

school which enforces it, and gives them the opportunity of gaining the most knowledge.

Your committee would suggest that age be adopted as the basis for grading by all our schools, and as far as possible scholars of the same age be graded, together.

The plan as outlined in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR may be adopted, or the names of departments may be changed, and the division of ages may be different, as the interests of the individual Schools may require.

With regard to supplemental lessons, your committee recommend that the plan outlined by the committee in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR be adopted by all our schools. As a stimulus to study, your committee would recommend examinations in the supplemental lessons and diplomas awarded to all successful candidates.

The plan of grading and names of books containing part of the supplemental lessons as outlined in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR can be obtained by applying to the several members of committee.

Before closing their report, your committee wish to call the attention of our schools to the good work being done by the "Home Department," and urge all who have not yet added this branch to their schools to do so without delay.

The Home Department not only carries the Sunday School to the home, but the influence is felt in the School itself, and instead of being an added expense, as many may suppose it is usually found to be a source of revenue.

In closing we would urge upon all, pastors and people, the necessity of giving to this great work the attention which its importance demands, that our schools may constantly manifest growth and progress and increase in power for the salvation of souls and for the up-building of stalwart Christian character.

In addition to the foregoing recommendation, and the provisions for advanced work adopted by this Convention a year ago, your committee recommend that a Superintendent of Home Department work be appointed whose duty it shall be to foster and encourage the establishment of Home Departments of instruction in connection with all our Sunday Schools.

On behalf of Sunday School Committee on the Sunday School.

T. S. SIMMS.
J. D. FREEMAN.
EDWIN D. KING.
CHAS. F. BAKER.

Historical Sermon

Preached by Rev. W. H. Warren, at a Roll-Call service at Bedeque, P. E. Island, on Sunday, August 6, 1899.

"But call to remembrance the former days." Heb. 10:32.

The frequent review of past mercies has in all ages been a marked feature in the devotional exercises of God's people. Moses delighted in recounting the wonderful deliverances of Israel from tyranny and danger; and Joshua grew eloquent in reviewing the glorious victories he had witnessed. By the stone Ebenezer at Mizpah Samuel rehearsed the mercies of Jehovah, and gratefully inscribed upon the monument the cheerful confession "Hitherto has the Lord helped us." The psalms of David abound in such inspiring reviews, reminding God's people of the multiplied blessings with which a merciful Providence had graciously favored them. And when we turn to the New Testament we find Peter and Stephen and Paul making lengthy references to the past and urging Christians in the words of our text, to "call to remembrance the former days."

Such reviews are well adapted to awaken gratitude in our hearts to Him who has in all the ages been the shelter and salvation of believers; and they tend to stimulate us to press forward hopefully in our efforts to promote His kingdom and glory on earth.

For this reason we have deemed it wise to refresh your memories by a brief review of the rise and progress of the Lord's work in connection with the church and congregation at Bedeque. The younger members will be especially interested in learning something about the circumstances under which the present organization was formed, and the steps by which the good work has been carried forward. At the end of five years of pastoral service among you, and at a service specially designed for calling the roll of our members, this review of the past seems to be particularly appropriate.

It is a matter of some gratification to us that this is the oldest of the Prince Edward Island Baptist churches connected with our Maritime Convention. About the commencement of the present century Bedeque became a community of some importance, and many intelligent and worthy settlers had formed for themselves comfortable homes and productive farms. Among these were a few Baptists who came hither from New Brunswick, the venerable Isaac Bradshaw being of that number. About the same time Elder Alex. Crawford, an earnest Scotch Baptist preacher, visited the community and preached the word of life with a good degree of success. He resided in the vicinity of Tryon for some years and gathered together a number of the followers of Christ. When Rev. Charles Tupper came to the Island as a missionary, in 1825 he met this worthy pioneer whom he describes as a "very pious and exemplary man." The congregations which had been formed appear to have become somewhat disorganized with but little prospect of improvement. As a result of the missionary's visit,

however, a new interest seems to have been awakened; and a number of persons expressed a desire to be formed into a church connected with the Nova Scotia Association. This desire was carried into effect in the following year, 1826, when two other missionaries visited the province. Rev. Joseph Crandall, the veteran founder of the Baptist church at Sackville, New Brunswick, came to Bedeque in September, 1826, and labored with much acceptance among the people. During this visit he baptized three persons. A few weeks later Rev. Theodore Seth Harding, of Horton, came to this place and preached with great power. In the latter part of October he gathered the brethren and sisters together and in agreement with their own wishes organized them into the Bedeque Baptist church, the first of its kind in the province. It included members residing at Tryon, and for many years the two sections formed one body.

The little church was weak and scattered and had not the help of a settled pastor. But their meetings from house to house were sustained with as much regularity as could reasonably be expected. An occasional missionary encouraged them to maintain their allegiance to the Master and strive for increased strength.

After a few years the first pastor took up his residence among them. This was Rev. Charles Tupper, who came from Amherst, in 1833, and spent one year in pastoral labor at Bedeque and Tryon. Much benefit was derived from this watchcare, and many were added by baptism to the church. But the field was found to be too weak financially to maintain a pastor; and for many years they were dependent upon the help received from missionaries who visited the Island from time to time. Many disadvantages arose from this state of affairs; and the growth of the church was but slow and spasmodic. But the Lord did not forget His little flock. They had many cheering evidences of His presence and favor.

Year followed year with but little change in the condition of things among our brethren. Days of sunshine and days of shadow alternated in the experience of the church; and the silent messenger bore some of the little band away to their eternal reward. By mutual consent the brethren at Tryon were separated into a distinct church in the year 1842. This change was made on account of any want of agreement or affection between the two sections, but in order to facilitate the work of the Lord in both communities. Nor did the change prevent the two churches from co-operating in religious effort, or from being superintended by the same pastor. In the person of Rev. Alexander McDonald they found a good and zealous pastor for several years. He was much beloved by the people, and his labors were blessed in the bringing of many precious souls to Christ. After his removal in 1846, the pulpits in Bedeque and Tryon were supplied by different ministers, whose names are familiar to us all. Among these we may mention Rev. Benjamin Scott, one of our early Island pastors; Rev. John Shaw, pastor at Three Rivers, and Rev. Benjamin Boulter, whose residence was at Tryon. Their visits were much appreciated, and additions to the church resulted from their efforts. These supplies continued with more or less regularity for seven or eight years.

A faithful pastor was called to the field in 1854, in the person of Rev. Malcolm Ross. He had previously filled the position of under shepherd at North River, where his name is still held in great veneration. For about five years he labored diligently and successfully at Bedeque and Tryon, building up the brethren in sound doctrine, and welcoming many accessions to the family of believers. Few men were more highly esteemed for their works' sake than this sainted minister; and his name today is mentioned by all denominations with affectionate respect. The church was honored in having all these worthy servants of the Lord as helpers in religious work. They have all entered into their heavenly rest; but their works follow them. Being dead they yet speak.

During the four following years the pulpit at Bedeque was regularly supplied by different preachers. Rev. William Dobson performed the duties of pastor for a year or two with much acceptance. Among other important changes which marked this period we may note that the old meeting house which stood on the east side of the highway was disposed of and a new house of worship erected. The new Bethel was a commodious building and it remained until the present beautiful structure took its place.

The Lord also blessed the little churches comprising this pastorate when he sent Rev. Maynard Freeman to lead them in spiritual things. Coming hither as a student from Acadia College, Bro. Freeman made so favorable an impression by his kindly disposition and plain, earnest preaching, that the brethren at once decided to call him as their pastor. He accepted the call in 1863, in which year he was ordained to the work of his life. His efforts in building up Zion were owned of God and abundantly blessed. Very many converts were welcomed by him into the church, and a period of marked prosperity followed his coming. Sunday School work was carried on with regularity and efficiency; the prayer meetings were well attended and interesting, and a very encouraging spirit of brotherly love prevailed among the people.

During Bro. Freeman's pastorate several important changes occurred. Members of the church residing at Cape Wolfe and vicinity obtained letters of dismission to form a separate organization in that part of the Island. A still larger number residing at Summerside were dismissed to form a distinct church in that town. Another detachment of brethren and sisters, residing at Cavendish also formed themselves into a self governing body. In view of these facts it is not difficult to understand why Bedeque church is numerically so small. It has been split into many churches; its members are to be found in different ecclesiastical families in Canada and the United States. It has sent presidents to colleges, missionaries to the foreign field, and pastors to other flocks. The record is an honorable one.

After spending about six years of faithful pastoral labor here, Bro. Freeman returned to Nova Scotia. His successor was Dr. J. B. McDonald, who was ordained in Tryon in 1870. He proved to be a zealous and efficient under-shepherd; and the church was much enlarged through his untiring efforts. In 1873 he removed to North Sydney, C. B.

Soon after this date brethren D. G. McDonald and J. G. Schurman, now president of Cornell University, came from Acadia College to spend their vacation in missionary effort in this community. Meetings of great interest were held for many weeks, and a large number of souls were brought to Jesus Christ. The church was materially strengthened by these accessions; and the young evangelists returned to college much cheered by the results of their labors.

Encouraged by these manifestations of the Divine favor, the church, in October, 1874, invited Rev. Alfred Chipman to the pastorate. He promptly accepted the call, and entered upon his duties with much earnestness and fidelity. During special services held in the following spring Bro. Chipman was aided by Rev. Joseph Murray of Summerside, and a gracious revival was enjoyed, in the course of which a number of persons were led to unite in fellowship with the church. Bro. Chipman remained four years in this field. He is kindly remembered in the community.

The church was not long without a shepherd. Early in 1879 Rev. E. N. Archibald was called as spiritual leader. He proved to be a diligent and successful pastor, giving careful attention to every department of church work. He was followed in 1881 by Rev. A. H. Lavers, who was sent by the Home Missionary Board to supply the pulpits at Summerside and Bedeque. Some good work was done in seed-sowing and indoctrination.

Rev. I. J. Skinner came to this field in 1885, giving part of his time to Tryon. He was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost. His preaching was earnest, tender and impressive, and many were led to Christ under his ministry. He was a judicious leader, a sincere friend and a wise counsellor. He remained in the good work nearly three years, after which he gave all his time to Tryon.

Rev. Joseph Cahill was now invited to become pastor at Bedeque. With an easy and pleasing manner and ready wit he became quite popular among all classes, particularly among those who were specially interested in temperance work. He spent four years between Bedeque and Summerside in effective service, and it was his privilege to welcome a number of converts into the fellowship of the church.

He was followed by Rev. B. H. Bentley who occupied the pulpits at Bedeque and Summerside for about nine months. At the end of this time the two churches agreed by mutual consent to pursue their work under separate pastors.

In July, 1894, the church extended a call to its present pastor. The events connected with the five years which have passed since that date are too recent to need more than a passing notice. The work of repairing and renewing the place of worship was the first object of interest. Already the contract had been given, and the work of repairs went forward speedily. In due time the old place underwent a complete change, and its comfort and beauty have been a source of great satisfaction to the friends ever since. The years have stolen quietly away. Congregations have come and gone. Death has silently visited our homes and borne away many of our numbers. But we are here today to record the Lord's mercies, and to renew our vows with a covenant keeping God. Our review has some pleasing features. We are grateful that the Lord has not forsaken us. His blessing has not been withheld. An energetic Aid Society has all through these years perseveringly carried on its work in behalf of missions. A little band of young people have gone quietly along in the study of sacred literature and of missionary history. Our Sunday Schools have been sustained with a fair degree of interest. Best of all the Lord has of late granted us a season of refreshing, and we have been cheered in seeing twenty hopeful converts putting on Christ and uniting with our church. He who said, "In due time ye shall reap if ye faint not," has fulfilled His blessed promise in our experience, and we have reason to "thank God and take courage."

So far as it is possible to be ascertained from the incomplete records of the church, we learn that about three hundred and fifty names have been enrolled in the list of members. Of these, three hundred and ten were added by baptism, the remainder having been received on experience or by letter. About one hundred have passed away to the better land. In quiet spots here and there in our little places of burial their names may be seen inscribed on mossy tombstones; but their happy spirits have entered into the blissful rest of God's dear children.

The resident members number one hundred, and about twenty of our brethren and sisters reside in other communities, not yet having taken letters of dismission. One has within a few days crossed over to the heavenly city; others of us will follow in due time. Many of the forms of those who have been present at this meeting will be quietly sleeping in the dust when the next Roll-call service shall be held in this place. But a more important roll-call will take place by and by. All nations and kindreds and tribes will be there. On which side shall we appear when the Judges shall call our names?

May a loving Saviour help us so to live as that we may hear from his blessed lips the joyous welcome, "Come ye blessed of my Father; inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."