

After a few introductory remarks by the Chairman, the Corresponding Secretary was called upon for his Annual Report, which was read.

## ANNUAL REPORT

*Of the Corresponding Secretary of the F. C. Baptist General Conference of New Brunswick, for the year ending July 5th, 1867.*

DEAR BRETHREN—

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ." Once more has our Heavenly Father permitted us who are "alive and remain," to greet each other in General Conference. Changes of vast importance have taken place since we separated one year ago. Changes abroad and at home—in the Church and in the State—political, commercial, national and social. The most important epoch in the history of our country has just been declared. The formation of our "New Dominion" has affected our entire national position. Upon it we earnestly invoke the Divine favour. But of however great importance we regard these things in the relationship we sustain thereto, we feel that, as a denomination, by nothing have we been so seriously and immediately affected as by the sad work of death. The last year has been a most trying one. Never did we before assemble in an Annual Meeting when our hearts were so full of heaviness and mourning. Never, in the history of the denomination, has your Annual Report contained so solemn and sad an announcement as must be made this day. Death—cruel death—has invaded our sanctuaries, and broken our ministerial ranks. Incomprehensibly mysterious have been the providential dealings of God with us. Our ecclesiastical year was ushered in with death. Just as we were closing our business session last July, one of our Licentiates, Bro. Hatfield, was closing his life. He died in St. John, and was buried before any of the brethren from that city returned home. His death was but the forerunner of the fearful ravages that have been made among our older and leading ministers. How shall we speak of those noble veteran brethren, who were with us, and who acted well their parts in the transaction of our business at our last General Conference? Will they meet with us no more? Is it so—must it be so—that our venerable and highly esteemed Father Hart, who for so many years toiled in raising up the denomination, and in care for all the Churches, will never, never enter our midst again? Our solemn answer is, Yes, it is true! Rich as he was in experience—deep as was his care, and valuable as was his counsel—yet the Lord has seen fit to take him to himself. No more shall those weeping eyes and that affectionate voice bespeak the deep anxiety of his heart for our welfare. He has gone to his rest. He died at Brighton, in Carleton County, on the 16th January, 1867. On the 17th of March, our sad hearts were made sadder, and our desolation was rendered more afflictive, by the sudden and unexpected death of our vigorous, hard-working, and beloved brother, the late editor of the *Religious Intelligencer*. Strong and zealous, and occupying as he did a sphere of wide-spread usefulness, it seems strange too that he should, just at this time, be taken from his loved employ. Yet so it is. Our beloved Brother McLeod, who, by his superior talents and distinguished consecration, laboured so successfully for the good of the denomination, has met with us for the last time. Last year he prepared and read our Annual Report. To-day, as this Report is being read, he is mingling with the spirits of just men made perfect, in heaven. In his death our entire denominational interests have lost a strong and devoted workman. He has exchanged the editorial chair and the pulpit for a crown and a seat with Christ. Yes, brethren, it is really true that Elders Hart and McLeod, to whose labours we are so much indebted for our present prosperous state, will meet with us no more. Neither the white locks of the one, nor the careworn countenance of the other, will ever grace our meetings