

Messenger and Visitor

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Two Meetings of the Eastern Association of New Brunswick.

The recent meeting of the Eastern Association at Surrey, of which an account will be found in our columns, recalls the meeting of the same Association (though covering at present less territory) in 1877, at Hillsboro. At the meeting of 1877, according to the recollection of the writer, who was then a mere school-boy, the following among other ministers were present and took part in the exercises: Rev. W. A. Carey, Rev. A. B. MacDonald, Rev. Thomas Todd, Rev. W. A. Coleman, Rev. James Tringle, Rev. Mr. Irving, Rev. P. M. McLeod, Rev. Elias Keirstead, Rev. G. M. W. Carey, Rev. William George, Rev. J. C. Hurd, M. D., Rev. I. E. Bill, Rev. Charles Spurden, D. D., Rev. J. E. Hopper. Acadia College was represented by Professor D. F. Higgins. The Association was opened with a religious conference in which the ministers spoke with more freedom of their personal experience than is common in such meetings now. The church letters were read in full and seemed very interesting and adapted to strengthen the desire of the listener for the progress of the cause. The ministers who were selected to read performed their task in much better form than the readers of such letters now are able to reach. The power to read seems to be largely a lost art. The Association sermon, then called the introductory sermon, was preached by Rev. J. C. Hurd, M. D., of Fredericton. The text was: "There remaineth much land to be possessed." Dr. Hurd was a man of vigor, somewhat eccentric, but effective. The Association asked him to publish his sermon in the Visitor. Dr. Hurd said he would consent on condition that it was published in two successive numbers of the paper and not be "continued" for weeks. He said Brother Carey was to preach the sermon at the Western Association, soon to be held, and that his sermon would be as long as the moral law and he (Hurd) did not want his own to be long drawn out.

Rev. William George evoked a cordial response by his sermon from "Will ye also go away? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Mr. George was preparing for the work of a missionary in Burma to which he gave his life.

The discussion on the Visitor was not unlike the discussions on our denominational paper now. Then, as now, some brethren objected to the advertisements, and the editor, Rev. I. E. Bill, explained the sad necessity that compelled their insertion. Then, as now, they also wanted to know why the paper could not be sold as cheaply as the secular papers. Then, as now, the editor carefully and patiently explained the reason. The price was two dollars then for a four page paper. But they complain now at paying a dollar and a half for a sixteen page paper. And they will go on complaining at least to the end of the world.

Like discussed education then, Bro. C. E. Knapp expressed his fears that the ministers would lose their spirituality if they became educated and that our denomination would, like some other religious bodies, lose its piety if we got much education. He was answered by Rev. Peter McLeod, who thought the man must be "non compos mentis" who was opposed to education. Whether Brother Knapp was convinced or not, he has been a life-long supporter of our denomination, and has no particular fear that its ever learning will quench its religious fervor. The discussion of the necessity of education for the minister was not all "sweetness." Two of the brethren became personal in their remarks. But the discussion did not close without emphasis and exhortation of good Christian feeling. They allowed him to have his way. We would do no better now.

But in many respects the Association at Surrey showed an advanced state among our churches and in the country compared with the earlier date.

Then we had no foreign missions of our own. Our contributions were expended through the Missionary Union. Now, according to last report, we have 8 churches with a total membership of 513 under the care of 22 missionaries. We have receipts of \$18,370, and Trust Funds amounting to over \$50,000.

In other departments we have advanced. But, "there remaineth very much land to be possessed."

The country has advanced. Then our railways in this province consisted, if we remember correctly, of the line from St. Andrews to Woodstock, and the line from St. John to Pt. du Chene. Then we had no free school system. Then college graduates were very few among us, and few looked forward to college training.

Our ministers of those days did a noble work under great difficulties. The difficulties have not all vanished yet. Our ministers now are laboring with commendable zeal. They, like their predecessors, are praying for more power. Let one who knew the churches at the former date visit them now and he would find the altar fires still aglow, the Word still preached in power.

In the writer's opinion the pastors now have better libraries, more general information, a wider range of thought, greater variety in preaching, more teaching power than the ministers of the earlier days. At the same time the demands are greater and now as then our churches need "more than is of man's degree" to prove worthy of their generation and the day of their visitation.

Pope Leo XIII.

Cardinal Pecci was already beginning to be an old man when in February, 1878, he was elected to succeed Pius IX in the papal chair, being then 68 years of age, but his term of office has exceeded that of everyone of his predecessors in the papacy, save only the pope whom he immediately succeeded. Pius IX had reigned thirty-two years, thus disproving the popular belief that no pope would ever attain the years of Peter who, according to the tradition received by the Roman Catholic church, was bishop at Rome for the period of twenty-five years. The late pontiff had, accordingly, reigned longer than any but one of his predecessors, while in the years of his life he had, we suppose, exceeded any of the popes who went before him.

The late pope was not, however, distinguished merely or chiefly for the length of his reign or the number of his years. His personality was without doubt one of the most commanding of his time. His long life and large experience made him master of resources and opportunities which he was not slow to turn to account. His mind was naturally of that keen, alert and retentive character which makes the acquisition of knowledge not a drudgery but a delight, and rapidly and easily he climbed the stairways by which the student and the scholar ascend to the seats of the learned. He was wise, too, as well as learned, understanding the times and the seasons, knowing the time to keep silence and the time to speak, the time to plant and the time to pluck up that which is planted.

It is perhaps, more than any other, this quality of wise prudence, his knowledge and ability to deal with men, nations and circumstances, his ability to take occasion by the hand—in a word, his masterly aptitude for diplomacy—that has constituted the real greatness of Leo XIII and lent distinction to his reign. But the results achieved would of course have been impossible apart from the high personal character of the late pope, his natural ability, profound learning and piety. His mental endowments, as we have seen, were most generous, he was learned in the learning of his times, he was familiar with the natural sciences, a lover of art and literature, an excellent stylist, a poet of no mean ability, he was profoundly devoted to the interests of his church and broadly sympathetic with the interests of humanity. Moreover he was deeply versed in theology, law and diplomacy, and was accordingly equipped as few of his predecessors had been to use to the full the opportunities of his high office.

It is hardly necessary on our part to disclaim any endorsement of the papacy as a religious institution. With other Protestants we entirely repudiate the claims of pope and papacy to dominate the consciences of men. But the immense influence of Roman Catholicism in the world, today as in the past, is a fact which cannot be ignored; and considering the immense influence of the papacy, not only upon the people and the institutions of Roman Catholic countries, but upon the world at large, the personality of the reigning pope can never be a matter of indifference to Protestants. There was much in the character of the late pope and his influence upon the world, which Christians of all names can cordially appreciate and approve. The austere simplicity of his life, his love of nature, his kindness and urbanity, his genuine interest in human welfare and sympathy with human ills, the courage and fortitude with which he performed the arduous duties of his high office, bearing in his old age burdens which might well tax the best powers of a strong man in his prime—all these are qualities which have appealed to the admiration and regard of people of every name.

In administration of the affairs of the papacy, the late pope showed a larger and more liberal spirit than had characterized most of his predecessors. He did not, it is true, relinquish the claim to temporal power, nor perhaps any other claim which his later predecessors had put forth, and, after the example of Pius IX, he maintained the fiction of regarding himself as a prisoner in the Vatican. But in dealing with the nations he employed diplomacy to accomplish results which some popes would have sought, and sought in vain, to accomplish by authority. His

encyclicals have frequently dealt with social and ethical subjects which had a common interest to the Christian world, and they have dealt with them by appealing to the reason and conscience of those addressed, rather than by enjoining obedience to the head of the church. If he did not place less emphasis on ritualism, it is evident that he placed more on the study of practical theology and the Sacred Scriptures. It has been said and it is probably true, that when the college of Cardinals elected Joachim Pecci as pope, they made the best choice possible. Of course, so long as the papacy remains a papacy, the best possible will leave a vast deal to be desired from a Protestant point of view, but we can hardly venture to hope at present for anything better in that connection than the election of a new pope on whom the mantle of Leo XIII has fallen.

The Wolfville Pastorate.

We learn that the pastorate of the Wolfville Baptist church will be vacant after September 13th, the resignation of the Rev. H. R. Hatch, M. A., having been accepted by the church to take effect at that date.

Mr. Hatch has held his present pastorate over five years. He returns to Maine his native State and becomes Professor in Colby College, his Alma Mater. The appointment is a compliment to his character, ability and scholarship. We congratulate him on the confidence the appointment expresses on the part of his brethren in his own State and, if we were known to Colby College, we would congratulate that institution on the wisdom it has shown in calling to its staff of instruction another teacher of approved ability, an industrious student and a man devoted to what he undertakes.

Before accepting the pastorate at Wolfville Mr. Hatch had served on the Faculty of Newton Theological Seminary and he now returns to the onerous yet grateful task of the College Professor. We shall expect him to worthily uphold the traditions of Colby. Certainly his brethren in these provinces will wish him abundant success. The teacher is the master; and he who teaches those who are to teach others multiplies his life. A good Professor in a Christian College is a power in the land.

While rejoicing with Professor Hatch in the fruits which we hope the coming years will yield we do not forget the Wolfville church that must now address itself to the important task of securing another pastor. The church holds a great trust, it has all the responsibility that is attached to any other church in the matter of the pastorate, and it has, in addition, the burden of supplying a minister for the students of these provinces who come from many churches. The brethren concerned have a task of much gravity and they will have the sympathy and prayers of many in our denominations in their search for the man of God they need to serve them in the gospel.

The number is comparatively small by whom Rev. T. S. Harding is remembered. But the Rev. S. W. DeBlois, D. D., who for more than a quarter of a century held the Wolfville pastorate is still fresh in the memory of the church and of the denomination. His word was blessed to the good of many hundreds. Large numbers were brought into the church during his ministry. Many of these have carried on his work by preaching, teaching and other forms of service.

For a dozen years or more our esteemed brother, the Rev. T. A. Higgins, D. D., preached the gospel and administered the affairs of the church, with a gentleness of spirit and a faithfulness to the Word of God that marked his ministry as one pervaded with the good spirit of God and fruitful in results. The church has, in the selection of its last two pastors, had its wisdom approved by two Colleges by whom its ministers have been sought for their service.

In view of the record of the church and of the devotion of the members of the present we may confidently hope that the coming pastor at Wolfville will be a man worthy of the place and of the opportunity. It is important to our beloved denomination that such should be the case.

Editorial Notes.

—Valuable testimony in favor of total abstinence from alcoholic drinks is that of Count Von Haeseler, lately commander of the sixteenth Artillery Corps in the German army, and spoken of as one of Emperor William's military intimates. The Count has himself been an abstainer for nearly 25 years, drinking only a quarter of a glass of champagne on the Emperor's birthday, and even that he thinks is too much. The soldier who abstains altogether, says Count Von Haeseler is the best man; he can accomplish more, can march better and is a better soldier than the man who drinks even moderately. Mentally and physically he is better. Brandy is the worst poison of all and beer comes next to it, but each limits the capacity and lowers mind, body and soul. For soldier's drink the Count recommends water, coffee, and especially tea.

In addition to the purely scientific interest attaching to the discovery of the radium, there seems to be reason to hope that the newly discovered substance will prove of great value to the world as an agent in therapeutics. A recent London dispatch says that Dr. Mackenzie Davidson, a well known London surgeon, has successfully treated a case