

Religious Intelligencer.

THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.—Peter

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WHOLE No. 1911

CONFERENCE.

Saturday was a bright, warm day. At 9.30 a. m. a large congregation assembled in Christian testimony meeting. From the organization of the Conference the first meeting of each annual session has been of this kind. The attendance is always large; generally the interest is good, and sometimes there is great joy. Christians find it profitable to talk to each other of their experiences in the Divine life; they are comforted, encouraged, stimulated; and strong impressions are often made on the unconverted. The meeting this year was good. Bro. F. C. Hartley, pastor of the Millstream church, led. Prayer was offered by Rev. Jos. McLeod. There were many testimonies. The reminiscences of the older brethren were inspiring; and it was good to hear old and young alike speak of the goodness of God, of his unfailing grace, and of the profit and joy of his service. When more than two hours had been occupied in this way, and the meeting had to be closed, scores who had had no opportunity to speak testified their faith and love by rising.

At 2 p. m. Conference business began, the moderator, Rev. Jos. McLeod, presiding. Rev. G. W. Foster led the Conference in fervent prayer for the Divine presence and guidance throughout the session. The roll call showed a very full attendance of ministers and delegates.

The Corresponding Secretary, Rev. J. W. Clark, read his report of the condition of the churches. The report says:

From the various parts of our denominational field we are this day assembled to celebrate the Saviour's praise, and to gratefully review our experiences, and to hopefully look to the responsibilities and duties of the future.

Then, with one heart and one voice let us unite in thanksgiving to Him by whose mercies we are permitted to meet again in our general Conference.

The history of the Christian church is a most glorious fulfilment of the prophecies and promises of God. From the primitive days until now she has steadily and conqueringly marched on, notwithstanding the predicted persecutions, and Christendom to-day has greater territory, influence and power than ever before.

Concerning ourselves and our work as a denomination of Christians we should rejoice that God has continued His blessings with us through another year, that he has honoured the faith and answered the prayers of His people, that their labours have resulted in the salvation of souls, and in otherwise building up the Kingdom of our Lord.

Numerous, indeed, have been the manifestations of our Father's love towards us. Spiritually, many of the churches are better, and numerically they are stronger than a year ago. Our losses, however, have been many. Death has been doing its work. Several leading and official members of our churches have passed away. Some of them had for many years been known for their faithfulness and loyalty to God and the church, and for having "earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the Saints." Especially is it our sad duty to record the death of two of our beloved and aged ministers, Revs. Robert French and Jacob Gunter. Both of these dear brethren did pioneer work. Both of them fought many battles for God, and achieved many victories, and finally they triumphed over "the last enemy, which is death," and peacefully entered into rest.

"Soldiers of Christ, well done; Praise be your new employ;
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in your Saviour's joy."

The report mentions each church in the seven districts, in their order, giving so far as possible, a detailed statement of the progress and condition of such. The summing up is as follows:

The total number of churches in the districts is 145, of which 117 have reported. 108 of the churches have had regular pastoral care during the year. The total number added to all the churches is, by baptism 278, by letter 126—in all 404.

Amount paid for Support of ministry, \$13,410 63
Current church expenses, 3,042 35
Buildings and improvements, 3,403 82

Total, \$19,856 80

Besides the foregoing are the amounts contributed for Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Relief of Sick and Disabled Ministers, Conference Fund, and Education, which will be reported by the Treasurers of those Boards.

In conclusion, dear brethren, I may say that the foregoing is a part of our denominational history for the past

year. It is true that the number added to the churches is not as large as in some years, but our success has not been small, neither have our blessings been few. That 278 souls have been regenerated, that union and peace abound, that our one purpose is the salvation of sinners through Jesus Christ, are facts which should produce within us the profoundest gratitude to God.

Our survey of the field which our Heavenly Father has given us in trust, suggests that the branch of work which we call Home Mission should be more than ever vigorously prosecuted; that such of the churches as are strong should liberally contribute to the help of those that are weak; that more attention be given and much prayer be made for those, who, in their weakness are struggling for life amongst us. Our possibilities and responsibilities are equally great. May we be abundant in faith and work.

The report of the Corresponding Secretary was listened to with much attention, and there was evident satisfaction throughout the large audience at the good showing it made. The adoption of the report was moved by Rev. C. T. Phillips.

He said he liked the report because it tells the truth. Exaggerated statements, especially of religious work are always hurtful. He spoke of reports of revivals which were so overwrought that they were disgusting to lovers of truth, and very injurious to the cause of religion. Nothing is gained by deception. It is well always to know the exact truth. He also then spoke of the denomination's future. Our doctrines appeal to the common sense as well as to the spiritual needs and experiences of men. In one view we are the largest denomination in the world, for our doctrines are everywhere. The territory in which to work is large, and their need is no interference with other christian workers. He thought some union meetings were simply a suspension of hostilities for a week, at the expiration of which the battle of the churches, much of it of the guerilla kind, went on more actively for the week's enforced cessation. He deplored and condemned the interference of denominations with each other, and hoped an interdenominational law, in keeping with a deep and broad christian spirit, would some time be agreed upon. There is room for all without trenching on the rights or interfering with the work of each other. Lay interest in the work is, he said, increasing. Not only in meetings for worship, but in the business of the churches and denominations, the young men and women are coming to the front, showing their concern and taking their share of responsibility. For the young ministers whom God is giving us he was devoutly thankful. They promise much usefulness. He hoped the Lord would give us more like them. The Lord expects us to be good to them, showing our appreciation and giving them encouragement. Then He will give us others. The best of all is that "God is with us." If he did not believe this he would say good bye to the denomination. He is, he said, not an over-sanguine man in anything. If all men were like him, America would never have been discovered, Africa would still be an unknown region, the riches beneath the earth's surface would still be there untouched &c; so that when he sees signs of hope and promise they must be very clear. He sees them for the denomination; believes the outlook is full of promise, and is sure that if we set ourselves to the work God will give us great blessing and prosperity.

Rev. Wm. Downey seconded the resolution to adopt the report. In doing so he spoke of the possibilities of the souls converted during the year, the changed and purified influences that will emanate from their lives, reaching and impressing a great host of others. Doubtless, also, some of the year's converts will become ministers and missionaries, and others prominent official members of the churches. One sign of hope is the increasing anxiety of the churches to have pastors; another is the demand for high standing in the ministry. The people are learning to pay, to support the ministry better, to contribute more liberally to missions at home and abroad, and to the other undertakings of the denomination. The young people are being more carefully trained in the Sabbath Schools and churches, and in this better training is great hope for the future. An enlarged de-

nominal loyalty is manifest. There is more teaching of the necessity of entire consecration of ourselves and all we have to the Lord. This has been our teaching always, and it is pleasing that there is increased attention given to it. Our doctrines endorse and insist on the highest type of Christian living.

The report was adopted.

Rev. Wm. Miller, Corresponding delegate from the N. S. F. B. Conference, was introduced. He brought, he said, the greetings and christian love of the brethren of the other Province. He spoke of several branches of their work, of what they are doing and the education of their young men for the ministry, Home and Foreign mission work, their position on the temperance question, &c., &c. As the statistics of the denomination appeared in the report published last week we omit them here. The last session of their Conference was very enjoyable and profitable, and they have entered on the work of the new year with courage and hope. They were much disappointed that no delegate from the N. B. Conference attended the last session. He spoke of the INTELLIGENCER, the esteem in which they held it, and the good it did amongst their people. He desired for his Conference, a continuance of the correspondence by delegation between the two Conferences. They have great joy in all our successes, and desire that our relations continue to be intimate and mutually helpful.

A resolution heartily welcoming Bro. Miller to the Conference was passed.

A letter was read from Rev. C. W. Foster, the delegate appointed to the Maine Free Baptist Association, regretting that illness prevented him attending. He also sent the following report of the Association:

"I send you in this brief report the fraternal greetings of the Maine Free Baptist Association. The Association was incorporated by an Act of Legislature, Feb. 26th, 1889. The first meeting was held with the Main St. Church, Lewiston, Me., Sept. 17th, 1889. As an Association we are but in our infancy. The second annual meeting is being held in the Essex Street Church, Bangor, Sept. 30th and Oct. 1st and 2nd, 1890. The object of the Association is to do the work of three Yearly Meetings in one general Association. Each of the yearly meetings has already discontinued its organization, and united in the Association for more general and better work than before.

Rev. O. W. Waldron, of Saco, Me., was appointed State Secretary one year ago, and has been labouring among the churches of the State, looking after the interests of the weak ones, and assisting the pastors in their work. We feel that this part of the State work has been attended with a good degree of success. Our State work is supported by collections from the churches, but more particularly by individual subscriptions.

The Quarterly Meetings remain the same as before, and report to the State Association instead of to the Yearly Meetings. Our churches in some Quarterly Meetings are well supplied with pastors; in others there is a lack; while in some fields there has been no regular preaching for some time. In many of our churches the meetings are well attended and interesting. The four Quarterly Meetings in the western part of the state, which were formerly known as the Western Yearly Meeting, have raised \$500 in the past year for the support of an evangelist in that field. Several new church buildings have recently been erected and dedicated; some have undergone extensive repairs; one at Caribou is in process of construction and is expected to be dedicated soon. Several of our churches have had large accessions to their membership.

The principle object of the State Association is to assist the weaker churches in securing ministerial care. There is no work of greater importance to us. Many of these churches are struggling, and unless they can get help they may be lost to us as a denomination. We are, as a people, giving more attention to the evil of intemperance than ever before. We believe the liquor traffic to be the greatest curse we have to contend against; it is the greatest foe that confronts the church of God to-day. We are looking to our Government for laws which will prohibit the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors in all our land.

We trust we may have the prayers of our brethren in the Province for God's blessing on our state work. We hope to receive a messenger from your body to our next annual meeting.

Rev. H. Hart, who attended the semi-annual meeting of the N. S. Conference, reported; and Rev. Jos. McLeod, who was appointed to attend the Maine Association, explained his non-attendance at that meeting.

The Moderator appointed the committee on Nominations, and made the

announcement of Sabbath services.—Adjourned.

At 7.15 p. m. Conference re-assembled. Prayer by Rev. F. Babcock. The order of business was the consideration of Sabbath School work. The Corresponding Secretary for Sabbath Schools, S. L. Peters, submitted a report:

Your executive committee for Sabbath Schools, in presenting their report for the information of conference, desire to express their regret that it is not as complete as they think it should be. It ought to register the returns of all the schools in the denomination. From unofficial sources we learn that there are a number of schools that have failed to report. Still we are quite sure that all the obstacles which now appear in the way can, by persistent effort be removed, and therefore we are hopeful. We have tried to meet the wishes of Conference by compiling such information as we believe will give a fair idea of the condition and extent of our Sabbath School work.

Beginning with the First District, we have reports from two schools, with a membership of 166 pupils. These schools are "evergreen," and the fact that they report twenty conversions is surely a good evidence of the character of the work done. Whether all or any of the other churches in the District have schools we are not able to say. The District certainly is a very inviting field of labour in this department of christian work.

The Second District reports 15 schools, with a membership of 787. Two churches report no schools, leaving 10 churches to be heard from. The Third District has reported 7 schools, with an enrollment of 528. Six churches were not heard from. Returns from the Fourth District show 8 schools in working order, with an enrollment of 487. Seven churches were not heard from. Your committee are certain that there are other schools in the District, and regret that we cannot give the facts about them. The Fifth District makes returns of 9 schools, with 312 pupils; leaving 10 churches that have made no reports. The Sixth District returns 20 schools in operation, with a membership of 920. Seven churches report no schools, leaving 3 churches not heard from. The Seventh District sends reports from 11 schools, with an enrollment of 1085. Two churches report no schools, and two others have not been heard from.

Then follows a tabulated statement showing the following totals—schools, 71; pupils enrolled, 4,195; average attendance, 2909; teachers, 414; average attendance of teachers, 333; open all the year, 29; open six months, 42; volumes in libraries, 7829; money received, \$1492.47; value of school property, \$3422.25; converted during year, 110; use books, 23; use papers, 12; use both books and paper, 30; use International lessons, 51; pastors attend, 48; per centage of church member attend, 31 p. c. The report says there has been a gratifying increase of S. S. literature, and also that the number kept open all the year is steadily increasing. The report continues:

Your committee note, with pleasure, the large percentage of the schools are cheered by the presence of pastors. When we take into consideration the large pastorates in which some of our ministers labour, involving preaching in two or more churches each Sabbath, it is encouraging to find so large a percentage who arrange to attend the schools. We regret, however, that the attendance of lay members is not so satisfactory. Is it because they have as much leisure on the Sabbath as the ministers, many of whom travel many miles and attend three services? Is it true that the duty of lay members to the school is entirely discharged when the meeting is adjourned which elected the superintendent and teachers? Think you, inactive, we do not say disinterested, brother or sister, that the officers of the schools do not need your presence and prayers? Your votes placed them in positions of great responsibility; it is fair to leave them to carry the burdens and endure the discouragements alone? They are labouring to teach the young in the truths of revelation, to win souls to Christ, to point out the way in which the guilt of sin may be removed and hearts be made to rejoice in Christ's overwhelming love, and to extend the kingdom of our Lord. Surely this is the work of the whole christian church, and not of a select few. The cry comes from 90 per cent of our schools—"we want more teachers, and greater support and encouragement from the members of our churches." Shall the cry go unanswered? Let us rally to the help of Sabbath School workers. Gladden their hearts by your presence and assistance, and the Saviour will surely reward you.

To one other matter we wish to call attention. Ever since the organization of this Conference it has stood pledged to the principle of total abstinence from intoxicants. Of the many religious bodies in this Province none have taken a more pronounced stand.

Your committee are unanimous in the opinion that this work should be extended in the direction of our S. School, and so far as it is possible, to secure the active co-operation of all our schools in the furtherance of temperance principles. To secure this co-operation we recommend that this Conference cause to be provided suitable pledges, to be presented to each school, for signature by the officers, teachers and pupils of the school; the pledges to be the property of the schools, and sufficiently ornamental to warrant them a place on the walls of the school room. We make this recommendation because we believe it to be consistent with our professions, and to throw around our young people a mantle of protection from the ravages of strong drink.

This Conference has always recognized the great importance of S. School work, and for the last twenty years has made it one of the distinctive features of the annual session. With other denominations, we have reason to feel encouraged at the progress being made.

Your committee are sure that they express the sentiment of the Conference in extending a hearty welcome to the members of the Provincial S. S. Association present with us. The love of the Saviour has drawn many active christians to this field, whose hearts go out to help all who can be brought within the reach of the S. S. circle. Through the efforts of this Association New Brunswick has been brought in line with the great international system of S. S. effort. May such obey the Master's call.

The resolution to adopt this report was made by Rev. G. A. Hartley, who said: Too much importance cannot be attached to this branch of our work. There is danger of the S. School being divorced from the church. All such tendency should be checked. The pastor of the church should, by virtue of his office, be the first officer of the school. He is responsible for the doctrinal teaching of the S. School. The church should appoint the Superintendent, Assistant Supt., Treasurer and Librarian, and thus maintain not only its connection with but its control of the school. The S. School should teach the distinctive doctrines of the denomination. In procuring lesson notes care should be taken to get those of a denominational character. Those which cost least are not always really the cheapest. It is important to have good teachers. Character in the teacher is of first importance. The pupil is impressed by what the teacher is as much as by what he says. He should be a practical christian. Then careful and prayerful study for the specific work he has in hand must be made. No teacher is fit for the place he occupies who goes to it unprepared.

Rev. A. C. Thompson, seconding the resolution, said: Good as the report is, he was glad it is incomplete. If it were complete, it would be a poor showing for the denomination. There are many more schools than have been reported, and the conversions of members of schools is much larger than the report shows. The fulness of the report, however, is promise of a complete one next year. He spoke of keeping the schools open all the year, and of the necessity of a house to house canvass for children. In every community there are children who do not attend. It will pay, in every way, to look after them. The end of S. School work is not just to get through with it, but to mould the children in righteousness and win them to Christ. If each teacher were in earnest to this end there would be a great ingathering to the churches. He does not believe in teachers who are not avowed Christians.

Mr. S. S. Eddy, Field Secretary of the N. B. S. S. Association, was introduced, and said: He was glad to meet representatives of the denomination considering this important work. He said the Sabbath School, except in form, is not a modern idea. Its beginning is found in the Old Testament record of the first dealings of God with the people. He traced the teaching of God as to the instruction of children. Thousands of little ones are growing up without knowledge of God; it is our duty to reach and teach and save them. The cultivation of the uncared for territory is the mission of the church. Besides this blessing to those reached by their efforts, Christians need the good and strength that come of the efforts they may make in behalf of the neglected.

Mr. S. J. Parsons said it rests with church members to remember all the defects that are shown by the report. Pastors, generally, are doing their full share of work; they must have the

active cooperation of members of their churches. The S. School opens a field for all, and if each asked, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" many who now stand aloof would find themselves moved to this work. He does not like S. Schools to be independent of churches. The S. School is that department of the work of the church in which the word of Christ is taught to the young. The whole purpose is to bring them to Jesus. He spoke of schools closing in the winter. He had been at such funerals. Had always found the children willing and anxious to have the school continued. Quarrelties, he said, are good, but they should not take the place of Bibles in the school.

Rev. Geo. E. Foster spoke briefly, and the report was adopted.

A resolution bearing on temperance teaching in Sabbath Schools was introduced, and was held over till the report of the committee on temperance should be brought in.

The committee on Nominations submitted a partial report. The Conference then adjourned till Monday.

Sabbath. There were occasional showers through the day, and the evening was very dark. Yet the congregations were large at all the services, more people attending than could get into the church.

The services began with a prayer and testimony meeting at 9 a. m., led by Rev. J. Noble. It was a season of much spiritual refreshing and strength. At 10.30 the annual sermon was preached by Rev. J. T. Parsons; at 3 p. m., Rev. Wm. Miller of Nova Scotia preached; and at 7 p. m., Rev. Dr. Hopper declared the old gospel. The sermons were good, and evidently made deep impressions on many hearers. At the Lord's Supper in the afternoon there was a larger number of communicants than we remember to have seen for many years, and it was an hour of sacred joy. The Moderator and Rev. Jos. Noble administered the ordinance. There was preaching at several other places by ministers of the Conference:

At Apohaqui by Revs. B. H. Nobles and G. A. Hartley; at Midland by Rev. J. W. Clark and Licentiate Cosman; at Sussex by Rev. C. T. Phillips; at Penobscia by Rev. G. F. Currie; at Norton Station by Rev. G. W. Foster; at Berwick (Methodist Church) by Rev. Wm. Downey; at Kierstead Mountain by Rev. John Perry; at Upper Millstream by Rev. J. N. Barnes. The day was an enjoyable one in christian worship and service, and was, we have no doubt, fruitful of good.

Monday. At 9 a. m., Conference resumed business. Prayer was offered by Rev. Wm. Miller. After roll call and reading the minutes of Saturday proceedings, the ballot for Moderator took place. Rev. J. Noble was elected Moderator, and Rev. A. C. Thompson Assistant Moderator. The Moderator elect having been conducted to the chair, the retiring Moderator welcomed him to the position, remarking that it seemed especially fitting that after a half century's faithful service in the ministry of the denomination he should be the choice of the Conference for the honourable position of presiding officer, and assuring him of the affection of his brethren and their sympathy and co-operation in the discharge of his important and sometimes delicate duties. Bro. Noble thanked the Conference for the honour of being their choice, spoke of his long connection with the body and of the marked progress made, and desired the consideration and help of all in his official duties, and their prayers that the Divine guidance might be given them all.

In accordance with notice of motion given last year Art. III of the Constitution was changed by inserting the words "Treasurer of the Executive for the Relief of Sick and Disabled Ministers" in place of "the Superintendent of Benevolent Societies."

The ballot for the Executive of General Conference resulted in the choice of Revs. G. A. Hartley, C. T. Phillips, J. W. Clark, Jos. McLeod and Wm. Peters Esq.

REPORT ON TEMPERANCE. The Committee on Temperance presented the following report:

The temperance reform moves on. Many and great obstacles are in its way—habit, prejudice, money, self-interest, political partyism—but in

(Continued on page 4).