

friends and lovers, neighbors and comrades are with us; there is circle within circle, and each one of us is at the charmed centre where the heart's affections are aglow and whence they radiate outward upon society. Youth is exuberant with joy and hope, the earth looks fair, for it sparkles with May-dews yet, and no shadow hath fallen upon it. We are all here, and we could live here forever. The home-centre is on the hither side of the river, and why should we strain our eyes to look beyond? But this state of things does not continue long. Our circle grows less and less. It is broken and broken, and then closed up again; but every break and close make it narrower and smaller. Perhaps before the sun is at his meridian the majority are on the other side; the circle there is as large as the one here, and we are drawn contrariwise and vibrate between the two. A little longer, and we have almost all crossed over; the balance settles down on the spiritual side, and the home-centre is removed to the upper sphere. At length you see nothing but an aged pilgrim standing alone on the river brink, and looking earnestly towards the country on the other side. In the morning, that large and goodly company rejoicing together with music and wine; in the evening, dwindled down to that solitary old man, the last of his family, and the last of his generation, waiting to go home, and filled with pensive memories of the Long Ago!—E. H. Sears.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, JUNE 1, 1870.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH POLITY.

The last No. of the *Baptist Quarterly* has a number of able articles on various topics of interest. One of these by Rev. Dr. Hovey, on "Church Polity," shews in a very clear concise form the teachings of the word of God in reference to this important matter. The opening remark is one that should commend itself to general acceptance; our readers will at once acquiesce in the sentiment. It is as follows: "There is, perhaps, some reason to believe that special attention should be given at this time to the nature and work of Christian Churches in the apostolic age; lest a proper reverence for inspired guidance in this great matter should be overcome by a prevailing desire to effect an outward union of all-believers. We are not without hope that the day for such a union will at length dawn upon the world; but it must be preceded by much study of the sacred record, and by a profound submission to its authority. It must be the result of inward unity, of a common belief in respect to the cardinal truths of religion and the essential principles of Church order. We propose, therefore, to lay before the reader, in as few words as possible, the results of a somewhat careful study of the New Testament, undertaken with a view to ascertain the polity of Christian Churches in the first age."

The article consists of fourteen distinct propositions, sustained by a number of Scripture texts, and a few explanatory remarks.

The first nine propositions relate to the powers and duties of Churches in which the members all participate. They are as follows:—

1. The apostles, as we have ample reason to believe, taught, either by word or action, the principles of Church Polity for Christians of all time.
2. The word *polity* (from the Greek) is used by us in the sense of constitution and government; and the word *Church* is used to denote a society of baptized believers, maintaining together the worship and ordinances of Christ, according to his revealed will.
3. The primary relation of the members of a Christian Church to one another is that of equality. In Christ they are all brethren,—all kings and priests unto God,—all entitled to the same privileges.
4. In the last instance, it belongs to every Church as a whole, and not to its officers, to exclude and receive members,—the right to exclude presupposing the right to receive.
5. The members of a Christian Church ought to receive into the same those, and those only, who are baptized on a credible profession of their faith, and who have reasonably correct views of Christian doctrine.
6. The members of a Christian Church are responsible for the proper discipline of offenders belonging to the body.
7. It belongs to a Christian Church to select for official service such of its members as it deems qualified for the same.
8. As a rule, Churches ought to respect the action of one another; for, though organically separate, they are under the same law ani-

minated by the same spirit, seeking the same end, and entrusted with equal authority.

9. Without risk to self control or separate responsibility to Christ, Churches may combine their resources and influence for the furtherance of religious or benevolent enterprises.

Dr. Hovey then refers to the official distinction of church members, and puts, in a very brief, but clear light the duties and functions of each class:

10. The lay members of a Church have but one duty strictly peculiar to themselves, viz., that of paying suitable deference to the officers. Yet, along with the deacons, they are also bound to see that those who serve them as Pastors have reasonable pay for their official work.

11. The deacons of a Church ought to assist the Pastor in the subordinate duties of his office, especially in caring for the sick and the poor.

12. The Pastors of Christian Churches are to watch over the Churches which they serve, instruct them in the Gospel, rebuke false teachers and refute their errors, insist upon suitable discipline, and, in a word, be leaders, teachers, and examples to the flock in all spiritual matters.

13. Evangelists are simply preachers of the Gospel,—ministers at large, having no pastoral charge. Many missionaries are strictly evangelists.

14. The apostles and prophets of the first age have had no successors thus far. But they still speak to us by the New Testament Scriptures. Their position was such that all Christians should obey their word.

There is something intelligible in these simple laconic statements. The Church Polity of the New Testament, is so intelligently shewn, that it must commend itself to Christians of all denominations. It may be seen at a glance that it faithfully describes the theory on which Baptist churches are formed, and by which the practices of the more active and efficient are regulated. In the application of these principles there may be some diversity of practice, but there need be no difficulty where a teachable spirit exists in learning from the New Testament how to act in all conceivable cases.

SECTARIAN SCHOOLS IN HALIFAX.

Any individual or body of people has the right of maintaining sectarian schools, but no Trustees or Commissioners ought to permit schools supported by public taxation and Provincial grants to become the hand-maids of any sect or party.

In the Memorial presented to the Council of Public Instruction by the Committee of the Colonial and Continental Church Society, and which was signed by the Bishop of Nova Scotia, the following important reference is made to the city schools:—

"Your Memorialists pray your honourable Council to cause a full investigation to be made into the mode of conducting the female Schools at Arichat; and as they have reason to fear that the endeavour to impart a sectarian character to the education afforded in the Common Schools is not limited to Arichat they pray you to provide for such an effectual supervision of all schools under your jurisdiction, particularly those in the City, as will secure the children attending said schools against all attempts to introduce sectarian teaching or practices contrary to the spirit and intention of the education act."

The report of the investigation made in response to the Memorial, makes no mention of any enquiry on the part of the Council or Superintendent into the condition of the City Schools. We presume, therefore, that no such enquiry has been made. We think it a matter of the first importance that the educational authorities deal as promptly as possible with every violation of "the spirit and intention of the education act."

In placing before our readers a correct idea of the position of the City Schools, we avail ourselves of the published letter of T. H. Rand, Esq., in reply to Dr. Murray M. P. P., under date of March 19th 1870. He there says:

"Previous to the operation of the new law in the city, those schools which were not mere private adventures, and which received public aid, were, with one exception, sectarian schools. This school supplied accommodation for about 150 pupils. There was not a single school house owned as public property within the City of Halifax. The Act empowered the Commissioners to undertake the erection of school houses. In order that accommodation might be had in the meantime, the Act provided as follows:—

"The Board of Commissioners are authorized to co-operate with the governing body of any city school, on such terms as to the Board shall seem right and proper, so that the benefits of such school may be as general as circumstances will permit; and in such cases the Board may make allowance to such schools out of the funds under their control as shall be deemed just and equitable; but no public funds shall be granted in support of any school unless the same be a Free School."

In an address delivered before the Board in January, 1866, I presented an outline of a system of public schools for the city of Halifax, and earnestly pressed upon the attention of the

Commissioners the views submitted. This address may be found in the Education Report laid before the Legislature in 1866, pp. 136—145.

There are now in operation in the city some 50 departments which are wholly under the control of the Board, and which are public or non-sectarian in their character. The new house in Albro St.-et, which is nearly ready for occupation, contains 11 school-rooms. There have been provided, therefore, about 60 public school apartments, having accommodation for 3,250 pupils. This is a great advance towards the universal introduction of public schools into the city. During the same period there has been no increase, but a diminution in the number of schools partly under the Board's control.

While the Commissioners have authority under the law "to co-operate with any city school on such terms as to the Board shall seem right and proper," I seriously doubted that the Board was thereby empowered to enter into any arrangements which ignored a fundamental principle of the school law. The Board, however, claimed extensive authority under the clause, even that of paying salaries to unlicensed teachers out of funds raised by public taxation. I refused every application of the Board for Provincial aid in consideration of the services of such teachers.

It has been demonstrated by the experience of the Board that it requires less funds to meet the interest on the debentures issued for the erection of a house to accommodate 500 pupils than it does to meet the annual rents for the accommodation of that number. The superiority of the accommodation secured by the erection of new houses, is a matter of the greatest moment respecting the efficiency of the schools.

In view of the large number of departments now organized in conformity with the law, and the knowledge now gained that suitable rooms can be more cheaply provided by the erection of new houses, than in any other way, the Board is in a position to notify the governing bodies of those schools which have been but partially under its control, of its willingness to purchase such of the buildings as are suitable for school purposes, or else to erect new buildings in their stead. This would entail even less expense upon the citizens than the present arrangements; while it would do away with those schools which however securely they may be maintained under a special interpretation of the law, are in my opinion, a standing violation of its fundamental principles.

In pursuance of these considerations, I instructed the Inspector for the County to inform himself during his round of inspection for the present term, of the character of all the books used in each school in connection with the Board; and to present a special report on the subject to the Education Office in May next. It was my purpose to bring the position of the city schools fully before the Legislature in the Education Report, at the present session of Parliament; and to recommend that the Clause of the law above quoted be repealed, since every purpose in the interest of a system of public schools which its provisions were designed and calculated to subserve has been accomplished; and since its provisions, while they do not prevent the Board from carrying out a uniform system of non-sectarian schools, render it practically impossible for the Superintendent to enforce such a system against the decision of the Board.

The course proposed must approve itself to all who have the interests of education at heart. We presume the special report which the Inspector was requested to make on the text-books in use in the city schools has now been sent in to the Education Office. With this document under his hand we trust that the new Superintendent will not wait for any formal complaints to be made by individuals; but will take effective steps to dislodge any unauthorized text-books from the schools.

The Committee of the Colonial and Continental Church Society couple together the alleged infractions of the school law at Arichat and Halifax. It will be found, we think, that nearly every attempt "to impart a sectarian character to the education afforded in the Common Schools," has originated in those schools which are affiliated or in some way allied with sectarian institutions, and are, in practice, but imperfectly under the control of the Public School Trustees. This, we believe, is the case at Arichat, Antigonish, and Halifax. The difficulty of obtaining any reliable information respecting the management of the Schools at Arichat arises, we believe, largely from some relation which they sustain to the Convent at that place. An effectual remedy for all such cases should be applied by the Legislature.

This is a question which interests the people at large, and is not only of moment to us, but to posterity. It is for the people to see to it that our rulers ratify and confirm our Free Common School System, and make it universally operative throughout the Province.

TRURO BAPTIST CHURCH.

The New Church Edifice at Truro, was dedicated to the public worship of Almighty God, on Lord's Day last, May 19th. At the commencement of the morning Service, the Pastor, Rev. D. W. C. Dimock, offered

the Prayer of Invocation. After the usual devotional exercises, the Rev. Dr. Crawley preached an able sermon from 2 Chronicles vi. 18: "Will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth?" He shewed that the question here asked as an enquiry of the deepest moment to mankind had been clearly proved to be, not only a possibility, by an actual reality; that spirit does touch spirit, and mind operate on mind, and that the Divine Spirit takes possession of the soul of man and dwells with him.

After the sermon Rev. D. W. C. Dimock related an incident in his first acquaintance with the preacher, and the benefit which he had derived from an enquiry made by him respecting his, Mr. D's, spiritual state when quite a youth.

In the afternoon, Rev. Dr. Cramp preached an animated and eloquent discourse from Matt. xxviii. 20. "Lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world." He shewed that the promise of the Saviour's continuing with his people was the source of their strength, that so long as they should observe all things that he commanded, he would appear on their behalf. The past history of the church has shewn the fulfilment of the promise in many remarkable cases. Dr. C. gave a number of highly interesting statistics and historical facts concerning the first formation and subsequent career of the Baptist Church in Truro.

In the evening, Rev. D. A. Steele preached an excellent, evangelical sermon from Zachariah xiii. 1. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." After proving the existence of sin in all men, he led them to the fountain so full and free in the gospel of God's dear Son. Other ministering brethren were present and took part in the services of the day.—Rev. B. Scott, Dr. Clay and J. Morrison. The evening service was continued by several addresses after the sermon. The congregations were large all through the day, filling the house in the morning. In the afternoon it was even fuller, and in the evening it was more closely packed; seats were put down the three aisles and filled by attentive listeners.

The Church is finely situated in the centre of the village, in Prince Street, immediately opposite the Provincial Normal School. It is one of the principal ornaments, if not the principal one of Truro. The edifice comprises the main building measuring 72 feet by 45½ with a lecture room 60 feet by 26, transversely across at the back having somewhat the form of a T. On one side of the front end is a tower with turretted top, on the other side is another one with a spire 100 feet in height. In this is a bell weighing about 500 lbs. costing about \$400, the gift of two young ladies—Miss Faulkner and Miss Bulmer.

The interior consists of a spacious entrance hall. In the audience room are four tiers of 18 pews, which with two against the wall make 74 pews cushioned all alike in green damask. The pulpit platform is raised two or three steps, and on it are a desk and three handsome antique chairs. On each side of the pulpit are large folding doors, opening into the lecture room, on the same level; which would afford accommodation for a large number of hearers on any special occasion. Over the entrance is a gallery containing seat-room for about 80 persons. A handsome new pipe-organ, built by Mr. Slade, of Truro, adorns this part of the building. We have not the particulars of this instrument, but believe it has four stops. It is certainly a very fine toned and powerful organ, fully equal to the capacity of the building. The walls are a fine representation of stone in large blocks. The windows are in good keeping with the rest of the structure, the centre one in front is very handsome, formed of a very neatly patterned glass, in small diamond shaped panes. Each of the other windows has a narrow border of variegated colored glass, giving a variety and chasteness of finish without gaudiness. The open truss-work of the roof is stained of a dark walnut color, and the board roof-lining is varnished in oak. The wood work of the pews and front of the gallery is of native ash, oiled to bring out the natural grain of the wood. Nothing of imitation could be more beautiful than this. The capping of the pews is of walnut, and all in perfect harmony, forming a fine model for improved church architecture in the province. We congratulate our Truro friends in having so convenient and appropriate a structure in which to meet and observe the ordinances which Christ has given for his people. We could wish that many of our brethren in other parts of the province with equal industry would arise and appropriate a portion of what God has entrusted to them