

Convention Reports.

Denominational Funds.

The Treasurers of Denominational Funds presented their yearly statements. The statement of Treasurer for Nova Scotia, Rev. A. Cohoon, was prefaced by the following remarks:

In presenting his Seventh Annual Report, your Treasurer wishes to say that he has done all that the time at his disposal for this work permitted him to do, to secure the \$15,000 asked for by the Convention. Early in the year careful study was given to the question as to how the \$15,000 could be apportioned among the churches. The results of this study were published in MESSENGER AND VISITOR of October 19, 1898. A notice that the Convention expected this \$15,000 has been kept in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR for most of the year. The pastors were early informed of the amounts hoped for from their churches, and asked to co-operate in securing the same. A few weeks before the close of the year the churches were informed of the amounts they had contributed, and still later, some that had not contributed anything, were written to and urged to do something.

A comparison of the report for this year with that of 1898 shows, that twenty-one of the churches that gave the largest amounts that year aggregating \$6,975.76, have this year given only \$3,859.19, a falling off of \$3,116.57. Is it too much to say that the decrease in funds for our Denominational work is to be traced to our strongest churches?

The column headed "Amount contributed by W. M. Societies" is made up from figures furnished by Mrs. Mary Smith, Treas. W. B. M. Union. As the information furnished is, in some cases insufficient, the Treasurer is not sure that the amounts reported have been credited to the right churches. Of the amounts reported by her \$177.38 came from Sunday schools, \$695.44 from Mission Bands, and \$31.80 from Junior Unions and B. V. P. U.

Your treasurer believes that the chief reason why we are not raising more money for our Denominational work is that many of our churches do not regard it as an important part of their work. He, therefore, suggests that the Convention recommend:

- 1. That our denominational work be made the subject for one regular prayer meeting in each month.
2. That the pastors be asked to frequently show to their congregations the importance of this work, as related to the advancement of the Kingdom of God, and to present the teaching of the word of God in reference to liberal giving.
3. That the churches arrange for regular collections for these funds at least quarterly.

The condensed statement of receipts and payments for Nova Scotia is as follows:

Table with columns: RECEIPTS, PAYMENTS, and various denominational categories like Western Association, Central Association, Eastern Association, African Association, Acadia University, etc.

NOTE.—Add to the above \$5201.69 reported to me by Mrs. Mary Smith, Treasurer of the W. B. M. Union, and we have as the total from Nova Scotia \$15,149.74.

Large table titled 'Condensed Statement of the Treasurer for N. B. and P. E. I., Rev. J. W. Manning' showing financial details for various associations and denominations.

The total amount raised during the year, according to these statements, for denominational work is \$23,143.06.

State of the Denomination.

Following is the report on the State of the Denomination presented to the Convention at Fredericton by B. H. Eaton, D. C. L., and adopted:

A report on the State of the Denomination and a long and thorough discussion following it would, we are convinced, be of the highest utility were such a report to gather up the most vital features of our work and the changes and tendencies we are undergoing in these years of ever increasingly rapid development and to point out clearly our most urgent needs and our greatest dangers, and the best courses to pursue, and were the Convention at leisure and in a mood to prase for a few hours in their consideration of the affairs of Boards in order to consider the inner life of the Sisterhood of Churches, and how that life might be developed into one of higher tone and greater effectiveness, and how the denomination might better accomplish its greater purposes. But in the unrelenting pressure of the business matters which call us together, there appears to be no time for such a discussion. It is a pity that such is the case, for nothing could be more profitable than to pause in our course once a year and examine and correct our bearings, if need be, and start anew with stronger and better purposes.

The question might reasonably be asked: Is the Baptist denomination working out its distinctively denominational purposes as fully as it should and might do by the persistent endeavor in all proper ways to promote the general acceptance of those doctrines and practices which we claim to hold and exercise as more in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Scriptures than those held and exercised by other denominations? And if not, why not? Another question pushes itself to the front with many misgivings as to the true answer to be rendered. It is this: Is the spiritual life of the membership of our churches becoming higher and better or is it deteriorating, and if the latter is the case how shall we turn the tide in the right direction? Still another: What is the cause of the restlessness and instability of the pastorate? Is it or is it not to be regretted? If it is an evil what remedy can be devised in the absence of any denominational means of regulation? It being a self-evident proposition that each group of our churches should be under the pastoral care of an able minister of the gospel,—a man having a thorough general and theological education, as well as possessing other necessary qualifications, how are we to secure a supply of the men thus needed? These and many other questions relating to our vitality and progress might be profitably discussed had we the time at our command. As one of the best means of meeting the needs of the pastorate of the Maritime Baptist churches we suggest the early development and full equipment of the Theological Department of Acadia College. This enlargement would afford a general means of preserving soundness of doctrine and of securing unity of sentiment and purpose throughout all our churches. Let us pray and labor for the full endowment of this department of our educational work.

The statistics which we present will speak for themselves, but not so encouragingly as we could wish. In view of what they indicate it is not a time to give ourselves to increasing prayer to God, the giver of all good, and to renewed activity in his service? Let us have a holy ambition to make the coming year the best in our history, and it will be if we put our trust in God and do our whole duty.

Your committee recommend that each association be requested by Convention to devote—at least one of the sessions of its annual meeting to a discussion of the State of Religion in that association and in the denomination in general. In this discussion we suggest that such topics as the following be considered: (1) The State of Religion as shown in our Family Life; (2) The State of Religion as shown in our Social Life; (3) The State of Religion as shown in our Church Life; (4) The State of our Denomination in respect to the great currents of thought of our time and in relation to our natural life.

ORDINATIONS.

- A. F. Newcomb, B. A., August 21, 1898, Amherst, N. S.
M. A. McLellan, B. A., Sept. 20, 1898, North Sydney, N. S.
F. W. Patterson, Oct. 17, 1898, and Grand Lake, N. B.
Wilbert J. Gordon, Oct. 20, 1898, Kars, Kings Co., N. B.
A. H. Whitman, B. A., Jan. 25, 1899, Springfield, P. E. I.
Allan Spidle, February 9, 1899, Osborne, N. S.
C. W. Turner, March 14, 1899, Montague Bridge, P. E. I.
Wellington W. States, 1899, Inglewood, Anns. Co., N. S.
R. Barry Smith, May 25, 1899, Little River, Kent Co., N. B.
J. O. Vince, B. A., July 4, 1899, Lower Granville, N. S.
J. N. Thorne, July 5, 1899, Elgin, N. B.
W. M. Field, July 26, 1899, Mace's Bay, N. B.

NEW HOUSES OF WORSHIP.

- Forbes Point, Wood's Harbor, Shelburne Co., N. S. W. Association, August 28, 1898
Black Point, Halifax Co., N. S. Central Association, October 9, 1898
Tobique Valley, N. B. Western, December 25, 1898
Meadowvale, Kings Co., N. S. Central, February 22, 1899
Farmington, Lunenburg, N. S. Central, July 4, 1899
Chelsea, Lunenburg, N. S. Central, July 2, 1899
St. George, N. B. Southern,
Oxford, N. S. Eastern, January, 1899
Pereaux, N. S. Central,

NEW CHURCHES ORGANIZED.

- Goldboro, Gnyaboro County, N. S., February, 1899.
Bedford, Halifax County, N. S., July 6, 1899.

The statistical statement which follows did not form a part of the report presented to the Convention but has since been furnished us by Dr. Eaton, the writer of the report.—ED. M. AND V.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS OF THE CHURCHES, MAY 31, 1899.

Table showing statistics of churches including columns for Associations, No. of Churches, Church Membership, No. of Baptisms, Expended for Church Support, and Contributed to Denominational Work.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS, MAY 31, 1899.

Table showing statistics of Sunday schools including columns for Associations, No. of Schools, No. of Scholars, Average Attendance, Number of Teachers, Adults Enrolled, and No. Baptized.

Report on Grande Ligne Mission.

presented by Rev. A. Cohoon, gave the following facts concerning this mission:

At Feller Institute sickness has made the attendance less than usual, the average number being 123, sixteen of these being Roman Catholics. Five of these matriculated to McGill and McMaster. Ten students are preparing for missionary work. The baptisms number 17. Five student colporteurs have spent their vacation visiting along the race line and breaking new grounds. In the missionary churches 36 Romanists have left the Church of Rome and become Protestant. Six of these have recently been baptized in Montreal. An attempt has also been successfully made to conduct religious work in mixed English and French churches. It is hoped that a French general missionary will soon be placed in the field.

Reference is also made to the work in Digby where, under the efforts of Brother and Sister Grenier, nine have been baptized during the year.

For the work at Grande Ligne this year Nova Scotia has contributed \$598.48; New Brunswick, \$223.59; P. E. Island, \$59.83.

The report was adopted without discussion.

Report of Committee on Sunday Schools.

ADOPTED BY THE CONVENTION.

Your committee on Sunday Schools have found it impracticable to hold a meeting of all its members during the year. They, have however, been able by correspondence, to agree upon a plan of grading and supplemental lessons as requested in the report of the Sunday School committee, adopted by the last Convention. Under these circumstances the chairman has thought it advisable to have printed in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR the plan of grading and supplemental lessons agreed upon, or enough of them to give a general idea of what the system is.

While not overlooking the spiritual side of the work of the Sunday Schools, viz., the "bringing of souls to Christ and building up souls in Christ," or the importance of comparing statistics one year with another, your committee feel that they will perhaps best accomplish the purpose for which they were appointed, by confining the most of their report, to the subject of grading and supplemental lessons. It has been found that where the best system prevails, there is the most interest in the work, and naturally the best results are secured. Scholars respect discipline, and come to love the