

"THAT ETERNAL QUESTION"

(How can these things be?)

Nearly forty-three years of Reformed Baptist history has been written. During those years progress has been made—our numbers have increased, our financial standing has been strengthened, and the range of our activities has gradually widened.

Often during those years we have heard this question raised again and again "How can these things be?" When the denomination was first formed outsiders prophesied its early downfall; even yet there are a few doubters who only see the darkness. But in spite of the criticisms the Reformed Baptists are coming out of the battles' smoke better prepared than ever to stand the fray. Since we wrestle not against flesh and blood. . . but against the spiritual forces of evil, the fight is a fight to the finish. We still need the Divine Anointing.

As the need of a former day seemed to point to the establishing of a Camp Ground no doubt many shook their heads and said, "How can this thing be?" The desired possession seemed to be surrounded by unsurmountable barriers—the choice of a desirable location, the burden of finances, and, on the part of some, a lack of faith. But God's hand was in the plan; man's extremity became God's opportunity. I read in the old Highways that a committee was appointed to look into the matter. Soon they reported that Brown's Flats seemed to be the most desirable location. Soon land was bought, cottages were built, a hotel erected, and finally a tabernacle set up as a more satisfactory place of worship than the old tent that was first used.

One by one the obstacles were overcome—even the finances came in sufficient quantities. Amounts were not large; the largest contribution seemed to be about fifty dollars. But finally the end was achieved and the final results have probably far surpassed the visions of the founders. Today Beulah Camp stands, as a tribute to their initiative and energy, one of the most beautiful Camp Grounds on the North American continent.

In the early years Foreign Missionary efforts were practically negligible—what few dollars could be spared were given to other missionary societies. The denomination seemed to have all it could do to extend its frontiers in America without taking on any added burdens. But soon the Macedonian call and the pre-Pentecostal commission became too urgent and once more the denomination rose to meet the demands of the hour.

The time seemed to be ripe to establish a work of our own; missionaries were available; but what a proposition! An old Highway gives an estimation of the probable costs for the first year as \$1300 or \$1500—and this, when the missionary contributions for both Home and Foreign work were less than \$500.

One can readily hear the discussions that took place when the different steps of the missionary development were broached. Foolish! Impossible! Preposterous! "How can this be?"

Then see what happened. Missionaries were sent out—not even a field of effort in sight, at first a farm was rented; next an opportunity to buy presented itself, (\$4000 or \$500!! What a proposition!); but finally it became a denominational possession. Old records tell how it was accomplished—different persons and groups bought one, two, or five acres until the whole 1100 acres were paid for. Today we have a flourishing missionary work with about six hundred church members and over thirty native

preachers and teachers—all free of debt and within our means. Faith surely became the substance of things hoped for!

Then think of later undertakings; building new buildings at Beulah and Riverside; keeping up the Camp grounds, increasing our contributions on many lines, financing tent extension work, etc. Were the difficulties ever too great? Not when God moved.

No doubt the future holds just as many trials of faith as the past. There no more is a royal road to working out God's purposes for us in the future than in the past. We must advance into the Unknown with a prayer of faith and self-sacrifice if our denomination is to continue to flourish. When we shall have reached the stage where our financial standing is secure and where we lack for nothing we shall begin to crumble and decay physically as well as spiritually. As the seed must die before it will spring into life, so we as a denomination must die to ease and prosperity if we are to fulfil our mission in spreading Holiness. "He that will not forsake. . . is not worthy".

By means of our churches, Sunday Schools, Tent Extension efforts, and Missionary efforts, we seem to be taking fairly good care of our spiritual growth and vigor. We have yet to provide for the mental growth of our future ministers, church workers, and future church members. As previous articles have stated the right type of education seems to be withheld from the majority of our people. Secular schools manned by bigoted teachers harass and discourage our children from making and keeping a bright Christian experience during their school days, while religious schools are contaminated with modernism or are too far away to meet our needs.

Since a Holiness fundamentalist school is such a great need in the Maritimes it may be that one of our future undertakings will have to be a Holiness School. It will have to be if we are to fulfill our missions to the Maritime provinces and Eastern Maine. It will have to be if we are to grow and occupy this ground that is being made white for the harvest. It must be if we are to retain our life and vitality. What we fail to do will be taken up by some other religious body sooner or later. Even now the penetration of one or two bodies is being felt. We as a denomination cannot drink at different fountains of education and expect to develop the same tastes and ideals if we are educated in institutions that differ radically in tone, ideals, and spirit. Each taken separately may have valuable contributions to make to the individual but taken collectively their combined influence is to bring about disruption rather than strength and unity. We need unity.

Some one might say that the result will give us a wider breadth of vision. That is good in its place but unity is the first essential. An effective family group must have first been cradled together before they can separate and go their several ways and yet maintain a close friendship throughout the succeeding years.

A school of our own would provide this cradling. Church contacts are excellent but they cannot measure up to the contacts which one forms in an intimate school atmosphere. The first are separated by intervals; the latter are continuous. This argument for unity is probably one of the strongest we could put up in favor of a Reformed Baptist school.

The early founders had this as one of their aims. As early as 1897 the Minutes speak of the fact that, "Some time was spent in discussing the importance of education on the part of those engaged in preaching the Gospel". The next year

this discussion seems to have been the means of bringing in the following resolution by G. B. Macdonald—"Whereas the time has now come, when we as a people, through the blessing of God have become a fixture among the evangelical people of the country and an important factor under God, in the spread of a spiritual religion, and whereas the need is apparent as workers are raised up of God, of some provision being made whereby such workers may receive such instruction as will qualify them for gospel work on Holiness lines:—Therefore Resolved, That this Alliance hereby express its recognition of the fact that some such instruction for our workers is needful, that a special committee be appointed to draft a plan for the formation of such a school as may be possible. And that said committee report in the Saturday morning session."

After discussion this resolution was unanimously passed, and Bros. S. A. Baker, A. L. Bubar, G. W. Macdonald and M. S. Trafton were appointed said committee.

On Saturday Bro. A. L. Bubar of special committee on denominational school reported as follows:—The committee on Alliance Training School recommended: 1st, a month's course of training in literary and ministerial work on Beulah Camp Ground, following the close of each Camp Meeting. 2nd, that a Board of Examiners be appointed who shall examine candidates in Bible doctrine. 3rd, the said Board of Examiners shall select such a work on Theology as they deem the best exponent on Scriptural doctrine as taught by our denomination. On motion, this report was taken up section by section and adopted as a whole.

The following Board of Examiners was appointed—Elders G. W. Macdonald, W. B. Wiggins, and J. H. Coy.

On motion—Resolved, That the young men and women associated with us in Christian Work, and those who are thinking of taking up the work of the ministry be earnestly urged to attend such school when instituted."

Two years later in 1900, Bros. W. B. Wiggins and A. L. Bubar from committee on Training School reported, and on motion report was accepted.

Resolved, that the committee be instructed to move at once in the institution of the school."

As to how they moved I have found no record, but it seems as though the movement has not amounted to very much yet. Over thirty years have passed and some of us wonder when the new generation will shake themselves and make this ideal a reality.

Conditions no doubt have changed and perhaps the plan formulated thirty years ago would not be sufficient but no one will dispute the fact that some sort of an institution is imperative.

Some may ask, "What are the practical problems to be solved before we can start a school?" That of course is a broad question to dismiss with a few words; but we might dismiss the problem more intelligently by considering the following phases: (1) The Divine Order. (2) The Financial Problem. (3) The Selection of a Competent Staff. (4) The Student Problem.

The natural order for discussing these points would probably be just the reverse: Finances, man, and God. There are so many problems faced with the wrong perspective that it is hard to turn the mind's telescope end for end. From the natural end mole-hills become mountains, but from the Divine end the result is just the opposite—giant crags become pebbles.

If a Maritime Holiness School is the Divine plan then the problem is nearly solved. The

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