

The Nova Scotia Eastern Association.

The Eastern Association of Nova Scotia met in its fiftieth annual session with the church at Pugwash, N. S., on Friday, July 13th, at 10 o'clock a. m., the Moderator, Rev. J. W. Bancroft, presiding.

After devotional exercises, the list of delegates from the churches was read by the clerk, and the Association proceeded to elect its officers for the year. Rev. O. N. Chipman, of Great Village, was chosen moderator, Rev. T. B. Layton was re-elected Clerk, with Bro. J. B. Fulton as Assistant, and Bro. C. T. Dewolf, Treasurer.

A number of visiting brethren were present at the opening meeting of the Association and others arrived later in the day, including Revs. Dr. Manning of St. John, and C. H. Martell of Canard, N. S., Prof. Haley of Acadia, Principal McDonald and Principal Brittain and S. McC. Black of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. All visiting brethren were invited to seats in the Association. Vacancies in regular committees were filled out, and the remainder of the session was devoted to the reading of letters from the churches. In this connection Dr. Burch, pastor of Zion church, Truro, pointed out that in the Year Book the name of his church appeared as Zion Church, (colored.) He considered that this note of distinction was uncalled for. The session closed with prayer by Rev. A. E. Ingram.

AFTERNOON.

The afternoon session opened with prayer by Rev. J. M. Parker. The reading of letters was resumed. In the letter from the church at Onslow West, special reference was made to the death of Mrs. Hardy, wife of Rev. John Hardy, missionary to India, and daughter of Rev. J. Williams, pastor of the church. At the request of the Moderator, the Association was led in prayer by Rev. G. A. Lawson, on behalf of the bereaved family. After the reading of the letters had been concluded, the report on Systematic Benevolence was presented by Rev. J. T. Dimock.

This was a carefully prepared report, dealing with the subject at length and with much ability. Reference was made to the great needs of the Home and Foreign mission fields and denominational interests, and statistics were presented to show that the contributions of our churches were not so large and general as might reasonably be expected. In many instances of recent years there had been a falling off in the contributions through the regular channels. Different plans of raising funds for denominational work were noted and commended—Weekly contributions, tithing, etc. The exhortations of the apostle in 1 Cor. 16, were especially commended for consideration. The desirability of frequent contributions was urged. In conclusion it was recommended:

1. That Benevolence be made a subject of earnest prayer.
2. That the subject be frequently presented to the people and their duty urged upon them.
3. That the young be encouraged and trained to give.
4. That contributions from the churches to the Convention fund be made at least quarterly.

According to appointment the reading of the report was followed by an address on the subject by Rev. W. H. Robinson of Antigonish. He said that there was need of system in the matter of contribution to our benevolent work. We should give regularly and frequently, thus we should give more and with greater ease than when contributions were made irregularly. Bro. J. B. Fulton emphasized the importance of training the children to give, and that all should contribute on New Testament principles. Dr. Burch spoke of the difference between benevolence—well wishing—and beneficence—well doing—and emphasized the importance of beneficence. Rev. R. O. Morse urged the importance of the denomination caring for its legitimate children, the interests included in the Convention Plan; to fail to support these interests would be dishonesty. Rev. J. W. Bancroft spoke of the Old Testament plan of giving which involved not only the giving of a tenth but other offerings in worship. He believed that our churches were suffering spiritually because of their failure to bring the tithes into the treasury.

The report on Denominational Literature, presented by Bro. H. G. Eastbrook, emphasized firstly the need of making much of the Bible. Baptists are to interpret the Word of God, and that Word is as well adapted to our day as to the past. The Sermon on the Mount must ever remain the law of the Kingdom, and Peter's discourse at Pentecost the Creed of the church. Good Christian literature was commended as preserving the noblest ideals of life, begetting large sympathies and large views of God's work. It is important that the literature of the common schools be true and wholesome in character, and that that of the Sunday School be fitted to the youthful mind and harmonious with the Word of God. Vigilance here is demanded. The literature of the home should foster right ideas of life, cultivate morality and reverence for God. The report strongly urged the importance of the denominational paper, because of its influence upon the home life, promoting intelligence upon denominational interests and fellowship among the churches, and as an invaluable assistant to the pastor and his work.

Rev. R. Osgood Morse, by appointment, gave an address upon the subject under discussion. The Baptist Publishing Company and the Baptist people of these Provinces, he said, had each obligations to fulfil. The Company should give the people as good a paper as was possible, and the people should give the paper their most liberal support. He did not want a cheaper paper, better pay more and have the best possible. Mr. Morse held that the paper would be increased in value if our thoughtful and scholarly men would contribute more

freely to the paper than they do, so that it should more fully reflect the thought of our people on the great doctrines of Christianity. This lack he knew was not the fault of the editor, it was difficult to secure from our men the discussions desired, yet he felt that their thought would be as valuable as that of men in other lands and more interesting to our people. The speaker would like to see the paper wire-stitched, and thought that in some of its mechanical features there was room for improvement.

Rev. J. Clark spoke in commendation of this paper, and said his experience with wire-stitched books and papers had not been favorable. Bro. J. B. Fulton also commended the paper, and urged the importance of increasing its circulation. By invitation of the Moderator, the editor of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR addressed the Association for a short time, and was listened to very kindly as he urged the importance of the paper's mission and bespoke the earnest co-operation of the members of the Association, with a view to making the paper as great a power for good as possible.

EVENING.

As the present year marks for the Association the completion of a half century of existence, it had been thought well that the annual meeting should be given somewhat of a jubilee character, and in accordance with this idea a jubilee programme had been arranged, which was in part carried out in the meeting of Friday evening. These facts were stated by Dr. Steele, Chairman of the Jubilee Committee, who also said that four hymns had been written for the occasion by Rev. John Clark, and announced as the selection for opening, A Memorial Psalm, by Mr. Clark, of which the first stanza is as follows:

Great Ancient of eternal days!
Let heaven and earth resound thy praise;
Who wast, who art, who art to come,
Thy children's help, thy people's home.

After the hymn had been sung, the Scriptures were read by Rev. Dr. Steele and prayer was offered by Rev. J. W. Bancroft. The first address was by S. McC. Black, entitled "The Fathers and Their Work." A second hymn by Rev. J. Clark was read by the author and heartily sung by the choir and congregation, after which a strong and thoughtful paper was presented by Rev. R. Osgood Morse of Guysboro, entitled "Our Present Doctrinal Position." Mr. Morse's paper was evidently the result of much thought and careful preparation, and was received with deep interest by the more thoughtful part of his audience. It is expected that this valuable paper will shortly appear in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, and all its readers will have an opportunity of perusing it in full.

SATURDAY MORNING.

Before the business of the Association was taken up, Rev. G. A. Lawson spoke briefly upon the subject of Preparation for Service.

The session of the Association opened with prayer by Rev. A. Routledge. Pastors Bates of Amherst, Ingram of Stewiacke, and Burch of Zion church, Truro, who had come into the Association during the year were welcomed by the Moderator, and each briefly responded. By request of the Moderator, Rev. Dr. Manning explained the plan on which it was proposed to raise a Twentieth Century fund of \$50,000 for the promotion of the Home and Foreign Mission work. It was explained that the raising of such a fund had been resolved upon at Fredericton, that a committee had apportioned what was regarded as a fair proportional amount to each of the seven Associations and that the amount named in connection with the N. S. Eastern Association was six thousand dollars. Explanations were also given as to the methods by which it was proposed the fund should be raised. After some discussion as to the ability of the churches to raise the sum named, a committee was appointed to consider the subject and report upon it.

The report on Sunday Schools was presented by Rev. D. H. McQuarrie. The report emphasized the importance of making the Sunday School work effective in the matter of training for Christian service. It showed that according to the statistics of the Year Book, there had been in recent years a slight decrease in the attendance of scholars, the number of teachers and the number of baptisms. But Sunday School workers should not be satisfied with mere attendance. Conversion and Christian training were the great ends to be kept in view. The duties of self-sacrifice and benevolence are to be inculcated. Young people should be educated to distinguish between things that differ and choose the best things. Great attention should be paid to the character of the Sunday School library. Some Sunday School libraries, Mr. McQuarrie said, were little else than novel exchange bureaus. The adoption of the report was moved by Rev. Dr. Steele who supported its recommendations. Rev. J. W. Bancroft gave a good address on the duty of the church to the Sunday School. He contended that as the church was the only divinely instituted body for promoting the work of Christ, the Sunday School should represent the church at work. In many Sunday Schools this is not the fact. The churches are far from fulfilling their duty in this matter. The deacons and older members of the church are frequently not found in the School. The church should provide for the expenses of the School and the scholars should be trained to give to missions and other benevolent objects.

AFTERNOON.

The business session of the afternoon was preceded by a sermon by Rev. W. E. Bates of Amherst. The subject was "Crown Solomon," text 1 Kings 1: 33-34. The discourse was a very interesting and helpful one. The report on Sunday Schools was taken from the table and after brief discussion was adopted. For the Committee on Obituaries Dr. Steele reported that there had been no deaths among the ministers of the Association during the year, and at the request of the Moderator Rev. C. H. Martell offered a prayer of thanksgiving. Prayer was also offered for Rev. D. McKeen whose strength, the Association had learned with regret, was much impaired, and for Rev. J. Williams and family on account of their bereavement in the death of Mrs. J. Hardy, a daughter of Mr. Williams, and for Bro. Williams' personal affliction which has made it necessary for him to resign his charge. Prayer was also offered for Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Gray of New Annap in their affliction through the death of their daughter, Miss Gray of India. The Moderator and Secretary of the Association were named as a

committee to convey to the afflicted an expression of the sympathy of the Association.

The report of the Committee on Temperance was presented by the Moderator. The report showed that in view of the fact that the present Dominion Government declined to accept the plebiscite as a sufficient mandate from the people to enact a general or provincial prohibitory law it is evident that neither party is prepared to make prohibition a plank in its platform. Something might be hoped for from an improvement of the Canada Temperance Act, but there should be an education of the temperance sentiment of the country with a view to general prohibition. Such sentiment is undoubtedly gaining ground. The pulpit is making itself heard on the question. The press has helped and it is hoped will help more powerfully. The influence of such men as Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener in the army must make itself felt. Yet effective help must come through legislation. This must be urged upon Parliaments and Governments. Care should be taken that men of pronounced temperance principles are sent to Parliament. So long as the attachment to a political party is stronger than the desire for prohibition, so long the traffic will continue.

The report was discussed by a number of the brethren. Dr. Burch wanted the use of tobacco condemned, which, he held, was almost as bad as the drink evil. He held that the hope for temperance reform was in the church of God rather than in Governments and Legislatures. When the church rises in her power in this matter, the temperance cause will be triumphant. Bro. W. D. McCallum said that the saddest thing about the subject of prohibition is that the church is not ready for it. He urged the importance of the education in temperance of the children in the Sabbath Schools and day schools. Rev. E. Bosworth said that in the matter of temperance reform the Maritime Provinces were far ahead of Ontario. Many parts of these Provinces had already a prohibitory law in the Scott Act, but he had observed that there was much need of a better enforcement of the law. Rev. J. T. Dimock contended that it was the duty of the people to insist on prohibition and not say that the time has not come for prohibition.

Rev. D. H. McQuarrie said he felt himself to be much at sea in reference to the question of prohibition. One thing was plain however, the country that squandered a hundred and forty million dollars on the liquor traffic for the sake of saving seven millions in taxes was making a very bad bargain.

The committee appointed to advise in reference to the Twentieth Century fund reported, advising that the churches of the Association undertake to raise the amount assigned, provided that it be divided according to the Convention plan. This proposal encountered opposition, and after considerable discussion the matter was referred to the committee for further consideration.

EVENING.

After singing the third of Rev. J. Clark's jubilee hymns, the Moderator read the 19th Psalm and prayer was offered by Rev. J. T. Dimock. The report on Education was presented by Rev. M. A. McLean, of Truro. The report urged the importance of education both for the minister of the gospel and the people at large, presented facts in connection with the work of the Wolfville institutions to show that the past year had been one of the most prosperous in their history, praised the good work done by Principal MacDonald of the Seminary and Principal Brittain of the Academy during the first year of their connection with those schools and commended the educational work of the denomination to the hearty support of the churches.

As a part of the Jubilee programme, for which there had not been room in the meeting of Friday evening, Dr. Steele delivered an able and instructive address on "The Baptist Phenomenon" in which it was shown that, notwithstanding the lack of any centralized human authority or any generally acknowledged creed and in spite of the fact that Baptists had stood for principles which had exposed them to the charge of narrowness and exclusiveness, they had made wonderful progress, and instead of being, as Dean Stanley once called them, an obscure sect, their membership in Great Britain and America now outnumbered by about one-third the number of communicants in the Anglican church in the same countries. The readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR will be glad of the opportunity of reading this excellent address.

Prof. Haley of the Chair of Mathematics at Acadia addressed the Association in reference to the work of the college. He spoke of the good work which had been done in the college during the year and the gracious religious influence which pervaded the institutions. The attendance had been the largest in the history of the college. The classes were increasing in numbers, and this bears evidence to the popularity of the college with the students. It has won respect abroad. A college president in the United States has recently stated that he knew of none among the smaller colleges that is doing better work than Acadia. The Christian influence at Acadia is strong and positive. All professors and teachers are professedly and actively Christian. The value of the college to the denomination in fostering Christian education and providing for the advocacy and defence of Baptist principles cannot be over-estimated. The college needs the sympathy and support of the people, that its religious influence may be strong, that it may be strengthened financially to meet the demands of the time and that the number of its students may be increased.

Principal Brittain of Horton Academy gave a stirring address in the interest of that institution, urging its importance to the college and to the denomination. The academy had received a very meagre measure of financial support, and a comparatively small investment of money in it at the present would have important results.

Rev. W. H. Robinson gave an excellent address showing how the hand of Providence had been seen in the history of Acadia.

Principal MacDonald spoke for the Seminary and spoke so well that, although the hour was late, he was heard with much interest as he presented the attraction of the school and bespoke for it a larger patronage.

SUNDAY.

The Associational sermon was preached at 11 o'clock by Rev. A. F. Newcombe of Amherst. The Scriptures were read by the Moderator and prayer was offered.

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