

Messenger and Visitor

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—It will be generally felt, we think, that the action taken by the New Brunswick Western Association—as appears by the report of its proceedings on another page—in reference to the future management of our Home Mission work in this Province, is much to be regretted. It seemed unfortunate indeed, that when so important a subject was to be dealt with by the Association the total representation from the churches was so small, and still further unfortunate that decisive action should have been taken at a meeting when so few of the delegates in attendance were present, and at an hour when it was not generally understood that the subject was to be considered. There was, we are sure, a general sense of congratulation and relief throughout the denomination when it was announced that, as a result of conference had at Fredericton during the session of the Convention, between a number of brethren representing the Board of the New Brunswick Convention on the one part and the Home Mission committee of the Maritime Convention on the other, an agreement had been reached to place the entire management of the Baptist Home Mission work of the Province in the hands of a Board to be jointly nominated by the three Associations. This plan on being submitted to the Convention, received its endorsement, the Convention manifesting its confidence in the intention of all concerned to carry out this plan in good faith by voting with almost entire unanimity to amend its constitution so as to remove Home Missions for New Brunswick entirely from its control. In accordance with this action, the N. B. Convention, at its meeting at Cambridge in September, adopted a resolution agreeing that, in the event of the Associations forming such a Board, it would hand over to it its Home Mission work at the end of its Convention year. It was, of course, well understood by the committees, Boards, Conventions and all concerned, that the Associations still had the right of independent action in the matter, and might do as they should see fit about appointing a Home Mission Board, but it was generally and reasonably taken for granted that, with the influence of those who had favored the plan proposed thrown in favor of it in the Associations, there need be no fear that the plan proposed would be adopted by those bodies, and thereby a ground secured on which all our churches in the Province could agree to work harmoniously and heartily together in the promotion of this great work. This it was felt was an end for which everyone who had the good of the great cause at heart would be willing to make some sacrifice of preference or opinion. And now that the union in method and the unity of spirit, so greatly to be desired, seemed to be in a fair way for attainment, it must be regarded as nothing less than a calamity if the whole matter shall be thrown into confusion again, by the failure of the Associations to carry out the plans which had been agreed upon. We trust that the plan may receive the hearty endorsement of Associations yet to meet, and that what was done at the Western Association is not to be regarded as its final action in the matter.

—The suffering resulting from the Indian famine is still appalling and must continue for some time to come. Its effects are being felt severely in some of the districts occupied by the missionaries of the A. B. M. Missionary Union. The Darjeeling Visitor of May 3rd, publishes a statement from Rev. Mr. Hopkins of that mission, in which he says: "There are thousands of people within the bounds of our mission fields who have but one meal, and that a very small, poor one, once in two or three days. Many are sifting the sand in the roads and in the utterly bare barren fields in order to get out of the sand a few seeds of grass or weeds to keep them from actual starvation. Many others are digging into the ant hills where they can find a few handfuls of grass seed laid up by the ants. Tamarind seeds, cactus and other such coarse fruits, roots, leaves and every available thing are eagerly devoured by the starving people. Many have come to the end. There is nothing left for them to eat, here is no work for them to do, and there is nothing before them but to perish, unless help comes soon." The missionaries are endeavoring to do what they can to relieve the suffering of the starving people and have published an appeal for funds to enable them to carry on this philanthropic work.

—The Young Men's Christian Association of the Maritime Provinces holds its annual Convention this year at Truro, July 5-8. The devotional exercises and discussions indicated in the programme should prove very helpful to those who take part in it. Among those who are to deliver addresses are I. E. Brown, F. W. Ober and Fred B. Smith, all of Chicago, John F. Moore, of New York, Rev. W. J. Arncliffe and Rev. A. Gandier, of Halifax, Rev. J. L. Gordon, Messrs. J. E. Irvine and Geo. E. Williams, of St. John.

The Nova Scotia Central Association.

The Central Association met in its fiftieth annual session with the Aylesford church on Friday, the 22nd ult., at 2 30 p. m. with Rev. A. C. Chute, Moderator, in the chair. Prayer was offered by Rev. Geo. R. White, of Hantsport. In the absence of the secretary, Rev. Howard Barss, Rev. H. G. Colpitts was appointed secretary *pro tem*.

The officers for the year were then elected as follows: Moderator, Rev. S. B. Kempton, D. D.; Clerk, Rev. H. G. Colpitts; Assistant Clerk, Rev. H. B. Smith; Treasurer, Mr. Geo. W. Eaton. After the reading of the list of delegates, appointment of nominating committee, making up committees, the provisional programme prepared by the committee of arrangements was adopted subject to change by the Association. A number of visiting brethren present were invited to seats in the Association.

Pastor Morgan, on behalf of the Aylesford church, in a brief address gave the delegates a very hearty welcome, which was fittingly responded to by the Moderator. The report on Benevolence was presented by Rev. Geo. R. White. The report set forth that we abound in almost everything except liberality, and we have need to heed the apostolic injunction to abound in this grace also. The spirit of covetousness is abroad, and there is need that the words of Malachi be heeded, "Will a man rob God?" The report referred to the tithe law of the Jews as involving the giving of from two to three tenths, and comparisons with the most liberal givers among Christian denominations showed that the latter fall far short of the Jews in this respect. Paul's exhortations as to giving as laid down in 1st Corinthians chapter 16 was commended. The report concluded with four recommendations, 1. That pastors preach and practice liberality in giving. 2. The practice of lying by as one is prospered on the first day of the week. 3. That this subject be made one of special prayer by the church. 4. That individual Christians make it a matter of prayer in reference to their own duty.

In accordance with the programme, the report was followed by an address by Rev. D. H. Simpson. The speaker regarded the subject as the most important that would come before the Association. We are great sticklers, he said, for Bible principles in almost everything but giving. He questioned whether the spiritual dearth which our churches are experiencing were not largely due to the lack of liberality. He did not regard it as benevolence for churches to build houses of worship and provide for their own religious needs. Benevolence is giving outside the limits of our own churches. Benevolence is necessary to the promotion of Christ's kingdom and the conversion of the heathen.

A discussion followed in which quite a large number of delegates took part.

Bro. R. N. Beckwith and others dissented from the view expressed by Mr. Simpson that contributions to local church work was not to be considered as benevolence.

Rev. D. W. Randall supported Mr. Simpson's view.

Dr. Saunders thought that the trouble is that too many bound their aims with this life and do not project them into eternity. A faith that really lays hold of a world to come ought to banish the spirit of covetousness.

Dr. Goodspeed believed that the best way to cultivate benevolence was to get people to give. To stir up emotions and fail to give the proper, practical expression to them tends to kill the emotions themselves. He gave an illustration drawn from his own experience to show what it was possible to do by a systematic effort to get a contribution from each church member according to his ability.

Rev. J. B. Woodland said that Baptists are less liberal toward missions than to other work. Yet the Lord had blessed the money contributed by Baptists more largely in proportion than that of any other denomination. This should be a great encouragement to Baptists to give largely. There is need of a good plan of benevolent work and of the best men and women in the church as collectors.

Rev. A. Cohoon urged the importance of system and perseverance in benevolent work. Pastors must put their hearts into it. Then they would succeed. But men do not succeed in any undertaking unless they work at it systematically and with a determination to succeed.

The Friday evening session was occupied by a meeting in the interest of the B. Y. P. Union work. An address of welcome by Miss Clara Palmer of the Aylesford B. Y. P. U. was responded to by Rev. G. W. Schurman, of Halifax. Excellent addresses were delivered by Rev. W. H. Jenkins on "The Junior Union," and by Rev. Z. L. Fash on "Open Doors."

SATURDAY.

Saturday morning's session was opened with prayer by Rev. B. N. Nobles.

The report on Obituaries presented by Rev. H. B. Smith. It recorded with affectionate testimony to their worth the deaths of Rev. J. L. M. Young, Deacon David Lantz, of New Germany, and Deacon Isaac Shaw, of Weston. Loving and appreciative reference to these brethren and their work was made by Dr. Saunders, Rev.

E. O. Read and Rev. D. H. Simpson. The report was adopted.

Rev. S. B. Kempton, D. D., reported verbally for the committee on The Future of the Associations. The report was to the effect that, in consequence of the failure of the other Associations to take any action looking toward a change in the present organization, the committee deemed it unnecessary to advise any action on the subject.

A plan for the raising of a Twentieth Century Fund was presented by Rev. A. Cohoon. The amount of the Fund is placed at \$50,000, of which Nova Scotia is expected to raise \$27,000; New Brunswick, \$20,000, and P. E. Island, \$3,000. It is to be divided equally between Home and Foreign Missions.

Mr. Cohoon said the sum aimed at might seem small in comparison with the Funds which other denominations were raising, but it had been taken into account that the denomination had a short time ago undertaken to raise \$50,000 for its educational work, and it would be seen that the \$50,000 now asked for missions was not for paying off debts, but for advance work.

Dr. Saunders declared himself in favor of the scheme, but thought that some provision for the Ministers' Aid and Relief work should be included in it, and suggested that one-tenth of the amount raised should be applied to that object.

Rev. Z. L. Fash called attention to the fact that the proposed fund made no provision for Grande Ligne and the Northwest, which he thought should be done.

Rev. W. N. Hutchins considered that it would be unwise to interfere with the plan which had now been adopted by the Western Association. The Northwest and Grande Ligne were making special appeals from year to year on behalf of their work.

Rev. D. Crandall said that hearty unanimity in this work was essential to success, and he hoped for a general cooperation in the plan as presented by the committee.

Rev. A. Cohoon said that if the churches work this plan it will work. The plan involved that the Association should apportion a certain percentage to each district and the district meetings apportion what might be considered a due proportion to each of the churches.

Dr. Keirstead spoke of the importance of connecting these efforts for raising money with an inspiring statement of the great principles to which these funds are to give expression and effect. He advocated a setting forth of the great Christian principles in accordance with which these funds are being sought.

The plan was adopted.

Rev. A. Cohoon and the chairmen of the several district committees were appointed a committee to apportion the fund to be raised to the districts.

The report on Denominational Literature, written by Bro. J. Parsons of Halifax, was read by Rev. J. B. Morgan.

The report stated that but for the possession of the Bible some of our Baptist families would be entirely destitute of denominational literature. Emphasis was laid upon the study of the Bible first of all; but it is of importance that our people should know how God is blessing his people in the present. To this end the denominational paper is of great importance. "Denominationalism may mean less than Christianity, but about all the Christianity we get comes over the denominational road. A boy or girl brought up in a home with only the Bible and the MESSENGER AND VISITOR will be a better citizen—a stronger man or woman, than if surrounded with all the magazines and 'best literature' of the day." The report warmly commended the MESSENGER AND VISITOR for its "breadth, depth and aspirations." It recommended that in every church a committee of one or two be appointed whose duty it should be to see that every family is regularly or occasionally supplied with Baptists papers or tracts, that news in brief, seasonable forms be sent to the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, and that Baptists facts and thoughts nicely done into paragraphs be furnished to the editors of the county and district newspapers.

By invitation of the Moderator, the editor of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR addressed the Association, and was very kindly heard as he spoke in the interests of the paper.

AFTERNOON.

At the afternoon session the report on Denominational Literature was again taken up and adopted without discussion.

Rev. M. P. Freeman presented the report on Home Missions. It noted the commanding importance and influence of the Home Mission work, through the efforts of the Fathers and those who have followed them, yet much remains to be done. The hopes of the denomination for continued efficiency in all departments of its work is intimately connected with the Home Mission work. The report expressed confidence in the wisdom and integrity of those who have this work in charge, and urged upon the churches to support them by their prayers, sympathies and benefactions. The report was supported in brief speeches by Rev. M. P. Freeman and Rev. Dr. Kempton, and was adopted. Short histories of the churches at Hammonds Plains and Falmouth, prepared by Dr. Saunders, were read by Rev. A. C.