

Messenger and Visitor.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 1887.

THE BASIS OF UNION.

Below is published the basis of union, adopted in substance by the joint committee of our Convention, and the Free Christian Baptist Conference, and put into final form by a sub-committee, appointed for that purpose.

DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS.

THE SCRIPTURES.—The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments have their authority from God alone, and are given to us by divine inspiration. They are perfect, supreme, infallible and sufficient standard of faith and practice.

GOD.—There is one true and living God; He is an infinite spirit, self-existent, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, good, wise, just and merciful. He is the creator, preserver and sovereign of the universe; He is inexhaustibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all honor, confidence and love. In the Godhead there are three persons in one—The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, who are equal in every divine perfection, and who execute distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

CHRIST.—Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the person of the Trinity, who by virtue of his sacrificial work, is the world's redeemer and the Saviour of all that believe. He is at present the intercessor of his people at the right hand of the Father, and it is to be the glory of all men.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.—The Holy Spirit is the person of the Trinity by whom all saving, comforting and sanctifying power is exerted upon human hearts.

STATE AND FALL OF MAN.—Man was created sinless. By his own disobedience he fell into sin. Through his fall into sin, an evil nature was transmitted to the whole race, revealing itself in actual transgression, and bringing all under the reign of condemnation and death.

ATONEMENT.—The perfect life, the vicarious death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, have removed the obstacles in the way of the Holy Spirit's regenerating power, and of the Father's forgiving grace being extended to the sinner, and constitute for every believing soul an all-prevailing plea and sufficient ground for righteousness before God.

REGENERATION.—In regeneration a new life principle is begotten in the soul of man by the Holy Spirit, through the word of truth, producing a disposition to joyful obedience to Christ and to holy conduct in life.

REPENTANCE.—In repentance, the sinner having seen his sin, being moved by the energy of the Holy Ghost, is led to grieve for, and hate it as an offence against God, and apprehending the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, he lovingly returns to God to walk in the way of his commandments.

FAITH.—Faith is a conviction of the intellect that God will perform all that he has promised, and as implicit trust in the heart is Christ as a personal Saviour. It includes a hearty concurrence of the will and affections with the whole plan of salvation as revealed in the Gospel, and is a condition of justification and of cleansing from the pollution of sin, and of all subsequent Gospel blessings.

JUSTIFICATION.—Justification is an act of God wherein he accepts as righteous the sinner, to whom is imputed the perfect righteousness of Christ, on the condition of faith alone.

PENITENCE.—We believe that persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes real Christians from superficial professors. If any who have been born of God altogether lose the grace received at regeneration, there is for them no renewal unto eternal life.

This does not mean, however, that the regenerate may not become back-sliders.

SANCTIFICATION.—The scriptures teach that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, Christians are made partakers of his holiness; that it is beginning in regeneration, and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, in the continual use of the appointed means—the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness and prayer.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.—We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's day or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public, and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

A GOSPEL CHURCH.—We believe that a Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word; that the only scriptural officers of a church are Bishops, or Pastors, and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. In a more general sense, the word church is used to designate all whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

BAPTISM.—This is the immersion of believers in water, into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in which are represented their death to the world, the washing of their souls from the pollution of sin, their resurrection to a newness of life, the burial and resurrection of Christ, their resurrection at the last day, and their engagement to serve God.

THE LORD'S SUPPER is designed to commemorate the sufferings of Christ, and to represent in the use of bread and wine the communion which exists with him and with each other. Every baptized believer in Christ, being a member of his body, and a part of his visible church, has not only a right to partake of the emblems of his body and his blood in the Communion, but is under obligation thus to commemorate his death.

DEATH.—At death our bodies return to dust, our souls to God who gave them. The righteous being then perfected in happiness are received to dwell with God, waiting the full redemption of their bodies. The wicked are cast into Hades, reserved unto the judgment of the great day.

RESURRECTION.—There will be a general resurrection of the bodies of the just and of the unjust; the righteous in the likeness of Christ, but the wicked to shame and everlasting contempt.

GENERAL JUDGMENT.—There will be a judgment of quick and dead, of the just and unjust, on principles of righteousness, by our Lord Jesus Christ, at his second coming. The wicked will be condemned to eternal punishment, and the righteous received into the fulness of eternal life and joy.

CHURCH POLITY.—Article I. The voluntary principle underlies the whole church polity of the New Testament. Each church is independent, but the churches are interdependent. All the power the more general bodies have over the less general and the individual churches is to advise, and to enforce advice with the strongest moral motives. In case a church, or the churches composing a less general body, depart from the belief and practice of the denomination, it shall be the right of the more general body to withdraw fellowship.

Article II. Each church as occasion may require shall have the right to appeal to the more general body for the help of their advice and moral influence, or to call a council from other churches. If a church, torn by dissensions and heresy, decline to seek assistance of this kind, it is the right of the more general body to send a delegation to assist the church as far as this may be possible.

Article III. Any church should be very careful in granting a license to preach. Every license, to be valid, must be signed by the pastor and clerk of the church granting it, and countersigned by at least two neighboring pastors, after an examination of the candidate's qualifications.

Article IV. When a church desires the ordination of a brother, a council from as many of the nearest churches as will secure the attendance of at least five ordained pastors, with a suitable number of laymen, may be called, or the more general body be requested to attend to the matter.

UNION.

Some time since the Independent sought to boom a union between the Free Will Baptists of the U. S. and the Congregationalists. This did not seem to take very well with the former, except among the extreme open communists. Later, there have been negotiations between the Free Will Baptists and the Christian body, which has, in the past, been Unitarian in its proclivities. During all this time not a word was said about a union, which would seem more desirable, between the Free Will Baptists and the great Regular Baptist brotherhood of the United States.

This doctrinally there is no reason now why Baptists and Free Will Baptists should perpetuate the division which occurred a century ago. They stand substantially upon the same platform. Ministers, who were once Free Will Baptist ministers, but now are pastors of Baptist churches, tell us that in changing their denominational relations they have not found it necessary to change their doctrinal views. They find that they can heartily accept the articles of faith held by our churches, and they are preaching the same great truths, and in the same way, which they preached in their former ecclesiastical relations.

We have been led to these remarks by a letter which we recently received from a Free Will Baptist minister in this State asking us upon what terms, in our view, a union of Baptists and Free Will Baptists can be effected. There has been in certain quarters some talk of a union of Free Will Baptists and Congregationalists. This brother evidently has no sympathy with any movement of this kind. He is not ready to throw away his Baptist principles, nor are the rank and file of the Free Will Baptist body. "Assure our brethren," says the Free Will Baptist pastor, "that they can preach a general atonement, and your churches may say with whom they may commune."

For a long time it has been evident that the communion question alone has divided the two bodies. But there is no practical difficulty here, as this brother testifies. When we asked him how many Congregationalists and Methodists had accepted an invitation to the Lord's supper during the past ten years, his reply was as follows: "Since you asked me the question I have been trying to think of any Federalist who has accepted the sacrament at my table. I cannot call to mind one in a dozen years." We have received the same testimony from Free Will Baptist ministers again and again.

On the other hand the practical effect of open communion views upon at least some of the Free Will Baptist body is easily discoverable. Those who have been the most active in their advocacy of open communion are the men who are now prominent in advocating union for Congregationalists, and who in past years have advocated the admission to Free Will Baptist churches of unimpaired members of other churches. We do not wonder that those who are Baptists in Free Will Baptist churches look with alarm at this state of things. The very fact that union with Congregationalists is entertained for a moment discloses the drift of things, as well as the reception of membership in Free Will Baptist churches of persons who have been sprinkled.

Baptists have taken their stand as a denomination not upon close communion, but close baptism. We hold the former because of the latter. If Free Will Baptists will take a stand here with us we shall rejoice. If two-thirds of the Free Will Baptists in Maine would unite with the Baptists, the force of Baptist principles would be greatly increased throughout the State. The churches would be strengthened in many places, pastors would receive a better support, and a new impulse would be given to Christian work in all its departments.

On this account we hope that brethren in all parts of the State will give some attention to this matter. The letter, to which we have referred is an evidence of the spirit of inquiry that is abroad at the present time. There may be in it more than some of us, perhaps most of us, are aware.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Henry Ward Beecher breathed his last on Tuesday, March 8th, at 9:30 in the morning: He was within three months of 74 years of age. His father, Lyman Beecher, one of the ablest preachers of his day, was, Boston. Henry Ward Beecher was one of a family of thirteen, all marked by strong individuality. Scarcely second to him in genius and varied talent, stands his sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe, while his brother, for many years, pastor of Park street church, Thos. K. Beecher, has won note as a writer and preacher.

Henry Ward Beecher has continued to attract wide attention from the time he became pastor of Plymouth church, Brooklyn, forty years ago the next September. His abounding energy and broad sympathies soon developed activities outside the pulpit. Probably there were no more potent factors in the anti-slavery movement than Mr. Beecher's eloquent and fervid utterances on the platform, and the touching pathos of Mrs. Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in the homes of the people of the North.

In 1863, Mr. Beecher went to Great Britain and, in all the great centres, used the utmost power of his eloquence to turn back to the North the tide of sympathy that was flowing out toward the South. The result of his trip was soon seen in a marked change of public sentiment, especially among the great middle class. At the conclusion of the war, he gave more time to literary pursuits, being editor, at different times, of the Independent and the Christian Union. In 1884, he became involved in a scandal case; for months the papers were full of it. The jury finally disagreed, and the great jury of public sentiment has also disagreed ever since. His people stood by him, and he has maintained his hold upon the public by his varied power.

For the last few years he has been developing greater and greater looseness of views. He has attempted to group the results of his thinking around the evolution idea. This has led to the severance of his connection with the Congregational body, to which he nominally belonged. While he had great versatility and wonderful power to move the masses, his mind was not of the constructive type, his thinking being disjointed, rather than systematic. He failed to grasp the bearing of one truth upon another. From this reason he made statements, at one time, most inconsistent with those made at another, and was most unsafe, as a leader. It is to be feared that he has made many less reverent, and has sent many more off on the wide, misty sea of skeptical thought, where they have lost all anchorage ground for faith. A year or two ago, he seemed to feel that his life-work at Plymouth church had not in it anything to bind the people to anything enduring, and that the church would fall apart like a rope of sand, when he had to take his final departure. It remains to be seen whether these were the expression of a temporary depression, or the well-considered statement of a far-sighted leader. Be this as it may, many of the best men of the age have been made unutterably sad, as they have seen the expiring energies of his master mind devoted to the weakening of the confidence of men in the grand

truths that have been the uplifting lever and stay of the world in the ages past. There is no question that he had a large heart, wherein there was a warm place for all the suffering, the downtrodden and the oppressed. May the living emulate his excellencies and avoid his defects.

THE WEEK.

War rumors still abound on the Continent of Europe. The late insurrections in Bulgaria are supposed to have been instigated by Russian emissaries. It is thought to have been a wide-spread plot against the government; but that it was prematurely sprung, thus destroying concert of action. The Regente of Bulgaria executed swift punishment upon the leaders of the rebels, in this way making it impossible for the Czar to interfere for their protection, as he did when Prince Alexander was kidnapped by his agents. The Continental correspondents of the English papers think that war is certain in a short time, but doubt whether it will begin this summer. France and Germany still watch each other with lynx eyes, and Austria and Russia are likely to fall upon each other, should the Czar attempt to overrun Bulgaria. This would mean that the whole Turkish question should be reopened, with all its delicate complications. It is also rumored that Russian forces are being concentrated in Central Asia, for a possible move upon Afghanistan. The Ameer has a rebellion on his hands, and has made an extraordinary levy on his subjects to provide men and money.

In the British House of Commons, there has been nothing of special interest. The parties are preparing for their great grapple of forces over the coercion bill, which the government are to bring in this week. Gladstone has notified his followers that he intends to take the lead of the opposition to the measure. Chamberlain has made a speech in which he declares the statements of the Gladstonians premature, as to an agreement between himself and their leader. He reiterates his determination to oppose all measures granting home rule to Ireland. Hartington declares that the Unionists will go almost solid for the government coercion bill. If this be true, then the measure will be passed with a good majority. It will, at least, be the test question.

The following statement of the points in dispute between Canada and the United States on the fisheries question is taken from the Montreal Witness. It is clear, and will help our readers to a fair understanding of the case: The Canadians were under a treaty with the Americans, and fulfilled their part of the treaty faithfully, while the Americans did not do so. The Americans terminated the treaty. They have ever since refused, though constantly asked, to take any steps toward a new treaty or agreement, and still refuse. By this action the relations between the two countries rest upon an antiquated treaty, the provisions of which it was necessary for our government to enforce, if they were to have any control of the national fisheries at all. The manner in which they have done this has been in the highest degree generous. The treaty terminated at the middle of the fishing season of 1885. At the request of the United States Government, which promised that steps would immediately be taken to arrange a new treaty, the American fishermen were allowed, without any return, to continue their fishing for that season. The American government took no steps to arrange a new treaty, because, at the instance of the New England fishermen, Congress finally refused to do so. The law was enforced during the season of 1886, in the most gentle manner compatible with firmness. Mr. Secretary Manning, ministered doublets by people on the coast, called this "brutal," word which had no foundation in fact, and which in the mouth of a diplomat of any other country would be considered an international outrage. This is the whole story.

The Nova Scotia Legislature began its session on Thursday last. The governor's speech does not forecast any very important measures, unless the statement, "Questions involved in the relation of the province to the central government at Ottawa, will doubtless again engage your attention," refers to a movement for repeal of the Union with the Dominions. The liquor sellers of Halifax are in trouble. Under the new and stringent provincial license law, but 80 out of nearly 200 can obtain permits to sell. They have petitioned the city council to ask the provincial legislature to suspend the act until they had tested its constitutionality in the courts. It is significant that these are the very men who resisted the Dominion license law as ultra vires, because such legislation belonged to the province. Now they think the provincial law ultra vires, because such legislation belongs to the Dominion. They evidently want all temperance laws to be invalid, they care not on what quibble. The city fathers refused to take any action in the matter.

In the New Brunswick Assembly the chief measure has been in the form of a resolution with reference to the abolition of the Legislative Council. It was passed unanimously. With the Queen, the Governor General, the Dominion Houses of Parliament, the provincial governors, and the two local houses, with mayors, councillors, etc., etc., over us, it does seem as if we were over governed, and that some of the governing powers might be dispensed with, and expense and complication be saved. Four Dominion Senators do not mend his ways in its attitude toward temperance legislation, the question will soon become a live one, whether we are to pay men to thwart the wishes of the people as expressed through their representatives.

The matter of absorbing interest in St. John, and quite generally in New Brunswick, is the failure of the Maritime Bank. Up to the present no statement has been published. The long delay seems to confirm the suspicion that the affairs of the Bank are in the utmost confusion. A liquidator is to be appointed in a day or two. Very many have their hard earnings deposited in this bank, it having offered a higher rate of interest than any other. It remains to be seen whether there will be anything left, after the bills are redeemed, to pay to the depositors. The stockholders are liable to twice the amount of their stock, and some of these will be ruined if the collapse is as bad as is feared. There is another railway horror, near Boston, as will be seen from the News Summary.

Dr. Hopper's Resignation. At the regular meeting of the Union Baptist Ministerial Conference held in St. John, March 14th, 1887, it was moved and unanimously carried:

That whereas our brother Rev. Dr. Hopper, the senior Baptist pastor in this city, has been compelled to retire for awhile from the active duties of the pastorate, and to seek rest in a Southern climate. Therefore resolved: That we as a Conference take this opportunity of expressing our high estimate of his character as a man, and as an able, faithful, and successful preacher of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to cherish the hope that in the good providence of God he may soon be restored to health and strength, again to engage in the work of the Lord.

Signed on behalf of the Conference, W. J. SWAFFIELD, Secy. Dr. Hopper closed his pastorate of the Brussels street church on Sabbath last. During his pastorate of a little over six years, he has given the right hand of fellowship to over three hundred members. The prayer meetings of the church and the Sabbath school are increasing in attendance and interest. There is thus afforded a very promising field for labor to any brother it may be the Lord's will shall become pastor. Dr. Hopper left for Jacksonville, Florida, last evening. On behalf of our readers we earnestly repeat the hope expressed in the foregoing resolution. We hope he may kindly favor the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR with an occasional communication.

A Cry from Carleton County. Realizing the sad state of our denominational interests throughout this county at the present time, I have taken it upon myself to raise the Macedonian cry through your columns, hoping it may reach the ears of some saints who will conclude that God hath called them to preach the gospel to some of our destitute churches in Carleton county. For we certainly have great need of at least two or three energetic and efficient pastors at once. A dozen or more of our churches are pastorless. Some of them have been so long in that condition that they are fast losing their viability. But few of them have vitality enough left to bestir themselves in their own behalf. Yet all of them are located in well settled districts, and ought to become, if properly directed and labored with, centres of religious life and activity for their respective communities. Owing to their weak condition, it might be impossible, even if the churches were conveniently grouped, for a pastor to receive the financial support he should have to begin with. But the rich soil, and general thrift of our county, forbid that anyone who is competent and courageous enough to declare the whole counsel of God, should suffer in this regard, or be long without a comfortable stipend. I feel confident that all our people need a little training in this matter to make them as benevolent as any other body of Christians. But we require pastors, who can do just this work, and much more besides. For nowhere in our province, I believe, are there so many and such subtle heresies to contend with as we have in this county. Many a conscientious Baptist is troubled over this, not being able clearly to separate truth from error, and needs the help which only one who is well grounded in the Scriptures can give him. Our needs call for men thoroughly established in the truth, and in whom the truth is thoroughly established. None others can do more than assist our churches in their retrogression, even though they slacken its speed somewhat. Here are opportunities to do work for the Master that may not win as much distinction from men generally as some others may, but which are certainly golden in promise for both the workman and the work. With so much to contend for and withstand, one must grow in grace up here or grow out of it. Never for one-fourth can a man of God feel sufficient in himself for his work in Carleton county. Our people are not usually slow in appreciating well directed effort. As sure as truth is mightier than error, so sure is the man of truth to win his way ultimately, and meantime into his character be wrought such stuff as Christian heroes are made of. Fellow workers, do not flinch if God calls you this way. Don't wait for the churches to call you. I know that's what they should do. But they are too weak to make you hear them. Come right along at the Master's call. Any of our pastors resident in the county will be glad to give you all the assistance possible. W. R. WOODSTOCK, N. B.

Bible Societies and the Baptists.

Several articles with the above caption, from the pen of W. J. Stewart, of Portland, N. B., appeared last year in the June and July numbers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. In these articles Mr. Stewart very plainly showed that the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society positively refused to make any money grants to the Baptist missionaries, Dr. Gates and Rev. Mr. Price, to aid them in printing Dr. Carey's Bengali Bible. This positive refusal was made by these societies because the missionaries would not consent to have Dr. Carey's translation changed by translating the word baptize, instead of translating it as Dr. Carey had done. This decided denial, on the part of these societies, took place in the year 1835, and since that time no grants of money have been made by them to any Baptist missionaries to print and circulate in his pious God's word, although these societies for their origin and early success are indebted to the Baptists. Mr. Stewart very wisely suggests that as the English Baptists organized the Bible Translation Society, and the American Bible Society, the Canadian Baptists, following their praiseworthy example, ought to organize and support a Bible Society for Canada.

The Foreign Mission Board of the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces adopted a resolution to establish a Bible Fund for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures in India, translated by Baptist Missionaries. The claims of this fund were brought before the denomination during the Convention lately held in the city of St. John, N. B., by John March, Esq., in his report and as a public foreign missionary meeting. They met with a ready and generous support, a strong desire being manifested that something ought to be done for a more extended circulation of the Bible, unutilized, among those who sit in the region and shadow of death.

The MESSENGER AND VISITOR, though its circulation, we are pleased to know, is increasing, and its editorial staff with much profit, does not, we regret, reach all the homes we could desire. There are many Baptist families who never see it. These know scarcely anything about Bible societies, and give their money to these societies to which we believe they ought not. In our recent visit, upon a single day, we found a sub-agent—there are many of them—in several Baptist families, soliciting and obtaining funds for the British and Foreign Bible Society. It would indeed be desirable if we could put the MESSENGER AND VISITOR into every Baptist home in the maritime provinces, for many reasons, this one not the least, that we have in connection with our foreign mission board a Bible fund, to give to the heathen world unadulterated the word of God. J. COOMBS, March 1st.

Dedication Service.

The new Baptist meeting house at Ohio, Yarmouth, N. S., was duly dedicated to almighty God on Sabbath, Feb. 27th. The day commenced with a heavy rain storm which threatened to make it impossible to carry out previous arrangements. The weather cleared, however, time enough, so that, except in the morning, good congregations assembled to enjoy the services. Of our ministering brethren there were present: Revs. H. F. Adams, J. B. Woodland, A. J. Ford, Dr. Day, A. Coburn, J. H. Hughes, H. N. Parry. Rev. J. B. Woodland preached the dedication in the morning; Rev. H. F. Adams officiated in the afternoon, and Rev. J. H. Hughes in the evening. All these sermons were worthy of the occasion, and must bear excellent fruit.

The afternoon meeting was most encouraging and enthusiastic. After the sermon, the Rev. H. N. Parry, on behalf of the friends, read a statement of the financial condition of the house, and the many gifts presented by outside friends. It was then intimated that any donations from those present would be most acceptable. Rev. J. Hughes set the ball rolling by stating that he had been instrumental in securing from a friend a large sum to help wipe out the indebtedness. Amid much enthusiasm the amount was added to, until it reached upwards of one thousand dollars. Thus, by the blessing of God, and the aid of kind friends, this house of worship, which at one time because of the heavy debt, seemed likely to pass out of our hands, is secured. The friends feel that now they will be able to manage the remaining debt, and are taking steps to at once lift the mortgage. To all who have helped in the good cause their friends feel truly grateful.

Thall not occupy your space by giving a description of the house, but content myself with saying, that it is one of the best houses in the province outside the towns. COM.

N. B. Sunday School Association.

A meeting of the executive committee of New Brunswick Sunday School Association was held at the Clifton House, St. John, on the evening of Tuesday, the 8th inst. In the absence of the chairman, Mr. James Frier was called upon to preside. Present: Messrs. S. J. Parsons, James Frier, S. L. Peters, G. McLeod, G. J. C. White, T. S. Simms, J. G. Forbes, W. Peters and Rev. T. Featheringham. The corresponding secretary stated that he had been authorized by his official adviser to engage in reading or writing, devoting to the collection of the year, and to the committee to provide for the conducting