

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER,

And Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School Advocate.

McLEOD, Editor.

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.—PETER.

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SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, JULY 27, 1855.

WHOLE NO. 82

EXTRACTS

on the Minutes of the Twenty-Third General Conference of the Free Christian Baptists of New Brunswick, held at Jacksonville, in Carleton County, 7th to 11th July, 1855.

JACKSONTOWN, CARLETON COUNTY, N. B.
Saturday, July 7th, 1855.

1. The twenty-third Annual Session of the General Conference of Free Christian Baptists of New Brunswick commenced at Jacksonville this day. A social meeting was held at 10 o'clock, a. m., and a deep interest seemed to be felt generally. At 3 o'clock, p. m., met for business.

2. The Reports of the several Districts were read, showing an encouraging increase in numbers and interest, and presenting the general aspect of the cause in our denomination as highly encouraging.

3. After the reading of the Reports, a system for Missionary labour, which was subsequently adopted by the Conference, was introduced, and read, and addresses were given on the subject of Domestic Missions, by Elders E. McLeod, S. Hart, E. Wayman, J. Gunter, and brother Doucet, a converted Frenchman, and local preacher. This was a season of deep interest, and a spirit of missions was evidently begotten in the very large audience which was present.

Adjourned by prayer to meet for business on Monday morning, at 8 o'clock, a. m.

Monday, July 9th,

Met pursuant to appointment at 8 o'clock, a. m. Opened by prayer. The Secretary read the Minutes of last year. Reports of Committees on local matters submitted and received.

5. The Committee appointed last Conference to obtain the draft of a deed by which to secure to churches, and the Conference feelhold property submitted the same, which was accepted. Also, a General Conference seal, which was likewise accepted.

7. Elders S. Hart, J. Gunter, and W. E. Pennington, who were appointed last Conference to labour as Missionaries, submitted their reports. Elder Hart had laboured in various parts of the Province, during the year, had witnessed a large number of conversions, and had baptized seventy-four persons. Elder Gunter had been deterred from his labours very considerably; first, by a calamitous fire in Fredericton which consumed his premises, and by which he sustained a considerable loss; second, by severe indisposition during the last two months, which had deprived him a part of the time of his sight, and confined him to his room. His labours during the time he was able to travel were confined to a portion of York County. He had witnessed, however, a considerable of revival,—had attended over three hundred and thirty meetings, and had baptized forty-seven persons. Elder Pennington had laboured two and a half months, principally in the counties of Westmorland and Carleton, had seen the cause revived in several places, and had baptized sixty-five persons. Revivals have been promoted by several other brethren, and over four hundred members have been added to our churches during the year.

8. The account of the Bible Distribution Fund was read and submitted; including the receipts, expenditures, appropriations, &c.

9. The account of the Religious Intelligencer and Book Store was read and submitted, including expenditures and liabilities; receipts, debts due, and all matters connected with the financial business of the Conference.

10. The Committee appointed last year to revise the Constitution of the G. Conference and District Meetings; and to form rules for the better regulation of our denominational business, submitted their report. See Appendix, Nos. 1 and 2.

Adjourned by prayer to meet at 2 o'clock, p. m.

Afternoon Session, Monday

11. Met at 2 o'clock, p. m. Opened by prayer. The revised Constitution was read section by section, and freely discussed, occupying the whole session, and was adopted with one slight amendment.

Adjourned by prayer.

Tuesday Morning, July 10th.

12. Met at 8 o'clock, a. m. Opened by prayer. Rules of Conference read one by one, and discussed. Amended and passed.

13. Voted, That our Colporteur, brother Thomas O'Donnell be a member of this General Conference.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

The Committee appointed to Report on Sabbath Schools presented the following, which was accepted.

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

We, the Committee appointed to report on the state of Sabbath Schools in connection with our Churches, have endeavoured to attend to that duty, the result of which we submit.

We find, by an examination of the reports of the Districts, that there are in connection with the Churches of the

First District,	9	Sabbath Schools.
Second District,	2	"
Third District,	3	"
Fourth District,	4	"
Fifth District,	8	"
Sixth District,	5	"

Making in all 22

From the present available sources of information, we learn with pleasure, that where Sabbath Schools have been instituted, they are generally in a prosperous state; yet we regret that there are so many of our Churches that have no Sabbath Schools, which we hope will soon be remedied by the adoption of such measures as a subject of such importance requires. We have not failed to discover that blessed results have been followed the establishment of Sabbath Schools in some sections of our Province; and we hope that the time is near when there will not be one of our Churches destitute of such an institution. That this object may be speedily and effectually carried out, we recommend that the several members of this Conference use their strenuous efforts to promote it. That the necessity of establishing Sabbath Schools be urged upon those Churches, in which they do not exist, and also the utility of having the several Schools furnished with suitable libraries, containing books for the use of teachers, as well as Scholars: all of which can be obtained at the Religious Intelligencer Book Store.

Note.—The number of Sabbath Schools in the above Report were taken from the District records, which do not give all the Schools in the Churches. Some schools have been commenced since some of the Records were made up. There are probably in our Churches about ten schools more than reported above.—Editor.

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION.

Your Committee rejoice at the great prosperity which has crowned the efforts of Evangelical Christians, to disseminate the pure Word of God. During the last half century the Bible has been translated into about one hundred and twenty different languages, and twenty-eight

millions copies have been disseminated abroad. In our own Province much has been done. The Report of our Conference Trustees shows the sale of about 2162 worth of Bibles; many of these were sent by them to destitute places, and others brought by their Colporters to the doors of those who, perhaps, had they not been, would not have purchased. A small amount's worth have been given to Sabbath Schools, and to poor individuals, and in the opinion of the Committee the Distribution Fund in connection with this Conference has been judiciously managed. They recommend that our members contribute to the funds of Branch Bible Societies, wherever they exist; and those who have not an opportunity of becoming members of regularly organized Societies, continue to aid this Conference by donations to its Bible Distribution Fund, in the work of scattering abroad through-out the destitute districts of our Province the invaluable word of Life.

ON COLPORTEURS.

The Committee on Colportage Report.—When looking at the records of kindred efforts in the United States and elsewhere, and from a short experience by our own denomination during the last year, your committee decidedly agree that Colportage is one of the best means for diffusing Religious knowledge that has yet been brought into existence; and is the most efficient auxiliary of the Religious Press. A distinguished and clear-sighted British Christian says: "The people who stand most in need of religious books are the last to seek them. Frivolous and immoral literature makes its own market every-where. The supply goes before the demand, and never fails to create it. In case of religious publications, the process is reversed. Religion must be conveyed to the fireside of the religiously destitute. * * * This is an agency which the Churches will require to cultivate to a greater extent than heretofore. * * * This power of the system of Colportage in the diffusion of good books, and in applying countervailing influences to the circulation of the mischievous literature, is the important feature of this organization."

Colportage is no longer an experiment. It is a well defined, approved, and indispensable system of Christian effort for the diffusion of religious knowledge which is greatly needed in numerous districts in our Province. In recommending measures for the more efficient carrying out of this department of Christian enterprise, we submit for perusal a paragraph from the journal of a Colporteur: "Wherever I find, in a family, a good selection of religious reading, I usually find a desire for more books of a similar kind. It is among those who are training themselves under such discipline, if any where that I find a spirit of deep-toned piety, of Christian efficiency, and a strong and predominant desire to do good, showing itself in Christian activity and usefulness, and the duties of every day life." Your Committee believe this testimony, and where families are found who have no reading, or whose reading consists in "light literature," revivals will be found, and no interest will be manifested in the great benevolent enterprises of the age.

Your Committee recommend that one or more Colporters (according to the means at command), be employed and kept in the field, during the ensuing year, and that subscriptions be solicited to enable them to distribute gratuitously large numbers of religious tracts and periodicals.

EDUCATION.

The Committee appointed to Report on Education, submit the following:—

The education of a child consists in more than the mere development of its physical and intellectual powers—it embraces also educated moral sense. Intellectual education may be acquired without the formation of moral principles. The Bible is the foundation of all correct education, and every government and people should endeavor to secure this richest boon on earth to the rising generation. Above all, should religious education, showing itself in Christian activity and usefulness, and the duties of every day life." Your Committee believe this testimony, and where families are found who have no reading, or whose reading consists in "light literature," revivals will be found, and no interest will be manifested in the great benevolent enterprises of the age.

Your Committee recommend that one or more Colporters (according to the means at command), be employed and kept in the field, during the ensuing year, and that subscriptions be solicited to enable them to distribute gratuitously large numbers of religious tracts and periodicals.

ON CHURCHES.

The Committee appointed to Report on Churches submit the following:—

1st.—I believe that no Minister should organize a Church in any village or place, without first calling a council of several judicious brethren, or having the concurrence of one or more ministers, except in cases where it would be quite impossible to obtain the presence of such brethren, or ministers. The following questions should be duly considered, in all cases, before organization:—

1. Is a Free Baptist Church in this place necessary? 2. Are there proper individuals who will compose such a church here? 3. Are there proper persons for deacons and helpers, who will look after and sustain the true worship of God? Will it be for the best interests of religion to organize a Free Baptist Church here?

If these questions can be answered in the affirmative, this committee recommends that the following Covenant and Directory be adopted in all cases at organization, with such additions as may be deemed necessary. [For Covenant and Directory, see Appendix in Minutes No. 3.]

2nd.—Your Committee recommend that all our Ministers and Missionaries who may visit churches, which have not as yet adopted any written covenant, urge upon them the propriety of their adopting the foregoing; and further, that the utmost care and vigilance be exercised in setting all our churches in order, upon gospel principles,—embracing the ordination of deacons, the keeping of a proper church record, and the maintenance of the proper relation of each church to the District Meeting and General Conference.

3rd.—Your Committee recommend that no persons be received for baptism, or church membership, until they give satisfactory evidence to the church of conversion, in some public relation of God's dealings with them.

TEMPERANCE AND PROHIBITION.

The Committee on Temperance and Prohibition beg leave to submit the following Report:—

While they deeply lament the devastations that the monster Alcohol has made, and is still making in our Province, and in the world, they nevertheless rejoice in the progress that the great moral question of Temperance has made, and they highly appreciate the wisdom and energy of our present Legislature, in preparing and enacting a stringent PROHIBITORY LAW. And while your Committee are not ignorant of the fact, that this General Conference as a body, both of ministers and laymen, have for many years been pledged to the Temperance cause, and in many cases refused membership to individuals not strictly temperate, and can also boast of having among their number the framers of perardventure the first Temperance Rules ever adopted in this Province, they would still urge on our members (especially at the present important juncture) the great necessity of firmness and decision in still carrying forward this great work of reform. And we recommend that this Conference pledge its energy and influence to sustain the PROHIBITORY LAW.

29. Voted, That the next Annual Session of this General Conference be held with the Church on the North Branch of the Oromocto, commencing on the first Saturday in July, 1856, at 10 o'clock, a. m.

35. Resolved, That this General Conference entirely disapprove of the use of Tobacco in every form; and earnestly request those ministers who may be addicted to it to henceforth abstain therefrom.

CONSTITUTION

Of the General Conference, and District Meetings, of Free Christian Baptists of New Brunswick.

PREAMBLE:

Whereas, All Christians in their individual capacity have a right to adopt the rules and plans which God has given in his Word, to carry forward the work to which he has called them;—

And Whereas, What they have a right to do in their individual capacity, they have a right to do in their associated capacity, and that parties scripturally associated are true and proper churches of Jesus Christ;—

And Whereas, Ministers and such other members, as churches properly organized, according to the Gospel, see fit to appoint, have a right to assemble to arrange and carry into effect their work, as Ministers and members of Christ, and such assemblies are SCRIPTURAL CONFERENCES:

Therefore, We, the members of the Free Christian Baptist Churches of New Brunswick, in order to secure a uniform mode of action, in faith and practice, and to carry out the full labour of the gospel, as also to define the powers and business of General Conferences and District Meetings, as recognized by us, do ordain the following ARTICLES OF CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLES.

ARTICLE II.

Section 1. This Association shall be called the General Conference of Free Christian Baptists of New Brunswick.

Section 2. The General Conference shall be composed of ordained Ministers and Licentiates (being members of Free Christian Baptist Churches) Messengers from District Meetings, and Clerks of the same, the Secretaries and Treasurers of the General Conference, with such other brethren, in good standing with their respective churches, as may be unanimously admitted to be members of Conference by the Conference.

Section 3. The Annual Meeting of the General Conference shall commence on the first Saturday in July of each year, at such place as shall be appointed by the preceding Conference, and shall continue daily until the business of the Session is accomplished.

Section 4. The General Conference shall have a Chairman, to be elected annually; a Corresponding Secretary, a Recording Secretary and Assistant, and a Treasurer, all of the latter to hold office during the pleasure of the Conference.

Section 5. Seven ordained Ministers, and six Messengers from District Meetings, shall constitute a quorum for business. A less number may adjourn.

ARTICLE III.

Section 1. The business of this Conference shall be—1. To deliberate on all such points of doctrine and practice as the welfare of the churches may require, and give such decision thereon as they believe the Scriptures warrant; 2. To devise any measures, not inconsistent with the Word of God, that they may consider for the general interest and benefit of the denomination.

Section 2. This Conference has no power to form any rule or devise any plan contrary to the Bible.

ARTICLE IV.

Section 1. Each District Meeting shall be composed of all the ordained Ministers and Licentiates residing, or engaged by any church or churches, to expend labour, within its limits; and such other ordained Ministers as may be appointed to attend by the Chairman of General Conference, and by two Messengers from each church belonging to the district, with a Clerk chosen by the meeting, and such other brethren in good standing with their respective churches as may be unanimously elected members by the meeting.

Section 2. Each District Meeting shall hold its annual session at such time and place as it may itself appoint.

Section 3. The officers of each District Meeting shall be—a Chairman, to be elected annually; a Clerk and a Treasurer, to hold office during the pleasure of the Meeting.

Section 4. Two ordained Ministers, and six Delegates from churches, shall constitute a quorum for business; a less number may adjourn.

ARTICLE V.

Section 1. Each District Meeting shall send two Messengers to the General Conference, such Messengers to be chosen by the unanimous voice of the Meeting, and to be furnished with a copy of the record of such vote by the Clerk, and by them handed to the Chairman of General Conference.

Section 2. The Messengers from Churches to District Meetings to be appointed by a vote of not less than two thirds of the male members present, and to be furnished with a copy of the record of their appointment by the Clerk of the Church, and which shall be handed by them to the Moderator of the District Meeting.

ARTICLE VI.

Section 1. The Clerk of each District Meeting shall furnish the Recording Secretary of the General Conference with a statistical report of the churches comprising the district, according to the Rules of General Conference and District Meetings annexed.

Section 2. The Clerk, Deacons, or Pastor of each church shall furnish the Clerk of the District Meeting to which it belongs with a statistical report of its members, according to the form referred to in the foregoing section.

ARTICLE VII.

Section 1. For the safety of the denomination and to secure an efficient Ministry, the right of ordination is vested with the General Conference and District Meetings only.

Section 2. Any person professing to be called of God to the work of the Ministry, and being in good standing with a church, shall receive a license to preach for one year only from said church, with the vote of two-thirds of its male members.

Section 3. Such Licentiate shall be examined in the next session of the District Meeting, to which the church giving him license belongs, or in the General Conference, in relation to his call to the ministry, qualifications for the work, soundness of doctrine, &c., and if approved his license shall be confirmed, and be renewed annually as long as the District Meeting or General Conference is satisfied with his labours and standing.

Section 4. No brother shall be ordained to the work of the Ministry until he has been licensed and proved two consecutive years as a Licentiate, and not then, unless he "gives himself wholly to the work."

Section 5. Ordination shall not be given to any brother, only on a vote of approval therefor by the General Conference, or the District Meeting by which he has been licensed.

Section 6. Any Minister having received ordination in any other denomination, shall not be received as a member by any church belonging to this Conference until he is first approved by a vote of the General Conference.

ARTICLE VIII.

Section 1. The General Conference shall at each Annual Meeting choose twelve brethren, all being members of Free C. B. Churches, who shall be a BOARD OF MANAGERS, to whom shall be intrusted the control and management of the Book Store, and Religious Intelligencer, and of all other property and business of the General Conference, not entrusted to any other Board, Committee, or Agent, by the Conference; said Board of Managers to hold office during one year, or until others are elected in their place.

Section 2. The BOARD OF MANAGERS shall be governed by the Rules for that purpose, annexed to this Constitution.

Section 3. All leases, deeds, conveyances, bonds, contracts, or other written documents, executed under the sanction of the Board of Managers, and having the signature of the Chairman of the General Conference, with the seal of the Conference annexed, and the signature of the Recording Secretary of Conference, shall be considered valid.

Section 4. All notes of hand drawn in the form prescribed in the Rules of this Conference, and signed by the Chairman of the Board of Managers, by the recorded vote of the Board shall be valid.

ARTICLE VIII.

Section 1. The General Conference shall appoint annually from among the members of the Free C. B. Baptist Churches not less than twelve persons, at least four of whom shall be Ministers, and all of whom shall be annual subscribers to the MISSIONARY SOCIETY of the Conference to the amount of one pound, or who have contributed the sum of ten pounds at one time, who shall constitute a MISSIONARY BOARD, and whose duties are prescribed in the Rules of Conference annexed to this Constitution.

Section 2. All persons, being members of F. C. B. Churches and subscribing one pound or upwards annually, or ten pounds at any one time, shall be considered members of the Missionary Board; and all persons subscribing five shillings or upwards, shall be considered members of the Missionary Society.

Section 3. The General Conference shall appoint, at any annual meeting, any other Committee or Committees, Agent or Agents, to continue during the year, or until dismissed by the Conference, or others are appointed in their stead, to perform any duties or manage any business specially committed to them, in accordance with the Rules annexed to this Constitution.

ARTICLE IX.

Section 1. This Constitution may be altered or amended at any Annual Session of the General Conference by the unanimous vote of the Conference.

Determined Men.

A GREAT NECESSITY.

Timidity shuts many a door of usefulness, and loses many a precious opportunity; it wins no friends, while it strengthens every enemy. Nothing is lost by boldness, nor gained by fear. It seems often as if there were a premium upon mere boldness and vigour, apart from other things. Even natural courage and resolution will accomplish much; how much more courage created and upheld by faith and prayer. In regard, for instance, to the dense masses of ungodliness and profligacy in our large towns, what will ever be effected if we timidly shrink back, or slothfully fold our hands, because the array is so terrific, and the apparent probabilities of success so slender?—Let us but be prepared to give battle, though it should be one against ten thousand, and who shall calculate the issue? But there is needed not merely natural courage in order to face natural danger or difficulty; there is, in our own day, a still greater need of moral boldness, in order to neutralize the fear of man; the dread of public opinion, that god of our idolatry in this last age, which boasts of superior enlightenment, and which would bring everything to the test of reason, or decide it by the votes of the majority. We need strength from above to be faithful in these days of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy—to set our faces like flint alike against the censure and applause of the multitude, and to dare to be singular for righteousness's sake, and to fight, single-handed, the battles of faith; the sneer, the scoff, the contemptuous smile of superiority, the cold support, the cordial opposition, the timid friendship, the bold hostility, in private and public, from lips of companions or neighbours, or fellow-citizens—often under pretext of reverence for religion—these are fitted to daunt the mind of common nerve; and to meet these, nothing less than Divine grace is needed. Never, perhaps, in any age, has wickedness assumed a bolder front and attitude; and never, therefore, was Christian courage more required than now. It needs little, indeed, of this to traverse the customary routine of parish duty. Men of the world and mere professors can tolerate, or perhaps commend, such diligence; but to step beyond that—to break the regularity of well-beaten forms—to preach and labour in season and out of season—in churches, or barns, or school-houses, or fields, or streets, or highways—to deal faithfully and closely with men's consciences, wherever you may happen to be brought in contact with them—to be always the minister, always the watchman, always the Christian, always the lover of souls—this is to turn the world upside down, to offend against every rule of good breeding, and to tear up the landmarks of civilized society. Ministers and private Christians do require more than ever to be "strong and of good courage," to be "steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." This has ever been one of the greatest secrets of ministerial success. Them that honour God, God has never failed to honour and to bless.—British Messenger.

Inexorable Law.

Every act of life is made solemn by its consequences, and by the fact that opportunity once lost cannot be recalled. The moment gone is gone forever. The deed done cannot be undone. The choice made, the soul is given up to the operation of the law under which it has placed itself. The wretch who commits suicide cannot come back to life, though he shrieks like a madman when he hears the death rattle in his throat! Or if a man commits murder, he cannot call his victim back by repentance. Perhaps he stabbed his friend in a passion. It matters not. Death has no pity. It knows not friendship nor remorse. Though the murderer throws himself upon the corpse and weeps in agony, the dead wake not.

Suppose a sailor, in a fit of revenge, set fire to a ship at sea! The next moment he is horror struck at what he has done. But will his bitter repentance soothe down the enraged elements? Will it cause the billows to cease their dashing, or the flames their fury? No! he has done the deed, and he must abide the consequences. The flames will still roll on, and mount on high, and wrap their fiery shroud around him for his ocean burial. Slowly but steadily sinks the wreck. An hour passes on and he is struggling with the waves. He reaches out his arms in convulsive agony. He curses and prays by turns. But his strength grows weaker with his efforts till—despite his struggles and prayer, and dying blasphemies—his form sinks beneath the waves, and the calm deep rolls over his head, smoothly as ever.

The laws of God in the moral world are as inflexible as those of nature. The are incapable of being turned aside by human power or ingenuity. Every man has reason to tremble lest he find too late that it requires a stronger hand than his to stop that terrific machinery which sin sets in motion. Let him not flatter himself that he can repair the injury by repenting of it. No! the only way to make life right is to start right. A late repentance may save a man's souls from hell—but it cannot undo the wrong that he has done. It cannot repair the evil which he has inflicted. In this sense, repentance comes too late. It may help to set the future right.—But it is not an atonement for the past. At the bar of conscience sin hath never forgiveness. It remains for ever, an eternal loss to the soul!—N. Y. Evangelist.