

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1849.

THE RECENT ASSOCIATION.

An interesting and we doubt not what will prove to be a very useful Session of the Association has just closed.

The Delegates were generally upon the ground in season, and at 2 o'clock, P. M. on Saturday, they convened in the Chapel in Brussels Street for Conference when two hours or more were spent in social conference, every one feeling it good to be there. At 4 o'clock, the Association organized by the choice of the Rev. Samuel Robinson, Moderator. The other Officers and Committees having been appointed the Association adjourned till Monday at 10 o'clock.

In the Evening, the Rev. W. D. Fitch, preached to a large congregation, from James 1, 19, 20.

On the Sabbath the Ministers from abroad occupied the several pulpits of the Baptist Churches in the city and vicinity, and large congregations were in attendance.

On Monday, the Rev. S. Elder, not being able to address the Association, the Rev. C. Spurden, his Alternate, preached the Introductory Sermon from 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23. "For all things are yours," &c. The remainder of the morning was occupied in the reading of the Letters. There was but little of special interest communicated, but the Churches were represented as being generally in a healthy state and free from contention.

The addition by Baptism to the Churches which sent their Letters was 74; by Letter 35; restored 3. The total number of Members in our Churches 2,388, of Ordained Ministers 22, of Licentiates 6.

The number of Sabbath Schools reported was 22, including 163 Teachers, and 1,279 Scholars, with 2,530 volumes in their Libraries.

A main feature of the Association was the Jubilee Sermon on Monday evening, this being the Fiftieth Anniversary since the organization of the Nova-Scotia and New-Brunswick Baptist Association. After reading suitable portions of the Scripture and the usual introductory services, father Joseph Crandal, recounted in a most interesting manner some of the principal incidents occurring in his experience and under his observation in the early period of our history. We hope to be able at a future day to lay them before our readers: after holding the congregation in fixed attention for upwards of an hour, father T. S. Harding, by way of an Appendix, gave some additional incidents. This meeting was a very happy one, and the congregation was very large, the spacious Chapel being crowded in every part. The presence of these much loved and justly honoured fathers gave great interest to all the Meetings and they appeared to participate with the liveliest interest and satisfaction in all the deliberations and services of the occasion.

The Reports of the several Committees and discussions thereon occupied the greater part of Tuesday. Ministerial Education being the principal subject in the morning, after a discourse from the Rev. John Magee, from Mat. v. 14. "Ye are the light of the world."

Colportage, the Christian Visitor, and Sabbath Schools were considered in the afternoon, after a discourse from Rev. W. Jackson, from Philippians iii. 8. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

On Tuesday evening, a large concourse of people assembled to listen to the claims of Foreign Missions, when the Resolutions recommended by the Committee on Foreign Missions were sustained by Rev. J. Crandal, Rev. T. S. Harding, Rev. A. D. Thompson, Rev. S. Elder, Rev. E. J. Harris, Rev. E. W. Pray.

The speeches of the brethren were animated and effective, and every attention was paid to each speaker. The collection at the close of the Meeting for the object advocated amounted to £6 18s. 10½d.

On Wednesday, A. M. at 10 o'clock, the Delegates assembled to close the business of the Session, after a discourse from the Rev. W. Hall, of Saint George, from 1 Cor. i. 18.

The subject of Missions amongst the French was then introduced, and the letter from Rev. Obed Chute read, who has commenced labours amongst them. This was a delightful Meeting, words were spoken which touched the heart, and a subscription was commenced amounting in the Meeting to £14 9s. 6d. Brother John F. Marsters was

appointed Treasurer for this fund for this Association, and subscriptions are solicited for the object as a most deserving and encouraging one. The Reports of the Missionary Board were presented, the Treasurer of the General Union made a Report which opened the subject for consideration, and after an interesting debate the wishes of the Delegates were expressed in favour of an Agency, and that Rev. Joseph Crandal should accept an appointment and visit all the Churches for this object. The Association then adjourned, having had sweet fellowship in devotion, and the utmost harmony in the transaction of whatever business was introduced.

The Collections for Foreign Missions during the Meetings were	£22	4	11½
Domestic Missions,	12	3	0
French Missions,	14	0	6
Colportage,	5	6	0
Union Society,	45	9	7½
American & Foreign Bible Society,	15	0	
Minute Money,	7	13	5½
Total,	£107	12	6¾

The next Session of the Association will be held with the Baptist Church in Mauderville, on the First Saturday in September 1850. Introductory Sermon to be preached by Rev. S. Elder.

CONVENTION.

The regular annual meeting of the Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island Baptist Convention, convene at Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, next week, on Saturday Sept. 15. We hope many brethren from this Province will be able to attend. Bridgetown was fixed upon as the place of Meeting in consideration of our convenience. All the precious interests embraced in the Union require attention, its deliberations will be of great importance and we hope the blessing of the Great Head of the Church may be upon the Convention and upon its agents and operations. Through the liberality of Mr. Whitney those attending the convention from this Province can by paying full passage over, have their return passage gratis.

Several communications are necessarily delayed this week for want of room. If 'Franciata' would be kind enough to give her name, we should be happy to offer a few suggestions. We are much pleased that a disposition is felt by a number of young people to correspond for the paper, and would do all we can to encourage and aid their efforts.

RECEIPTS.—We would hereby acknowledge the receipt of the following sums. From J. T. Smith, Rev. W. Hall, T. Hicks, Rev. T. Todd, A. Turney, J. Bradshaw, H. Melvin, J. Moran, Wm. Vaughan, E. Webb, Rev. W. L. Hopkins, Capt. Joslin, Rev. J. Walker, Ten Shillings each.

From Abner Jones, E. Brown, N. Estey, B. Kilburn, C. Sote, J. Wightman, Rev. S. Hobbs, Five Shillings each. From Rev. K. Brooks, Jr., and Rev. E. J. Harris 12s. 6d. each. From R. E. Steves, £1 2s. 6d. From Rev. J. Francis for Union Society, £5 6s. 3d. From J. V. Tabor, £12 4s.

NOTICE.

The several Baptist Boards located in this City will meet in the Baptist Chapel in German Street, at 9 o'clock A. M., on Monday next, Sept. 10th, for organization and general business. A general and punctual attendance is earnestly requested, as the Reports are to be prepared for the Convention.

Correspondence.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

SABBATH SCHOOLS.

No. XVIII.

Duties of Ministers and Churches in relation to Sabbath Schools.

Waiving the mention of other reasons besides those already assigned to prove that it is the duty of the christian minister to promote by direct and earnest endeavor the interests of Sabbath Schools; and omitting also the arguments which might easily be urged to prove the obligations of christian churches in the same respect,—let us glance at some of the labours and results which would seem to be involved in the performance of this duty.

1. The Ministers of the Gospel employed in our "Home Missions" ought to regard the formation and support of Sabbath Schools as an important part of their work.

Through the labors of our Missionaries small churches have been planted over the Provinces varying as to the number of members and thoroughness of organization, but agreeing in one point—that of being destitute of stated pastoral care. They are visited from time to time by missionaries, and thus revived and strengthened. Some are united, active, and prosperous bodies, and will soon be able to provide for themselves the constant services of a minister. Others seem to be more loosely put together, manifest a very feeble degree of spiritual life, and very little united effort. In all, however, there are valuable materials for constructing "a building of God;" "lively stones" which require only to be rightly fixed and arranged to "grow to an holy temple in the Lord."

If Sabbath Schools were established in connection with these Churches, they would form admirable means for rendering available to the cause of God the piety, benevolence and intelligence of their members. The spiritual power which is now too often suffered to waste itself in irregular and fitful impulses, or to remain inactive, would then be concentrated and directed to useful purposes. The steady habits of religious activity would succeed to desultory movements; minds would be trained to labours of usefulness; fervent and zealous spirits would find scope for noble enterprise, and be brought under the dominion of sound and rational principle; converts would be less liable to fall away from the Church; and christian order and harmony would be more likely to be preserved.

To some it may appear a very difficult if not impracticable attempt to establish Sabbath Schools in the positions to which we refer.—It may seem scarcely possible for a Missionary, whose stay at any one spot in the field of his labours is generally brief, to find time for the performance of such a work. Further, it may be doubted, even if he should have succeeded in forming a Sabbath School, whether it would continue in operation without the support of stated ministerial help, or a much greater progress in knowledge and experience than the most of these Churches exhibit. In answer to this, it is admitted that difficulties exist in the way of the undertaking; and that they are greater than would be met with in many other attempts. But we have no reason for supposing that they cannot be removed by patient and vigorous toil. On the contrary, so far as experiment has been made—and it has been made to some extent—the result shows that there are no obstacles in the way absolutely insurmountable. Some of our missionaries have succeeded in arousing a warm interest on behalf of the young in the communities of which we speak; and have gathered together in the Sabbath School classes of children and youth eager for instruction, and Teachers animated with no passing interest in their vocation. Why should not similar exertions be elsewhere followed with like success? We are convinced that they would be successful; and we would earnestly solicit the attention of those who are employed in our Domestic Missions to an object so worthy of their regard and so certain, if intelligently and perseveringly pursued, to render their labours more lastingly useful. As to the supposition that a missionary can seldom remain long enough at a station to accomplish the intended work, we believe it is incorrect. Some latitude is always allowed him as to the selection of place and distribution of service; and it is advisable that he should not diffuse his labours over a wide space, but concentrate them as much as possible. By so doing he can cultivate the field he has chosen to greater advantage; and can secure time enough to plant Sabbath Schools. Then, as to the fear that if Sabbath Schools were established by the missionary they would be liable to neglect and abandonment after his departure, we do not think it is justified by reason or experience. Let it be remembered that at intervals more or less near, the same places are visited successively, either by the same missionary or by others; and that by this means the Schools once set in operation would be maintained in action. There would be the greater probability of this, if the duty of forming and sustaining these institutions were once recognized and seriously undertaken as a necessary part of the missionary's work. Moreover, it is very unlikely that a band of christians once fairly enlisted in the cause of Sabbath School instruction, and having their best feelings interested in their work, would soon relinquish it. Let us hope for better things from those who have received the grace of God.

2. Pastors of Churches are required, if no Sabbath Schools have been formed in the scene

of their labours, to adopt prompt and judicious measures for their organization.

The Pastor, after having prepared himself to become an advocate of the Sabbath School, should publicly set forth its principles of constitution, its objects and the means of arriving at them, its varied and invaluable benefits; and should press upon the members of the Church, parents and others, the duties which they owe to the young, and, by consequence, their obligations in respect to the Sabbath School. He should also advocate this cause from house to house, urging on christians, parents and children, its solemn importance.—He should disseminate information through the medium of books and tracts, but by all means show what the Bible teaches in regard to early religious instruction. When the requisite steps have been taken to call attention to the subject of Sabbath Schools, and to lead to a thoughtful consideration of their claims, then a general meeting should be called, which all classes in the community should be urged to attend. The pastor should state the object of the meeting, offer such explanations as might be thought necessary, and seek to gain the convictions and confidence of those present. He should also be prepared to submit for adoption, a clear and practicable plan of Sabbath School organization, instruction and government; and then, with the consent and co-operation of church and congregation, proceed to the constitution of the School, the enrolment of Teachers and Scholars, the division into classes, the appointment of a Superintendent, and such other acts and arrangements as are required by the occasion.

As respects the office of Superintendent, it is generally desirable that it should be filled by the Pastor. It will be expected from his position, character and official influence that he will take a leading part in controlling and directing the School, in order to which the situation of Superintendent will place him in the most intimate and advantageous relation to every part of the institution. It doubtless adds considerably to the amount of pastoral labour to accept this office, but those who can engage in its duties will find their toil amply compensated by the delightful interest and the opportunities of usefulness which it offers. If the Pastor is unable from the pressure of other engagements, to superintend the Sabbath School personally, he should at least visit it as often as possible and make himself acquainted with its operation and progress. He will thus discover its defects, if any exist, and be enabled to adopt measures for their correction.—He will also be better able to afford the Teachers such counsel as may be needed for their guidance; while they will feel cheered in their toilsome efforts by his presence and exhortations. Another method by which he can effectively co-operate with the Teachers is by forming a Bible-class under his own immediate instruction. There are many young persons of both sexes in every community who would not care to be enrolled as Sabbath School Scholars, but who would be willing to receive knowledge on Scriptural subjects from their Pastor. It is highly important that his efforts should be put forth in this manner to win this interesting class to the service of God. In addition to the ways just suggested by which every Pastor may throw the weight of his influence into the cause, we may mention that he may further contribute to its prosperity by pleading with parents and families on its behalf; and by delivering occasional sermons from the pulpit.

3. How should the members of churches act in promoting the Sabbath School?

Such of them as are qualified, should cheerfully act in the capacity of Teachers. It is by no means to the credit of many professed christians that they decline assuming the duties of this honorable employment, and oblige the Pastor to solicit the aid of those who do not belong to the Church. Strange and melancholy inconsistency, that the pledged supporters of the cause of Christ should be indifferent to the religious instruction of the young, while numbers of non-professing members of society display a most praiseworthy zeal in its promotion! How many parents belonging to the Church never enter the Sabbath School where their children are being taught the words of life! How many members of the Church are wholly ignorant and careless as to the prosperity of the School! What criminal neglect of sacred obligation is thus presented; and what a baneful influence must such examples exert! It might surely be anticipated that they who profess to have received the truth in the love of it, to have been born,