

The Committee beg to offer the following remarks:

In the first place.—The small number of conversions is to be deplored, while there is reason to be thankful that the Baptist body continues to advance,—the rate of advance leaves much to be desired. Confining attention, at present, to Nova Scotia, it is observable, that in the Western Association, thirty-six churches out of sixty-eight, report no conversions: in the Central, twenty-seven out of fifty: in the Eastern, thirty-six out of sixty-five. If it be affirmed that the churches in which there have been no conversions are small and feeble, the explanation may be admitted; and it may be further observed, that there may be reasons for the withdrawal of the divine blessing, which will be patent to impartial examination. Still, the question returns, is the rate of increase satisfactory? And is there not reason to believe that if faith and diligence were better proportioned to obligation, the onsets of the hosts of the Lord on the foe would be more vigorous and effective? It also deserves earnest inquiry whether the efforts made for the conversion of sinners, either in the pulpit exercises of the ministry or by individual members, are of that direct character which the guilt and danger of the unconverted should call forth?

Secondly: Sound doctrine.—It has become fashionable in some quarters to decry doctrinal teachings, as dry and barren. Men call out for the practical, "Give us life," they say; "not notion." It will be a dark day for the churches of God if life should come to be sought for irrespective of truth. "True holiness" is the holiness of the truth. Truth is the seed; holiness is the fruit. "The truth," said our Divine Master, "shall make you free." "Sanctify them"—so He prayed, "through thy truth; thy word is truth." "Christianity is emphatically the truth, a grand glorious all-comprehensive system, every part of which is essential to the completeness of the whole. "Every word of God is pure! No part of it can be innocently or safely neglected. The spiritual body has no superfluous members. He who thinks to improve the Christian system by omissions, or abridgements, is "wise above what is written," which is unwisdom, and is more likely to "darken counsel" than to "minister grace unto the hearers." Brethren, let us "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"—all of it—the doctrinal and the moral—the promises and the precepts. It is all life-giving; it is all "according to godliness."

Thirdly.—The small number of *restorations* has been noticed by the committee. There were 131 exclusions in churches of Nova Scotia last year, but there were only twenty-seven restorations. Is there not a fault here? Ought it not to be borne in mind that the gospel is a restorative dispensation, and that the good shepherd "goeth after" the wandering sheep!

In conclusion, the committee repeat the recommendation of former years, that the Convention appoint a day to be observed by the churches as a day of supplication, for the outpouring of the Spirit. What need have we of his gracious, quickening influences!

J. M. CRAMP, *Chairman.*

[B.] *

The Committee to whom was referred the Report on the State of the Denomination, respectfully report:

That the apparent decrease in the membership reported from the Eastern Association of New Brunswick arises from the fact that, in

* See page 12.