

The Christian.

ST. JOHN, N. B. JULY, 1892

EDITORIAL.

We have returned from our eastern tour much encouraged with prospects and finding friends well at home.

On the 20th of May we reached East Point. It was probably the coldest day since March. Although cold and tired with the journey, no material injury followed, and labor began at once. We spent the days in visiting and conversation and the evenings in preaching. Although the people were busy with "spring work," they attended the meetings well, and many were sore and sad at the loss of loved ones. Never in the same time has that community so suffered from sickness and death as in the last three or four months. There were few meetings during these gloomy months, as the sick and dying had to be attended.

Night after night passed, but no one responded to the invitation of the gospel, but the interest seemed to increase. On the third and last Lord's day we staid three young men came forward and confessed the Saviour, two of them in their teens. May the life thus begun be spent for Jesus and His cause. The third was J. F. Baker, brother of the lamented Hodgson Baker, whose obituary was given in the last CHRISTIAN. He has for years been an agent for the CHRISTIAN and in sympathy with its work, though harassing doubts kept him from a surrender to Christ. The church had long and anxiously expected him they so highly esteemed to stand with them, and deep were their emotions when he made "the good confession." Others expressed their desires to be saved, but were not fully decided to obey the Lord. Other appointments called us away. We preached on Monday and Tuesday evenings, and baptized those three; then left for Montague. Bro. John McDonald had so far recovered as to attend and take part in the meetings to the joy of all. On our way to Montague we spent a night with Dr. Muttart and his kind intelligent family. We also called on Mrs. Knight, whom we found as genial and christianly as "in the days of lang syne." The same night we attended a large and lively temperance entertainment, where old and young acquitted themselves as masters of the situation. It is encouraging to see the young people set their face against the deadly demon of strong drink before it gains the mastery.

And still another call must be mentioned. It was at the house of Donald Nicholson, Dundas. He may be called "a prisoner of Jesus Christ." For a number of years he has been confined to his room by paralysis, but appears happy in his Saviour's love. Mrs. Nicholson, too, appears to be an earnest and intelligent Christian, and a visit at their house is very enjoyable.

We found the friends at Montague, generally, well and true and kind as ever, and only regretted there was so little time to visit them, especially such as could not attend the meetings. We spoke twice to large and attentive audiences on Lord's day at Montague, and on Monday evening at New Perth, and came home on Tuesday.

What time we could we staid with Bro. and Sister Emery. His health is much improved, and instead of leaving the Island, as it was feared, he has engaged to labor for the churches of Charlottetown and Lot 48. We sincerely hope the Lord's blessing will follow this arrangement. It was very pleasing to hear the brethren at Montague speak of his faithfulness in visiting the sick, assisting at their meetings, and otherwise helping the church when his health prevented his preaching and his engagement with the church had ceased.

They are expecting Bro. Weaver soon to labor there and at East Point, and our prayer is that he may be abundantly successful in these large and important fields.

We are glad that two different writers in the last CHRISTIAN have called attention to the census report of the number of Disciples in the Dominion of Canada in 1881 and 1891, giving the decrease in the last ten years from 20,193 to 12,763. We hope our brethren will think of it and ask, "How is this?" Are the Disciples decreasing at this rate in Canada while they are so rapidly increasing in the United States? and they will find that it is not so; that there is a mistake from some cause, a misleading and injurious mistake, which will be rectified in the next decade. There are different causes for the mistake. We think the principal one is this: The brethren have not been sufficiently careful and determined to report themselves DISCIPLES OF CHRIST. The census has a column for DISCIPLES and it has no other that will suit our brethren. If we report ourselves members of the Church of Christ (which is right in itself), there is no column for such, and our names are lost or go to swell the number of "Other Denominations." The same is true if we report ourselves Christians. If we say we are Baptists, it swells that denomination. There can be no reasonable objection to being called Disciples, for we know it is the name the Lord called His people. And when the question comes to us in the direct way we are now considering, we must either say we are Disciples or deny it.

Had the whole matter been rightly understood and determinedly adhered to by our brethren, we have no doubt that instead of 12,000 the number of the Disciples would exceed 50,000 in the Dominion of Canada. We have recently enquired of four churches and learned that only one of the four have generally reported themselves Disciples. The returns of 1881, though so much better than of 1891, were altogether below the facts. For example, the report for Prince Edward Island in 1881 is:

Free Will Baptists,	648
Disciples,	594

Now for the facts. There was not a Free Will Baptist church on the Island in 1881, and there might or might not be a few scattered members of this church. The Disciples had 7 churches with 709 members, which would give a population of about 2,000; yet the Free Will Baptists were marked 648, and the Disciples 594.

We are hopeful in regard of our annual meeting, which begins on Saturday, 9th of July, at 6 p. m., at New Glasgow. It would be well for those who intend coming by train to drop a card a few days ahead, so that they could be met at Hunter River station. The brethren here will be happy to see a large number of friends and brethren, and will do their best to accommodate them. Ask at start for tickets to attend the P. E. I. Christian Association at New Glasgow, and keep them for a return.

Correspondence.

THE ANNUAL MEETING AT BOWMANVILLE.

The first session of the annual meeting of the Disciples of Christ, in Ontario, opened at 3 o'clock Thursday afternoon, June 18. Bro. Hugh Black, President of the Board of Co-operation, in the chair. Reports showed great activity and progress in every department of the work. The work at Muskoka, Welland, Collingwood, Hamilton, Owen Sound, Winnipeg, Toronto, Orangeville and London is aided by the Board. The work in Toronto and London deserves special mention.

London is a new field. At the beginning of the present year there were 27 members, there are now 64. The attendance at Sunday-school is 91 and 9 officers. The Y. P. S. C. E. has a membership of 23. The audiences are large and the prospects for building up a strong church good. Bro. T. L. Fowler is pastor. To onto is an old field, but a good work is being done. Bro. A. W. Corner is pastor. This church is laboring under great disadvantages. They have a debt on their church building of \$15,261. Their ordinary expenses per annum are \$2,546.97. The membership at the present time is 166. I would add that the meetings conducted by Hall & Hutto, at the Cecil street church, closed the 20th ult., with 40 additions. The brethren are zealous, and endeavoring to do great things for God.

The report of the Sunday-school committee shows an average attendance at Sunday-school of 1,324 and an enrolment of 1,396, with 197 teachers. Contributions for home support, \$863.74; for Home Missions, \$205.33; Foreign Missions, \$110.23. Bowmanville and St. John, N. B., each reports 105 pupils, with an average attendance of 76 and 91 respectively. St. John heads the list in its report of finances.

The treasurer's report showed that \$2,020.89 had been raised during the year and expended. The Ontario Christian Woman's Board of Missions raised upwards of \$500. Miss Mary Rioch, of Hamilton, Ont., goes as a missionary to Japan under the direction of this board.

The Children's Mission Bands numbers fifteen, with a membership of nearly 300, and have raised for Foreign Missions this year and last, with interest, \$383.05. A native boy in China has been adopted by the children to be educated as a missionary.

The work of the Y. P. S. C. E. received considerable attention, and next year will doubtless bring in a report of much work done.

The programme throughout was an excellent one. "The Prayer Meeting," by Bro. Conner, provoked a good discussion. "Church Finances," not the least important subject at a convention, by Bro. John Campbell, of St. Thomas, was excellent. "Our Attitude Towards the Denominations," by Bro. T. L. Fowler, of London, gave rise to the most spirited discussion at the convention. It was a strong, uncompromising paper. The addresses of Miss Mary Graybiel, lately from India, and Bro. A. McLean, of Cincinnati, Secretary of the Foreign Board of Missions, on Missionary themes, were well received. A reception during the convention was tendered Miss Mary Rioch and Miss Graybiel, who will soon leave for their respective fields of labor.

A noticeable feature of the convention was the large number of intelligent consecrated young men who intend devoting their lives to the work of preaching the gospel. We are beginning in Ontario to produce our preachers and hold them, which is a good indication for the success of our work.

Probably the great feature was the lecturing and preaching of Bro. Z. Sweeney, of Columbus, Indiana. Bro. Sweeney is well known to our brethren in the Maritime Provinces. His lecture Friday night, in the Town Hall, where our services were held, "Going up to Jerusalem," was given to a full house, and was better than the most favorable press comments we had read, and many of them were, indeed, warm in commending this lecture. Bro. Sweeney is an orator of a very high order, and his power over an audience is marvellous. Two hours sped by ere we were aware, so great was the interest in the speaker and his theme. The audience was delighted, and Bro. Sweeney may come back when he will. His sermons were grand. His last discourse, on Sunday night, to at least eight hundred people, on