

Convention Minutes

MINUTES

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OF THE

FIRST SESSION

OF THE

BAPTIST CONVENTION,

OF

NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK,

AND

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND,

HELD AT

SAINT JOHN,

IN THE

PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK

ON

SATURDAY AND MONDAY,

19th and 21st September, 1846.

FREDERICTON:

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1846.

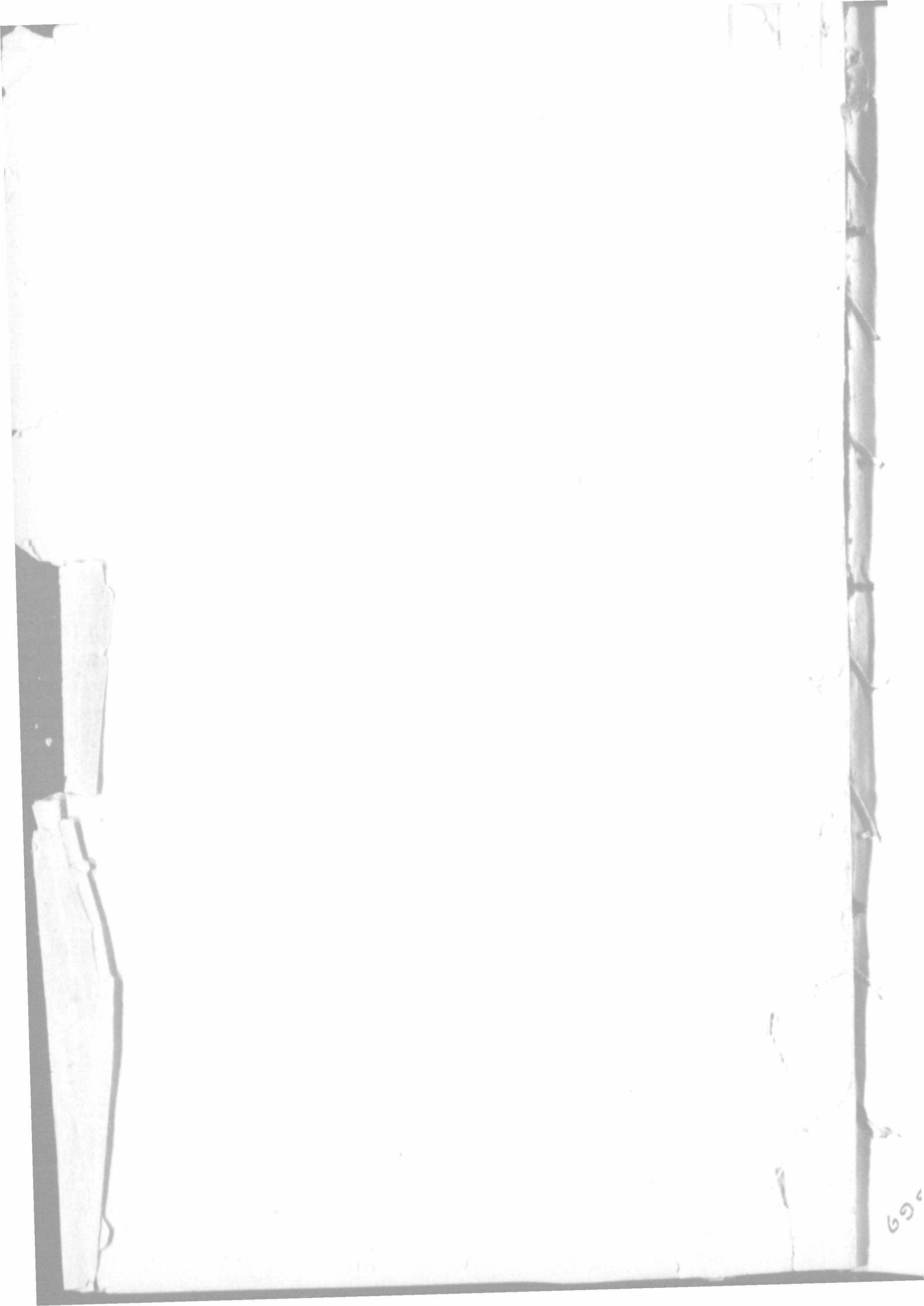
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CONSTITUTION, &c.

I. That the Convention be called "The Baptist Convention of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island," and shall consist of the Members and Delegates hereinafter specified.

II. That the business of the Convention shall be conducted by a President, one or more Vice Presidents, one or more Secretaries, two Treasurers, (one residing in Nova Scotia, and the other in New Brunswick,) an Auditor, and a Board of Directors, consisting of twenty-five members, all of whom shall be members of Baptist Churches, in good standing, in addition to Life Directors, to be chosen annually by the Convention. The Board to have power to fill up any vacancies that may occur previous to the next meeting of the Convention.

III. That the objects of the Convention shall be, to advance the interests of the Baptist Denomination, and of the cause of God, generally; to maintain the religious and charitable Institutions hereinafter mentioned; to procure correct information relative to the Baptist Body, and to advise and carry out such measures as may, with the Divine blessing, tend to advance the interests of the Baptist Denomination, and the cause of God, generally.

To aid the Convention in procuring statistical information it is hoped that the several Associations in the Province will obtain from the Churches connected with them the requisite statements, and report the same, annually, to the Convention, and will concur with the Convention in all such measures as they judge advisable.

IV. That any person paying annually ten shillings, or upwards, into the funds of the Convention, shall be a member thereof; any person paying five pounds, or upwards, shall be a Life Member; and the payment of twenty Pounds, or upwards, at one time, shall constitute a Life Director.

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Every Church connected with an Association, and contributing annually ten shillings to the fund of a Union Society, shall be a member of this Convention, and be at liberty to send one Delegate to represent such Church, and if five pounds are collected, two Delegates. Every Local Union Society collecting annually five pounds, or upwards, shall be a member of this Convention, and shall be at liberty to send two Delegates to represent them therein, and one Delegate for every additional five pounds collected; so as no Church or Local Union Society be at liberty to send more than five Delegates; and that each Association connected with the Convention be allowed to send five Delegates. Every Missionary and Educational Board shall also be at liberty to send one Delegate.

V. That all monies contributed by individuals for membership, or for the general purposes of the Convention, after the payment of incidental expences, shall be paid to the Treasurer of the Convention in the Province in which they shall have been contributed, and shall be by him appropriated in accordance with the existing regulations of the Union Societies in the Province; and that all monies collected by the Local Union Societies, or by General Unions of such Societies, shall be paid to the respective Provincial Treasurers, of the Convention, to be appropriated for such of the above great objects, and in such proportions, as the several Union Societies shall direct.

VI. That any individual paying into the funds of the Convention, more than the sum required to constitute membership, will be at liberty to direct the application of the surplus to the several objects contemplated by the Union Societies, to any one or more of them, separately.

uc. That the Board shall meet quarterly, or oftener, for dispatch of business, at such place as the Convention shall from time to time appoint; nine members shall form a quorum.

VIII. That the Convention shall meet on the third Saturday in September, annually, at such place as shall be agreed on by the Body; when, in addition to the Office-

bearers and Board of Convention, the following Boards shall be chosen, viz.; a Board of fifteen members for the Foreign Missionary and Bible cause, and a Board of fifteen members to take charge of, and direct the funds for superannuated Ministers and their families ; all of which Boards shall consist of members of Baptist Churches, in regular standing. These Boards shall hold their meetings at such places as the Convention shall annually appoint. At least one third of the members of these Boards, and of all Boards connected with this Convention, to reside within the vicinity of the places named for their meetings.

IX. That the Boards established for the promotion of the objects contemplated by the Union Societies, shall be requested to furnish the Secretary of the Convention with a full report of their proceedings, annually. Such reports to be presented to the Secretary of the Convention at least one month before its meeting.

X. That this Constitution may be altered or amended at any annual Meeting of the Convention, by two thirds of the members present.

OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 1846--7.

President.

Rev. Theodore Harding, of Horton.

Vice Presidents.

Rev. Edward Manning, of Cornwallis,
 Rev. Joseph Crandall, of Salisbury,
 Hon. J. W. Johnston, of Halifax,
 Hon. W. B. Kinnear, of Fredericton,

Secretaries.

Rev. I. E. Bill, of Nictaux,
 Rev. Samuel Elder, of Fredericton,

Recording Secretary.

Rev. Charles Spurden, of Fredericton,

Treasurers.

J. W. Nutting, Esq., of Halifax,
Nathan S. Demill, of St. John

Auditor.

J. T. Smith, Esquire.

Board of Directors.

Rev. Charles Tupper,
Rev. Nathaniel Viditoe,
Rev. John Chase,
Rev. R. B. Dickie,
Rev. John Pryor,
Rev. Samuel Robinson,
Rev. John Mills,
Rev. John Magee,
Rev. Joshua Bunting,
Rev. William Hall,
Rev. John Marsters,
Rev. James Walker,
Rev. E. J. Harris,

Rev. David Crandall,
Rev. J. A. Smith,
Rev. William G. Parker,
Rev. Thomas Magee,
Rev. John Francis,
Professor I. L. Chipman.
E. Cutten, Esq.
John King, Esq.
William Johnson, Esq.
Dr. Harding,
Dr. A. Sawers,
Edward Huestis, Esq.

Board of Foreign Missions.

Rev. E. A. Crawley, Cor. Secy.,
Rev. J. Pryor,
Professor I. L. Chipman,
Rev. T. S. Harding,
W. Johnson, Esq.,
Dr. L. Johnston,
Rev. W. Chipman,
Rev. I. E. Bill,

Rev. N. Viditoe,
Rev. W. Rideout,
Asa Coy, Esq.,
John T. Smith,
Joshua Ells,
W. Jacobs,
W. DeWolfe, Esq.

Board to control Fund for Superannuated Ministers.

Rev. William Hall,
Rev. Joshua Bunting,
Rev. I. E. Bill,
Nathan S. Demill,
Alexander M'L. Seely,
J. S. Clark,
C. H. Dimock,

Edward M. Seely,
Deacon Hayward,
David Vaughan,
D. C. Landers,
James Clark,
Pastors of the Churches of St.
John, Portland & Carleton.

MINUTES, &c.

SATURDAY, 19th September, 1846.

As many of the Ministers and Delegates from the different Churches were not present, the business of the day was confined to discussions and arrangements preparatory to the General Meeting on Monday.

MONDAY, 21st September, 1846.

Introductory Discourse preached by the Rev. Dr. E. A. Crawley, from the 17th Chapter of John, 22d verse.

The following Ministers and Delegates from the Associations, Churches, and Union Societies, then took their seats as Members of the Convention.

Delegates from the New Brunswick Association.

Rev. J. Crandall, John Marsters, James Wallace, John Magee, and the Hon. W. B. Kinnear.

Delegates from Nova Scotia Association.

Rev. I. E. Bill, J. Chase, N. Viditoe, and Charles Randall.

Delegates from Churches, Union Societies, &c., in New Brunswick.

St. John, - - - Church—Rev. Sam. Robinson, Deacons J. Smith and Lockey.

Union Society—Solomon Hersey, John T. Smith, and George A. Garrison.

Domestic Missionary Board—J. Marsters.

Foreign Missionary Board—Nathan S. Demill.

Carleton, - - - Church—Rev. J. Francis.

Union Society—John Clark.

Portland, - - - Church—Brethren Curry and Hayward.

- Fredericton*, - Church—Rev. S. Elder and J. P. A. Phillips.
Union Society—Rev. Charles Spurden.
Missionary Board—William S. Estey
- Norton*, - - - - Church—Brother Frost.
- Springfield*, - - Church—Rev. David Crandall.
- Maugerville*, - Church—Rev. J. Magee, and G. Miles.
- St. George*, - - Church and Union Society—Rev. W. Hall.
- St. George*, - - 2d Church—Rev. James Walker.
- Sackville*, - - - 2d Church—Rev. W. G. Parker.
Union Society—L. Lawrence.
- Sussex Vale*, - Church and Union Society—Brother Smith.
- St. Martins*, - Church—Rev. J. Mills, and Brethren Moran
and Newcomb.
- Greenwich*, - - Rev. James Trimble, subscriber to Conven-
tion Funds.
- Upham*, - - - - Rev. Joshua Bunting, subscriber to Conven-
tion Funds.

Delegates from Churches, Union Societies, &c. in Nova Scotia.

- Liverpool*, - - Church and U. Society—Rev. R. B. Dickie.
- Yarmouth*, - - Church and Union Society—Rev. William
Benton and Edward Huestis.
- Horton*, - - - - Church—Rev. Theodore S. Harding, Rev.
Dr. E. A. Crawley, and W. Johnson.
- Halifax*, - - - Church—J. Ferguson.
- Nictaux*, - - - Church—David C. Landers.
- Bridgetown*, - Church—Rev. J. Chase.
Union Society—Brother Chipman.

The Rev. T. S. Harding was then appointed Moderator.
Rev. Samuel Elder, Clerk, *pro. tem.*

The Convention having gone into Committee, for the purpose of discussing and amending the Constitution adopted by the Association, several amendments were agreed on, and the amended Constitution finally adopted unanimously.

[The Constitution, as amended and adopted by the Convention, will be found prefixed to the Minutes.]

The Convention then proceeded to appoint the office-bearers, and members of Boards connected with the Convention, for the present year. A list of the Officers and Boards of the Convention is prefixed to the Minutes.

After Prayer, the Convention adjourned till half-past 2 o'clock.

Met pursuant to adjournment.

Prayer.

1st. *Resolved*, That this Convention, being of the opinion that there are no existing jealousies in relation to Education or Domestic Missions, that should prevent an active union of the Baptist Denomination in these two objects, through the medium of the Convention, they therefore request the respective Associations to consider the subject of more united action in those objects, and give their views thereupon at their next meeting.

2d. That the meetings of the Missionary Board for the present year be held at Horton.

3d. That the Board to take charge of and direct the funds for the support of superannuated Ministers, &c., meet at Saint John.

4th. That the next meeting of the Convention be held at Nictaux, Province of Nova Scotia.

5th. That the Rev. Charles Spurden preach the Introductory Sermon ;—that the Rev. Samuel Robinson be his alternate.

6th. That the Introductory Sermon, preached by the Rev. Dr. E. A. Crawley, be published in Pamphlet Form, under the direction of the Secretaries ; that two thousand copies of the same be printed, to be sold at three pence per copy ; that the surplus, if any, be devoted to the funds of the Convention ; the deficiency, if any, to be supplied from these funds.

The proceedings of the Convention were closed with Prayer.

AN
INTRODUCTORY SERMON,
DELIVERED AT THE
FIRST ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
BAPTIST CONVENTION of NEW BRUNSWICK, NOVA SCOTIA, and P. E. ISLAND,
AT
SAINT JOHN, N. B., SEPTEMBER 21st, 1846.
BY THE
Rev. Dr. E. A. CRAWLEY, Professor of Theology,
ACADIA COLLEGE, HORTON, N. S.

“And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them: that they may be one even as we are one.”—*John*, xvii. 22.

UNSPEAKABLE blessings are doubtless in store for the people of God; blessings, the fulness and perfection of which can only be entirely apprehended at that glorious day, when the earthly enjoyments of piety shall be exchanged for the rapture of heavenly love, according to that saying, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

These blessings are, however, it is added, “revealed to us by His Spirit.” This must be understood, we apprehend, as a *partial* revelation, for “we know not now what things shall be;” but this partial revelation is of vast importance to us, as it brings these future glories so far within our reach as to make them the means of our instruction and objects of our aim, casting light especially on those rudiments of heavenly things which commence on earth and are perfected in eternity.

One of the modes of this future bliss is expressed in the text, “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them.”

The Lord has, then, bestowed on his people no less a gift than the glory he received of the Father, and this is no other than the glory of union; "that they may be one even as we are one." The full splendor of this glory we wait to see revealed hereafter even to our understandings; but how much there is in this blessed truth which both the understanding and the heart may even now receive!

The language with which the Scriptures clothe their noble truths, is, it will be remembered, the ordinary language of men, and what glory is, therefore, in the common estimation of mankind, such, in some important particulars, however unlike in others, is glory as here spoken of.

We ordinarily understand by glory the renown of something which arouses general admiration; fires the imagination, and swells, and as it were, exalts the soul; and that is termed glorious which is considered as deserving of this renown. Hence we speak of a glorious victory, or triumph, a glorious discovery in science or in art. And, doubtless, the *union of God's people*, seen hereafter to present a wonderful reflection of the union of the Father and the Son, will impress the gazing inhabitants of Heaven with all the influence of an object truly glorious—vast and excellent in character and in extent.

Let us proceed to consider the union of the people of God in some of those points of view in which it may be even now perceived thus to be *glorious*.

I. The union of Christians is *a glorious triumph over difficulties*. No changes are so hard to effect as are all kinds of moral reform; and of these, the hardest are those which are most opposed to the strong passions and prejudices of our corrupt nature. The reform by which man is to be brought truly to love his brother is of this sort. It is not the subjugation of a single appetite, strongly and distinctly prejudicial to himself and to his own interests, which is required in this case, but a deep and radical change, which, while it subdues prejudices, creates in the heart new affections and sympathies that require not the excitement of self-interest, but are often most strongly manifested where self is least regarded; a change so deep and thorough, that those who belonged to a race "hateful and hating one

another," become under its influence, mild, disinterested, affectionate, generous. Before this new and potent principle what fearful tyrants of the human race are routed. Jealousies, heart-burnings, offences, hatred, variance, tumults, war, seditions, murders, all vanish before the glorious spirit of union, which is no other than the spirit of love.

II. This union is glorious *from its impressiveness*. This is another feature of its glory. Many excellent Christian graces are seen only by our Heavenly Father, or are imperfectly visible to others. Union cannot but be seen by all; and hence its vast power of effect—its impressiveness. It is a sun whose light all see—whose warmth all enjoy. Union, too, implies an influence confined in its operation to no individual; it takes effect on the many; as it is visible to all, so it seeks all; and here also we see the force and breadth of its impressive power. Diffusing every where its happy effect, "it is like the precious ointment upon the head" of Aaron, descending thence "to his beard;" nay, even "to the skirts of his garments;" and like the "dew of Hermon," and that which came down upon "the mountains of Zion;" how numerous the drops, how beautiful, how refreshing! The mighty influence of this spirit, uniting men of the most opposite dispositions and habits, in one strong bond of brotherhood, extorted from the enemies of the early Christians the well known testimony in their favor, "Behold, how these Christians love one another!"

III. But the glory of union is also seen in its power, *a combination for special ends*. And this is no other than a distinguished instance of the often-repeated axiom, "Union is strength." The Scriptures testify the power of union when they declare that "two are better than one;" and that "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." It is a strength, too, which in many cases alone prevails. Certain results, our Saviour informed his disciples, could only be effected by prayer and fasting; and it is, certainly, no less true, that there are many things which demand, as an indispensable means, that combination on wise and Christian principles, which is the natural result of a spirit of union.

This appears to be involved in the sentiment of the text.

The Saviour there declares that he bestows on his disciples the boon of a glorious oneness, "that they may be one." Now, in what, we ask, must this oneness consist? Must it not be a oneness in sentiment, or belief—a oneness in affection, and a oneness in action? But if *designed* to be thus one, and that oneness includes union in action, then this is the appointed means for those ends at which the united action of Christians is to aim. Thus we see that Christian combination, for those objects which require it, is ordained of God; it is an important law of his government; we need not add it is a potent law, for "none of his ordinances fail." Glorious, then, in itself, is the power of combination as resulting from Christian Union; and glorious also in the ends at which it aims, and will finally accomplish. How vast, my brethren—how all important are those ends; the complete subjugation of Satan; the rescue of the millions of earth's inhabitants from his fiery grasp; the overthrow of the reign of sin; the salvation of souls; the extension and perfect sway of the Kingdom of Christ. These are among the ends which demand Christian effort. And we repeat the sentiment, the principle of well-grounded spiritually-minded combinations among the disciples of Christ *will effect these ends*. How important, then—how glorious is that union of Christians of which such combination is the natural offspring!

The glory of this union, and the greatness of its destined results, claim from us a watchful jealousy, lest we mistake its nature. Let us, my brethren, distinguish between *union* and *uniformity*. One is the result of life, the other may be the progeny of death. The disciples of the false Prophet, the worshippers of Boodh, the subjects of Papal Rome, and various other bodies of merely nominal Christians, may all boast of their uniformity, and enjoy no union; as witness the quarrels, tumults, and wars that are perpetually arising among them. Union, on the other hand, may subsist without a perfect uniformity. It subsists in a life beyond the reach of all mere forms. Such union, however, will not lead us to despise a decent uniformity; and while aiming at this, and still more, to be "of one mind and one judgment in all things," we shall, at the same time, avoid mistaking a scru-

pulous sameness in minor points, for that heaven-born union which grows out of the grand essential doctrines of Christianity. In these, all sincere Christians have ever agreed; and these, therefore, must be the ground on which is based that glorious oneness which our text declares to be the especial gift of Christ.

It is greatly to be lamented, however, that this union is so little understood, and so little cultivated. The people of God of every division of the Church, know that they love—that they cannot but love one another, and yet they hardly dare to avow themselves united. Still, it is gratifying to see a growing desire for a more extended sense of union, and an increasing inquiry after those modes, in which, consistently with conscientious attachment to particular doctrines, such union may be manifested, and may act. The spread of correct Biblical knowledge, and of the principles of a just Biblical interpretation, which has characterised the last thirty or forty years, tends greatly to promote the union of the Universal Church, by bringing all to a common test of religious belief, rather than referring each section of the Church to fallible and yet rigid human standards, which must be regarded as almost ultimate in these decisions.

A manifestation of the results of this growing light has been seen in the formation of Bible Societies, in combined Missionary labours, and still more in the efforts at Christian Alliance recently put forth by almost every branch of the Christian Church in England and America.

If union is thus so desirable and proper for Christians in general, how much more needful is it that those among whom there exists no difference in faith or practice, should be fully united! Nay, how worthy of the highest censure and reproach must be any want of that union in action, as well as in sentiment, and in affection, of which we have already spoken as comprising the oneness which the Saviour has bestowed upon his people.

On this account, it has been greatly regretted, that the division of these Provinces into separate governments should ever have lessened the means of union and of combined exertion among our Baptist Churches. It is to provide the means whereby we may better know and love one another,

and more effectually combine our efforts to promote the Redeemer's Kingdom, that representatives of our Churches and Societies are here this day assembled.

It is evident that in time past we have needed combination. If we have not this, the independency of which we boast were an evil rather than a blessing. I may be permitted here to glance at some of those objects which especially demand the united counsel and efforts of our Churches in these Provinces, and at which the proposed "Union" or "Convention" may usefully aim.

The importance of this measure for the prosperous management of our *Foreign Mission* hardly needs comment. It is evidently impossible, in any other way, to obtain that concentrated action which, it is apparent, must be necessary to the support and direction of a Mission thousands of miles distant from the Churches that maintain it.

But *Domestic Missions*, also, though not now, perhaps, proposed to be an immediate object of the Convention, might, doubtless, derive great benefit from concentrated thought and combined action. There are in Nova Scotia, and I doubt not in this Province, also, modes of operation, obviously necessary to the increase of prosperity in our Domestic Missions, which cannot be effected but by a more enlarged plan than hitherto pursued; any enlargement of plan, however, requires many minds engaged in it; it requires concentrated power, and, for my own part, I doubt not that a union of the Churches in these Provinces, to some extent at least, in order to obtain the increase of means and of wisdom which constitute that power, would prove highly advantageous.

But the subject about which there may probably exist most jealousy, lest we trespass on the respective rights of our existing communities in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, is Education. I should be sorry to do anything to provoke or alarm that jealousy, but I am, at the same time, assured that we need combination, for the purpose of education, fully as much as any other object, if not more than for any other. The advancement of Religion amongst us is greatly dependent on the advancement of education as an indispensable means of religious as well as social improve-

ment ; and there is coming to be a strong conviction of this truth in the minds of many persons. But there are many more who are indifferent or opposed, and to disabuse their minds of error requires a strong concentrated effort. To enlighten, on so grave a subject, a whole people, to bring them to feel that every human being is bound, (the means being within his reach,) to cultivate his mind as essential to the improvement of every other talent committed to his charge, and to wipe away the prejudices and practices that are hostile to such a conviction, is surely a vast labor, demanding no less a force to effect it than the widest combination of christian benevolence and effort that could be accomplished in these Provinces.

Many other objects that can well be effected in no other way might be mentioned, but I forbear. Enough has been said, I trust, to show the sincere disciples of Jesus Christ that the object before us is one which demands, on their part, earnest and persevering prayer ; and the cultivation of that deep spirit of piety, without which their prayers, if without it they pray at all, are of little worth. This spirit of prayerful piety I earnestly entreat them to seek, as essential to the welfare of that Kingdom which they love, and especially to the success of the new measure for its advancement, which we are now about to undertake ; a measure, the novelty of which, alone, must greatly endanger its extensive reception, unless thus recommended by the ardent piety and well directed zeal of all concerned in it.

[A few practical remarks, addressed to the "unconverted," closed this discourse.]

THE END.