

# Baptists Of New Hampshire

WILLIAM CATHCART  
(1826-1908)

Hanserd Knollys founded the first church in Dover, N.H., in 1638. A little later he preached Baptist doctrines; and in 1641 he was recognized by the people of Dover as a decided exponent of our principles; the result was two religious communities. After his return to England, the Baptists, it is said, fled to Long Island to avoid persecution, and for the same reason, in 1644, they removed to the neighborhood of the present New Brunswick, N. J., and called their new home Piscataway, after the original name of Dover. It is not certain that these Baptists were regularly organized into a

Baptist church in Dover.

The first church of our faith in New Hampshire, of whose regular formation there are no doubts, was founded at Newton in 1755. In 1770 it is supposed that there were but three Baptist churches in New Hampshire — Newton, Madbury, and Weare.

In 1770, Eld. Hezekiah Smith, an able and devoted minister, settled in Massachusetts, preached extensively in New Hampshire, and great blessings attended his ministrations. He baptized the Eld. Eliphalet Smith, a Congregational

clergyman, and fifteen others.

This thorn in the flesh came

(II Cor.

tan to buffet me, lest I should be

exalted above measure" (II Cor.

12:7).

In the flesh, the messenger

## The Baptists Of N.H.

(Continued from page one)

gathered in Brentwood, in 1771, with branches at one time in more than twelve different towns, and a membership of nearly 1,000.

During this year churches were formed in Richmond, Hinsdale, and Chesterfield. In 1780, Elder Shepard baptized 44 persons at Meredith and constituted them into a church.

Elders Hezekiah Smith and Samuel Shepard were apostles in New Hampshire, whose labors enjoyed a remarkable measure of divine favor. There were other early preachers and churches in New Hampshire worthy of our denominational name; and upon them and their brethren the Spirit of God fell, and converts were gathered and churches formed in all directions, until today we have seven Associations, 86 churches, ministers, settled and without charge, 103. The number of members is 9,210. In the department of Sunday Schools we find that there are 72 schools, with 814 teachers and 9,319 scholars.

In education the Baptist of New Hampshire have taken an active interest. In 1826 they founded the "New Hampton Literary and Theological Institution," at New Hampton.

Elder B. F. Farnsworth was its first principal and Professor of Theology. Elder E. B. Smith succeeded him in 1833, and retained position until 1861. In 1838, Elder J. Newton Brown was made Associate Professor of Theology, and discharged the duties of the office until 1845, when Elder James Upham was appointed to the professorship. At the death of Elder Smith, Elder Upham became president of the institution, and retained the position until 1866. Owing to inadequate financial support the seminary was removed to Fairfax, Vt., in 1853. This institution gave instruction in the higher branches of a general education, and prepared young men for the ministry; and it had in connection with it an academy of a higher order for young women. In its two locations it had about 200 theological students, most of whom became very useful in the pastorate and in other departments of Christian work. Few seminaries with its means have rendered such important service.

After the removal of the New Hampton Institution to Vermont in 1853, the Baptists of New Hampshire took immediate steps to establish an academy at New London, which was opened in 1853; it now bears the name of Colby Academy.

The report of the benevolent

operations for the year covered by the statistics here given is, for the Missionary Union \$1,848.11; for the Woman's Foreign Mission Society, \$1,074.06; home missions, \$863.26; for the Convention, \$2,584.19; for home objects, \$82,114.04. The total for all purposes, \$92,254.03.

The State Convention was founded in 1826. It has accomplished great results in New Hampshire, and its affairs have been managed with much ability. In 1880 it aided seventeen churches and two missions, which have become churches. Its officers were Eld. W. V. Garner, president; Eld. W. Hurlin, secretary; A. J. Prescott, treasurer.

While in New Hampshire very many of the churches suffer constant diminution by emigration, a review of the last half century presents many facts, showing how the denomination has grown in that State.

Fifty years ago there were in New Hampshire seventy churches and forty-one ministers. The greater part of these churches were poor, and pastors that were settled received but a scanty support. Moreover, there was more or less direct oppression which Baptists

were to endure from the "standing" They were the "sect every where" spoken against." But a most happy change has taken place in all these respects. The statistics given above will show the present situation of the denomination. Baptists have places of worship which will compare favorably with those of any other denomination. They are firmly planted in all the prominent cities and villages of the State.

In the valley of the Merrimack they were but little known fifty years ago; "Now the churches which occupy that valley," says Elder E. E. Cummings, in his "Ministry of Fifty Years," "are the pride and strength of the denomination throughout the State."

There is every reason to expect that continued prosperity will attend the churches in the future as it has in the past, and that the sentiments and practices of the Baptists will continue to have strong hold on the intelligent convictions of no small part of the community.