

"Ebenezer."

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Thus spake the old prophet Samuel, at Mizpah, after the wonderful deliverance of Israel from the attack of the Philistines, and thus may the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces gratefully exclaim as they review their past history.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY.

We were then a very feeble folk. On the 33rd of June, 1800, the first Baptist Association of the Maritime Provinces, or of what is now the Dominion of Canada, was organized at Granville, Annapolis County. Eight ministers were present and nine churches were represented. The number of members is not known, but ten years after, the Association, which then included both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, reported 14 churches and 924 members. And this was all we had. No missionary organization of any kind, no schools for the higher education of the youth, and we were accorded but scant recognition by other religious bodies or by the powers that were.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

There are now 410 churches, and upwards of 50,000 members. We have our Mission Boards for the prosecution of our work at home and the conduct of our well established mission in India, our Academy, College, and Seminary for young women, our Ministerial Education Board and Ministers' Annuity Board, and are helping the brethren in the Western Provinces in the work of the Grande Ligne and Northwest and British Columbia Missions. Seeing what we now are from so small a beginning, we do well to note how God has helped us.

THE MEN HE HAS GIVEN US.

He who will for a little consider this point must clearly see the helping hand of the Almighty.

1. The early preachers. Edward and James Manning, Theodore and Harris Harding, Joseph Dimock, Thomas Handley Chipman and Joseph Crandall, were a remarkable class of men. That so large a number, peculiarly adapted to the work that needed to be done, should have been raised up from among the few Baptists of that time, seems to me a most unusual thing.

But some will ask have we not idealized these men and were they after all more than ordinary. Let those who knew them when living testify. Dr. I. E. Bill at the time of T. S. Harding's death said, "The best savior one of a most remarkable class of men has fallen asleep." Dr. E. A. Crawley says of Edward Manning, "He was in several points of view a remarkable man—a man born to to sway men." Again of all of them, "Taken together they constituted a company of men above ordinary mark. Nothing perhaps, would strike a new acquaintance more strongly and abidingly than that the truths they held were their own, not borrowed."

Dr. Cramp, who first visited these provinces in 1846, writing in the Baptist Register of Montreal says of these men: "God raised them up for a great work. They were peculiarly fitted for the enterprise and they were divinely sustained. They may be fitly called the Patriarchs of Nova Scotia. They may justly be regarded as the founders of the Baptist denomination in that province."

2. Another group supplied. A quarter of a century has passed. The Baptists number about 3,000. They are in need of a school for the higher education of their youth. But they have no one qualified to lead in such an undertaking. And now the hand of the Lord is seen providing another group as leaders in this work. Let Dr. Crawley tell us this wonderful story.

"A young student at King's College in Windsor, belonging to a family in Halifax of unquestioned fidelity to the Episcopal church, was, in the absence of the Rector, stationed in Liverpool during his summer vacation, as reader (so called.) It so happened that at the same time the Wesleyan Society in that town were diligently engaged in various religious services, and, in Scripture phrase, "great grace was upon the people." An older gentleman, a relative of the young student, in good social position and much respected, was a member of the Wesleyan Society and an earnest Christian. His young friend accompanied him to some of the religious meetings, and became deeply affected. Thenceforward, openly and with uncommon fearlessness he avowed his conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ, and his belief of those prominent articles of faith now commonly received by all earnest Christians, of whatever name, as essential to the inner spiritual life. He became a chief instrument in the conversion of several gentlemen of Halifax, subsequently members of the Baptist church there, who afterwards were closely concerned with the origin of our Academy and College, thus forming a chain of connecting causes between things so unlike, as some might deem them, as the religious meetings of the Wesleyan church at Liverpool and the establishment of Acadia College."

The men here referred to were John Ferguson, J. W. Nutting, J. W. Johnston, E. A. Crawley and John Pryor, men eminently fitted for the work of leading in the establishment of schools for the Baptists as the sequel has clearly shown.

WONDERFUL GROWTH.

In our remarkable numerical growth we have another evidence of Divine help. In 1820 we had a membership of 2785. This had increased to 4633 in 1830, and to 9041 in 1840. This increase let it be remembered was not because of immigration, but in spite of the fact that many of our members were removing to other countries. We speak of our increase in Manitoba and the North West as quite remarkable, the membership having increased from 1600 in 1891 to 4678 in 1901, but if that is remarkable in a country that is receiving so many from the older provinces, much more was our increase remarkable in the years referred to.

But let us hear from one who "passed through the many and wonderful revivals and beheld the salvation of God displayed in the mighty deliverances of those times." In the Christian Messenger of January 23rd, 1846, we find a letter from Father T. S. Harding, then in his 73rd year. After referring to his acquaintance with the Baptists of these provinces from the beginning of their history, he says: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has graciously caused to pass before me truly astonishing displays of his glorious presence. 'Mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' 'Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.' I have in fine little doubt, that if the history of our churches which have sprung up so rapidly and have so mightily spread and prevailed, could be fully gathered and placed on record, it would all show that the great God has not more wonderfully dealt with any people."

THE STABILITY OF OUR ORGANIZATIONS AND ENTERPRISES.

In looking over the early history of the Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, I have been impressed with this feature of our history. There I find one Convention or Society succeeding another, till several have come and gone, so that it is not till 1888 that a satisfactory organization is reached. Of the Baptist press, Professor Tracy writes: "In 1851 we had no weekly Baptist newspaper. The Register published in the East and the Pioneer in the West are both defunct." Of their educational work, Mr. E. D. Thomson says: "The Montreal College started chiefly through the instrumentality of Rev. John Gilmour, opened its doors in 1838, struggled against manifold vicissitudes until 1850, and then died." Other educational schemes were started, but failed, so that it was not till 1860, when the school at Woodstock, under the lead of Rev. R. A. Fyfe came into being, that they had anything in educational work that was to remain.

In our case all this had been very different. The Convention organized in 1846 with but slight changes in its constitution remains till this day. The Missionary Magazine, started in 1827 as a quarterly, at the instance of the Home Mission Boards of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, in 1834 was enlarged and published every two months, and in 1837 developed into a weekly, which remains till this day under the name of MESSENGER AND VISITOR. Our educational work started in 1828, began with the Academy. Ten years later the College was added and subsequently the Seminary for the education of young women, all of which continue till this day to pour their ever increasing stream of blessing over the land.

CONCLUSION.

But why cite further evidence? Enough has been written to cause all to see that the hand of the Lord has been with us, and his arm has wrought for us. And what so fitting as we enter upon a new century, as that we erect a memorial of all this help that has been vouchsafed to us in the century that has passed. And what better memorial can we raise than this \$50,000 for our Mission work. Then when this has been gathered and placed alongside of the \$50,000 Forward Movement Fund, the Baptist can say: "at the beginning of the 19th century our denominational existence began. At the commencement of the 20th century, by the grace of God, we are able to raise \$10,000 for our Educational and Mission work, and this we do as a memorial of his great goodness and a pledge of our continued fidelity to our Lord Jesus Christ and his truth. Ebenezer, 'Hitherto has the Lord helped us.' "And because he has been our help therefore in the shadow of his wings will we rejoice."

A. COBURN.

Wolfville, N. S., Jan. 23rd.

Canada.

Lord God of hosts by whose strong hand
The nations fall, the nations stand
For thy dear Son, we claim this land
Fair Canada, fair Canada.

Let pillar of fire and cloud lead on,
The hosts of God, till earth be won,
Among the jewels of the Son
Fair Canada, fair Canada.

Make strong our arms for holy deed,
Make bold our hearts, if thou but lead
For her to live or die if need,
Fair Canada, fair Canada.

A Brief Sketch of the Foreign Mission Work of the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces Since 1873.

It will be interesting reading to many of the friends of missions to learn of the progress of the work of world-wide evangelization in these Provinces since the establishment of our Independent mission in 1873, when Rev. R. Sanford and wife, Rev. George Churchill and wife, Rev. W. F. Armstrong, Miss Maria Armstrong and Miss Flora Eaton were sent out as our pioneer missionaries to the Telugus in India.

Up to this time the work of Foreign missions had been carried on under the auspices of the American Baptist Missionary Union. The first missionary sent to the foreign fields by the Baptists of these Provinces was the Rev. R. E. Burpee and wife, in 1845. He labored until 1850, when failing health compelled his return to this country. The first lady missionary, Miss Minnie B. De Wolfe, was sent in 1867. She only spent five years in Burmah. In 1869 Rev. William George and wife were sent forth, and in 1870 Miss H. M. Norris, having succeeded in interesting the sisters in our churches in this great work, sailed for Burmah. All these worked under the Missionary Union, though supported by funds raised in these Provinces. A number of individuals and Sunday Schools and churches contributed quite largely to the support of native teachers, preachers and other helpers, under the direction of Rev. A. R. R. Crawley, and by these means were able to do most excellent work for the Master. In some respects the work thus done has not been excelled since those days. However, there was felt on the part of many, that to develop more fully the missionary spirit among our people, it would be wisdom to have a mission which we might properly call "our own." This led eventually to the establishment of the independent mission and the sending forth of the above mentioned laborers as the pioneer workers, not in Burmah among the Karsas—but in India among the Telugus.

These were quickly followed in 1873 by Rev. W. B. Boggs, in 1878 by Miss Carrie A. Hammond, in 1881 by Rev. J. R. Hutchinson and wife, in 1883 by Rev. I. C. Archibald, in 1884 by Miss A. C. Gray, and Miss H. H. Wright, in 1889 by Rev. W. V. Higgins and wife, and Miss Nettie Fitch, in 1890 by Rev. M. B. Shaw and wife, in 1891 by Rev. J. H. Bass and wife, Rev. L. D. Morse and wife, and Miss Kate McNeil. In 1893 Rev. H. V. Corey and wife and Miss Martha Clark, in 1896 Rev. R. E. Gullison and wife, Miss Maud Harrison and Miss Ida Newcombe, in 1897 Mr. John Hardy and Miss Mabel Archibald, in 1898 Miss Helena Blackadar and Miss Annie Williams who became the wife of Mr. Hardy upon her arrival in the country, and in 1901 Miss Flora Clark.

It will thus be seen that the Baptists of these Provinces have shown a deep interest in world-wide missions. There have been marks of progress since 1873, as is evident from the number who have been added to the staff from time to time. The progress has been steady and continuous. It is true that all have not remained in connection with the Mission. Some have withdrawn for various reasons, the most of them have done so on account of their own failing health or that of their families. Two only have crossed the river, Mrs. John Hardy, and Miss A. C. Gray. It is a fact that there has been a growing missionary spirit among the Baptists of these Provinces during the last twenty-five years. True it is, that more, very much more might have been done; but we ought to be grateful that the interest is as widespread and as general as obtains today. If all our people were as interested as are some, the condition of things would be greatly in advance of what it is, both at home and abroad. Work abroad has a wonderful effect upon work at home. The apparent deadness and sterility in some of our churches is due, doubtless, to the neglect of the marching orders of the King.

There are at present in our mission: Rev. R. Sanford and wife, Rev. G. Churchill and wife, Rev. I. C. Archibald and wife, Rev. L. D. Morse and wife, Rev. W. V. Higgins and wife, Rev. H. V. Corey and wife, Rev. R. E. Gullison and wife, Rev. John Hardy, Miss Martha Clark, Miss Maud Harrison, Miss Ida Newcomb, Miss Mabel Archibald, Miss Helena Blackadar, Miss Flora Clark. Mr. and Mrs. Morse are at present home on furlough.

As a result of the effort made by the churches of these Provinces, there have been organized 8 churches with a total membership of 414. There were three unordained pastors, 44 native preachers, 17 colporteurs and 18 Bible women, and there are 4 medical assistants, and 35 teachers of whom 29 are men and 15 are women. There are 7 main stations, 15 outstations and 65 villages where Christians live. Bungalows have been erected at each of the main stations at a cost, for each of them, of about \$3000.

The work is large. It is steadily growing. We have undertaken to reach 2,000,000 of the people of India. They are bound to us by ties of blood. They are fellow-subjects of the same sovereign, and are protected by the same flag. But they are living in the dark and dying in the dark at a fearful rate. The Lord Jesus who died for them has said to Christians, "Ye are the light of the world,"—and so a light for the world. The light that shines the farthest away will send out its rays near at hand with greater brilliancy. All that can be done to reach these multitudes ought to be done. Mission stations ought to be planted at every important centre of this great field, and a mission family placed in every one of them. Every inch of the soil of this Northern Telugu country should be sown with the good seed of the Kingdom. The men to enter this great white harvest field are obtainable, but the means for sending them are not forthcoming. Already the expenditures exceed the income by some thousands of dollars. This must not be. The outlook all along the line is bright. The workers are full of hope, and the prospect is cheering. And now brethren help us with your prayers and your gifts.