

TERMS AND NOTICES

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Terms of religious news from every quarter are always welcome. Denominational News, as all other matter for publication should be sent promptly.

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ALL COMMUNICATIONS, etc., should be addressed RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER, Box 375, Fredericton, N. B.

Religious Intelligencer.

REV. JOSEPH McLEOD, D. D., EDITOR.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 23, 1896.

A Canadian Christian Endeavour Convention will be held at Ottawa Oct. 6th-9th. It will be the first purely Canadian Convention of the C. E. Societies. It is expected that all parts of the Dominion will be represented.

Sectarian feeling appears to be somewhat intense in the South. The Baptist Sunday School Board has its literature printed on a press owned by the Methodist church; and some of the Baptists are criticizing the Board severely for doing so.

The Treasurer for Foreign Missions acknowledges, in this issue, some recent contributions. There must be many more, however, before the needed \$400 are in the treasury. Every one who is intending to contribute should do so at once, and thus enable the Treasurer to have all accounts squared when he presents his report to Conference.

According to Dr. Cuyler—and who can deny the correctness of what he says—giving money to the Lord is just as much an act of sacred service as offering a prayer, or singing a hymn of praise, or teaching in a mission school, or coming to a sacramental table. In the Bible, the consecration of our substance is not made a mere incidental, it is put in the forefront of our religious duties.

Ballington Booth, son of "General" Booth, who left the Salvation Army and organized The American Volunteers a few months ago, has been ordained a minister of the Reformed Episcopal church. The ordination took place in Chicago, on Wednesday of last week. It is not understood that this step will interfere with the Volunteers movement of which he is the head. He is expected to continue his work along the lines indicated by him since his retirement from the Army.

It will, doubtless, be a surprise to many to be told, as Dr. Pentecost tells us, that there are far more conversions in India, in proportion to the number of missionaries preaching the gospel, than there are at home. Perhaps this fact may cause some of those who are in the habit of talking about the small results from the expenditure for foreign missions to say less. Dr. Pentecost expresses the belief that in fifty years India will be nominally a Christian country. Let us hope so, and help it to be by doing our part towards it.

The Manitoba Schools question continues to receive considerable attention, and is evidently causing some people a good deal of perturbation. Archbishop Langevin has returned from his visit to Rome. Being interviewed on his arrival in Montreal, he said,—"My attitude is the same as before my departure." Which probably means that he does not intend to modify anything in his demand for separate schools in Manitoba.

It has been stated that the Dominion and Manitoba governments have come to an understanding; and yet there seems to be something lacking, to arrange which an emissary, Abbe Proulx, has gone to Rome. This whole business needs to be watched. Is the Pope to determine the affairs of Canada?

A few days ago it seemed that England had resolved, acting

quite independently of the other powers, to make an end of the massacre of the Armenians by the murderous Turks. But now it appears that there has been such a combination of the Powers as makes England's independent action practically impossible. Not even the United States government, which has really more reason than any other to call the Turk to account, can be counted on to second the course which the British government desires to take. The only thing England seems able to do, and that it has done, is to withdraw from the alliance of powers so far as the Turkish question is concerned, and be no longer a sharer even indirectly, in responsibility for the horrible state of things. The whole case is a most pitiable exhibition of petty jealousies and selfishness among the nations.

The General Conference of the Free Baptists of the United States is triennial. There is a Conference Board, however, which meets annually and which receives reports of denominational work, and considers them and other matters affecting the denomination. The Conference Board's 1896 meeting was held a few weeks ago at Ocean Park, Me. It is announced that the reports presented were encouraging. The additions to the churches were, in many instances more than usual, and the contributions had not felt the financial stress as much as was feared. The Foreign Board commenced the year with a debt of \$3,000. The receipts during the ten months covered by the report were \$18,583, and the accounts closed with a balance on hand of \$1,389. This was accomplished, however, only by cutting down on every hand. The Home Mission Board received \$4,017.

The subject of holiness was given the leading place in a recent issue of the 'Christian Guardian,' several articles, editorial and contributed being devoted to it. In a summary, the editor says: One great bone of contention is as to whether the work of sanctification is gradual or instantaneous. Why should Christians or Methodists divide over a problem like that. Conversions are not all alike in time or intensity or attendant circumstances. The work of sanctification also is not always after the same mould as to time, intensity or circumstances. It is the same Spirit, but there are manifold operations. To limit the workings of the Holy Spirit to forms or modes or theories is an old folly exploded often enough by actual facts in the history of the church to begot by this time a little large-mindedness.

The House of Commons passed the resolution forbidding the sale of liquors within the precincts of the Commons Chamber. The closing of the bar, by order of the Speaker, was well enough so far as it went, but the same thing had been done before. So long as liquor was permitted to be sold in the Commons restaurant, the prohibition of bar drinking would only reduce the drink sales very slightly. But the prohibition of sales in any form will, without doubt, have marked beneficial effect. The fact that such a resolution has been adopted by the House, without division, is one of the best and clearest evidences of the strong and growing prohibition sentiment in the whole country.

The Senate has not yet taken like action as to the sale of liquors in its part of Parliament building. Senators Vidal and Aitken moved in the matter Ferguson and others earnestly supporting the proposal. But Senator Power and others objected to the movement, on the ground that the restaurant keeper had a three months contract, and the matter was deferred. It will, surely, come up again at the next session and the prohibition resolution be adopted.

The testimony of Li Hung Chang to the devotion of Christian missionaries in China, and the benefits of their work, is worth recording. During his visit to New York an address was presented to him by the representatives of the societies which carry on mission work in his country, expressing appreciation of the protection given to missionaries there. In his reply he spoke in warm terms of the character and labour of the missionaries saying, amongst other things,—

The missionaries have not sought for pecuniary gains at the hands of our people. They have not been secret emissaries of diplomatic schemes. Their labors have no political significance; and the last, not the least, if I might be permitted to add, they have not interfered with or usurped the rights of the territorial authorities. As man is composed of soul, intellect and body, I highly appreciate that your eminent Boards, in your arduous and much esteemed work in the field of China, have neglected none of the three. I need not say much about the first, being an unknowable mystery of which even our great Confucius had no knowledge. As for in-

tellect, you have started numerous educational establishments which have served as the best means to enable our countrymen to acquire a fair knowledge of the modern arts and sciences of the West. As for the material part of our constitution, your societies have started hospitals and dispensaries to save not only the soul but also the body of our countrymen. I have also to add that in the time of famine in some of the provinces you have done your best for the greatest number of sufferers to keep their bodies and souls together. . . . Opium smoking, being a great curse to the Chinese population, your societies have tried your best not only by anti-opium societies, but to afford the best means to stop the craving for the opium; and also, you receive none as your converts who are opium smokers.

I have to tender, in my own name, my best thanks for your most effective prayers to God to spare my life when it was imperilled by the assassin's bullet, and for the most kind wishes which you have just now so ably expressed in the interests of my Sovereign, my country and my people.

The Conference.

Next week the sixty-fourth annual session of the Free Baptist Conference of New Brunswick will be held in St. John, in the Victoria street church. The Minister's Conference will meet on Friday at 10 a. m. Saturday at 10 a. m. there will be the social conference, conference which, from the organization of the denomination, has been a notable feature of the annual meeting. At 2 p. m. the moderator will call the General Conference to order, and business will begin. The chief features of the first meeting are (1) the report of the Corresponding Secretary, which gives a summary of the activities of the churches during the year, the results of the work done, and their present condition, (2) addresses on denominational matters by the brethren who move the adoption of the Report, (3) the reports of fraternal delegates to other bodies, (4) the introduction of fraternal delegates from other bodies and addresses by them, and (5) the appointment of committees.

At all Conferences, Conventions, Associations, Synods and other general meetings of religious bodies, certain routine matters, necessarily engage considerable attention. Sometimes it may seem to the not very observant, onlooker that each annual meeting is like every other one. Perhaps, occasionally a session may be so barren of real work as to almost justify such belief. But it is not often such a session of any religious body is held. Usually there is much new and important work, and nearly always more is done than appears to the mere onlooker. It would be a grave mistake and worse—a waste of time and money, a lack of appreciation of the condition and needs of Christ's cause, and a sign of unfaithfulness, for any religious body to meet year after year without at each meeting considering existing conditions, seeking to remedy such defects as may be discovered, getting enlarged views of the possibilities of Christian service, and a new sense of the obligations involved in its organized existence and the opportunities at its hand, and then planning to make an always better use of the forces it possesses for the most effective work for Christ's kingdom.

At the approaching session of Conference there will, of course, be the usual routine. Reports of officers, of executives, and of committees will be presented, all of which will give rise to discussion. Some of them, perhaps all, may contain suggestions necessitating, if not new lines of work, at least new or changed methods. This may be true particularly of the reports of the Corresponding Secretary of Conference, and the report of the Home Mission Executive, which have to do particularly with the work and condition of the churches. Then it is always open to any member of Conference to propose anything that he may think will promote the health of the body, and increase its efficiency as a Christian organization. Perhaps no one will deny that there is room for improvement in many respects; there is always something to improve and there always will be till perfection, not only of faith and devotion, but of organization and administration is reached, which will be—when?

Among the things which occur to us as requiring attention are the following:—the enlargement of both the Home and Foreign Mission work; a more definite arrangement for the theological training of candidates for the ministry; the increase of the fund for the relief of sick and disabled ministers, and a proper system of disbursement; the relation of the Conference to certain matters connected with the N. B. Seminary; a revision of statistical tables and methods, with a view to greater accuracy; how to encourage in the churches a deeper and more practical interest in questions and undertakings of the denomination which are general rather than local; whether the time has not come, in many

sections, for more compact pastorates, which may receive closer pastoral care and in return more liberally support their pastors; and whether we should not be more ready to occupy such new fields as God may be calling us to. These and other questions, of more or less moment, may very well engage the thoughtful and prayerful attention of Conference. In dealing with and determining the various matters which come before it the Conference will, let us all hope, have only one consideration in mind—the effect on the life and efficiency of the denomination, and thereby, on the kingdom of Christ.

All the District meetings having been held, the delegates to Conference have all been chosen, and, we hope, are intending to be present. Every one of them, as all the ministers and other members of Conference, should attend, being present at the opening and remaining till the close. No member is unimportant. Each should be there to do his part to forward the work God has committed to us.

Conference is usually a season of spiritual blessing. In the midst of much work, the brethren do not forget to worship, and the Lord manifests His gracious presence. The session of this year, we trust, may be one of unusual "refreshing from the presence of the Lord." Doubtless many are now praying for this. For it let all the people pray.

Ministers' Relief Fund.

Perhaps all the ministers and churches have had resolution 12 of the Conference of 1895 in mind, and have done as recommended therein. We hope they have. If they have done so this reference to it, while unnecessary, will do no harm. On the other hand, if any churches or ministers have overlooked the matter, this will be a reminder of a duty which it is not yet too late to attend to. The resolution referred to is as follows:

"Resolved, That the Sunday immediately preceding the meeting of General Conference, or on such other days as each church shall prescribe, in each year, be Ministers' Relief Sunday, and that the churches be requested to take up, each, one collection, on that day for the Ministers' Relief Fund."

There is no fund in charge of the Conference which more deserves the sympathetic and generous support of the churches than the fund which is intended to provide help for sick and disabled ministers. The ministers themselves are, of course, in sympathy with it; and yet they may have a delicacy about urging it upon the attention of the people, lest they may be open to the criticism of being anxious to provide for themselves. The younger men, being yet, presumably, many years removed from the time when, if ever, they may need to receive anything from such fund, should not hesitate to present its claims clearly and with much heartiness. Up to this time whatever contributions have gone into the Relief Fund have been more accidental than designed, and have been so meagre that there has never been enough money in hand to warrant the establishment of any system of appropriation, nor enough to meet any really serious demand for relief. This is not, we think, so much attributable to unwillingness of the churches as to the fact that they have not had the need of such a fund, and its claims upon them, clearly and persistently set before them. We must believe that if the importance of providing for those ministers, who, by old age or broken health, are unable to longer engage regularly, or not at all, in the active work of the ministry, were rightly brought to the attention of the churches there would be a general willingness and gladness to contribute to such a fund. There would be not only the collections at District meetings and Conference, as for several years, and the special collections annually in the churches as recommended in the resolution of last General Conference, but many members would make generous contributions to the fund—some during their life-time, and some in their wills. It would not be long till a fund worthy its purpose, and adequate to all the demands upon it, would be created.

Returning to the resolution quoted above, let us hope that all the churches that have not yet done so will comply with the recommendation of Conference at once. Where it has not been done, it should be done next Sunday. Even if the pastor's appointment is not with the church next Sunday, the collection can be taken, and if there is danger that it will be smaller than the church would give under more favorable conditions, enlarge it by soliciting contributions from those who, either were not present or did not have money enough with them. And all collections that have not already been sent should be forwarded to the Treasurer of the fund at Conference.

The Nova Scotia Conference.

This is not intended to be a report of the Conference proceedings. The Clerk, Rev. E. Crowell, will furnish that from the official records.

To reach the Conference, from St. John, there was a steamer trip, a railroad ride of 104 miles—48, on the D. A. R., to Middleton, and 56, on the N. S. Central, to Bridgewater and a carriage ride of twenty-four miles to Port Medway. The day, Wednesday, 9th inst., was fine, and the journey was made, pleasantly enough, between 7 a. m. and 8 p. m.

Fine weather was not in gr at plenty, after that day, during the Conference session. Part of Friday was clear and bright, as was part of Saturday; the rest of the time, from Thursday morning till Monday, fog and rain alternated.

Port Medway is a small village, at the mouth of the Medway river, on the Atlantic coast. The harbour is said to be an excellent one, capable of accommodating the largest ships. Until within a few years it was an important port, much lumber being shipped. Just now little or nothing is being done there in the lumber trade. It is a prettily situated village, and has the appearance of thrift and comfort. There are four churches—Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal and Free Baptist.

The Baptist and Free Baptist are about equal in membership and strength; the others are smaller. Rev. T. H. Siddall is pastor of the Free Baptist church. He preaches, also, at East Port Medway, which is across the harbour, and at Port Moulton, twenty miles distant. Under his ministry the church has been much revived and strengthened, and he is held in esteem not only by the members of his own church, but by the community generally, for his work's sake.

The entertainment of the Conference was with characteristic Nova Scotia hospitality. Pastor Siddall and his people evidently intended that their visitors should feel quite at home, and they succeeded.

A Conference is always a good place to be. One meets so many friends, to see whom he has few other opportunities. It was pleasant in this case to see old friends, some whom we had not seen for many years, and to meet some whom we had long known but had never met.

Inquiries were made about a number of the New Brunswick ministers who, at one time and another, had been in Nova Scotia. Many of the older people asked about Rev. Jos. Noble, who, a number of years ago, was pastor at Port Medway for two years. His pastorate began at a most trying time in the history of the church; but his faithful and judicious ministry was blessed to its help. The late Rev. W. Downey, who spent a month there, immediately following bro. Noble's pastorate, and was much blessed in revival, was frequently spoken of.

The attendance at Conference was not as large as in some years. The absence of several ministers, and the representatives of a number of churches, were, doubtless, due to the fact that the place of meeting is remote from the majority of the churches. To get there necessitated either a considerable outlay for steamer and railway and coach travel, or a very long and tedious ride by private conveyance, consuming much time and causing much weariness. And, probably, each brother thought that he would be the only absentee, and would not be much missed. But all the absentees were missed—Revs. W. C. Weston, W. M. Knollin, W. Miller, J. W. Freeman, D. T. Porter, G. E. Sturgis, J. W. Smith, F. G. Frances, and, also, a number of laymen who are almost always at the annual meeting. Do not do it again brethren, unless you are very sick. Get there, if it takes all the money you have and a fortnight of time. You need to see the brethren they need to see you, all need the renewing and strengthening of holy fellowship which comes from the four or five days close Christian intercourse which a Conference affords, and Christ's Kingdom requires that the best thought the ripest experience and the fullest consecration of all shall contribute to the purposes and plans for its extension.

Notwithstanding the somewhat smaller attendance than usual, and the unpleasant weather, it was a good Conference. The Saturday conference was a season of refreshing, as was the communion service Sabbath afternoon. The reports, which will be printed in full later, showed a good degree of success during the year. The Home Mission work was much blessed. The interest in Foreign Missions is increasing; it is almost entirely managed by the sisters, and they are doing their work well. The Young People's societies are doing efficient service; they had a good increase of members in the last year, and they evidently

intend to go on to still larger undertakings "for Christ and the church."

The annual sermon by the retiring Moderator, Rev. J. K. West, was one of deep interest and power. We hope to print it very soon. One licentiate of the Conference, bro. E. S. Parker, was ordained. The ordination sermon, by Rev. E. Crowell, was a clear, practical and earnest presentation of the qualifications and duties of the Christian minister. . . . Rev. James Billingston, a member of the Vermont Free Baptist yearly meeting, who has been labouring in Nova Scotia for some time, was received into the Conference. . . . The missionary meetings were good, as, also, was the education meeting. . . . Taken altogether, it was a good session of the Conference. Our brethren are brave, energetic, enterprising; they recognize the good hand of God in the successes they have had, and they are looking to Him for wisdom and strength to still more strongly establish what they have, and to help them enter and possess for Him the fields which seem to invite them.

Rev. D. T. Porter is the fraternal delegate to the N. B. Conference. Rev. E. Crowell will accompany him, and bro. Porter having been appointed a committee to confer with committees of our Conference and that of N. B., Maine and N. S., on the question of Free Baptist union. . . . The N. S. Conference in 1897 will be held in Yarmouth.

Mission News and Notes.

—After four years' labor the North African mission of the Baptist church has received its first convert in Egypt.

—The English Baptists have now planted a station within ten miles of Stanley Falls on the Upper Congo.

—The increase of Protestant Christians in China every year is about 5,000, and the present number is above 70,000.

—Since its organization in 1814 the American Baptist Missionary Union has averaged one person baptized every two hours and a new Baptist church formed every two weeks.

—Three new translations of the Bible are in progress in India, respectively into the Hindi, Hindustani and Punjabi languages. The Bible has been translated wholly into fifteen Indian languages, and partly into forty six more.

—Although the Moravians number only 13,000, they have seventeen mission fields, 303 missionaries, 1,500 converts under instruction, 215 mission schools with 283 teachers, and 1,700 pupils. The annual cost of their work is \$250,000.

—The native Christians of the South Sea Islands are model Sabbath-keepers. On Saturday they prepare all their food for Sunday; not a fire is lighted, nor flesh nor food is cooked; not a tree is climbed, nor a canoe is seen on the water, nor a journey on land is undertaken on God's holy day.

—For miles around Efulen, Africa, the people have ceased to believe in witches, and three witch doctors have given up their calling gracefully and gone to work building bark houses. It was only in the summer of 1892 that Dr. Good, making his preliminary exploration, struck the first blow at witchcraft in Efulen.

—The workers of the different Protestant denominations in Mexico are coming nearer together, and joining hands in a common effort against not only the teachings of Rome, but against the not less formidable enemy of skepticism among the liberally educated classes.

—It is stated that Chou Han, the notorious author of the books and placards against Christianity and foreigners, which have had such an effect in inciting the people of Hunan to bitter opposition to Christians, has given up worshipping idols, and severed his connection with his anti-foreign and anti-Christian associates. Earnest effort is being made for his conversion.

—Under Spanish rule all intercourse with the native Christian inhabitants of the island of Ponape is strictly forbidden, being kept back to prevent it. It has, however, been learned that there are at several points churches and schools maintained by the native Christians themselves, who are holding fast to the faith, and fruit is being gathered unto life eternal.

—In Zululand church contributions are taken up, but the African natives do not depend on small coin for their offerings. In response to one appeal made by the bishop recently there were offered ninety-three baskets of 'mealies,' seven head of cattle, one