best days I ever saw. * * They kept it up till night."

You observe that the word "Association" is not used. But from the description of the exercises, and the reference to "business" I inferred that the lost meeting was found, and wrote to Daniel Dimock Esq. of Chester, requesting him to make inquiries respecting it. He replied as follows:—"I referred your letter to deacon Bezanon for information. He informs me that the church record of that date is not to be found. I have inquired of an old lady, who 'remembers an Association—Rev. James Manning and T. H. Chipman being present. Mr. Manning did not leave for some time after the other ministers, and quite a revival of religion followed.' This tallies exactly with the following passage in the letter from which I have already quoted—"I

have concluded to stay here three sabbaths, and Mr. Dimock will come in my room." The old lady "thinks, by comparing it with other events, that it was in 1806." I think so too. The list of the Association is now complete.

My last letter closed with an account of the Association in 1818. The prosperity of the year 1819 exceeded that of the previous year. The Association met at St. John. John Burton reported the addition of 113 members to the church at Halifax, mostly coloured persons, as before; 64 at River Philip; 16 at St. John. The clear increase of the year was 216. The church at Norton, N. B., joined the Association.

Jos. Dimock preached the introductory sermon. Edward Manning was chosen Moderator; Joseph Dimock, Clerk; and J. M. Wilmot, "Assistant Clerk." Three brethren, Messrs. A. Drinkwater, P. Pilsbury, and T. B. Ripley, attended as delegates from Corresponding Associations in the United States.

The increasing development of missionary zeal was seen in the Contributions sent in by Female Mite Societies, which had been established at Chester, Annapolis and Upper Granville, River Philip, Horton, Cornwallis, and Nictaux. "Our female friends," say the Minutes, "generally accompany their donations with the most affectionate letters, in few words, wishing prosperity. They have surely done worthily, and great, very great will be their reward."

To the usual recommendations to observe certain days for thanksgiving, and fasting and prayer, an addition was made, that "the evening of the first Monday of every month be spent as a season of special prayer for the success of the gospel." Several of the New Brunswick brethren were placed on the Missionary committee, and the appointments for the year included eight weeks each to Elders Crandal and Easterbrook "among the destitute in New Brunswick." Each missionary was to receive forty shillings a week and his expenses. It is much to be regretted that abstracts of the journals or reports of the brethren so employed were not published. We should have had much pleasure now in reading the history and tracing the results of christian effort.

The Circular Letter, written by Elder T. Griffin, of St. John, was a practical exposition of 2 Cor. 7, 12, shewing how the representatives of the churches cared for their brethren and sought their spiritual welfare. I transcribe one extract:—"Our care for you leads us to pray you may enjoy much of the life and power of religion in your own souls—sweet fellowship with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ—the earnest of the Spirit in your hearts—peace and joy in believing, and fellowship with the saints; that the life you live in the flesh may be by the faith of the Son of God; that you may walk worthy of your high vocation—shine as lights in the world—find the grace of God at all times sufficient for you; that his goodness and mercy may follow you all your days; and that you may dwell in the house of God for ever."

In 1820 the Association met again in New Brunswick, Sackville being the place appointed. Edward Manning preached the introductory sermon; James Munro was Moderator; Charles Tupper, Clerk; David Harris, Assistant Clerk. Although the increase reported fell short of the statements of the preceding year, many of the churches had enjoyed gracious manifestations of divine power; Chester church had received 66; St. Martins, 27; Upper Granville, 22. The whole number added was 183; the clear increase, 137. The churches at Windsor and Miramichi were received into the body. David Nutter was ordained on the second day of the Association, as I have stated in a previous letter. Timothy Robertson and Charles Millar, members of the church at Miramichi, were ordained on the third day.

Liberal contributions were paid in, and James Munro's "Missionary Journal," which was read at the meeting, was heard "with satisfaction."

The subject of the Circular Letter, written by Charles Tupper, was "the nature and necessity of communion with the blessed God." The evils to be avoided, indulgence in which hinder that communion, were pointed out, especially avarice, ambition of worldly honour, and a cold and for-

mal spirit in devotion. The following are the closing paragraphs:—

"We would recommend to heads of families to maintain the worship of God in their families; and that, not only occasionally, but statedly. We want to recommend to heads of families to attach great importance to this part of their duty, and follow the example of pious Joshua, Daniel, &c. And that it may be attended to with propriety and advantage, let the family be taught to attend discreetly and in order, both children and domestics; and not, as the manner of some is, part at prayer, the rest in bed, at play, or at work. Brethren, these things ought not to be so.

"We think family prayer ought to be attended devoutly, sincerely, decently, affectionately, and with awful solemnity; that we might participate of those heavenly communications of grace that God communicates from off his mercy-seat to those who wait upon him as they ought. And in return they will experience the blessedness of communion, real, heart-felt communion with their covenant God and Saviour; without which, we wish you not to be content.

"Likewise we recommend a punctual and prayerful attendance at all the meetings of the church; such as prayer meetings and conference meetings, as well as public meetings on the Lord's day; ultimately, for the glory of God, and the benefit of his cause, particularly the church of which you are members; subordinately, your own furtherance in the divine life, that you may be his disciples indeed. So shall ye live a life of sacred communion with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The last meeting of the Association during this period was held at Onslow. The introductory sermon was preached by William Elder. Edward Manning was chosen Moderator; William Elder, Clerk; William Chipman, Assistant Clerk. The churches at Newport and Fredericton reported additions of twenty each. In the other churches the increase was but small. The whole number added was 110; the clear increase, 48.

The Home Missionary Committee reported that thirty-seven weeks of labour had been performed during the past year, by the brethren Burton, Davis, Nutter, and T. S. Harding. A vote passed that some extracts from the journals of the missionaries should be an annexed to the Minutes. Unfortunately, it was not carried into effect. The record runs thus:—"As the Journals were very extensive, and the whole particularly interesting, it would be difficult to make any selections from them to do them justice; otherwise than merely saying that brother Nutter (being rather more explicit in his Journal) travelled 700 miles, preached about 70 times, and baptized 26 persons.—Brother Davis's travels were something similar, and we trust productive of much usefulness.—Brother J. Burton has also laboured extensively amongst the people of colour on the Halifax road, Hammonds Plains, &c. &c., and we hope his labour of love has been blessed to many poor sinners. On the whole, there appear to be loud calls for missionaries' labours, and many effectual doors opened, and many precious souls hungering and thirsting for the bread and waters of eternal life.—Brother T. S. Harding was also employed on a missionary tour in the province of New Brunswick, but not having had any extracts from his journal, we can only add that from letters received we are led to believe that his labours have been extensively blessed."

In the Circular Letter, prepared by David Nutter, the attention of the brethren was called to the importance of "stability in the doctrines of grace"—"personal holiness"—and "a faithful discharge of the duties of church membership." Some of the observations on the last-mentioned topic may be quoted:—"There is another duty you owe as those who are blest with and interested in the gospel of Christ. That is, that you would not forget those who are destitute of the blessings you enjoy. There are many settlements in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, whose inhabitants are perishing for lack of knowledge; and although it may need a little of your worldly substance to supply them with the preached word. Yet that is the least you

can bestow. And be assured that you cannot apply it in this way but it will yield you an abundant crop, for the blessing of him that was ready to perish will come upon you. You have done something in this way already, and we beg you not to be weary in well doing. You pray that his kingdom may come; you call the gifts and send them forth to preach that kingdom but you must be like the zealous Jews in the days of Nehemiah. Say, 'Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee; we also will be with thee: be of good courage and do it.' Your missionaries have often brought us good tidings that even their enemies became subject to them through the word of God's grace. And if we could think you needed any excitement in this particular, we would remind you of the many happy effects which have crowned missionary exertions. We would invite you to consider the desolate state of our fellow men on the Northern and Southern shores. You may view the lonely and scanty dwellings in the wilderness, and you would see the joy and delight of its wretched inhabitants at the sight of a missionary—the tear of gratitude at parting—and hear their earnest request—'do come and see us again—do tell the Association we can never thank them enough for sending the gospel amongst us.' Dear brethren, we invite you to come and share a part in this glorious triumph, for we are sure of victory."

The desirableness of a division of the Association had been felt for some time. It was accomplished at the meeting in 1821, and is reported in the following terms:—"At the request of a number of brethren from New Brunswick, it was unanimously agreed that this Association be divided, and that the line which separates New Brunswick from Nova Scotia be the dividing line."

During the five last years of this period the Association had commenced its meetings on Wednesday, instead of Monday, which was the original arrangement. Probably the design was, to prevent as far as possible, or at least shorten, the absence of the pastors from their churches. It was not found, however, to work favourably and in appointing the first meeting of the Nova Scotia Association, Monday was again fixed as the day of opening. It was customary for the brethren to reach the place of meeting on Saturday. There was abundance of preaching on the Lord's day. Business was not entered on till Monday.

Let me now place before you an abstract of the state of the churches in this Period:—

Year.	No. of Churches.	Added.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Died.	No. of Members.
1810	14	84	95	8	6	924
1811	18	92	21	24	6	1221
1812	21	76	6	13	13	1371
1813	24	138	8	3	9	1499
1814	26	133	12	56	12	1494
1815	26	36	13	30	4	1207
1816	24	41	1	24	14	993
1817	24	48	8	20	21	1104
1818	24	200	6	16	9	1367
1819	26	260	18	7	19	1570
1820	28	183	12	16	18	1785
1821	30	110	17	27	18	1827

Seventeen of these churches were in Nova Scotia, containing 1321 members. Here is the list:—

Churches.	Pastors.	No. of Members.
Lower Granville.		40
Upper Granville and Wilmot.	Thomas Ansley,	78
Cornwallis,	Edward Manning,	124
Newport,	George Dimock,	81
Onslow,	James Munro,	39
Clements,		36
Halifax,	John Burton,	300
Amherst,	Samuel McCully,	14
Nictaux,	T. H. Chipman,	114
Chester,	Joseph Dimock,	167
Lunenburg,	Robert Davis,	35
Sissiboo,	Enoch Townner,	30
Horton,	David Harris,	61
River Philip,	Charles Tupper,	44
Digby Neck,	Peter Crandal,	120
Windsor,	David Nutter,	26
Annapolis,	William Elder,	12

1321.