

MINUTES

OF THE

NOVA-SCOTIA

BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

Held at

AMHERST, N. S.

JUNE 27th and 29th,

1825.

Halifax, N. S.

PRINTED FOR THE ASSOCIATION, BY

E. A. MOODY.

1825.

Am. Minutes

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MINUTES
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NOVA-SCOTIA
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

MONDAY, June 27.

1st. Introductory Sermon by Elder Theodore S. Harding, from Phil. 2, 9, 10, 11. Elder C. Tupper read his Missionary Journal, and Elder J. Munro, made a statement of his Missionary labours; after which a collection was taken, in aid of the Society's funds, amounting to £13.

2d. The Ministers and Messengers composing the Association took their seats. After prayer by Elder E. Manning, Elder Joseph Dimock was chosen Moderator, Elder Charles Tupper, Clerk, and Elder James Munro, Assistant Clerk.

3d. Read the Letters from the several Churches.

N. B. In the following Table, the names of Ordained Ministers are printed in SMALL CAPITALS; those of Licensed Preachers in *Italics*. Ministers whose names are thus marked, (*) were not present. Churches from which we had no information at this session are designated by this mark (†): vacant Churches, by a dash—

†Lower G
†Upper G
Cornwallis

Newport,
†1st Clemen
2d Clemen
Onslow,

Halifax,
Amherst;

Nictau,
Chester,

Lunenburg,
†Digby Nec
Horton,
River Philip
ter,

Windsor,
Annapolis,

Hammønd's

Chute's Cove
Rawdon,
Little Fork,

N. B. The

4th. Read
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J. Dimock, a

Churches.	Elders and Messengers.	Added.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Died.	Total.
†Lower Granville,	*DAVID HAPRIS,					35
†Upper Granville,	*THOMAS ANSLEY,					60
Cornwallis,	EDWARD MANNING,	}	44	1	1	223
	Hezekiah Hull,					
	William Cogswell,					
Newport,	*GEORGE DIMOCK,			1	1	51
†1st Clements,	*ISRAEL POTTER,					98
2d Clements,		1			1	27
Onslow,	JAMES MUNRO,	}	3			46
	David Page, sen.					
	David Page, jun.					
Halifax,	*JOHN BURTON,	16			10	307
Amherst,	SAMUEL McCULLEY,	}	2	rst. 1		13
	Thomas S. Black,					
	Samuel Freeman,					
	Philip Freeman,					
Nictau,	THOMAS H. CHIPMAN,	5	2		2	129
Chester,	JOSEPH DIMOCK,	}	7			45
	Leonard D. Gildert,					
	ROBERT DAVIS,					
Lunenburg,	PETER CRANDALL,					120
†Digby Neck,	THEODORE S. HARDING,	5			3	88
Horton,	CHARLES TUPPER,	}	1	2		32
River Philip and Westches-	Samuel Webb,					
ter,	Jonathan Weatherbe,					
	William Weatherbe,					
	Thomas Johnson,					
Windsor,	*WILLIAM ELDER,				1	40
Annapolis,	Winckworth Sharp,	1				12
Hammønd's Plains,	*GEORGE RICHARDSON,				1	43
Chute's Cove,	Nathaniel Smith,					
Rawdon,		12		1		20
Little Fork,	rest. 1			2		23
	Nathan Mills,					31
	Peter Mills,					
		97	4	19	20	1580

N. B. The last Church was received at this Session.

4th. Read a letter from Rev. Thomas M'ulloch principal of the Academy at Pictou, stating his intention to visit Great Britain, in order to obtain assistance in aid of the Seminary under his care, and requesting a recommendation from the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association. Voted that a recommendation be given to Dr. M'ulloch ; and that Elders E. Manning, J. Dimock, and J. Crandall, be a Committee to prepare it.

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5th. Read and accepted the Circular Letter, prepared by Elder C. Tupper.

6th. From Corresponding Associations received as follows :—

Associations.	Messengers.	Minutes.
*Lincoln,	_____	_____
Eastern Maine,	_____	_____
Bowdoinham,	_____	Minutes.
*Cumberland,	_____	_____
New-Brunswick,	_____	Minutes.

7th. Voted, to request the Baptist Association of New-Brunswick to unite with us in the publication of a Religious Periodical Magazine ; and appointed Elders J. Munro, C. Tupper, and S. M'Culley, a committee to prepare a letter to be addressed to them upon the subject.

8th. Adjourned till 9 o'clock to-morrow morning.

TUESDAY, June 28.

9th. Prayer Meeting at half past 5 o'clock, A. M.— A solemn and refreshing season.

10th. Met according to adjournment, Prayer by Elder E. Manning.

11th. Read and accepted the Corresponding Letter, prepared by Elder J. Munro.

12th. Read and accepted the Recommendation prepared for Rev. Dr. M'Culloch.

13th. Examined and approved the Letter relative to the publication of a Religious Periodical Magazine.

14th. Voted, that Elder T. J. Harding be our Messenger to the New-Brunswick-Association ; and that he be allowed £2 for that service.

15th. Voted, that Elder R. Davis be our Messenger to Corresponding Associations in the United States, and that he receive £10.

16th. Voted, that our next Association be held at the South Baptist Meeting-House in Wilmot, on the first Monday after the 20th of June 1826.

17th. Voted, that Elder J. Munro preach the introductory Sermon ; in case of failure, Elder C. Tupper.

18th. Voted, that Elder E. Manning write the Circular, and Elder R. Davis, the Corresponding Letter, for next year.

19th. That it be recommended to our Churches to observe the 25th day of Dec. next, as a day of thanksgiving ; and the 1st day of January, as a day of fasting and prayer ; and also the evening of the first Monday in every month, as a time of special prayer for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

20th. That Elder John Burton be requested to superintend the printing of the Minutes, and that 500 copies be printed.

21st. Voted, that our cordial thanks be tendered to those benevolent Societies and Friends who have afforded pecuniary aid to the funds of the Missionary Society.

22d. That our thanks be presented, by the moderator, to the inhabitants of Amherst, for their special kindness and hospitality during the present session.

23d. That the time and place of our Yearly Meeting be inserted in the

*The Minutes from these Associations have been received since. Ed.

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Minutes : viz for the present year, on the first Lord's day after the 20th September, at Lunenburg.

24th. That Elders E. Manning, T. S. Harding, D. Harris, J. Munro, and brethren Holmes Chipman and William Chipman, be our Committee for Missionary purposes ; and that brother William Cogswell be our Treasurer, and a member of the Committee.

The Society has employed as Missionaries, during the past year,

Elder James Munro, 3 weeks £4 10 0

Elder Charles Tupper, 2 weeks, 3 0 0

The above named brethren were requested to spend more time in the service of the Society, and others were appointed as Missionaries ; but the appointments were not received in time to be fulfilled before the Association. The reports that were made were quite satisfactory and encouraging ; and, from the state of our funds, and the arrangements made, we trust, that at the next Association much more Missionary labor will be reported. It is desired that the Missionaries should keep written journals. The calls for Missionary labor are very numerous and urgent. May the Lord incline the hearts of many to assist in a cause so excellent and important !

It affords us pleasure to state, that at the present session, the following sums were received, in aid of Missions : viz.

Collection at the Association in Amherst, £13 0 0

Collection taken in Cornwallis, 4 10 6

From the Female Mite Society in the district of Mr. Thomas Lovett, Cornwallis, 1 10 0

Collected at Newport, 1 1 3

Paid in by Females, Onslow, 0 14 0

Collection at Amherst, before the Association, 2 15 9

do. at Chester, 1 10 0

do. at Lunenburg, 3 0 0

Sent from Windsor, by Elder T. S. Harding, 1 10 6

do. Hammond's Plains, 0 15 0

do. Little Fork, 0 13 6½

Received by Elder C. Tupper in Prince Edward Island, while on his mission there, 1 17 4

32 17 10½

The Association closed with a discourse delivered by Elder Robert Davis, from Ps. 110. 3.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Elders and Messengers of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association, held at Amherst on the 27th and 28th of June, 1825, to the Churches which they represent, Greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN,

CHURCH DISCIPLINE is the subject to which we would call your attention at this time. We have cause for gratitude to God on account of the correctness of sentiment, unity of affection, and propriety of conduct, generally prevailing among you. We cannot, however, indulge the hope, that no amendment or improvement is necessary ; and we trust you will suffer the word of exhortation.

In defining the nature, and enforcing the exercise, of Church Discipline, as in all other matters relative to religion, we must make the sacred Scrip-

tares our only guide. The principal cases of Discipline which they appear to us to notice, may be comprehended under the following classes, viz. *private offences, neglect of duty, immorality of conduct, and error in sentiment.* On each of these, permit us to make a few remarks.

1st. *Private offences.*—The rule relative to this case is laid down by our Lord, Matt. 18. 15, 17. *Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.* No case of this kind should ever be admitted to a hearing before the church until the first steps have been regularly taken. The church must then decide upon the testimony of the persons who were first called to hear and settle the matter: and if they find the accused party guilty, they should admonish him; and if that prove unavailing, they must exclude him. Entire secrecy should be observed until the affair is laid before the church: and if it can be settled by either of the former measures, the whole matter should be buried in eternal silence. Incalculable evils arise from the indulgence of a tattling and back-biting spirit. The practice ought to be frowned into contempt and disuse by all serious people.

2d. *Neglect of duty.*—If one brother deem himself injured by another, and, instead of obeying the directions above given, disclose the matter, or withdraw fellowship from his brethren, he should be admonished, being a disorderly person, who neglects his duty, and, if he be not thereby reclaimed, he ought to be excluded. 1 Thess. 5. 14. *Warn them that are unruly.* 2. Thes. 3. 6. *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly.* From these passages of Scripture it is obvious, that though a church member be not guilty of the commission of any act of immorality, yet if he refuse, or neglect, to walk with the church according to God's commands, or live in the wilful neglect of any known duty, he is a subject of reproof; and if that produce not the desired effect, of exclusion. See also Heb. 10. 25. and 2 Thes. 3. 11, 12, 14.

3d. *Immorality of conduct.*—There are some things which though not flagitious crimes, are nevertheless inexpedient and unbecoming in professors of religion. Eph. 5. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 23. Every church-member ought to admonish, in love and in the spirit of meekness, any brother or sister whom he knows to indulge in such things. Would to God such freedom and faithfulness generally prevailed in our churches. 1 Heb. 3. 13. *But exhort one another daily.* One may excuse himself by saying, "I so frequently fall into like improprieties of conduct myself, that I cannot reprove another." For that very reason you should be the more faithful and punctual in the discharge of this duty, requesting your brother, and by your faithfulness laying him under obligation to shew the same kindness to you.

Furthermore, he who knows his brother to be guilty of immoral conduct which is not made public, ought not to disclose it, but should ardently strive to reclaim him. James 5. 19, 20. *Brethren if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall*

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hide a multitude of sins. If, however, his efforts do not succeed, he must report the offender, that the church may labor with him, and, if he continue obstinate, expel him. Eph. 5. 11. *A. I have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.*

But when it is known, and can be clearly proved, that a member has been guilty of immoral conduct, such as *unchastity, railing, drunkenness, extortion*, or any offence of a heinous nature, the church to which he belongs should forthwith exclude him. Should any suppose that he ought first to be visited and admonished, we reply, that we can find no Scripture to sanction such a course. What says Paul of the incestuous person, 1 Cor. ch. 5, with whose crime he classes the others above-mentioned, verse 11? Does he give directions to reprove him, and wait for his amendment? No. He says, (verse 13.) *Put away from among yourselves that wicked person.* The offender should be admonished after his exclusion; and, if he manifest repentance, he should be restored. Paul, speaking of the same person, after he had become penitent, says, *Wherefore I beseech you, that ye would confirm your love toward him.* 2 Cor. 2, 8, see also, 2 Thess. 3, 14, 15.

Mere flying reports against brethren are not to be regarded. Moreover, an accused person should be held innocent until he is proved to be guilty; and must not be kept back from the Lord's supper upon suspicion only. That would be prejudging, and condemning without proof or trial.

4th. *Error in Sentiment.*—Some diversity of opinion in matters of minor importance may be tolerated in a church, as is manifest from Rom. ch. 14. Great tenderness and forbearance should be exercised also toward the weak. Rom. 15, 1. *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.* But when a member introduces sentiments subversive of the simplicity of the gospel, or denies plain scriptural doctrine, he should be admonished once and again; and, if he persist in his error, he must then be rejected. Titus 3. 10. *A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject.* Rom. 16. 17. *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*

From the statements now made, and the texts of Scripture adduced in confirmation of them, it appears, that in all cases, save that of public immorality admonition must be used previous to exclusion. Discipline should, however, in every instance, be executed with punctuality and dispatch. If it be delayed, the fellowship, harmony, and comfort of the church will unavoidably be interrupted. Is it not extremely painful to hear church members, when expressing their freedom toward their brethren, making reserves and qualifications? Must it not exceedingly damp the joys and grieve the hearts of communicants at the Lord's supper, to see brethren standing back from that ordinance, especially if the cause be unknown? *Brethren, these things ought not to be so.* No brother should ever be guilty of either of these pernicious practices. If his mind be hurt on account of any church member, he should exercise admonition, or if necessary, give notice to the church, and so have all hindrances to fellowship immediately removed.

It does indeed belong to the Pastor peculiarly to take care of the church of God (1 Tim. 3. 5.) and to reprove, rebuke, exhort, (2 Tim. 4. 2.) but every individual must fill his place, and discharge the duties devolving upon him, as the Scriptures direct. In excluding a member the church is to act as a body. See 1 Cor. 5, 13. 2. Thes. 3, 6. Great care should

be taken, that no partiality be used on account of natural relationship, wealth, learning or influence. See 1 Tim. 5. 21. James 2, 1, 6.

To enforce this duty, we may observe, that the neglect of it dishonours God, by giving occasion to the wicked to blaspheme; hurts the offender, by encouraging and hardening him in his offence; injures the church, by burdening the minds of the brethren, interrupting their fellowship, and hindering other pious persons from uniting with them, and has a pernicious effect upon sinners, casting a stumbling block before them and emboldening them in their sinful courses. Hence, it is obvious that the glory of God, the good of the offender, the prosperity of the church, and consequently the advancement of the cause of God, and the eternal welfare of sinners, require the prompt and faithful exercise of Church discipline. Let this duty be punctually performed, and there is reason to hope, that the cases requiring it will be greatly diminished. These considerations without adducing more, are surely sufficient to determine each church, and every individual member, to pursue a regular, consistent, and scriptural line of conduct relative to this matter.

Brethren, may the Lord preserve you and us from giving occasion for the exercise of discipline. If any cases occur, in our churches, in which it is necessary, may He enable and influence us to perform that duty with humility, tenderness, zeal, and faithfulness, so that we may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion, and shew forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. Amen.

CORRESPONDING LETTER,

The churches of Christ composing the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association to Corresponding Associations, send christian salutations.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,

Through Divine favour, we have been indulged with another Anniversary Meeting, in which the Lord hath been graciously pleased to manifest his presence and favour, in assisting his Ministers to preach the blessed Gospel of his Grace to the edification and comfort of his Body the Church. When we are enabled to realize the immutability of JEHOVAH, and attend to the plan of redemption, as exhibited in the Scriptures of truth, we are naturally led to the soul-cheering inference, that the weakest believers, in the Church below, are as near the heart of our exalted Redeemer as the glorified saints above; and, being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Him, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, they shall, without doubt, all appear at length in Zion before God and find acceptance in his presence. You will learn the state of our Churches from our Minutes. We regret the absence of your Messengers, and the failure of the Minutes of some of the Associations; but we impute it to some interposition of Divine Providence, and desire to be still. We always have valued, and still do your correspondence, and desire a continuation. And now, that the love of God, which passeth all understanding, may abundantly possess your souls henceforward forevermore, is the earnest desire, and fervent prayer of your brethren in the Lord.

By Order of the Association,

JOSEPH DIMOCK, *Moderator,*
CHARLES TUPPER, *Clerk,*
JAMES MUNRO, *Assistant Clerk.*

FINIS.