

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

— THE ORGAN OF THE —
REFORMED BAPTIST ALLIANCE

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Editor - Rev. B. C. Cochrane

Associate Editor and Business Manager

Rev. E. W. Tokley

Contributing Editors: Revs. F. Dunlop, C. E. Stairs,
A. D. Cann

Other members of Committee: Revs. W. L. Fernley,
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— Editorials —

ANNIVERSARY REFLECTIONS

Nov. third marks the seventy-second birthday of the Reformed Baptist Alliance. On that date in the year 1888, about seventy-five ministers and laymen from various parts of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and the State of Maine, were gathered in the town of Woodstock, N. B., for a Convention that was to make history. They had arrived in the town on Nov. 1st. in response to a circular letter call to "lovers of holiness" in the Maritime-Maine area.

Five ordained ministers of the Free Christian Baptist Church had been disfellowshipped by official action of Conference held at Blissville, N. B., in October of that year. The offence of the disfellowshipped ministers — profession of the experience of entire sanctification received by faith in the Lord Jesus, and preaching of the doctrine of instantaneous entire sanctification, which the F. C. B. Conference had labelled "decidedly unscriptural".

So the issue before the "lovers of holiness" meeting at Woodstock was plain. The Church with which many of them had held membership, and in which some of them had been serving as pastors, had officially stated that the preaching of entire sanctification and testimonies to the experience would not be tolerated.

In order to obtain the opinion of the delegates gathered, the following motion was presented: "That it is our opinion that the time has come when the friends of the Holiness movement in New Brunswick should seek to make a more united and earnest effort for the dissemination of the doctrine and experience of Bible Holiness". After discussion, the motion was put to vote and carried unanimously. A committee of eight was appointed "to study the possibilities of organization, and the next day resolutions were presented and passed unanimously calling for the organization of the "Reformed Baptist Alliance" and approval of certain basic statements of doctrine and church polity.

On Saturday evening, Nov. 3rd., the Reformed Baptist Church of Woodstock was organized with forty-one members. Fifteen names were added the next day, bringing the total to fifty-six. In the first seven months, twenty-two churches were organized, signifying that the infant

Church had been born healthy and strong. And a progressive state prevailed in the years immediately following, with more new churches being organized, a Church paper, the King's Highway, brought into circulation (1890); a twenty-five acre site purchased as a location for annual Alliance meetings (Beulah Camp Grounds, acquired in 1849); the launching of a Foreign Missionary enterprise (1901); and the purchase of a second Camp Meeting site in Maine (1902). And in all these areas of service the banner of "Holiness unto the Lord" unfurled from the masthead.

At this point in our denominational history, we feel that our Church fathers were fully justified in the action they took. If they had left their Conference by choice, we might question as to whether it had not been better to remain and do their best to promote the work of God by testimony and Christian conduct. But when they were faced with the necessity of quenching the cleansing fire that had been kindled within them, or forfeiting their standing with the Church with which they were affiliated, we feel that their decision to go out was akin to those made by Luther, Wesley, and others.

The conviction that God raised up our Church "to spread scriptural holiness over these lands", is quite as strong and deep with our ministers and lay people to-day, as it was with those who faced the issue in Woodstock seventy-two years ago. It is obedience to this calling that gives us rightful claim to denominational existence. The doctrine of instantaneous and entire sanctification by faith is still branded by some as unscriptural and heretical, but it is our firm belief that it is biblical and orthodox. Certainly we believe that there are many other doctrines of the Bible that are fundamental and vital, but we believe that the doctrine of holiness is cardinal and essential. We regard it as a specific and sacred responsibility to propagate this truth. Wesley described the doctrine as "the grand depositum of Methodism", and from Methodism the treasure was passed along to us. May we guard it with jealous care!

We honour the memory of those from whom we have received this "goodly heritage". We are thankful that love for God and loyalty to truth were stronger forces within them than personal interests and denominational allegiance.

We might well pray for a new and powerful upsurge of conviction, enthusiasm, and vision such as stimulated our fathers to aggressive and progressive action in the earlier days of our denominational history. An expanding missionary programme, an enlarged plan for Christian education, a more extensive and intensive pursuit of evangelism at the local church level, and some of the challenges we face at the present time. And, by the help of God, the history yet to be written of the Reformed Baptist Alliance and its churches could be the brightest and best. Let it be, dear Lord, let it be!

GOSSIP

Samson lost his power because he talked too much. Samson lost his power when he told all he knew. The talkative Christian is usually a powerless Christian. We need to pray, like the Psalmist, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth;; keep the door of my lips" (Ps. 141:3) There is a tremendous dissipation of power when our speech is not seasoned with salt (Col. 4:6).

How often, after a most blessed time in the prayer meeting, we have lost the blessing through idle talk and gossip.

—James Stewart

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