

### Historical Sketch of Gibson Baptist Church.

BY THE PASTOR.

Three facts prior and leading up to the organization of Gibson Baptist church may be related. First, the preaching services in Close's Hall, maintained during summer months, by Revs. R. D. Crawley and Jos. McLeod, D. D. Second, the organization at Gibson of a Sunday School with Rev. W. E. McIntyre as first superintendent. Later on another Sunday School was organized at St. Mary's Ferry, which was in time merged into the Gibson one. The latter had as superintendents after Bro. McIntyre's removal, Brethren W. Y. T. Sims, J. A. Miles and W. A. Bradley, who still remains in faithful, efficient service. Third, the organization of the ladies' sewing circle on April 28, 1886, "to institute ways and means to raise funds to build a church," Mrs. John Miles, Mrs. Thos. Hoben, Mrs. T. D. Babbitt, Mrs. A. Colwell, Mrs. W. A. Bradley and Miss Belle Miles held office at different times in this band of workers. The



GIBSON BAPTIST CHURCH.

first named sister passed away before her cherished hope of seeing a Baptist church in Gibson realized, but not before she had seen the promise of it. Mrs. T. D. Babbitt also has since passed away.

The first social, which was held at the home of Mrs. John Miles, was a union effort with the Free Baptists, but each denomination deciding to build separately the money on hand was forthwith equally divided. Up to the time of the building of the church in 1889, the ladies' sewing circle gathered together from all available sources \$530. Hon. A. F. Randolph, of the mother church across the river at Fredericton, presented the lot upon which the church was erected. The meeting at which the church was organized convened on Nov. 14, 1889, Rev. F. D. Crawley in the chair. A motion of organization was passed, and thirty-seven persons enrolled themselves as charter members. T. E. Babbitt was chosen deacon, Mrs. Thos. Hoben, treasurer, and J. A. Miles, clerk. On the following Sunday, Nov. 17, the church was formally dedicated, Rev. W. B. Hinson preaching the sermon on that occasion. Brethren Manzer, Deblois, Bentley and



THE PARSONAGE.

Ganong supplied the pulpit for longer or shorter periods. Rev. B. N. Nobles was called and entered upon his pastorate Oct. 6, 1890. The church expected some aid from the Home Mission Board but decided to do without it, and has, therefore, the unique experience of having never received missionary aid:

On the removal of Bro. J. A. Miles Bro. T. D. Babbitt was appointed clerk, in which office he still remains to the perfect satisfaction of the church. Pastor Nobles on Nov. 16, 1892, organized a B. Y. P. U. with eight active and five associate members. The Union has been maintained ever since, though much hindered by the frequent removals of its leading members.

The Gibson Baptist church, though so young a daughter, was now blessed with a daughter herself, and Fredericton Baptist church became a grandmother. On Oct. 25, 1893, seventeen members were dismissed to form a church at Marysville, which thereafter became responsible for one-third of the pastor's salary. On June 1, 1893, after a most faithful and successful pastorate of two years and eight months, Pastor Nobles resigned, and on June 18 Rev. F. D. Davidson took the oversight

of the church. Two days after the disastrous Gibson fire occurred, and the church did not escape the clean sweep made by the flames.

Fortunately there was some insurance on the church building, and though most of their homes were still smouldering in ashes, the members decided on July 4th, to rebuild the house of worship at once. Services were in the meantime held in the Forester's Hall in St. Mary's, which was seated with chairs at the expense of the church. Oct. 17th saw a considerable portion of St. Mary's go up in smoke, and with it the Forester's Hall and contents. After this the church worshipped in the vestry of the partly completed church, which was being erected on the old site. The dedication service was held on Dec. 24th, 1893, Dr. McLeod, Dr. Saunders, and Rev. Mr. Howie being the preachers during the day.

On June 13, 1895, Mrs. Thos. Hoben resigned as treasurer, and the church recorded its appreciation of her faithful work. Miss Belle Miles was appointed treasurer in her stead, and is still in office, having patiently and unselfishly done all any treasurer could do to contribute to church prosperity and success. During this year Bro. A. D. Yerxa was appointed deacon, Allan Hoben, M. A., was licensed to preach, and a successful effort made to pay off the church debt.

On Oct. 1st, 1897, Rev. F. D. Davidson terminated his pastorate of four years and four months, which had been very fruitful in additions to the church. On Nov. 1 of the same year, the present pastorate began, and a few weeks later the building of a parsonage on a lot adjoining the church was commenced, and by May of the following year was ready for occupancy. During the past summer, in the vicinity of \$200 has been expended on church painting and repairs. In addition to this, the ladies' sewing circle has erected in front of the church and parsonage a neat fence at a cost of over \$50. Since Oct. of last year the church employs all the pastor's time. The parsonage and lot cost \$1750, upon which there is at present an indebtedness of nearly \$1300, which is gradually shrinking under a sinking fund. The church contributed \$9 to missions the first year of its existence, and this year raised for the same purpose \$146, in all for the ten years \$637. Other statistics for the decade are as follows: Sunday school receipts, \$858, on hand \$45; church receipts for current expenses, \$73, on hand \$67.50; building receipts, \$35.82. Total receipts \$1237.7. In all there have been 295 names on the church record, 63 have been dismissed, 18 have died, and 214 remain, of which 49 are non-resident and 165 resident members.

### The Year Book and Revivals.

BY H. F. ADAMS, TRURO

There is no truer index to the presence or absence of the revival spirit in our churches than our annual Baptist Year Book. For however lifeless statistics may seem, they are speechful when we are seeking for a clue to the degree of the Spirit's presence in our midst. My Year Book came last Friday, and next day I sat down and devoured its contents, getting much food for reflection. But the unpalatableness of the meal filled me with sadness, the very reverse of the roll that Ezekiel ate, Ez. 3:3. Mine was bitter his sweet. It told a long tale of defeats of the King's soldiers. The band's music was not a pibroch but a dead march. I got uneasy, my brows lowered, as when I read of British reverses in the Transvaal. And yet I am not a pessimist but an optimist of the first order. Why then should I feel sad and look blue after swallowing the Year Book?

#### LOOK ON THIS

The following table of figures is the result of comparative study. The churches in the Associations are:

Nova Scotia, Western,	72
"    Central,	55
"    Eastern,	70
New Brunswick, Western,	75
"    Southern,	45
"    Eastern,	50
Prince Edward Island Association,	27
African Association,	16
Total,	410

#### AND ON THIS.

N. S. Western reporting conversions,	28	Churches	28
"    "    no conversions,	44		44
"    Central reporting conversions,	29		29
"    "    no conversions,	26		26
"    Eastern reporting conversions,	29		29
"    "    no conversions,	41		41
N. B. Western reporting conversions,	22		22
"    "    no conversions,	53		53
"    Southern reporting conversions,	19		19
"    "    no conversions,	26		26
"    Eastern reporting conversions,	14		14
"    "    no conversions,	36		36
P. E. Island Asso. reporting conversions,	14		14
"    "    no conversions,	13		13
African Baptist Asso. reporting conversions,	2		2
"    "    no conversions,	14		14
Totals,	157	Churches	253

These figures show that only 157 churches report conversions, while the enormous number of 253 churches do

not report a single conversion for the whole year. The 157 churches report a little over eight conversions per church, aggregating 1,302.

Do I hear one remark, "probably the 253 churches reporting no conversions are all small and pastorless churches." Indeed it is not so. I find on analysis of the 253 that there are of

Churches of a membership between	20 and 100,	176
"    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "	100 and 200,	54
"    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "	200 and 300,	15
"    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "	300 and 400,	4
"    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "    "	400 and 500,	4

Total. 253

These statistics may seem very dry, but they ought to bring tears to our eyes, call us to confession and cry unto God for forgiveness of our sins.

Can it be possible that a single pastor, deacon, Sunday School teacher, or any other Christian worker, can read these results and not shut himself or herself in a room and quietly think over and pray about this state of things in our churches. Every one will agree that this is a most lamentable showing for a year's work. That 253 churches, comprising nearly two thirds of all, should not have a single conversion is the worst year's record within the memory of many. Last year the N. S. Western reported 34 churches with no conversions, and in 1897 there were 25 with none. But this year 44 report no conversions, etc.

Now that we are face to face with facts, carefully gathered together and arranged by the hard working committee of the Year Book, chaired by that painstaking man, Dr. B. H. Eaton, let us think, compare notes and deduce conclusions, that may set us to work to reverse this state at our next annual meetings. Slowly but surely belief in revivals has been renounced by many. Not as slowly, but as surely, approval of revival preachers has been displaced in more. Several reasons have been given for this course, but more excuses have been given than reasons. Whatever they be, one thing is certain and that is that the objectors cannot claim either New or Old Testament to sustain them. Our current Sunday School lessons illustrate the use God made of revivalists in securing the awakening and co-operation of the Jews to begin and complete large religious works.

Zerubbabel was the man whom God filled with his spirit so that he stirred up the Jews to co-operate and amid great difficulties to rebuild the beautiful temple. After matters had lapsed into a bad state God stirred the heart of that famous revival preacher, Ezra, to go to Jerusalem and hold special meetings for reclaiming the backsliders and readjusting the service of the Temple according to the pattern of Moses' instructions. Some years after another great work needed a revivalist to enthrone the people to a point of white heat on the subject of wall building. And no better man could be selected by the Lord than Nehemiah. Result of his visit was that under his inspiring preaching a wall that had been 142 years in the state that Nebuchadnezzar left it was all rebuilt in 52 days. And were not all the prophets revivalists? especially the minor prophets? What was John the Baptist, Peter and Paul but revivalists? And is not the "evangelist" of divine origin, and has he not a place in the economy of grace? Else what meaneth Ephesians 4:11, 12, "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some EVANGELISTS, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ?"

It may be possible to blame some one else than ourselves for this defection, but it is more manly and less reprovable to lay the sin each man on himself, and to imitate the Jews in repairing the broken wall, who repaired it each man the piece opposite his own door. But still I am a little inclined to believe that the teaching of such men as Dr. Lyman Abbott has had not a little to do with this discouraging of revivals in our churches. His clever Outlook is continually paring away the Scripture doctrines of human depravity and salvation from sin. And instead exalting human goodness and evolutionistic ideas, subversive of instantaneous conversion. Instead of encouraging revivals in churches, his cry is, "we need a revival of ethics in man." I understand ethics to be "the science of human duty," or the conduct that makes character. How can we have a revival of ethics, that shall be the fruitage, unless first there be a revival of the spiritual life, that is the root of all noble conduct? An Annapolis Valley farmer whose orchard had been very unproductive in recent years might with as much reason suddenly raise the cry, "I need a revival of fruit." While at the same time the roots of his trees were covered with weeds four feet high that had not only choked the soil and prevented ventilation, but had stolen the nourishment needed by the trees, to say nothing of pruning, fertilizing, all of which the farmer had neglected for years. If the farmer wants a revival of fruit he must attend to the roots and get them revived and fruit will naturally follow. If we want a man to act well and to speak well he must think well, love well, believe well. And what quicker, better, diviner method is there than to revive his interest in Jesus, in the Blood that stoned, in the resurrection that justifies, in the Holy Ghost who renews?