

Religious Intelligencer.

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

VOL. XLV.—No 87.

FREDERICTON N. B., OCTOBER 13, 1897

WHOLE No. 2291

The General Conference of N. B.

SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION.

The Ministers' Conference opened in this city, at 10 a. m. Friday. The venerable Chairman, Rev. Jos. Noble, was present, presiding with dignity and grace. "Blest be the tie" was sung; the Chairman read Col. 2; and prayer was offered by Rev. G. A. Hartley. Roll call showed that about a dozen of the ordained ministers were not present at the opening. Some of them are likely to put in an appearance before the close of the session. There has been no death of ministers during the year, for which all hearts were moved to thank God. Rev. H. A. Bonnell was elected Chairman and Rev. G. A. Hartley, Assistant Chairman, for the ensuing year. Father Noble in retiring from the Chair, which he has filled many times, spoke tenderly of his long years of connection with the Conference, and of the many times his brethren had honoured him. He does not, he said, expect to be active in the work much, if any longer. His powers he said, are decaying, and he knows that very soon he must pass over. He has great love for his brethren and the denomination of his youthful choice—alove which was never so strong as now. The new Chairman made suitable remarks on taking the chair. Revs. T. S. VanWart, E. B. Gray and H. Hartt were elected members of the Ministers' Conference Executive for the year. Rev. J. A. Robertson, a former member of the Conference, now resident in Massachusetts, being present, was invited to a seat. A committee on absent brethren was appointed. Rev. F. C. Hartley, by appointment made last year read a paper on John 3:5. It was followed by an interesting discussion, participated in by a large number of the members. The meeting then adjourned to the afternoon, and was invited to a seat. Several matters were considered, but which, being referred to General Conference for completion, need not be reported till final action has been taken. The meeting adjourned to the call of the Chairman.

FRIDAY EVENING.—There was a preaching meeting at 7:30. A good congregation assembled. Rev. David Long preached on Growth in Grace, a helpful sermon.

SATURDAY.—The Saturday morning meeting of the annual session is always well attended, almost always a meeting of great interest, and often one of much spiritual power. At 10 a. m. last Saturday there was in the church an interesting congregation. The meeting was led by the pastor, Rev. F. C. Hartley, Revs. J. Noble and the Moderator, Rev. B. H. Nobles, being associated with him in the opening devotions. After singing several hymns, Rev. Jos. Noble led in prayer. The leader read the Church Covenant, and spoke at some length about christenings and the goodness of God. The Moderator followed, speaking particularly of the suggestiveness of review, and how every thoughtful person must be impressed with the goodness of God. Rev. Jos. Noble said his last days are his best. He thanks God, and also the many who have done so much towards making his days so full of comfort. It is, he said, a beautiful world. He has had his share of what are called hardships, but the good and the bright have far exceeded all else. Then followed a large number of testimonies. The theme of the meeting was God's goodness. After an hour and a half spent in testimonies, many who had not had opportunity to speak, expressed their faith and love by rising.

GENERAL CONFERENCE.—The first business meeting of the General Conference opened at 2 p. m. the Moderator, Rev. B. H. Nobles, presiding. "All hail the power of Jesus name" was sung; the Moderator read Psalms 122 and 125; and prayer was offered by Rev. Gideon Swin. After roll call, the Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Jos. McLeod, read his report as follows:

REPORT OF THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

BRO. MODERATOR AND BRETHREN:—One of the duties of the Corresponding Secretary of this Conference is "to prepare an annual report of the state of religion in the churches," which report he is instructed to read "in the first business session of the Conference."

For the Conference to know the religious condition of the churches is most important. To discover that condition, and set it forth, is most difficult. The material from which such report must be made comes, principally, from the Clerks of the several District Meetings, each furnishing a summary of the reports of the churches in his District.

An additional source of information was provided for by the Conference, at its last session, by a resolution (No. 38) requiring each minister, ordained and licensed, to report to the Corresponding Secretary of his work during the year.

The summaries sent by the District Clerks are, presumably, as full and accurate as could be made of the material furnished in the reports from the churches. The Clerks have, also, at the request of the Corresponding Secretary, kindly permitted him the use of their Records and the 1897 reports of the churches.

Of the ministers twenty-eight (21 ordained and 7 licensed) have sent reports as required by resolution of the Conference of 1896; from twenty-six (22 ordained and 4 licensed) no reports have been received. The non-reporting brethren will, perhaps, at the proper time state their reasons for not complying with the request of Conference.

From the sources of information indicated the facts hereinafter set forth have been gathered.

MINISTERS.—There are on the Conference roll forty-three (43) ordained ministers and four (4) licentiates. Besides these there are seven District Meeting licentiates, and three church licentiates.

Of the ordained ministers five are out of the Province.—Rev. J. H. Erb, in Texas, on account of his health; Rev. F. A. Currier, M. A., who has a pastorate in the Nova Scotia Conference; and Revs. A. H. McLeod and W. Reid, who are at Cobb Divinity School. Four—Revs. Thos. Connor, J. S. Jones, T. W. Carpenter and L. A. Cosman, on account of age or ill-health, have not been able to engage in the work of the ministry. The working force of the ordained ministry has, therefore, been thirty-four. Of these, four—Revs. J. Noble, T. O. Dewitt, H. Hartt and J. Henderson—have been engaged in general mission work, brethren Noble and Dewitt the whole year—the former some of the time under the direction of the W. M. Society, the latter some of the time under direction of the Conference H. M. Executive; brethren Henderson and Hartt, part of the time, independently.

Twenty-nine—Revs. John Perry, G. A. Hartley, J. T. Parsons, J. N. Barnes, T. S. VanWart, E. B. Gray, C. T. Phillips, W. DeWare, J. W. Clarke, J. J. Barnes, W. J. Halse, O. N. Mott, G. W. Foster, G. F. Currie, B. H. Nobles, W. H. Perry, G. Swin, C. B. Lewis, F. C. Hartley, H. A. Bonnell, A. G. Downey, D. Long, A. Perry, I. D. Harvey, S. J. Perry, J. B. Daggett, E. S. Parker, W. C. Keirstead and D. Patterson—have been pastors; and one, Rev. Jos. McLeod, has been editor of the denominational paper—the RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

Of the Conference Licentiates, C. T. Coombs and A. H. Williams were in charge of pastorates the whole year; S. J. Case was teaching at Horton Academy, and is now teaching in a Free Baptist school at New Hampton, N. H.; L. A. Fenwick was pursuing his studies at Acadia University, and is now there; but these brethren did some preaching during the summer vacation.

Of the District Meeting licentiates, F. S. Hartley, who is at the Divinity School, spent the summer vacation with churches in the Third District under direction of the H. M. Executive; T. Patterson, who is at the Bible School, spent part of the summer with churches in the Sixth District; A. D. Paul has been two years in Maine, part of the time attending the Bible School, and he thinks to continue his studies there another year; J. E. Puddington was engaged with some churches in the Second District; A. Stoeger with churches in the Third District; C. Stirling with churches in the Fourth District; and Z. Doody gave some care to a church in the First District.

Of the church licentiates, M. L. Gregg and G. D. Milbury spent the summer, under direction of H. M. Executive, with churches in the Seventh District; R. McKim gave some care to a church in the Fifth District.

As ordinations take place only at Conference there could not be any addition to the list of ordained ministers during the year. To the list of licentiates there have been added since last Conference, by the First District Meeting, Z. Doody; by the Second District Meeting, Chas. Stirling and J. E. Puddington; by the Third District Meeting, A. Stoeger; by the Sixth District Meeting, Talmage Patterson; by Fredericton church, G. Douglas Milbury; by Snider Mountain church, M. L. Gregg; by Fifth Wickman church, Robt. McKim.

Of the pastors only five have had but one church each. The others have had the care of pastorates embracing from two to seven churches each, the pastors averaging four churches each.

CHURCHES.—The number of churches connected with the Conference, according to the enrollment in the several Districts, is one hundred and fifty-

five (155). Of these one hundred and eighteen (118) reported to their respective District Meetings this year.

The following table shows the number of churches in each District, the number reported and the number unreported this year:

DISTRICT	CHURCHES	Reported	Unreported
First	21	7	14
Second	26	25	1
Third	28	18	10
Fourth	16	15	1
Fifth	21	15	6
Sixth	29	26	3
Seventh	14	12	2

CHURCHES HAVING PASTORS.—One hundred and fifteen (115) of the reported churches had pastoral care during the year, as follows:

FIRST DISTRICT.
Rev. S. J. Perry: Bath, Beechwood, Upper Kent, Lower Perth.
Rev. J. Perry: Wicklow, River de Chute.

SECOND DISTRICT.
Rev. C. T. Phillips: Woodstock, South Wakefield.
Rev. J. N. Barnes: Lower Brighton, Pembroke, Newburgh, Hartland, Upper Brighton, River Bank.

Rev. J. J. Barnes: Rockland, Coldstream, Gordonsville, Windsor.
Rev. A. G. Downey: Victoria, Somerville, Connell, Charleston.
Rev. Wm. DeWare: Third Tier, Waterville, Lakeville, Brookville.

SEVENTH DISTRICT.
Rev. G. B. Gray: Tracey Mills, Knoxford.
Licen. Puddington: Knowlesville, Freston (partial).

THIRD DISTRICT.
Rev. J. T. Parsons: Marysville, Peniac.
Rev. T. S. VanWart: Upper Hainesville, Staple's Settlement, Millville.
Rev. F. C. Hartley: Fredericton.

Rev. W. C. Keirstead: Douglas, Kingsley, Gibson.
Licen. Coombs: Southampton, Campbell Settlement, Meductic, Lower Canterbury.

Licen. Stoeger: Stanley, Bloomfield (partial).
Licen. F. S. Hartley: Prince William, Bear Island, Lower Queensbury (partial).

FOURTH DISTRICT.
Rev. O. N. Mott: Fredericton Junction, Tracey Station, Little Lake.
Licen. Williams: Blissville, Patterson, Mill Settlement, Clarendon.

Licen. Stirling: Waasis, Oromocto, Waterville, French Lake, Victoria.
Rev. J. B. Daggett: Lincoln (partial).
Rev. T. O. Dewitt: Upper Gagetown, Rusiagornish (partial).

Rev. John Henderson: Geary, Rusiagornish, (partial).
FIFTH DISTRICT.
Rev. G. W. Foster: Hampstead, Upper Hampstead, Jerusalem, Hibernia, Gagetown.

Rev. C. B. Lewis: 2nd Johnson, 1st Wickham, 2nd Wickham, 4th Wickham, 6th Wickham.
Rev. H. A. Bonnell: 1st Greenwich, 2nd Greenwich, 5th Hampstead, Westfield.

Licen. McKim: 5th Wickham (partial).
SIXTH DISTRICT.
Rev. B. H. Nobles: Sussex, Penobscia, Newtown, Dutch Valley.

Rev. G. F. Currie: Norton Station, Midland, Long Point, Erb Settlement.
Rev. A. Perry: Steeves Settlement, Wheaton Settlement, Lewis Mountain, Coverdale, Steeves Settlement, Eagle Settlement.

Rev. D. Long: Apohaqui, Millstream, Millstream Mountain, Snider Mountain, Upper Millstream.
Rev. E. S. Parker: Moncton.

SEVENTH DISTRICT.
Rev. G. A. Hartley: Carleton, St. John.
Rev. J. W. Clarke: Waterloo St., St. John.

Rev. W. J. Halse: Victoria St., St. John.
Rev. W. H. Perry: North Head, Grand Harbour, Seal Cove.
Rev. I. D. Harvey: Whitehead.

Rev. D. Patterson: Wilson's Beach, North Roads.
Licen. Fenwick and Milbury: Beaver Harbour (partial).
Licen. Gregg: Fair Haven, Chocolate Cove, Northern Harbour (partial).

Rev. Jos. Noble, the senior minister, though now 82 years of age, was abundant in labours during the year. He visited churches in every District—his journeyings taking him from Beaver Harbour, in Charlotte Co., to Riley Brook, on the Tobique river, and to the head waters of the Miramichi. He preached every Sabbath, except one, during the year. His visits to the churches have been highly appreciated.

ADDITIONS TO CHURCHES.—The churches which received new members during the year are the following:

CHURCH	MINISTER	BAPTIZED	BY LETTER
Arthurrette	Rev S J Perry	5	1
Beechwood	do	1	
Riley Brook	" C T Phillips and S J Perry	3	5
Lower Brighton	" J N Barnes	3	
Rockland	" J J Barnes	7	
Woodstock	" C T Phillips	18	3
Coldstream	" J J Barnes	1	
Waterville	" W DeWare	1	1
Lakeville	do	2	2
Fredericton	" F C Hartley	2	
Meductic	Licen. Coombs and Rev W J Halse	9	10
Campbell Sett.	Licen. Coombs	1	
Mid Southampton	Licen. Coombs and Rev W J Halse	19	
Gibson	" W C Keirstead	16	21
Marysville	" J T Parsons	3	
Tracey Station	" O N Mott	2	
Rusiagornish	" T O Dewitt	5	
Waasis	Licen. Stirling	9	1
Geary	Rev J Henderson	3	1
Upper Gagetown	" T O Dewitt	7	
Greenwich	" H A Bonnell	3	1
Gagetown (Bethany)	" G W Foster	5	1
1st Hampstead	do	1	
3rd Hampstead	do	1	
5th Hampstead	" H A Bonnell	4	2
4th Wickham	" C B Lewis	1	
6th Wickham	do	1	3
Westfield	" H A Bonnell	1	5
Snider Mountain	" D Long	1	
Lower Ridge	" G Swin	4	
Upper Millstream	" D Long	1	
Steeves Mountain	" A Perry	6	
Taylor Village	" G Swin	6	
Newtown	" B H Nobles	3	
Moncton	" E S Parker	3	
Sussex	" B H Nobles	1	2
St John Waterloo St.	" J W Clarke	15	
do. Carleton	" G A Hartley	3	
do. North	" W J Halse	2	
Seal Cove	" W H Perry	3	
North Head	do	3	

The additions during the year were,—by baptism 185; by letter 62; total 247. The net increase is 46.

The membership of the reported churches is 9169; the estimated membership of the unreported churches is 2790, making a total of 11,959.

NEW CHURCHES.—Churches were organized as follows:
At Havelock, C. Co., June 12th, by Revs. J. N. Barnes and A. G. Downey, with 17 members.

At Riley Brook, V. Co., a church long dormant, was resuscitated in January by Revs. C. T. Phillips and S. J. Perry.

CHURCH BUILDINGS.—A new church building at Connell, Car. Co., was dedicated to public worship. Church buildings are nearing completion in the following places: Victoria, C. Co.; Kingsley, York Co.; Bloomfield, Y. Co.; Waasis, S. Co.; Westfield, K. Co.; Castalia, Ch. Co.

Besides the foregoing several church buildings have been much improved at considerable cost, among them the following: Gibson, Marysville, Lincoln, Brown's Flat, Portage, Coverdale, Upper Millstream, St. John.

CHURCH PROPERTY.—The value of church property, so far as can be ascertained from the reports, is \$160,000.

There are twelve parsonages—three in the second District, two in the 3rd District, four in the 6th District, and three in the 7th District.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.—The money raised for all purposes, by the report-

ed churches, was \$28,907.48. The items making up this amount, as stated in the reports of the churches, are set forth, by Districts, in the following table:

Total.	Other Monies.	W. M. Societies.	By Y. P. Societies.	Conference Fund.	Educational.	Sabbath Schools.	Foreign Missions.	Home Missions.	Building Improvements.	Church Expenses.	Salaries.	District.
483 11	100 83	78 53	7 50	5 00	2 84	184 06	41 37	15 40	20 00	62 00	\$385 77	1st.
7 330 34	100 83	78 53	7 50	5 00	184 06	24 05	41 37	60 50	3,800 00	382 63	2,438 07	2nd.
6,648 29	341 87	83 58	144 31	82 17	24 05	1 50	90 54	6 25	2,764 56	500 71	2,496 00	3rd.
2,207 90	62 28	80 01	41 19	56 45	1 50	6 00	8 61	13 14	755 51	145 05	1,045 05	4th.
1,368 09	8 52	19 15		47 47	5 50		8 60	98 97	165 99	165 99	920 03	5th.
4,563 08	2 75	128 35		104 25	6 86		163 81	44 82	1,245 08	377 05	2,437 00	6th.
6,425 67	391 10	126 28	277 45	140 90	46 74	408 66	30 00		964 64	964 64	3,227 58	7th.
28,907 48	916 35	515 90	691 45	495 09	271 55	474 66	342 93	239 08	9,352 08	2,658 03	\$12,949 50	Totals.

Some of the items which go to make up the total (\$28,907.48), are incomplete. For instance, the reports of only two Districts make mention of money raised for Sabbath Schools. It is not to be understood that the other Districts failed in this branch of work. The explanation of the omission is that the Clerks of five Districts, knowing that a report dealing exclusively with Sabbath School work is presented by an officer of the Conference, did not think it necessary to include financial or other particulars of Sabbath School work in their reports to your Corresponding Secretary.

Other items, also, as Education, Y. P. Societies and others, are manifestly, not fully reported.

The aim for some years has been to have prepared for the information of Conference a statement of all monies, for all purposes, raised in all the churches. There is an improvement in the reporting; but to get everybody who has to do with these things to be as systematic and painstaking as is desirable is found to be a not easy thing. There is yet much to be done before the reports will convey an accurate financial statement, or an adequate idea, in any respect, of the work the denomination has in charge, and how the ministers and churches are seeking to do it, and with what success.

SOME AVERAGES.—Of all money reported for all purposes, the average payment per resident member is found to be \$4.61—being \$2.06 for ministers' salaries, \$1.91 for other local purposes, 4 cents for Home Missions, 6 cents for Foreign Missions, 8 cents for Conference fund, and 45 cts for all the other purposes specified in the financial table.

By DISTRICTS the average payment per reported resident member is, 1st Dis. \$2.82; 2nd Dis. \$6.19; 3rd Dis. \$6.55; 4th Dis. \$2.95; 5th Dis. \$2.60; 6th Dis. \$4.51; 7th Dis. \$4.45.

MISSIONS AND CONFERENCE FUND.—The Home Mission money was contributed by thirty-eight (38) churches, reporting 2428 resident members; the Foreign Mission money by fifty-one (51) churches reporting 2911 resident members; the Conference Fund by eighty-eight (88) churches reporting 5455 resident members.

Twenty-two churches contributed to Foreign missions only; ten churches to Home Missions only; twenty-nine churches contributed to both Home and Foreign Missions.

The number of churches which contributed to H. M., or F. M., or both, are, by Districts, as follows: 2nd Dis. 13; 3rd Dis. 12; 4th Dis. 3; 5th Dis. 8; 6th Dis. 22; 7th Dis. 3.

Churches reporting 3829 resident members gave nothing for Home Missions; and churches reporting 3348 resident members gave nothing for Foreign Missions.

The Sixth District has the distinction of having contributed most to Home and Foreign Missions, of having the largest proportion of its churches sharing in the contributions, and of having the largest per capita contribution by an individual church.

COMPARISONS.—Comparing this year and last it is seen that the additions to the churches by baptism are 252 less this year.

Comparing the salaries and other expenditures for church purposes, it is shown that there is an increase in this year of \$2,415.52.

The increase was chiefly in expenditures on church buildings, the increase in salaries being only \$15.39.

There has been a falling off in the contributions to Home Missions of \$312.14; and in those to Foreign Missions of \$316.94.

The Conference Fund is larger this year than last year.

TWO PERIODS.—Correct judgment of gain or loss cannot be formed by examination of a single year, nor even by comparing the record of a year with that of its immediate predecessor. Comparing periods gives more accurate and, therefore, more satisfactory results.

There have been things in the history of this Conference—peculiarly trying experiences, which have to be considered in order to a just estimate of the denomination's growth and present standing.

In 1877 the number of churches enrolled was 148, 112 of which reported that year. The membership of the churches was 9131. The salaries and other expenditures for local church work amounted to \$15,704.20.

In 1887 the number of churches enrolled was 145, 115 of which reported that year. The membership was 9607. The salaries and other expenditure for local church work amounted to \$19,693.39.

It needs to be remembered that in the latter half of the decade (from 1882) certain distracting and disintegrating influences were at work in many churches, preventing growth.

In 1897 the number of churches enrolled is 155, 118 of which have reported this year. The membership (estimated) is 11,085. The salaries and other expenditures for local church purposes amount to \$24,693.39.

During the decade ending with this year the denomination suffered much from an unhappy schism, the culmination of the influences mentioned as at work from 1882. In the first year of this decade (1888) twelve ministers—nine ordained and three licensed—were lost to the Conference, with their following. And for a considerable time there was a severe struggle caused by the influence of those who were separated from the denomination. It has been surprising to many, and very gratifying to all, that the denomination so soon recovered from the shock and loss.

"THE STATE OF RELIGION."—The foregoing facts may not show as clearly as some may desire "the state of religion in the churches."

Attendance at monthly conferences and mid-week prayer-meetings is, perhaps, regarded as a better index of spiritual condition.

The record of these meetings and the average attendance, as given in the reports from the churches, is as follows: