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

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The Conference of New Brunswick.

Sixty-Seventh Annual Session.

The sixty-seventh session of the General Conference of the Free Baptists of New Brunswick convened with the church in Carleton, St. John.

The first meeting was that of the Ministers' Conference, which met on Monday. It was, as usual, a meeting of interest. The ministers were glad to meet each other, some of them not having met for a year. That death had not entered the ministry during the year was a gratifying fact. For the goodness of God and His preservation we all felt grateful.

The meeting opened at 10 a. m. Rev. W. H. Perry, Chairman presiding. "Blest be the tie that binds" was sung, a scripture lesson (Ps. 19) was read by the Chairman, and prayer was offered by Rev. Jos. Noble, the senior member of the Conference.

The roll call showed a number of members absent, many of whom came in later.....Revs. T. H. Siddall, the corresponding delegate from the Nova Scotia Conference, Rev. G. M. Wilson, of Nova Scotia, and Rev R. Heine, of New Hampshire, being present, were invited to seats.....Rev. David Long was elected Chairman of the Ministers Conference for the ensuing year; and Rev. J. Noble, T. S. Vanwart and E. B. Gray were elected members of the Executive committee.....Matters which pertain especially to the ministers were considered. Sympathetic references were made to the aged brethren whose infirmities prevented their attendance, and prayers were made for them, Rev. B. H. Nobles leading in the prayers.....Rev. J. W. Clarke read a brief and interesting paper on Christian Unity, for which he was voted the thanks of the meeting. The subjects of the paper and cognate questions were discussed freely, many of the members participating.

At 7 30 p. m. there was preaching by licentiate M. L. Gregg. The service was followed by a number of testimonies and exhortations, and it was an enjoyable meeting.

SATURDAY.—The Saturday morning conference is always a marked feature of the annual session. Besides the members of Conference many other people attend this meeting, some making it a point to attend it, even though they cannot get to any other part of the session. It is to the General Conference what the monthly conference is to a church—a testimony meeting, in which personal christian experience is related, and the people of God themselves up to thanksgiving and praise for the blessing of the divine grace which is unto salvation. This meeting this year was well attended. It was led by the veteran pastor of the church, Rev. Dr. Hartley. On the platform with him were the Moderator of Conference and Rev. Jos. Noble. The opening exercises were: singing, Scripture lesson by the pastor, and prayer by Rev. Jos. Noble. The pastor welcomed the people, and expressed the hope that all would readily take part in the meeting. The meeting continued two hours. There were many testimonies to the goodness and love of God, and much rejoicing in our great salvation. The reminiscences of the old christians, both ministers and laymen, were touching and must have strengthened the faith of many an uncertain and halting disciple; while the testimonies of the younger set have comforted the hearts of those whose race is almost run, because of the promise that the work passed on to them will be faithfully carried on. It was a good meeting, in which was the manifest presence of the Spirit.

The General Conference.

The first business meeting of the General Conference was opened at 9 a. m. Saturday, Rev. F. C. Hartley, Moderator, presiding. The devotional exercises were as follows:

There was singing, reading of Scriptures by the Moderator, and prayer by Rev. F. G. Frances.

The roll was called by the Clerk, Rev. D. McLeod Vince, and the Conference properly organized.

REPORT OF THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

The Corresponding Secretary of the Conference, Rev. Dr. McLeod, presented the following report:

Brother Moderator and Brethren:

This report presents, sifted and classified, the facts furnished by churches and ministers for the Conference year just closed.

CHURCHES. The number of churches heard from this year is 132; one hundred and eighteen reported in regular form, and four verbally, to their District Meetings; ten reported to your Corresponding Secretary, after the District Meetings, in response to requests from him.

Of the reports received 123 give membership statistics. They have 9555 members. The estimated unreported membership is 2563, making a total of 12,218.

NEW CHURCHES. One new church has been organized—that at Lambert's Cove, Deer Island. It began life with 12 members; it now has 41 members.

Perry's Point church, in the Fifth District, is nearly a new one, having been resuscitated after having been thought dead for several years. It has now 45 members, twenty-two of whom were added this year.

BUILDINGS. Two new church buildings were dedicated—one at Riley Brook, V. Co., and one at Lambert's Cove, Deer Island. Two new parsonages have been purchased—one at Salisbury, and one at Penobsquis, and one is in course of construction at Hartland, C. Co.

ADDITIONS. Forty-two churches report additions, the whole number being 316—by baptism 237, by letter 79. The net increase of members is 134.

CONFERENCE AND PRAYER MEETINGS, &c. The reports of these meetings are much the same as the reports of last year: Three more conferences are reported; the regular prayer meetings are three less; the Lord's Supper has been administered to two less churches; missionary sermons have been preached in seventeen more churches; three churches less have had missionary prayer meetings; gain in spiritual life and christian activities is reported by five more churches; the number reporting loss in spiritual life is nine less; twenty-three churches are financially stronger, and ten are financially weaker. The average condition, so far as it can be judged by the reports, is slightly improved.

FINANCES. The financial returns are, as usual, incomplete and, therefore, unsatisfactory. The following table presents the aggregates of the several items as they appear in the reports of the churches:

District	Salaries	Church Cu. Ex.	Pu ld-ings &c.	Home Miss.	Foreign Miss.	Sunday Schools	Conf. Fun	Y. P. Soc's	Y. P. W. M. Soc'ties	Other Funds	Totals
1st	$ 381 75	$ 33 00	$ 75 00	$ 25 50		$ 16 00	$ 2 97				$ 534 22
2nd	2965 00	529 98	764 20	21 74	$ 40 38		52 15		$107 02		4468 37
3rd	2337 35	788 01	368 00	63 19	53 80		86 32	$100 35	110 00	$ 14 75	3971 77
4th	1117 64	163 00	265 00	31 28	11 54		64 12		68 79	56 57	777 94
5th	844 37	124 86	192 18	14 91	12 22		62 05		34 83	39 10	1325 53
6th	2320 00	511 64	1829 97	39 58	103 96		99 67		126 77	114 08	5145 67
7th	3120 58	945 80	1126 25	63 26	78 66	568 92	117 06	143 74	125 51	226 40	6516 18
Totals	$13136 70	$3096 29	$4621 60	$259 46	$300 56	$584 92	$484 34	$244 09	$572 92	$450 90	$23751 78

In the foregoing table the amounts paid for salaries, current expenses of the churches, and for buildings and improvements are probably substantially correct. It must be noted, though, that in some Districts—notably in the Fifth, several churches have this year reported only the money actually paid for salaries &c. from Oct. 1898 up to the time of their District Meetings this year, not more than three-fourths of a year. Their next reports and all subsequent ones will contain a full years payments.

The other items in the financial table are incomplete. The same thing occurs, in some degree, every year. For instance: Last year the amount stated in the Corresponding Secretary's report as paid by the churches for Home Missions was barely more than half the amount they really contributed; the amount by Sabbath Schools was only about one-third of what they paid; and in all the other funds the amounts named in the table were considerably below the actual payments for the year. The explanation is this: The financial statement of this report is made up from the financial reports made by the churches to their District Meetings. A number of churches have the habit of delaying their contributions to missions and other general funds of the denomination till after their reports have gone to the District Meetings. Their payments are credited by the several treasurers, but are not included in this report's financial statement. If the proportion of delayed contributions this year is the same as last year, there might be about $2500.00 added to the above aggregate.

The Corresponding Secretary's reason for continuing to embody in his report the financial statement, though incomplete, is that he understands it to be his duty to make the report, so far as possible, an exhibit of all the denomination has done in the year. The financial returns have improved much within a few years. If the churches will adopt the plan of making a full year's returns of everything to their respective District Meetings, this report will from year to year present to Conference just what the denomination has done.

PASTORAL CARE. One hundred and seventeen (117) of the reported churches have had pastoral care this year. How the pastors have spread themselves among the churches may be stated thus: 6 churches have each one-eighth of a pastor's time; 7 churches have one-sixth; 8 churches have one-fifth; 51 have one-fourth; 12 have one-third; 11 have one-half; 4 have three-quarters; 8 have what they call "part"; 2 have "occasionally"; and 8 have "all," i. e., they have each a pastor exclusively. Besides these, some of the churches have had missionary care and the visits of other ministers more or less frequently.

MINISTERS. The year began with 47 ordained ministers enrolled. None have died. During the year two—Revs F. A. Currier and A. H. McLeod—having become pastors, the first named in Lowell, Mass., and the second in Raymond, Me., were, at their own request, granted dismission by the Conference Executive. Two (Revs. Thos. Connor and J. S. Jones) have, owing to poor health, been unable to do any ministerial work. Four (Revs. J. H. Erb, C. F. Rideout, W. R. Reud and W. C. Keirstead) are out of the Province—the first two on account of poor health, and the last two pursuing their studies. Bro. Keirstead spent the summer at home, supplying the Carleton, St. John church, during the illness of the pastor. Thirty-two of the ordained ministers have been pastors, viz., Revs. John Perry, G. A. Hartley, D. D., J. T. Parsons, J. N. Barnes, T. S. VanWart, T. O. DeWitt, C. T. Phillips, W. DeWare, J. W. Clarke, J. A. Robertson, J. J. Barnes, O. N. Mott, G. W. Foster, G. F. Currie, B. H. Nobles, W. H. Perry, G. Swim, C. B. Lewis, F. C. Hartley, H. A. Bonnell, L. A. Cosman, D. Long, A. Perry, I. D. Harvey, S. J. Perry, J. B. Daggett, E. S. Parker, D. Patterson, F. G. Francis, L. A. Fenwick, A. S. J. Prosser and A. D. Paul.

Those who have not been pastor have not been idle. Rev. J. Noble the venerable senior minister of the Conference, now past four score and five years, has been almost continuously engaged in the work he loves, journeying from place to place, preaching the word and ministering counsel and comfort to many. Rev. Jos. McLeod has been editor of the denominational paper, and has, also, been General Secretary by appointment of Conference. Revs. E. B. Gray, T. W. Carpenter, J. Henderson and H. Hartt have been engaged more or less regularly in the work of the ministry, and with good effect.

There were six licentiates at the beginning of the year—four licensed by Conference, and two by District Meetings. Of the Conference licentiates, three (brethren A. H. Williams, J. E. Puddington and M. L. Gregg), and one District licentiate (bro. Chas. Stirling) have been pastors; one Conference licentiate (bro. S. J. Case) has been teaching in a Free Baptist school in New Hampshire; and one District licentiate (bro. W. Kirkpatrick) has been at school part of the year. District licentiate Stirling, whose license would have expired the first of October, joined a Baptist church in September. The First District Meeting, in June of this year, gave license to bro. Z. Doody; and the Sixth District Meeting, in July, gave license to bro. Fletcher Knollin.

Thirty of the ministers have complied with the rule of Conference (see Year Book, 1896, Res. 38) requiring each minister each year to report his work to the Corresponding Secretary. The following are summaries of the reports received;

Rev. G. A. Hartley, D. D., has continued pastor of the Carleton, St. John, church, this being his forty-second year. Poor health has prevented him laboring as in former years. He says: "For nearly half the year I have done partial work only. Additions to the church have been few—one by baptism and two others. The spiritual condition of the church is fairly good, and the temporal affairs rather better than usual." He also reports a visit to Lambert's Cove, Deer Island, where he went by invitation in Oct. last. The people had erected a church building, and wished counsel as to their future denominational relation. "The result of the visit was that the house was given over to us." It was dedicated by brother Hartley, assisted by bro. Paul, and they also organized a church of twelve members. "The accession of the church to the Deer Island pastorate makes it one of the best country pastorates in the Conference. The new church property is valued at $1500, and is free from debt."

Rev. J. T. Parsons is now completing his eighth year as pastor at Marysville and Peniac. He has a fortnightly preaching service at Peniac. He is at Marysville every Sabbath. The various services of the church are well sustained, and the ordinances regularly administered. The year was a very good one; nine were baptized. There is an excellent Sunday School, and a good C. E. Society. The interest in all departments of the work is good, and the outlook encouraging.

Rev. J. N. Barnes has been two years at Stanley, and will remain a third year The pastorate consists of two churches (Stanley and Bloomfield), about thirty miles apart At Bloomfield some revival was enjoyed, and three were baptized. The church raised considerably more money than last year. At Stanley the interest is somewhat improved; the people are more hopeful, and the pastor is too. He is expecting the new year to be better than its predecessors.

Rev. T. S. VanWart reports the churches of the Upper Hainesville pastorate, to which he has ministered part of the time, as but little changed from last year.

Rev. T. O. DeWitt spent November and December with the Wickham and Bald Hill churches. His labours were blessed; two were baptized. Since New Year he has been pastor of the Bear Island, Queensbury, Prince William and Dumfries churches. He has preached seventy times, made one hundred and eighty-two calls, attended thirty-six prayer meetings and twelve conferences; he has baptized three at Bear Island and three at Canterbury. For some weeks he was laid up. It has been, all things considered, a busy and quite trying year, but God's blessing has not failed.

Rev. C. T. Phillips is closing his fourteenth year as pastor of the Woodstock church, during which time he has done excellent work—in the earlier years of his pastorate heroic work, which held a church threatened with destruction, and made denominational history. Of the year now closing he says: "The church had revival; nine were baptized. We have good congregations; a large number of young people attend. Good prayer meetings. Held fortnightly Sunday afternoon meetings at South Wakefield, a young and small church. It ought to have more care; it will pay to give it care."

Rev. J. W. Clarke is about closing eight useful years as pastor of the Waterloo St. church, St John. He says,—"During these years there have come to us many evidences of progress, the year now closing being one of the best. As a result of special services last spring twenty-two were received into the church, fifteen by baptism and seven by letter. The first two weeks Rev. B. H. Nobles and singing evangelist Britton led the services, after which the pastor continued them, with the above results. One of those converted, whom we all feel God is calling into public service, has on several occasions preached to interested congregations. The Sunday School and C. E. Society are doing good work; the Sunday services and the prayer meetings have been well attended, and most encouraging.

Rev. J. J. Barnes, pastor of the Waterville pastorate, reports the spiritual life in all the churches (Waterville, Third Tier, Seventh Tier, Lakeville and Brookville) "good and growing." He is to continue pastor another year.

Rev. O. N. Mott's pastorate consists of Blissville, Mill Settlement and Patterson churches, and Clarendon which is a branch of Patterson church. He "held special meetings at Patterson, which strengthened the church; two were baptized. He will remain another year—the third.

Rev. G. W. Foster's pastorate consists of Keswick and Kingsley churches, the first named having two preaching places—Mouth Keswick and Douglas. He reports that "in the early part of the year he held special meetings at Mouth Keswick; four were baptized, and the spiritual life of the church was helped." Later he "held special meetings at Douglas, which were helpful; five were baptized." At Kingsley, also, special meetings were held, and though the time of year was not the best, good was done. "Good congregations in all the churches." "Spiritually, the condition is not all we could desire, but the outlook seems more promising." "More godliness will make the work more successful." A clearer sense that to be a christian is to follow Jesus, to walk in His steps, is what is needed everywhere."

Rev. B. H. Nobles reports the work at Sussex encouraging. "This is the church's first year as an independent pastorate, and it has, in every particular, been very satisfactory. The Sabbath congregations have increased a good deal, and the prayer meetings have grown both in attendance and spiritual interest. The parsonage which was built and finished a year ago, is now free of debt. The people are hopeful as to the future of the church's work, and are devoted to the cause of goodness."

Rev. W. H. Perry has spent his first year as pastor of the Hampstead group of churches. The churches in the pastorate are Upper Hampstead, Central Hampstead, Hibernia and Jerusalem, with Woodville Hall and Otnabog as preaching stations. He reports "the spiritual condition not what we would desire, but in all the churches are faithful christians, who are hoping and praying for better times. No special services were held; one was baptized at Upper Hampstead. The church buildings are all in good repair and free of debt. A parsonage is needed, and could be secured without seriously burdening any of the churches." Bro. Perry says "all the ground possible is occupied in that section. To make christian work more effective there is need of more self denial and a deeper consecration."

Rev. G. Swim has had pastoral care of the Millstream-Apohaqui pastorate, consisting of five churches. He has preached three times every Sunday, when possible to reach his appointments; it has been difficult to reach the Mountain churches regularly in the winter. The drives are long—twenty-five miles one Sunday, and twenty-one the next. "The spiritual condition of the churches is not what is desirable," but he thinks "there is an improvement of late." He has "endeavoured to preach the Word faithfully, the good seed has been sown, and some one will reap in due season." He is now retiring from the pastorate after two years of service; and he hopes "the right man will succeed him."

Rev. C. B. Lewis has just completed his first year with the Lincoln-Rusiagornis pastorate. It embraces five churches. To cover the work requires him to preach three times each Sabbath, and usually to attend three week night prayer meetings. There is improvement in the pastorate, as a whole; just now there seems a quickened interest at some points. He is to remain another year.

Rev. F. C. Hartley reports: "I have been continuing my work as pastor at Fredericton. The year has not been one of special revival interest. All the regular work of the church has been maintained, and we are hoping to reap good fruit from the seed sown. Five persons have been added to the church by baptism, and two on experience."

Rev. D. Long who has been two years pastor of the Victoria St., St. John church, reports that progress has been made. "The congregations are large, there is more interest in the prayer meetings; notwithstanding many members of the congregation lost heavily by the fire the finances are good, and harmony prevails. And yet we are not doing nearly what we ought for our Master. More self-denying service is needed."

Rev. Abram Perry has spent the year with the Salisbury pastorate, which includes six churches; it is his tenth year. "Regular pastoral work has been done in all the churches, and at Lewis Mountain special meetings were held, and six were baptized.....The spiritual condition of the churches is fair."

Rev. S. J. Perry "has pastoral care of Bath, Beechwood, Upper Kent and Lower Perth churches;" he, also, "extended care to Maplehurst and Mineral. Special meetings were held at Bath, Upper Kent, Lower Perth and Maplehurst, which resulted in four being added to the Bath church, one to the Lower Perth church, and four to the Maplehurst church." He has been four years paator of the churches named, and now retires, praying that the Lord may direct a faithful man to the field."

Rev. J. B. Daggett has been pastor of the Hartland-Brighton pastorate, which includes Hartland, Upper Brighton, Lower Brighton, Pembroke and Newburgh, with Havelock as a branch of Lower Brighton. He has maintained all the regular services of the churches, which necessitated preaching three times every Sunday, attending two mid-week prayer meetings and four monthly conferences. He also "co-operated with Rev. L. A. Fenwick in establishing and maintaining a preaching appointment at East Florenceville," and has "preached there twice." There has not been much revival spirit. Three have been baptized. "Christian harmony prevails, and there is much to be thankful for." The church building at Hartland has been renovated; and they "expect to finish, except the seats, the new church at Newburgh. A parsonage is in construction at Hartland; it is being built by the whole pastorate." Bro. Daggett is to remain another year—his third.

Rev. W. C Keirstead reports that he spent the school year at Cobb Divinity School, and believes it was a profitable year. The summer months he spent as a supply for Dr. Hartley, St. John (West.) Last week he started for Chicago University. He regrets that he cannot be at Conference.

Rev. A. D. Paul has had a good year as pastor of the Deer Island churches. The Lambert's Cove church was organized, the church building dedicated, and twenty-four members added by baptism; it is "in very good condition spiritually." Fair Haven church "has suffered loss of members by death and removals; two were baptized." "Chocolate Cove church has made some progress. There was revival; four were baptized, and a number of wanderers helped." The pastor

(Continued on page four.)