

The Christian Visitor,

Saint John, N. B. June 25, 1879.

Independence or Inter-Dependence.

There is a growing conviction that we are in danger, denominationally, from excessive individualism and independence.

We revolt against prelacy and ecclesiasticism. We insist on the priesthood of every believer, and acknowledge but one Master—Christ. We, however, modify this individualism in our democratic system, and each freeman in Christ Jesus becomes a fellow-freeman (*demotes*) in the Church: "We, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

We consider that the Apostolic churches were locally independent, and adopt their polity. We qualify this independence by giving groups of churches a consulting voice in the ordination of ministers and the right of formulating articles of faith and practice as conditions of fellowship of church with church. Here, too, the principle is admitted that "we are members one of another." In other words we allow that Christian individualism and church independence are to be modified by the Pauline principle of *inter-dependence*.

There are denominational indications that renewed insistence and emphasis needs to be given to this idea of inter-dependence. We contend with such evils as these: Cases of partizan minorities crippling churches; cases of coteries ordaining unqualified men; cases of weak neighboring churches refusing co-operation in supporting pastors; cases of churches holding aloof from denominational councils, and maintaining indifference, armed neutrality, or indifference to denominational enterprises.

Many, if not most of these troubles root themselves in false and exaggerated notions of individual liberty and church independence. They cannot be removed by substituting the iron bands of Romanism, Episcopacy, or Presbyterianism for our more spiritual and flexible polity. Those systems have difficulties and dangers greater than our own. The cure lies in a better recognition of the truth that "the body is not one member, but many," and that "all the members of that one body, being many, are one body." An intelligent apprehension of this doctrine of universal inter-dependence will do great good. Churches will then clearly understand that they exist for each other, and their independence will be subordinated to the claims of the body. Groups of churches, meeting as Councils, Associations, or Conventions, will recognize their ministry, as a body, to each member.

The application of these principles is evident. In an individual church adopting a course which imperils Christ's cause in its midst, the body will come to its aid and care for its members, and, without infringing upon its independence, gently constrain it to the right. Are groups of churches adopting courses prejudicial to general interests?—the same influence will heal the members with whom "all the members suffer."

While priestly and churchly despotism is avoided and individual and church rights carefully maintained, it is best that it should be understood that the body has rights as well, and that all individual, church, and denominational rights are reciprocal and attached to corresponding duties. While free of all men, we are yet under law to Christ, and men's servants for His sake; and churches singly or in the aggregate cannot be loyal to Christ and disloyal to the members of that body of which He is the Head.

BRENTON.

Editorial Notes.

Prof James DeMille delivered a poem at the late commencement of Brown University.

Dr. Bright says that the Baptist population of America numbers 8,000,000, or one-fifth of the whole American people.

Rev. D. C. H. Malcolm, an open communion Baptist, has been "confirmed" as an Episcopalian. Of course!

J. B. Colgate, Esq., New York, of the firm of Trevor & Colgate (Wall street bankers), tells us that he is "tired of paying for other people's blunders." He thinks churches and individuals should count the cost before plunging into debt.

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary needs but \$100,000 to complete its new endowment of \$500,000.

Tremont Temple Baptist Church, Boston, proposes to spend half its net income this year in colporteur and missionary work in the city and elsewhere. A worthy example.

We learn that Rev. S. H. Tyng, Jr., D. D., who has been ill for some time, lies in a very critical condition. Dr. Tyng is in the best sense a Broad Churchman, and is a power for good. He would be sorely missed, and his recovery is ardently desired.

"Stupid and wearisome" speakers were stamped down at the Saratoga Baptist Anniversaries, and the editor of the *Examiner & Chronicle* thinks such a "moderation" not altogether an evil. We confine such methods to the lower order of political gatherings.

Rev. John Brown has resigned the pastorate of the Wilmot Baptist Church and proposes to return to England in August. He takes this step on the urgent advice of his physician, who considers it imperative necessary to the health both of Brother and Mrs. Brown. His departure will be much regretted by his church and by his brethren.

The Wallace Baptist Church, reports by its clerk, through the *Messenger*, the exclusion of the Rev. Jas. A. Moore, from its fellowship on the 7th inst. The action of the church was unanimous and followed a careful hearing of the evidence in the case. We much regret having to chronicle decisions like this, still it is better that churches should purge themselves—better for them and better for the brethren who are thus dealt with.

The Pittsburg, Pa., Baptist Association passed the following resolutions at their recent session at Monongahela:

"Resolved, That churches belonging to this Association, needing the services of a Council for any purpose whatever, we recommended to issue invitations to every church within the Association, and that the call be for the pastor and two lay delegates from each church having a pastor, and for two lay delegates from each church having no pastor; said invitations to be mailed at least thirty days before the date for the assembling of the Council."

A good move towards "unity and comprehension."

For the VISITOR.

Nova Scotia Baptist Home Missionary Union.

The seventh annual session of this important Society was held at Hebron, Yarmouth Co., on Friday, the 14th inst. About forty delegates were present.

In the absence of the President, Rev. J. H. Saunders, one of the Vice Presidents, took the chair. Rev. W. H. Warren and B. W. Lockhart were appointed Secretaries.

After the usual routine business had been transacted, the Report of the Executive Board was read by Rev. A. Cohoon, Corresponding Secretary. From the Report it appeared that 35 missionaries had been employed during the past year. These had laboured 912 weeks, preached 2,366 sermons, made 7,595 pastoral visits, and distributed over 8,000 pages of tracts. One hundred and twenty-three stations had been occupied, and fifty-three churches had been assisted. The receipts were \$3,202.89, and the expenditures were about the same. One hundred and one converts had been baptized by the missionaries under the direction of the Board.

The evening session of the Union was exceedingly interesting. Addresses on the French Mission question were delivered by Revs. A. Cohoon, Dr. Day, John Brown, T. A. Higgins, M. Normandy, G. O. Gates, and others.

It was then our trying but imperative duty to move that this Union instruct its Executive Board to transfer its work, funds and property, to the Home Mission Board of the Convention.

As we were in some measure instrumental in forming the Home Missionary Union, and had watched its interests from the first, it was a painful duty to help legislate it out of existence. But we hope that our course in this matter will be duly appreciated by our New Brunswick brethren, and that, at the annual meeting of their Home Mission Society, they will unite with

us in the important work of Home Missions.

Matters have been looking in this direction for several years. Now we trust the goal will be reached. All the legal disabilities in regard to union in Home Missions have been removed.

The Board Appointed by the Convention will meet in the Vestry of the First Baptist Church, Yarmouth, on Monday, 23d inst., at 2 o'clock p.m., and we expect to push on the good work as rapidly as possible.

G. E. DAY.

For the Christian Visitor.

N. S. Western Association.

This Association met at Hebron, Yarmouth Co., on Saturday, 14th inst. About 150 delegates were present. Rev. John Brown was chosen Moderator. Rev. G. O. Gates and Rev. G. B. Titus were appointed Secretaries; J. C. Anderson and James Crosby, Treasurer.

The letters did not bring very joyful tidings. There had been only about 145 baptisms during the year. Moneys received by the Association rather exceeded the amounts of last year. The Association sermon by Rev. J. A. Higgins was a very timely discourse. So was the Circular Letter on Religious Declension by Rev. John Brown.

The sessions of the Association were very interesting throughout, and will undoubtedly be productive of good to all that attended.

G. E. DAY.

For the Visitor.

Denominational Statistics.

No. 1.

The value of statistics is now generally recognized. No argument is needed to show how desirable it is that the leading facts connected with the condition and growth of the churches, should be collected and kept on record. For this purpose, full and accurate reports should be had from the largest possible number of churches, and this requires a well-arranged system faithfully worked.

We Baptists in these Provinces have for many years been gathering statistics in our Associations and Conventions, and printing them for general information and for future reference. But for want of a proper system, the tables are more or less incomplete, inaccurate, and incapable of being compared one with another with satisfactory results.

Probably the general plan already in operation is not as good a one as could be devised. The churches report yearly to the Association, and the statistics thus obtained are collected and summarized by somebody for publication in the Convention Year Book. At least in theory this seems to be our present plan. But practically it is very imperfectly carried out.

For instance, take up the Year Book for 1878—in some respects a very excellent publication,—it ought to exhibit as fully as possible the actual condition and progressive increase of the Denomination in these Provinces. Under the head "Statistics of the Churches," we have the names of all the churches in each Association, the number of persons baptized during the year, and the membership as reported to the several Associations. But on comparing these figures with those given in the "Report on the State of the Denomination," we find the totals in the former less than those in the latter, by six churches, fifteen baptisms and one hundred and sixty-eight members. Moreover the actual increase in the total membership is not exhibited; and if we refer to the Year Book of 1877 for the total of that year, in order to find the difference, we shall still be at a loss, for one table makes the total more than the other does by 479. Besides, even if we could ascertain the net growth, we have no means of getting at the gross increase in membership. The number of persons coming into our churches from sister churches, beyond the limits of the Convention, and the number of baptized persons coming to us from other denominations, is not reported to the Associations.

Not to make this article too long, I shall defer the remainder of my observations on the subject until next week.

Yours truly,

NUMERATOR.

June 21, 1879.

The *Jewish Times* computes the number of Jews all over the world at 6,503,000.

N. S. Central Association.

The above body held its annual session on the 21st inst., with the church at Berwick, Kings Co., of which Rev. S. McC. Black is the efficient pastor. The attendance at the different sessions was very large, attracted by the central location, the fine weather, and the well-known hospitality of the people of that happy valley. The Committees, having been appointed the previous year, were able to present matured thoughts on the important questions of Education, Missions, Denominational Literature, etc.

The discussions on these questions occupied the Association after the Monday morning session. They were participated in by some of our best speakers, and several very stirring addresses were delivered. Many valuable suggestions will doubtless be carried home from this gathering.

The attendance at the Sabbath services was beyond the utmost capacity of the large meeting house. Excellent discourses were delivered by Rev. Dr. Welton in the morning, Rev. G. Weathers in the afternoon, and Rev. E. M. Kierstead in the evening.

The Associational Sermon on Monday, by Rev. E. M. Saunders, was characterized by his usual vigor of thought and breadth of treatment.

Rev. Mr. Williams had been appointed preacher, and Rev. I. S. McLean alternate, but Mr. Williams failed to come or notify his alternate, and Mr. Saunders preached at request of the Association.

The Circular Letter on "The Fellowship of the Churches" by Rev. E. M. Kierstead, was a most valuable contribution to our current literature. It will be read with profit by our brethren who were not able to hear it.

This Association embraces fifty churches with a membership of about 7,700.

Forty of these sent letters reporting 220 baptisms and about \$1,300 sent to the Association for benevolent purposes. They have appropriated during the year about \$800.

The Association will meet next year at Windsor. C.

Theology at Wolfville.

No. 3.

BY D. M. WELTON, PH.D.

In my last paper allusion was made to the need which exists of a larger supply of ministers to meet the growing wants of the churches. That need is so real and pressing that no inquiry as to the best means of remedying it can be deemed out of place. Various explanations have been offered of the comparative fewness of young men offering themselves to the Christian ministry. Some have traced it to the representations which every now and then appear to the effect that the supply already exceeds the demand; others to the meagre support which ministers as a general thing receive, as compared with those who engage in other professional work. But whether these explanations account for the fact or not, it yet remains true that the number of young men yearly entering the ministry falls considerably below the yearly demand. If our observation be extended over a wide area, say the different Evangelical denominations of the United States and Canada, it will be found that the percentage of young men in the different institutions of learning having the ministry in view is not much more than half as high as it was a few years ago. The ministry is not overstocked as some persons seem to think, nor is it likely to be. Those who are truly fitted for ministerial work and willing heartily to engage in it, will not be long in finding it to do, will not be long in finding a church already made for them, or, under God, in making one for themselves. Those who are not thus fitted and willing, whom few persons wish to listen to or employ, show hereby that they have never been called to preach the gospel, and had better therefore, turn their attention to some other occupation.

The present demand is chiefly for ministers of first class talents and qualifications; for it is they, be it remembered, that best succeed in the humblest as well as the highest spheres of Christian labor and influence. It is not every person that is fit to do the work of an evangelist; no amount of zeal can atone for ignorance and incapacity. If the ministry be overstocked anywhere, it is at the base. Higher up, where superior ability is required, there is abundant room. And it is so in all callings and professions; for skilled labor

there is ample employment and ample compensation.

The young men now specially needed for the ministry are not those who could succeed in no other calling, nor even those whose only qualification is piety; but those rather for whom nature as well as grace has done much,—men of large minds and large hearts, of broad sympathies and strong common sense. No gifts and qualifications, in fact, are too excellent or extraordinary to be laid upon the altar of Christ, and used in his service.

To give young men of this stamp such Theological instruction as shall fit them for efficient work as ministers and pastors in these Maritime Provinces, is the object contemplated in the establishment of a Theological school at Wolfville.

I have shown that by means of such school a larger number of ministers will be produced and a larger number retained. But other reasons might be adduced.

It might be shown in the second place that hereby our young men will come into truer sympathy with the work they will be called upon to perform. Every species of training develops a bias and aptitude corresponding to itself. Men may be educated out of sympathy with their surroundings, as well as into sympathy with them, may come to feel so partial to the customs and institutions of other countries and communities as almost to despise those of their own. Other things being equal, the minister who enters most sympathetically and appreciatingly into the wants and susceptibilities of the people among whom he labors, will be most successful and happy in his work. Accordingly the training that most happily conduces to this end must be regarded the best to him.

As the Georgics of Virgil, though containing useful reflections for the tillers of the soil in Italy and Sicily, would not make the best practical farmers for the granite hills of New England, so it may be doubted if the Theological schools of the latter place, as Newton and Andover, though furnishing instruction suited for the wants of the churches they more immediately represent, would yet be the best for those expecting to labor in these Provinces.

Take the matter of the delivery of sermons to which considerable importance attaches, as it is the principal means by which the preacher comes into contact with his hearers and lays before them the fruits of his theological studies. Now, the prevalent custom of New England is to read, to which the homiletical teaching of its divinity schools conforms. But reading sermons is not generally acceptable in these parts; the judgment and taste of the people are against it, and I believe the argument is principally on their side.

As a general thing the best ministers for any country are the men who have been born and trained within it. No policy could be more unwise or more unsuccessful for any people to adopt than that of importing their ministers from abroad.

The Englishman, for example, often finds it difficult to adapt himself to the state of things he finds on this side of the Atlantic, and therefore not unfrequently returns. But the tendency of the policy of educating our young men abroad and that of the policy of getting them from abroad, already educated, must be nearly the same. The brain and heart power with which the Almighty has endowed our youth is not exceeded elsewhere under the sun. Let us make the schools in which they are to be trained, not less than those found abroad, but more adapted to our circumstances, more in harmony with the genius and aspirations of our people, and the largest and most satisfactory results will be achieved.

It will be seen that the difficulty of building up a Theological school among ourselves and of retaining our young men for our home fields, will continue to be felt so long as any material support is given to the policy that advises or obliges them to go abroad. Nothing is more natural than that persons should think well and speak well of the institutions at which they have studied, and from which, it may be, they have received material benefit.

Accordingly we find that those who go to Newton and become its Alumni, as well as participate in the pecuniary assistance which it offers, are not slow to extol its virtues, which they seek sometimes to make more prominent by disparaging the humbler efforts of their brethren in the same direction at home. Thus, that which makes Newton strong makes Wolfville weak; the yearly exodus of young men is perpetuated; some of them never return to us, and the complete development of denominational independence and power is rendered impossible. But this leads me to thoughts which must be reserved for the next paper.