

The Ontario Evangelist,

A RELIGIOUS MONTHLY.

Terms, 50 Cents per Annum In Advance.

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All matters for publication should be addressed to GEO. MUNRO, Erin, Ont. All remittances should be sent to T. L. Fowler, Everton, Ont.

Remittances sent by Post Office Order or Registered Letter will come at our risk.

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JUNE, 1888.

THE ANNUAL MEETING.

The Annual Meeting of 1888 is over. It was a good meeting, as such meetings must be where brethren are met together with a common object in view, and that object so great a one as the advancement of the cause of Christ. Whatever differences of opinion were expressed were in regard to the best way of accomplishing the great end. There is, there can be, no reasonable objection to full, and free, and frank discussion of all matters connected with the carrying on of our missionary work. Indeed such an interchange and comparison of views is absolutely necessary when men come together to confer regarding any matter of common interest requiring decision and action. And here we may be allowed to say that there seemed an unwillingness on the part of some brethren to hear the other side, a certain impatience of discussion, a sort of suspicion that those not agreeing with them were speaking and acting in a factious and un-Christian manner. It is always well, when at all possible, to concede, (and to act upon the concession too) that those who differ from us are, at least, as candid as ourselves. And we venture to say that whatever irritation there was during the business sessions was produced by the failure to act upon this very noble and altogether Christian principle. No one need fear that vigorous, even warm, discussion will result in a breach of fellowship among those whose aims are essentially and fundamentally one, and whose hearts are strongly knit together in Christian love.

The foregoing remarks suggest the propriety of calling very particular attention to the fact that no question was raised respecting matters of faith, no one desired to have the gospel defined, no one suggested that any compromise should be made in presenting the truth to the people. Indeed it was beautiful to observe the perfect unanimity on such matters so far as any reference to them was made. And herein, brethren, lies our strength and our hope. If we but consecrate all we have, and all we are, to the furtherance of the gospel pure and undefiled, the blessing of the Lord will rest upon us, and make our work prosperous. Nay, let us daily remember that if we are not set for the defense and maintenance of the ancient gospel we have no place in these days. If we are but a sect—a party, held together merely by human ties and worldly associations, the sooner we disband the better. But if, as let us trust the fact is, we are devoted to the setting forth of the undiluted gospel to all men, and the accomplishment of union among all the followers of the Lord, then the sooner we awake out of sleep and discover that, for some years at least, we have been unfaithful to this high calling the sooner we can have the answer of a good conscience towards God.

MRS. O. A. BURGESS.

In Sister Annie Kilgour's report of what was done at the Sisters' Meeting will be found an account of what Sister Burgess did in a public way at Hillsburg. In addition to that she very kindly consented to address a meeting in Erin Village on Monday evening, June 4th, when, though the notice was very short, a good congregation assembled to hear her. And as in her address before the general meeting in Hillsburg she won the hearts of all by her clear, earnest, tender presentation of the claims of the unsaved upon Christian women. Among those whose good fortune it was to meet her in private there was but one opinion,—that she is a

modest, intelligent, cultured, devoted Christian lady. It was a kind act on the part of the executive committee of the C. W. B. M. in the States to send her over, it was kind in her to come, and we predict that the work among our sisters in Ontario will receive from her presence and her counsel such a direction and such an impetus as will cause it to bear rich fruit for the Master for many a year to come.

JUNE MEETING NOTES.

Bro. C. J. Lister and Bro. Colin Sinclair received a warm greeting from their many old friends in Erin.

Though there was a large crowd assembled on Lord's Day the best of order prevailed. Nothing happened so far as we know inconsistent with the sacred character of the day.

Bro. J. W. Kilgour was, by his reasonable and urgent request, relieved of a large part of the work which he has performed for many years as Secretary of the Board.

Bro. James Menzies, of Toronto, is worthy of special and honorable mention in having come to the annual gathering though appearing to be in very feeble health. May the Lord deal tenderly with him in these his declining years.

It was decided to hold the next annual meeting in St. Thomas; and that it should begin on Thursday at two o'clock, instead of on Friday at seven as heretofore. The exact date is left to the Board to determine.

Many whose presence and counsel would have been an inspiration were absent. We mention the names of Alexander Anderson, Hamilton; Edmund Sheppard, Ridgeway; John Stewart, Everton.

The occasion of greatest interest was when at one o'clock on Lord's Day over 400 Disciples sat down together to break bread in memory of the Saviour. Bro. Fowler presided and made very appropriate and impressive remarks.

Bro. Robert Macmillan was "instant in season and out of season," looking after the billeting of visitors, filling up the R. R. certificates, and generally seeing that everything was going on comfortably and smoothly.

The number of business men present was an encouraging feature of the meeting,—and of farmers too; for the time of the farmer is perhaps more valuable than that of any other citizen at this time of the year.

Instead of the old-time plan of having three services on the Lord's Day only two were held. It made the day more comfortable both for preachers and hearers; and it is believed as much good was done by the two meetings as by the three formerly.

J. R. Gaff was the chief speaker on the occasion. Much was expected of him. We got it and more. He exceeded the expectations of nearly every one. His sermons gave evidence of much careful thinking, they were timely and well delivered. He cannot but accomplish good in Toronto.

C. J. Lister was in a very poor state of health, but that did not prevent him coming to the meeting. He preached a short, but very interesting sermon in the Union meeting-house on Sunday evening. Many of his old friends in Erin and Eramosa took advantage of the occasion to hear him.

These notes would be very incomplete without a reference to "those women" who have organized for Christian work. Paul exhorted a certain one to "help those women" who labored with him in the gospel. Thanks to the gospel which Paul preached, those women are now able to help themselves, and a more appropriate exhortation in some quarters might be, "Let them alone, they are doing a good work." The energy, zeal and ability of Sisters Brown and McClurg have, we presume, contributed most largely to bringing their work into its present hopeful condition. That they will succeed is just as certain as that unselfish, devoted Christian work always does succeed, being blessed of our Father in heaven. Elsewhere will be found what they propose to do during the coming year. We invite the attention of the sisters all over the Province to this work, and would respectfully urge upon them everywhere to organize and be fellow-workers in the same. It will be a blessing to others, and a rich blessing to themselves.

Bro. C. J. Lister made an appeal on behalf of the church in Owen Sound. They are putting up a new meeting-house this summer, and having taxed themselves to the utmost of their ability, they ask the Disciples in the Province to aid them to the extent of ten cents a piece. Later full particulars will be given through the EVANGELIST and otherwise. We cannot now recollect the details as presented by Bro. Lister.

O. G. Hertzog was at the meeting and favored us with two good discourses. One in the hall on Saturday evening and another in the Presbyterian Church on Sunday evening. He spoke to the brethren in Acton on Wednesday evening preceding the June meeting, and on Thursday evening for us at Everton. Everybody seemed glad to see and hear him.

Though Hillsburg is not so convenient of access by rail as Guelph, there was a larger number of delegates present this year than last, as well as a larger number of visitors. Sister C. Macdonald, of Prince Edward Co., again showed her interest in, and devotion to the cause by coming all the way as the sole representative from the far east. She said she was not sorry that she came.

Bro. James Kilgour, though sufficiently well to attend all the business sessions and all the preaching services, and also to take some part in the discussions on matters of business, was prevented, on account of his not yet having fully recovered the use of his voice, from participating in the Lord's Day services, as was formerly his wont at the June meetings. His many friends of other days from all parts of the Province were glad to see him even so well as he is after his severe illness of last winter.

Too much praise cannot be accorded the sisters of the Erin Centre Church for the way in which they entertained the visitors. On Saturday dinner and supper were furnished in a hall over where the business sessions were held. The arrangements seemed perfect, and the provisions and attendance certainly were. Much time was saved by that plan, and the sisters themselves were able to attend the meetings and enjoy them instead of being compelled to remain at home to have things in readiness for their guests.

Neither the Baptists nor the Methodists held services in Hillsburg June Meeting Sunday: their places of worship were occupied by our preachers, morning and evening. It was Communion Sunday with the Presbyterians so they could not give up their house in the forenoon, but they very generously placed it at our disposal in the evening.

Before the Co-operation adjourned votes of thanks were passed to these churches for their kindness and we may here record the appreciation of their friendly treatment by the Erin Centre Church.

The officers in the new Board are the following:—Hugh Black, President; J. W. Kilgour, Recording Secretary; T. L. Fowler, Corresponding Secretary, and John McKinnon, Treasurer. These officers, with the addition of Bro. Robert Macmillan, Hillsburg, constitute the Executive Committee of the Board. All contributions to be sent to the Treasurer, John McKinnon, Everton, Ont.

The programme of the Lord's Day services will be seen from the reduced copy of a hand bill struck off, which is given here:—

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST IN ONTARIO.

JUNE MEETING, 1888.

The Disciples will hold services, June 3rd, at Hillsburg, as follows:

Town Hall—Eld. J. R. Gaff at 11 a. m. and 6 p. m.

Union Meeting House—C. Sinclair at 11 a. m., and C. J. Lister at 6 p. m.

Methodist Church—M. Gunn at 11 a. m., J. Lediard at 6 p. m.

Presbyterian Church—O. G. Hertzog at 6 p. m.

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be dispensed at 1 o'clock p. m., in the Town Hall, T. L. Fowler presiding.

R. McMillan,
Chairman of Committee.

The writer having to attend the meetings in the Town Hall did not hear any of the brethren who preached in the various churches. But from those who were present he learned that good preaching was the order of the day.

It is said that "comparisons are odious," but Mark Twain says, "they need not be malicious." It is not our purpose to be either odious or malicious. However, we venture to repeat here what seemed to be the general feeling of those present, that the Annual Meeting of 1888 was the best held in recent years, if not the best ever held by the Disciples in Ontario. If it was the best, it is only what we should all desire. And the present writer feels sure he is giving utterance to the sentiment of all his brethren, when he expresses the wish that next year in St. Thomas we may have a still better one, and so on year by year.

A very interesting report was presented on behalf of the Denison Avenue Church, Toronto. We should like to publish it entire. It made one feel more like assisting that church. They are a devoted and self-sacrificing people; they do not ask assistance to do that which they are able to do for themselves. After they have done all they can, they say, "help us." Here is an estimate of what they expect to raise for the coming year:—

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Rent..... | \$275 00 |
| Gas and Water..... | 50 00 |
| Coal and Wood..... | 10 00 |
| Caretaker..... | 60 00 |
| Liabilities on Furniture..... | 235 00 |
| Home and Foreign Missions..... | 25 00 |
| Sunday School Supplies..... | 50 00 |
| Support of Minister..... | 500 00 |
| Church Expenses..... | 25 00 |

Total.....\$1,260 00

In the discussion at the Annual Meeting upon the best way to use the means contributed for the spread of the gospel, it was evident that there were at least two opinions. Some advocated the concentration of our efforts; but others the keeping of an Evangelist to travel over the country.

Our statement that the late Elders Black and Parkinson favored the former was called in question. Fortunately we have in our possession a letter written by our late Bro. Parkinson bearing upon this very question, which letter you will find in full in the September number of the ONTARIO EVANGELIST '86.

The following are extracts from it:—
We are satisfied from the experience of the past that it is NOT THE PART OF WISDOM TO SCATTER a small amount of labor over a comparatively large field. In our opinion if the larger part of the funds contributed were applied in doing PERMANENT work in a few of the important centres where churches already exist, it would tend to make our position better known and increase our influence for the advancement of the cause of primitive Christianity in our Province.

As to the keeping of an Evangelist he says:—
For it is DESIRABLE that the EXPENSE of SPECIAL COLLECTORS being employed should be saved.

The late Elder Black with whom we conferred many times upon this subject was of the same opinion. In fact it was from him we got the idea; and when we advocate the advisability of concentrating our work instead of spreading it over a large area we are advocating a policy begotten by the wisdom of those who were engaged in co-operative work for nearly half a century.

NOTES.

Contributions from Ontario to Foreign Missions since last report: J. R. Gaff, Toronto, \$5.00.

Two dollars sent to us pays for the *Christian Standard* and ONTARIO EVANGELIST for one year.

We regret that lack of time prevented us from conferring with our friends at the Annual Meeting regarding the EVANGELIST.

All those interested in mission work home and foreign should take this paper. It will, no doubt, be more interesting than over during the coming year. Subscribe now.

As a proof of the increasing interest taken by the Disciples of Ontario in Foreign Missions we note the fact that \$611.38 has been contributed by them during the past seven months; in the corresponding period last year \$407.47. It is evident that we are well able to support one missionary.

We have done our best to give our readers a good account of the June Meeting, and have held the paper back two weeks this month to present it as soon as possible. We have, no doubt, failed to do full justice to the matter. We should like to have published the various reports presented, but lack of space forbids. In our next we may take occasion to call attention to sundry matters overlooked, or unavoidably excluded now. The only way to get the full benefit of an Annual Meeting is to attend it. This is a hint for the future. All aboard for St. Thomas next year.