

Average attendance 1873 — 159

do do 1872 — 166

Percentage attendance of Resident M^{rs} 1873 — 61

do do do 1872 — 64

Short addresses were then given by the Pastor
Brethren Shadwell, J. Russell, Dowell, R. Odell
Halsey, Stephen Woodfield, W. Foster & H. Foster.
The meeting which was felt by many to be
both pleasant & profitable was closed by
singing the usual hymn & prayer.

Church Meeting Jan^y 29th

After devotional exercises the minutes of the
previous meetings were read & confirmed.

309

Dismission was granted for our Brother Sobey
& his wife to the Church Burton near Bridg-
water of which he has become the Pastor:
for our Brother Chamberlain & his wife &
for our Sister Mary Giles to the Church in
the Walsworth Road in this town, with
which through circumstances it is much more
convenient to worship than with us: for
our Sister Elizabeth Huckle to the Church
in the Old Meeting Biggleswade

The names of the sick members were
read & the Meeting closed with singing &
prayer.

Lords Day March 1st

310

After the Lords Supper dismissal was granted

for our Sister Ellen Williams & the Church
in Richmond Chapel Everton Liverpool

Church Meeting April 9th

After devotional exercises the minutes of the
previous meetings were read & confirmed.

311 The following young men were proposed for
fellowship

Edward Janson Pead Beals Messengers

Brethren H Foster & Halley

Joseph Abbott Messengers Brethren

W Foster & Dan. Chambers

Arthur Webb Messengers Brethren

Woodfield & John Morgan

312 Letters were adopted applying for the transfer of
our Sister Elizabeth Horsfield from the Baptist
Church Gray, Inn Road London, & of our
Sister Elizabeth Stanford from the Church at
Shillington.

313 Dismission was granted for our Sister Charlotte
Wilsheer to the Baptist Church Pickerslow
Cambridgehire of which her husband has
become the Pastor

314 Notice was taken of the peaceful death after
a long illness of our young Brother Thomas
E. Robin, & of the death this very day of our
Sister Mary Ayres.

315 Our young Brother William Baker having
for some time preached at our Village Station
Thursday the 23rd instant was appointed as the

time for him to preach in order for the Church
to decide on the desirability of appointing
him permanently as a Village Preacher
316 Our Treasurer read the Annual Account
of the Minister's Fund the Incident Fund
& Burial ground Fund & made some
remarks thereon.

Proposed by our Brother Woodfield & seconded
by Brother W^m Hare That the Account now
read be approved by the Church. A unanimous
vote of thanks was also accorded to our
esteemed Treasurer for his efficient services.

317 Our Brother Halsey then read the Account
of money received at the Lords Supper & dis-
bursed to the poor.

Proposed by our Brother Chambers & seconded
by Brother Woodfield That the Account
submitted by Brother Halsey be approved
by the Church & that our thanks be tendered
to him.

The names of the sick members were
read & the meeting closed with singing
& prayer.

Church Meeting April 30.

After devotional exercises the minutes of
the previous meeting were read & confirmed
318 The 3 candidates proposed at the last Church
meeting came before the Church, & after the
usual testimony they were unanimously received.

319 Our Brother William Barker having preached according to the resolution passed at the ^{last} Church Meeting it was Proposed by Brother H. Foster Seconded by brother J. Russell That our Brother William Barker be appointed as one of the Village Preachers.

The names of the sick members were read & the meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting June 4th.

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed

320 A letter was read from the Baptist Church Arthur Street Chapel King's Cross Road dismissing to our fellowship our Sister Elizabeth Horsfield.

321 Dismission was granted for our Brother Stephen Woodfield to the Church at John Street Chapel Bedford Row London.

322 The following letter was adopted to be sent to the Association.

The Church of Mt meeting in Salem Chapel Hitchin to the Pastors & Delegates of the Hert & Beds Association of Baptist Churches in Session at Wellington Street Chapel Luton.

Dear Brethren

In presenting our Annual returns we much regret that we have not a more encouraging report to make

Our Evangelist to whose labours we referred last year, has left us to take the charge of a small Church in Somersetshire, & the difficulty experienced in raising the needful funds was such that we are not at present thinking of seeking for a successor.

Our Sunday Schools both in the town & at the Village Stations are in an encouraging condition. The attendance is large & we hope that some of the young people are asking the way to Zion.

We mourn that the manifested instances of conversion amongst us have been very few. Still we would not give way to despondency. We are thankful that we have been still preserved in peace & harmony.

Wishing you every blessing on your assembly as well as on each Church & Pastor

We are Dear Brethren

Yours in Christ love
Signed for the Church John Aldis jun
Pastor

Church Meeting June 4th 1874.
Brethren Threlwell, H Foster, Halsley & R. Odell were appointed Messengers to the Association

The following are the
 Increase By Profession 12
 By Letter 3
 By Restoration 1
 16

Statistics returned
 Decrease by Death 3
 By Dismissal 13
 16

No of Members 293
 Sunday Scholars 550
 Teachers 55
 Village Stations 4
 Lay Preachers 7

Contributions 1
 Baptist Mission Socy
 £ 66. 2. 3
 To Herts Union
 3. 16. 0

The names of the sick members were read & the meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting July 29

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

323 The following friends were proposed for fellowship

Mary Elizabeth Jeeves — Messengers
 Brethren W. Foster & R. Odell
 Rosa Kate Throssell — Messengers
 Brethren Halsey & J. Brown

324 A letter was read from the Church at Shillington dismissing Elizabeth Stanford to our fellowship

After some remarks on the low state of conversion work among us, & after the reading the list of sick members the meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting Sept 3rd

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

325 Mary Elizabeth Jeeves & Rosa Kate Throssell came before the Church, & after the usual testimony they were unanimously received.

326 The following young friends from the Sunday School were proposed for Baptism & fellowship

Sarah Ann Stanford Messengers Butcher
H. Foster & R. Odell

Miscilla Westwood do do

Halsey & J. Russell

Mary Jane Bennett do do

W. Foster & Jelly

Sarah Russell do do

Woodfield & Pryor

Florence Ellen Jelly do do

John Morgan & W. Hare

Esther Elizabeth Creasy do do

Chambers & Sam^l. Brown

327 A letter was adopted to the Church at Salter's Hall London applying for the transfer of Fanny Rodney to our fellowship.

328 The death was reported by the Pastor of our young Sister Elizabeth Day, after a brief illness. She was a consistent & useful

members of the Church. The names of the sick members were read.

Our Brother Halsey just returned from the Conference at Oxford on Hallowe'en gave some account of the meeting & closed in prayer.

Church Meeting Nov 26.

This meeting was held after an interval of nearly 3 months occasioned by the serious illness of the Pastor who desires here to record his sense of indebtedness to God for his sparing mercy; & also to the Church & Congregation for the great kindness & sympathy shown to him & his during their affliction.

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

329 The six Candidates proposed last meeting came before the Church & were all unanimously received.

330 A letter was read from the Church Salter's Hall London dismissing Fanny Gedney to our fellowship.

331 Emma France was proposed for fellowship.
 Messengers Bro. W. Foster & J. Morgan
 Reference was made to the death of our Sister Shadwell & Sheet, the names of the sick members were read & the meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting Dec 17

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

332 Emma Francis came before the Church & after the usual testimony was received.

333 Benjamin Pearce was proposed for baptism & fellowship. Brethren Halsey & Woodfield

334 Dismission was granted for our Brother Henry Olney & his wife to the Church Moed St Paddington, for our Sister Martha Thorpe to the Church Hreesworth St Royton, & for our Sister Emily Ellard to the Church at Clay Cross Derbyshire.

335 There was some discussion as to the desirability of altering our time for commencing service on the Lord's day.

Proposed by Brother Woodfield, Seconded by Brother Chambers, & carried by a majority that it is desirable to alter the time of commencing service to a quarter to eleven in the morning & half past six at night.

Proposed by Brother Burls & Seconded by Brother Ellwood That the Collectors be requested to ascertain the wishes of the seat holders on this point.

336 Proposed by Brother Woodfield, Seconded by Brother Burls That a watch night service be held at the close of the year.

The names of the sick members were read & the meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Annual Members' Meeting
January 1st.

The members of the Church met for tea at 5 o'clock, but owing to the inclemency of the weather the attendance was not so large as some times.

337 The collectors who had been requested to ascertain the wishes of the seat holders with regard to the time for commencing service on the Lords day gave in their report Proposed by our Brother W. Foster Seconded by Brother Dodwell That Public worship on the Lords day commence in the morning at a quarter before eleven & in the evening at half past six o'clock. 66 voted for 3 against the motion & many were neutral.

338 The names of the members were read & also the names & addresses of the non-resident members now numbering 46, as well as the following statistics of the year.

Died

Dismissed

Jan ⁷	Thomas Edwin Robin	Jan ⁷	Thos Chamberlain
April	Mary Ayres	-	Eliz th Chamberlain
Sept	Elizabeth Day	-	Mary Giles
-	Elizabeth Shadwell	-	J. H. Sobey
Oct	Mary Street	-	E. Anne Sobey
	Dismissed	Mar	Ellen Williams
Dec ²	Emily Ellard	April	Charlotte Withere
	Henry Olney	June	Stephen Woodfield
	Eliz th Olney	Jan ⁷	Eliz th Huckle
		Dec [?]	Martha Thorne

Received		Removed	
By Profession	12	By death	5
By Transfer	3	By dismission	13
	<u>15</u>		<u>18</u>
Decrease 3	Present number of members	297	
	Non-Resident	44	
	Resident	<u>253</u>	

X Average attendance at the Lords Supper 153
being 60 per cent of the resident members.

After singing the "Consecration hymn" the following Brethren spoke in relation to the Lords work among us & their own experience: the Pastor, Brethren Dodwell W. Foster, Chambers, Halscy, J. Weeks (the Pastors father in law) Paula Woodfield & Griggs. A message was read from Bro. Huiwatt.

Church Meeting Feb 4

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

339 After the usual testimony was given Benjamin Peice was received as a candidate for fellowship after baptism.

440 Proposed by Brother Woodfield, Seconded by Brother H Foster That our Brother R. Odell be requested to preside at the prayer meeting on the Lords day morning.

Some other matters were mentioned on which however no resolution of the Church was come to, & the meeting closed in the usual way.

Church Meeting Mar 1

After prayer the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

441 The following young men were proposed for membership

Amos Spriggs Messengers Brethren
H. Foster & Chambers

Henry Hawkins Messengers Brethren
W. Foster & S. Brown

442 Dismission was granted for our Sister Caroline Bidewell to the Church St. Andrews St Cambridge.

443 The case of our young friends George & Jane Tarrier was reported on, who had been guilty of a sad departure from morality, but who manifest deep contrition

Proposed by Brother H Foster, seconded by Brother W. Foster That George & Jane Tarrier be suspended for six months.

The names of the sick members were read & the meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting April 1st

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

444 Amos Spriggs came before the Church, & after the usual testimony he was unanimously received.

- 445 Dismission was granted for our Brother Charles Barker of the General Baptist Church Eastgate, Louisa, of which he has become Pastor
- 446 Our Treasurer read an abstract of accounts of the minister fund & incidental fund which shewed a deficit. Proposed by Brother Woodfield seconded by Brother Chambers That the accounts now read be passed & that our thanks be given to the Treasurer for his services. There was some discussion as to the deficit, but it was ultimately resolved that the subject be resumed at our next Church meeting.
- 447 Our Brother Halsey read an abstract of the account of money collected at the Lord's Supper. Proposed by Brother John Morgan seconded by Brother Woodfield That the account now read be passed & that our thanks be given to our Brother Halsey
- 448 Reference was made to the sad loss sustained in the death of our esteemed brother William Hainworth whose remarkable abilities were ennobled by exemplary piety & whose long & useful career terminated peacefully after some months of growing weakness on Monday March 15th
- The names of the sick members were read & the meeting closed with the doxology & the benediction.

Lord's Day April 4th

449 At the close of the Lord's Supper permission was granted to the Pastor to apply for the transfer of Elizabeth Allbon from the Church Red Hill Surrey.

Church Meeting April 29

450 After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed. Our brother William Foster made a statement of what the Deacons deemed necessary in painting the Chapel & of a projected improvement in the gas fittings. There was some discussion on the matter but it was ultimately agreed that the arrangements proposed by the Deacons should be carried out. It was notified that the subscribers would be waited upon for the needful funds.

451 Reference was made to the death on April 9th of our Sister Mary Dodwell who has been for many years a most consistent & useful member of the Church. She passed away very peacefully after a brief illness to the great regret of many, being generally beloved. The death also was recorded of our Sister Dinah M. Littlebury.

The meeting closed with singing & prayer

Church Meeting May 27

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed

452 The following friends were proposed for baptism & fellowship

Elizabeth Allbin Messengers Brethren
Halsey & Ellwood

Mary Ann Turner do do

Woodfield & J. Russell

Lizzie Cousins do do

John Morgan & R. Odell

Emily Webb do do

W^m Foster & Pryor

Harriet Westwood do do

Chambers & Sam Brown

Emma Shepherd do do

H. Foster & W. Hare

3 453 A letter was read from the Church at Red Hill dismissing Elizabeth Allbon & our fellowship.

3 454 The following letter was adopted as our Annual letter to the Association at its forthcoming session at St Albans.

Dear Brethren

In reviewing the past year we look back with feelings of mingled sorrow & gratitude.

It has pleased God to weaken us by the removal by death of some of our members who were preeminent for goodness & usefulness.

occasioning a void that it seems hard to fill.

We have endeavoured humbly & prayerfully to carry on our work in the varied departments of Christian effort, & not altogether without tokens of God's approval, though we have not seen the results that we could desire.

At present our most successful labours are among the young. There are several in our Sunday School, & in our Young Men's Christian Association whose hearts we believe God has touched.

We are thankful that God has preserved us in peace: but we are desiring & praying for some share in the great religious awakening with which God is now graciously visiting our land.

Wishing you every blessing on your meeting & on the Churches you represent

We are dear Brethren

Yours in gospel bonds

Signed for the Church John Aldis jr
Church Meeting May 27. '75. Pastor

Brethren H. Foster, Halsey, W. Foster & Woodfield were appointed as Delegates to the Association.

The following statistics are returned

Increase By Profession 11 By Letter 3

Decrease By Death 6 By Disunion 6

Clear Increase 2 No of members 295
 Sunday Scholars 530 Village Station 4
 Teachers 50 Preachers 7
 Baptist Mission 57.3.0 Herts. Union 11.6.0
 The names of the sick members were read
 & the meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting July 29

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

455 All the 6 candidates proposed at the last meeting were unanimously accepted upon the usual testimony being received.

456 The case of Thomas & Hannah Maria Chambers was brought up who have dishonoured their profession. Brethren H Foster & Halsey were appointed messengers to see Thomas Chambers & our Sister W^m H Foster & W^m Gatward were appointed to have an interview with his wife.

457 Reference was made to the death on June 20 of our Brother John Odell who has been a consistent & esteemed member of the Church for 40 years & who died very peacefully after a protracted illness.

Our Brother Richard Lane who was on a visit addressed the meeting which was afterwards closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting Sept 30

After singing reading & prayer the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

458 The following were proposed for baptism & fellowship

Henry Brown Messengers Brethren
Woodfield & Odell

William Crowley Messengers Brethren

John Morgan & Griggs

George James Bagshaw Messengers Brethren
Chambers & W^m Hare

459 Application was made for the transfer of Ada Allbon from the Church at Red Hill

460 The Messengers appointed to visit Thomas & Hannah Maria Chambers gave their reports which indicated penitence for their sin. It was therefore proposed by Brother H. Foster seconded by Brother Halsey that their membership be suspended for six months.

461 The period during which the membership of George & Jane Ferris was suspended having expired, & they having borne the discipline of the Church in a truly Christian spirit, the Pastor was authorized cordially to invite them back to the Lords Table & to the fellowship of the Church.

462 The case of John Brown was next considered who has for long been mentally afflicted,

But who has entirely absented himself from the ordinance of worship. On the motion of Brother Halsey seconded by Brother Woodfield it was agreed to erase his name.

The meeting closed with singing & prayer

Church Meeting Nov 4.

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed

463 Fanny Brown, William Crawley & George James Bogshaw came before the Church & after the usual testimony they were unanimously received.

464 A letter was read from the Church at Park Hill dismissing Ado Allbon to our fellowship

465 Priscilla Abbott was proposed for baptism & fellowship, Messengers Nathaniel Halsey & W^m Foster

466 Application was made for the transfer of William Owen from the Church Oxford Road, Manchester.

467 Attention was called to the case for Sarah Howard of Wymondley who for many months has given over attending with us & has gone to Church. On the motion of Brother H^y Foster seconded by Brother Halsey it was agreed to erase her name

The names of the sick members were read & the meeting closed as usual.

Church Meeting Dec: 2nd

After singing reading & prayer the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

- 468 The messengers appointed to visit Priscilla Abbott (who was unable to be present through ill health) gave in a satisfactory report, but through some unexplained cause no letter was received from her. However on the motion of Brother Woodfield seconded by Brother Chambers it was unanimously decided to receive her.
- 469 A letter was read from the Church Union Chapel Oxford Road Manchester dismissing William Owen to our fellowship.
- 470 A letter was read from the 1st Christian Church Allegheny City Pa U S A commending Frederick Foster to christian fellowship. On this testimony he was received into the fellowship of this Church.
- 471 Dismission was granted for our Sister Mary Lane to the Church at Hurlingham for our Sister Frances North to the Church at Baldock & for our Brother Frederick Street to the Church Proed Street London
- 472 Reference was made to the peaceful death of our Sister Sarah Crewley after a long illness.
- 473 Since the new year comes in on a Saturday in consequence of which the Annual Meeting

Meeting cannot be held before Monday Jan 3rd
it was proposed by Brother W. Foster Seconded by
Brother R. Odell that special new year
prayer meetings be held on Saturday Jan
1st from 7 to 8 AM & from 8 to 9 PM.

The names of the sick members were read & the
meeting closed in the usual way.

1876

Annual Members Tea Meeting

Monday January 3rd

About 130 members of the Church met for tea about 5 o'clock

The meeting opened with singing & prayer after which the Pastor read the names of the members as well as gave some account of the non-resident members.

474 Dismissal was granted for the following friends for leave judge to the West Croydon Baptist Church: for Emma Williams to the Baptist Church Chipping Norton: for Sarah Ann Green to the Independent Church North Malvern: & for Sarah Shaw to the Baptist Church Lee.

475 Permission was granted to apply for the transfer of Sarah Arnold from the Independent Church Luton to our communion.

476 The following statistics of the year were then read. Removed —

By Death		By Dismissal	
Mar	W ^m Hainworth	Mar	Caroline Bide well
Apr	Mary Dod well	Apr	Charles Barker
-	D. M. Littlebury	Dec	Francis North
Jun	John Odell	-	Mary Lane
Nov	Sarah Crowsley	-	Frederick Street
Dec	Eliza Harvey		By Erasure
	By Suspension	Sep	John Brown
Sep	J. & H. M. Chambers	Nov	Sarah Howard

By Erasure (continued)

Dec: Fanny Bonford, who has recently joined the Baptist Church Alcester.

Received		Removed	
By Profession	12	By Death	6
By Letter	4	By Dismission	5
		By Erasure	3
		By Suspension	2
	<u>16</u>		<u>16</u>

Members enrolled January 1st 1876 - 297

Resident 249 - Non Resident 48

Average attendance at the Lords Supper 145

477 After singing a hymn brief addresses were delivered in relation to their own experience & the work & prospect of the Church, by The Pastor, Brethren Dodwell, R. Lane (who was present on a visit) W. Foster, Thedwell, H. Foster (who read from an Australian paper some reference to the labours in the ministry & death of our former member Philip Lane) John Morgan R. Odell, Jacob Russell, Beech, Woodfield & W. Hare. An earnest & cheerful tone pervaded the addresses, & the meeting was felt to be alike pleasant & profitable.

Church Meeting Feb 7 3rd

After singing reading & prayer the minutes of the previous meetings were read & confirmed.

478 The following friends were proposed for fellowship

Albert Braund } Messengers Brethren
Sarah Knapman Braund } Dodwell & H. Foster.
Abigail Stanford Messengers Brethren
W. Foster & R. Odell

479 The Pastor having written to one of the Deacons of a Strict Communion Church trying to know whether they would dismiss to our fellowship our Sister Martha Wayne, a letter was read in reply stating that she was baptized there & was still enrolled as a Member, but in consequence of our open communion practice they could not grant her a transfer of membership. After hearing the letter it was proposed by Brother Woodfield, seconded by Brother R. Odell that our Sister Martha Wayne be received as a member of this Church

480 A letter was adopted to the Congregational Church at Isleworth applying for the re-dismission of our former member Elizabeth Throssell.

481 Dismission was granted for our Brother Thomas Odell, & his wife Georgiana Odell to the Baptist Church Princes Street London.

482 The names of the following absentee members were erased by a vote of the

Church, as they do not feel able to unite with any other Church & see no probability of uniting with us again — Elizabeth Crowley, Sarah Ann Weedon & Miscilla Field.

483 Our young Brother Frederick Foster having preached with acceptance in our Village Station, Thursday February 17th was appointed as the evening for him to preach in this place with a view to his regular appointment as a Village Preacher.

484 Our Brother R. Odell gave notice of motion for holding social Church meetings similar to the New Year meeting more frequently

The names of the sick members were read & the meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting March 2nd

After singing reading & prayer the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed

485 The following friends were unanimously received, Albert Braund, Sarah Knappman Braund & Abigail Stanford.

486 Letters were read transferring to our fellowship Sarah Arnold from the Congregational Church Luton & Elizabeth Throssell from the Congregational Church Ishworth.

487 Dismission was granted for our Sister Sarah

Ann Gray to the Baptist Church West
Croydon

488

Our Brother Frederic Foster having
preached according to the Resolution of the
Church, on the motion of Brother Wood
field seconded by Brother R. Odell, he
was regularly appointed as one of the Vil-
lage preachers sanctioned by the Church

489

Our Brother R. Odell moved the Resolution
of which he gave notice last month, & which
at the suggestion of the Deacons was modi-
fied in form, & seconded by Brother Fred
Foster was carried thus That a social
Tea Meeting of the Members be held on the
last Thursday of this month.

The names of the sick members were read
& there was some conversation on the desir-
ability of visiting them more frequently &
the meeting closed in the usual way.

Members Tea Meeting March 30th

About 80 members met for tea in the
Schoolroom. The meeting was held in the
Vestry afterwards at which about 100
were present. After devotional exercises
the minutes of the previous meeting were
read & confirmed.

490

The treasurer read the accounts of the
Minister & Incidental funds. Proposed by

Brother Woodfield seconded by Brother Russell that the accounts read be approved & that the thanks of the Church be given to the Treasurer

Our Brother Halsey read the sacramental account, which on the motion of Brother Gregg seconded by Brother Odell was passed accompanied by a vote of thanks

491 Eliza Fletcher, who years since was a member of this Church but who has long been identified with the Church at Bethel ^{has} applied for membership. As some months since, at her own desire, she related her experience before the Church, to discharge what she felt to be a duty she had neglected at the time she first joined, & as for this she had been cast out by the Bethel friends, it was proposed by Brother Woodfield & seconded by Brother Halsey that she be received without further delay.

492 Application was made for the transfer of Millie Almond from the Church at Breachwood Green.

493 Dismissal was granted for Ellen Fox to the Church Kingsgate St Holborn, & for Kate Wright to the Church in the Walsworth Road.

494 Notice was taken of the death March 29th of our Brother James Arnold whose end was peace.

our Sisters Mr. Ambrose & Miss L. Hairworth were appointed for the month.

The meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting May 25

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

501 All the candidates proposed at the last meeting were unanimously received, on the usual testimony.

502 Dismissal was granted for our Sister Rebecca Hodge to the Independent Church Stoke Newington.

503 The following letter to the forthcoming meeting of the Association at Lighten Buzzard was adopted

The Church of St meeting in Salem Chapel Hitchin, to the Delegates of the Associated Baptist Churches of Hert & Beds in session at Lighten Buzzard.

Dear Brethren

In reviewing the year we have nothing of special interest to report.

As our statistics will show we have received about the average additions to the Church.

Our efforts in the Sunday School & in the Village Station have been steadily pursued, & not without encouragement.

Martha Foster Messengers
 Bro Halsey & Miss Esther Palmer
 Jessie Prudden Messengers
 Bro. W. Foster & Mr Pryor
 Minnie Jebby Messengers
 Bro R. Odell & Mr Horsfield
 Alice Mansell Messengers
 Brother J. Russell & Mr Sharp
 Robert Beech Messengers
 Brethren Woodfield & John Morgan

- 497 A letter was read from the Church Breachwood Green dismissing Millie Almond to our fellowship
- 498 Application was made for the re-transfer of our young Sister Emily Ellard who some time ago was dismissed to the Baptist Church Clay Cross.
- 499 A letter was read from Ann Wilshere resigning her membership as she has long ceased to unite with us, having met with the friends at Mount Zion. On the motion of Brother Woodfield seconded by Brother Morgan her resignation was accepted.
- 500 The question of the desirability of appointing Messengers to visit the sick members somewhat according to the plan adopted AD 1842 (or thereabouts) was discussed. Proposed by Brother Woodfield seconded by Brother Hare That Two Brethren & Two Sisters be appointed monthly to visit the sick. Brethren Woodfield & Chambers &

495

The Pastor stated that the six months suspension of Thomas & Hannah Chambers had expired, & that they appeared to have borne the discipline in a good spirit. They will therefore be welcomed back without further delay.

After singing a hymn the rest of the evening was spent in a social manner. Addresses were given by the Pastor, Brethren M. H. Foster, Burlo, Fred Foster, Halley, Grigg, Woodfield & Odell. The meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting May 4th

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

496

The Pastor dwelt on the importance of the messengers appointed to visit candidates endeavoring to exercise more permanent supervision sympathy & counsel toward those whom they visit, & suggested that in the case of youthful female candidates it would be well to have one of the messengers a Sister in the Church. The plan seemed to meet with approval, & the following were proposed for baptism & fellowship.

Eliza Foster Messenger

Bw. H. Foster & W^r Galward

At some of the Village Stations the Congregations have been unusually large, & we hope that good is being done though we cannot tabulate the results.

Our ordinary services are attended about as usual.

Though we neither see nor feel what we could desire, yet we see no ground to lose heart, & thank God for the peace in which He has preserved us, & for the measure of prosperity He has vouchsafed to us.

Wishing you the Divine presence in your assembly, & the richest of blessings on the Associated Churches & their Pastors We are Dear Brethren

Yours in the gospel
Signed for the Church John Aldie
Church Meeting Pastor

May 25th 1876

The following are the statistics returned

Increase		Decrease	
By Profession	19	By death	4
By Letter	7	By Withdrawal	1
By Restoration	1	By Dismissal	14
	<u>27</u>	By Easure	<u>5</u>
Increase	<u>3</u>		<u>24</u>

Present number of members 298

Sunday Scholars 450

Teachers 50

Village Stations 4

Preachers 7

Contributions £ s. d.

Worship Mission 67. 15. 7

Hert Union 11. 11. 0

504 The Sick Visitors gave in their report & the following were appointed for the month
Brethren W. Hare & H. Cressy Sisters,
Mrs W. Foster & Mrs Gutward.
The meeting closed in the usual way.

Church Meeting June 29th

After singing reading & prayer the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed

505 Elizabeth Hough was proposed for baptism & fellowship Messengers Brother Hulsey & Sister S. Winer

506 A letter was read from the Church at Peterborough dismissing Emily Ellard to our fellowship.

507 Reference was made to the death on June 18th of our Sister Sarah Bullen whose end was peace

508 The reports of the sick visitors were given in & the following visitors were appointed for the ensuing month Our Sisters Smoothy & Collier, our Brethren Woodfield & John Neaves.

After an address from our Brother Bull who is about to leave the town the meeting closed in the usual way.

1876

33

334

Church Meeting Aug

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.
509 Elizabeth Hough was unanimously received after the usual testimony was given in.

510 Dismissal was granted for our Sister Sarah Russell to the Church Terrak Green Ipswich.

511 The Pastor introduced the matter of the "Buryan Chapel" to be erected at Preston, for which a suitable site has at length been obtained, in order to obtain the sanction of the Church for the scheme.

On the motion of Brother Halsey seconded by Brother Jacob Russell it was Resolved— That this Church adopt the scheme for building "Buryan Chapel" at Preston, to be held in trust, & to be worked as a preaching station in connexion with the Parent Church.

512 The following friends were appointed as Sick Visitors for the ensuing month:—
Brethren J. Russell & Chambers, & Sisters Neobard & Palmer.

513 Our Brother J. Russell proposed to call the attention of the next Church Meeting to the question of the occasional celebration of the Lords Supper at the Valley Station.
The meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting Aug 30

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed

5-14 The proposed Preston Chapel being talked of. It was proposed by Brother W. Foster, seconded by Brother Woodfield That a committee be appointed to make all arrangements, consisting of the Pastor & Deacons, Brethren Odell, Poyer, Grigg, J. Russell, F. Foster & W. Marriott of Preston.

It was further proposed by Brother H Foster, seconded by Brother Chambers That the following be appointed as Trustees of the Chapel, The Pastor of the Church for the time being (if such an appointment can be legally made) Brethren H Foster, Hulsy, W. Foster, Odell, Poyer, S. Brown, Braund, Grigg, F. Foster, A. Throssell & George ^{Wagstaff} Russell jun

5-15 Our Brother Odell being willing to visit Birmingham, It was proposed by Brother Poyer seconded by Brother F. Foster, That Brother Odell be the Delegate from this Church to the forthcoming meeting of the Baptist Union.

5-16 Proposed by Brother Grigg, seconded by Brother F. Foster That in future

- The service on Thursday evening begins at the same time as on Monday - viz at a quarter past seven o'clock
- 517 Proposed by Bro. Odell Seconded by Mrs. M. Hare That a members social tea meeting be held on Thursday October 11th.
- 518 The following visitors were appointed for the sick Sister, Wm. Butcher & Wm. Newbald, & Brethren Odell & Grigg
The meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Members Tea Meeting October 12th

A good number of members met for tea & spent a pleasant hour in social intercourse

- After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed
- 519 Dismission was granted for our Sister Martha Hunt to the Church Dalton Junction.
- 520 Reference was made to the death of our Sister Elizabeth Deenan on Lords Day September 10th who has been for years laid aside.
- 521 The following sick visitors were appointed for the month, Our Sister Wm. Smoothery & Wm. Horsfield, & Brethren Odell & Jelly.
- 522 Our Brethren Odell & Jacob Russell gave very interesting & encouraging reports of the meetings of the Baptist Union held last week in Birmingham

Addresses were afterwards given by the Pastor
Brethren H Foster, Chambers, Beech, ~~W. Foster~~
W. Foster, John Morgan & Woodfield
mainly bearing on union & cooperation in
our fellowship & work as a Church
The meeting which was felt to be alike plea-
sant & profitable was closed with singing
& prayer.

Church Meeting Nov^r 30.

After devotional exercises the minutes
of the previous meeting were read &
confirmed

523 Dismissal was granted for our Sister
Emma Malden to the Church at Vernon
Chapel London.

524 Our Sister Sarah Thorogood having since
her marriage worshipped with her hus-
band at Mount Lion Chapel it was pro-
posed by Brother Woodfield seconded by
Brother Halsey that in accordance
with her own request the name of
our Sister Sarah Thorogood be erased
from our list of members.

525 Proposed by Brother Halsey seconded by
Brother Ellwood that collections be
made for the Aged Pilgrimes Friend
Society on Lord day December 24th.

526 Proposed by Bro. Chambers, seconded by
Bro. Woodfield that instead of a

Watch-night service a special character shall be given to the closing prayer meeting on the Last Lords day in the year.

- 527 Reference was made to the death of our Brother Thomas Taylor who died peacefully after considerable suffering; & to the tragic end of our young Brother Arthur Webb who was found mutilated on the railroad when he was crushed by a train on the evening of Lords day Nov 19th. There seems reason to suppose that his mind had been affected after an accident occurring some time since.

The following sick visitors were appointed
 Brethren Ellwood & S. Brown, our Sisters
 Miss Ellen Prudden & Miss Eliza Foster
 The meeting closed with singing & prayer.

1877

Annual Members Tea Meeting
January 1st.

A good number of members met for tea & several more came to the evening meeting which was largely attended.

528 After singing & prayer the Pastor read the names of the members of the Church & gave some account of those who are non-resident. The following statistics were also read.

Removed —

By Death

Dismissed

Mar	James Arnold	Jan ⁷	Sarah Ann Green
June	Sarah Bullen	"	Sarah Shaw
Oct	Eliz th Deacon	"	Emma Williams
Nov	Thomas Taylor	"	Jane Judge
"	Arthur Webb	Feb ⁷	Georgiana Odell
		Mar	Sarah Ann Gray
		"	Kate Wright
Feb ⁷	Elizabeth Crowley	May	Rebecca Hodge
"	Sarah E Weeden	Feb ⁷	Thomas Odell
"	Priecilla Field	Mar	Ellen Fox
Nov	Sarah Thorogood	Aug	Sarah Russell
		Oct	Martha Hunt
		Nov	Emma Malden

Erased

Feb⁷ Elizabeth Crowley
" Sarah E Weeden
" Priecilla Field
Nov Sarah Thorogood

Withdrawn

May Ann Wiltshire

Received

Profession 10
Transfer 5
Restoration 3

18

Died 5

Dismissed 13

Erased 4

Withdrawn 1

23

Decrease 5

No of Members	Resident	Non Resident	Total
Jan ^r 1876	249	48	297
Jan ^r 1877	257	35	292

Average Attendance at the Lords Supper
in 1875 - 145 in 1876 - 146

529 Dismissal was granted for an Sister Sarah Elizabeth Day to the Church Gipsy Road Lower Norwood

530 Application was made for the transfer of Rachel Thompson from the Church at Barnet

After singing a hymn short addresses were given on a variety of topics by the Pastor, Brethren H Foster, Chambers, Holsey, Odell Beech, W. Foster, Woodfield F. Foster & J. Russell. The meeting was felt to be both pleasant & profitable & a hopeful tone pervaded the addresses.

Church Meeting Feb^r 1st

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meetings were read & confirmed.

531 A letter was read from the Baptist Church New Barnet dismissing Rachel Thompson to our fellowship.

532 Application was made for the transfer of Amelia Skinner from the Church at Biggleswade.

533 A letter was read from our Sister W^m

Hall on behalf of herself & her daughter resigning membership. After some explanation had been given, on the motion of Brother Halsey seconded by Brother H. Foster it was resolved to accept her resignation.

534 Brethren J. Russell & W. Hare were appointed to see Thomas Bullard who has for some time ceased to attend on the ordinances of divine worship among us.

535 Brethren W. Foster & R. Odell were appointed to visit James Pryn for the same reason.

536 Brethren H. Foster & A. Throssell were appointed to confer with William Dawson on a similar account.

The following sick visitors were appointed for the month Brethren Pryn & J. Russell, & Sisters Mrs Pryn & S. Winn. The meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting March 1st.

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

537 Dismissal was granted for the following for our Sister Ellen Flint to the Church Sussex Street Brighton, for Rebecca Day to the Church Westbourne Grove London, for Louisa A Johnson

to the Church Daltons Hall London, & for our Brother William Dawson to the Independent Church Queen St Hitchin.

- 538 The messengers appointed to visit Thomas Ballard gave in their report, & a letter was read from him resigning his membership, which resignation was accepted on the motion of Brother J Russell. Seconded by Brother John Morgan.
- 539 After the messengers appointed to visit James Payne had given in their report, it was proposed by Brother H. Foster, seconded by Brother W. Foster that his name be erased for non-attendance.
- 540 Reference was made to the sudden death on February 9th of our Sister Susanna Barker who had lived a quiet & consistent Christian life. The following sick visits were appointed for the month; Sisters, W^m Galwood & W^m Sharp, & Brethren John Morgan & John James. The meeting closed with singing & prayer.

Church Meeting April 19

After devotional exercises the minutes of the previous meeting were read & confirmed.

- 541 A letter was read from the Church at Biggleswade dismissing Amelia Skinner to our fellowship.
- 542 Permission was granted to the Pastor to apply

for the transfer of our Brother Kenzie,
the Colporteur, & his wife from the Church
at Biggleswade.

543 Dismissal was granted for our Brother
Herbert Wheeler to the Church Regent
Park Chapel London.

544 The Pastor referred to the case of our
Sister Mary Ann Reynolds, who it
appears was some time ago confirmed
in the Church of England. It was there-
fore resolved to erase her name.

545 The Pastor stated that Amos Spriggs
had written to resign his membership,
not having felt for some time happy
in his relations with the Church. On the
motion of Brother Halsey seconded by
Brother H Foster it was resolved that
the resignation of Amos Spriggs be
accepted.

546 Our Brother H Foster was appointed
a delegate to the ensuing session of the
Baptist Union.

547 The treasurer read an abstract of the
Accounts of the Ministers Fund, the
Burial Fund & the Incidental Fund,
on which last a balance of £10.19.6½
was due to the Treasurer. It was pro-
posed by Brother John Morgan, seconded
by Brother Jelly, that the accounts now
read be confirmed, & that our hearty

Thanks be given to the Treasurer for his services.

Our Brother Halsey gave notice that at an early date he would call attention to the desirability of adopting a system of weekly offerings.

It was proposed by Brother Halsey seconded by Brother W^m Hare that collections be made on Lords day April 29th to liquidate the debt on the Incidental Fund.

548 Our Brother Halsey next read the account of the money collected at the Lords Table proposed by Brother Woodfield seconded by Brother G. Russell. That the account was read be approved, & that our hearty thanks be given to our Brother Halsey for his services.

549 Proposed by Brother Halsey, seconded by Brother W^m Foster, that a Congregational Tea Meeting be held to take leave of the Pastor (whose resignation is recorded in a subsequent minute) on Wednesday May 9th.

The Meeting closed with singing & the benediction.

The following is the summary of the statistics of the Church during the Pastorate which now closes.

Received		Removed	
On profession of Faith	136	By Death	33
Transferred from other Churches	46	Dismissed	107
Restored	7	Withdrawn	8
	<u>189</u>	Erased	38
		Excluded	4
			<u>190</u>
Decrease	1		

At the beginning of the Pastorate the members numbered as follows—

	Resident	Non Resident	Total
	225	57	282
At the close	250	31	281

Increase of Resident Members 25.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us"

1st April

550

The Church was detained after the Ordinance of the Lords Supper to hear the following letter read from the Pastor

Ketchi 31st March 1877

To the Church Meeting in Salem Chapel Ketchi

Beloved Brethren Welcome to Christ

It is with considerable emotion that I write to you now to resign the office you entrusted to me 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ years ago. It is with pain that I contemplate leaving Ketchi where I have lived & labored very happily, & thank God with many proofs of the Divine blessing on my work. But if I interpret aright the leadings of Providence that same hand which I believe led me here, now beckons me away. It is right you should know what has led me to deem it my duty to take the solemn step of resigning my charge.

For some time I have seriously questioned whether my work were not done here, but I have been anxious to do nothing rashly, but prayerfully to watch for the guiding hand.

The following reasons are of weight -

There has not been the same manifest success attending my work lately, it may be that the time has come for another workman to take my place.

I am painfully conscious that through a variety of causes, our Church has been growing weaker for some time, I shall be truly thankful if a man of another order of ability can step in

and arrest the decline. While I am thankful
for the good degree of confidence that has been accorded
to me, and for the very hearty support of many
I am conscious that I have not that unanimous
support which is so essential to any great success
when a Church is passing through circumstances of
weakness & trial.

These things have been
long pondered by me, but I have shrunk from taking
any hasty step. Now however I believe I am
distinctly called elsewhere; I have received
what seems to be a very earnest invitation to the
Pastorate of the Baptist Church at Canterbury:
and the more I think of it the more evident it
appears to me that I ought to accept it. It
came altogether unsought by me, & in fact I
opposed it in every stage as long as I could.

The Church is in many respects weaker than this
but there is a much larger population to work upon
and I trust there is a work for me to do.

Let me express in conclusion my deep
sense of the many acts of kindness & of mine have
received from you, especially during seasons of
sorrow. I feel much pain in parting from the
Sunday School Teachers with whom I have ever had
the most cordial relations & from whom I have
recently received as kind a proof of their
esteem.

Let me recommend to your confidence
the Deacons of the Church who I know have its
interests at heart; they merit as I trust they

will receive your sympathy and support under
the special duties which will now devolve upon them

I am thankful that I leave the Church
in a good degree of peace & harmony. I hope to
pray that you may be soon furnished to a Pastor
and that it may please God to direct you to a
man in whose choice you may be unanimous.

To this end it will be needful that each should
waive somewhat of personal predilection, & study
that which will promote the good the Body the Church
"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the
gospel of Christ that whether I come & see you or shall
be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand
fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together
for the faith of the gospel"

Yours with love

John Aldis Junr

April 4th 1877

551
A Special Meeting of the Church Numerously
attended was held to consider the letter of resignation
of the Pastor. Several brethren spoke in terms of
high appreciation of his character & work & expressed
much sorrow at his leaving. The following resolution
proposed by Brother Jacob Russell & seconded by S. Brown
& Carried unanimously was decreed to be forwarded in
reply

That the Church have received with surprise and
very much regret the resignation of their esteemed
Pastor taking into account all the reasons which
have led to this step they feel bound though any

reluctantly to accept it. They desire very heartily
to bless God for all the grace given to him, for the
abundant labours, & earnest loving service rendered to
the Church through his 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ years ministry, and fervently
pray that the richest blessings may attend & follow
him to his new sphere.

The meeting began & closed with singing & prayer.

May 9th 1877

A largely attended ^{2nd} meeting of the Church and Congregation
was held in the schoolroom to take leave of the Pastor
a paper containing sixty signatures was presented to him
and addresses delivered by several friends, Mr Aldis
returned thanks suitably & ~~gave~~ ^{made} farewell to all

30th May 1877 Church Meeting

A letter was read from the Church at Canterbury
applying for the transfer of membership of Mr &
Mrs Aldis our late Pastor & his wife, an honourable
transfer was granted

A letter was read from the Church at Befferswade
dismissing James Kennie to our fellowship

A resolution proposed by Mr Balsey seconded by Mr
was carried. That the Rev F G

Marchant of Wandsworth be invited to supply two
Sabbaths with a view to the Pastorate

Church Meeting 28th June

After devotional exercises the previous minutes were
read & confirmed

556 Dismission was granted to our friend B. Barker to the Ind^l Church H. H. H.

The following resolution proposed by Bro Jost-Russell
 seconded by Bro A Braund & supported by nearly all
 557 the brethren present was carried unanimously
 "That the Rev F. G. Marchant be invited to become the
 Pastor of this Church"

558 It was agreed to call a Meeting of Subscribers to
 consider this resolution on Monday Evenf 2nd July
 The Meeting closed with the Doxology & Prayer

559 A meeting of Subscribers was held on Monday
 2nd July. It was proposed by W. Smoother, and
 seconded by W. Cylott, "that the resolution of the
 Church, inviting W. Marchant, be confirmed."
 Carried with three dissentients only.

The following letter was accordingly forwarded
 to W. Marchant

Wymondley, Stevenage.
 3rd July 1877.

My dear W. Marchant,

560 I have much pleasure in informing
 you that at a numerously attended meeting
 of the Church at Gitehouse Street, Hitchin, held
 on the 29th ult., it was proposed, seconded, and
 carried unanimously that the Rev F. G. Marchant
 be invited to become the Pastor of this Church.
 This resolution was confirmed and adopted at
 a subsequent meeting of the Congregation and
 subscribers.

In transmitting this intelligence, it
 is only right I should inform you, that a
 degree of cordiality was manifested, and

appreciation of your services expressed, most gratifying and encouraging, and going far to confirm the belief that in this case "Vox populi, vox Dei".

Our prayer now is that you may be guided to a right decision; that even if should we have erred in judgment, the mistake may be rectified. The prominent feature of the friends' prayer lately has been that God would guide and decide for us; this being the case, I trust we are in the right course

It may be well to inform you that the general practice of our Church has been for the Minister to receive all that is contributed for him, without any guaranteed of a fixed sum. This for many years past has averaged over £200 per annum; and though it has fallen a little below this the last year or two, I believe I am justified in saying there is a general disposition amongst the friends, to increase their subscriptions. Then there is the minister's house, for which we charge £10 a year rent, and let to the Minister subject to 3 months notice to quit on either side.

I think I need not enlarge further; if there are any questions you think well to ask before giving your reply, I shall be pleased to answer all I can.

I may say if you think favorably of our request we shall be glad of as early a settlement as consistent with your convenience

With kindest regards to Mr. Marchant and
yourself, in which ~~my~~ brethren in office join
I am

Yours very truly
(Signed) M. G. Foster

Rev. F. G. Marchant.

Mr. Marchant's reply:-

To the Baptist Church
Fitchhouse Street, Hitchin.

Dear Brethren

561. I cordially accept your unanimous
and hearty invitation to take the pastorate of
your Church.

I must ask you not to regard the
delay of my answer as indicating, on my part,
hesitation and indecision. While my own mind
has been quite disposed to come to you from
the time of receiving your letter, I have thought
it best to wait thus far ere sending my reply,
both in order that I might not take so
important a step without patient and
prayerful consideration, and that some little
time might be afforded to prepare the minds
of my friends here for the tidings of my
separation from them.

I accept your call to preach the Gospel
among you, asking your earnest and continuous
prayers. Let us each hear Christ saying to us
afresh "Without Me ye can do nothing"; but not
discouraged by our lowly dependence upon Him.

may the humblest ^{of us} have grace to feel with
his apostle: "I can do all things through Christ
which strengtheneth me."

Brethren please pray for me; please
help me in our common work; please bear
with me in things which you will, no doubt,
have to call my infirmities. I shall come to
you with much faith in your kindness, your
godliness, and your Christian zeal. May we
be strong, above all things, in the love of Christ,
that being so, we shall, I am sure, possess a
large-hearted tolerance of each other in all
differences, and know a warm co-operation in
our work together for Him.

I close my pastorate here on the
5th August, and, allowing myself a few weeks
rest, I propose to begin my ministry among
you on the first Sunday in September.

May future years of glad communion
and service in the work of our Lord, prove and
hope that God guides us each now.

I am, dear Brethren

Yours sincerely
(Signed) F. G. Marchant.

Wandsworth

July 10th 1877.

This letter was read to the Church & Congregation
after the morning service 15th July

~~28 June Church Meeting~~

~~Besides the business noted on a previous page, Application was received from the Independent Church Queen St. Bristol for the transfer of membership of our friend Mr B Barker. Granted~~

~~A letter from the Church at Selfridges was read, commencing our friend Mr Rennie to our Fellowship~~

17 Sep. Church Meeting.

562. A letter was adopted applying for the transfer of membership of our pastor Rev J G Marchant & Mr Marchant

563. Application was ordered to be made for the transfer of Mr Westwood from the Church at Abbey Road London

564. Report for membership Mr Cook, Old Park Kitchi Messengers Messrs Balsey & Wm Foster

Church Meeting, Oct: 25th, 1877.

After singing and reading the Scriptures, prayer was offered by the minister and Mr H. Foster. The Minutes of the last meeting were then read and confirmed.

565. The Chair was then taken by Mr Foster, who read a letter from the Church at East Hill, Wandsworth, granting the dismission of Mr and Mrs Marchant, who were cordially accepted into the fellowship of the Church here. Mr Foster very warmly welcomed the minister to the Chair, expressing, on behalf of the Church, earnest desires for the Divine blessing on his labours. Mr Marchant having replied, business was proceeded with.

1877.

566.
On the report of brethren Halsey and Tom Foster, it was agreed that Mrs Emma Crook be received into fellowship.

567.
A letter was read from the Church at Abbey Road, St: John's Wood, saying that, on account of non-attendance, Mrs Westwood (formerly Arthur) had ceased to be a member there, and that they were thus unable to grant a dismission. Brethren Odell and Jacob Russell were therefore requested to visit Mrs Westwood.

568.
It was ordered, on the application of the Church at Westbourne Grove, that Mrs Clements (late Woodfield) be honourably dismissed to their Fellowship.

H. G. Marchant, Chairman.

Nov: 26. 77.

Church Meeting, Nov: 26. 77.

569.
Prayer having been offered by Mr Halsey, the Minister reported the admission to the Church of Mrs Crook, and the dismission of Mrs Clements to the Church at Westbourne Grove Chapel, London.

570.
Mr Odell not being present, Mr Jacob Russell reported on his interview with Mrs Westwood. Testimony was also given to this friend's Christian character, and to her regular attendance at the Chapel at Preston, by Mr Wm Foster. On the statement made, and on the recommendation of Mr Russell, it was agreed to receive Mrs Westwood into our fellowship.

H. G. Marchant, Chairman.

Jan: 28. 78.

1878.

Annual Members' Meeting, Jan: 3. 78.

571.

The number of members assembling for Tea was thought to be rather below the average of preceding years. A good assembly gathered for the business of the evening.

After singing hymn 465, and the reading of the Scriptures in Pss: 133 & 134, prayer was offered by Mr. J. Foster.

572.

The Minister proposed the following friends for admission after baptism: -

Sarah E. Day : visitors, Brethren Halsey, & J. Russell.
 Sophia Culpin : " " " Mr. H. Foster, & Pryor.
 Thomas Waller : " " " Wm Foster, & Woodfield.

573.

Proposed for admission on testimony -

Elizabeth Rennie: visitors, Brethren O'Dell & Chambers.

574.

Proposed applications for transfer from other Churches

Sarah Shaw (formerly a member, Cf. Minute 474), from the Church at
 Mary Hamer, from the Independent Church, Heyworth, Leam.

575.

The honourable dismission of the Church was granted for Louisa Daintree, for thirty years a consistent member of our fellowship, to the Union Church at Spaldwick, near Kimbolton, and for Wm Owen to the Free Church at Caversham.

576.

The following statistics for the year ending Dec. 31st. were then submitted to the Meeting: -

Additions.

By Profession on Testimony:

Emma Crook ; Mary Ann Westwood 2

By Dismission from other Churches:

Rachel Thompson, from New Barnett; Amelia Skinner, and James Rennie, from Biggleswade; F. G., and H. H. Marchant, from Wandsworth. 5

Total Additions 7

1878.

Removals.

By Death:

Susannah Barker, Feb: 9th; Harriett Hare, July 2nd;
Harriett Shortland, Ann Carling, June 25th;
James Street, August; Ebenezer Foster, Sep: 8th;
Arthur Kingsley Throssel, Nov: 30th; and Reuben Shadwell,
the late senior Deacon, who after membership extend-
ing over a period of ^{nearly} fifty-nine years, during forty-five of
which he worthily served the Church as one of its officers,
passed to his rest on Dec: 11th last. Total deaths, 8.

By dismission to other Churches:

Sarah Elizabeth Day, Ellen Flint, Rebecca Day,
Louisa A. Johnson, Wm Dawson, Herbert Wheeler,
the Rev: John and Mrs Aldis, Benjamin Barker,
and Selina Clements. Total dismissions, 10.

By withdrawal:

Mary Hall, Gertrude Hall, Thomas Bullard, and
Amos Spriggs. Total withdrawals 4

By Erasure:

James Payne, and Mary A. Reynolds. Total erasures 2
Total Removals 24.

The decrease for the year, thus, amounts to seventeen.
The number of resident members was stated to be 237,
that of the non-residents to be 38, making a total
membership at the end of the year of 275.

The attendance at the Lord's Supper, as shown by the
Communion Cards, was 130 per month.

During the evening, addresses were delivered by the minister;
and by brethren Dodwell, H. Foster, W. Foster, Halsey Russell,
J. Morgan, Woodfield, and O'Dell. It was noticed by

1878.

Mr. Henry Foster that Mr. Marchant's ministry was continuing among them about 200 years after that of the Rev. J. Wilson, the first pastor of the Church, Mr. Wilson having been set apart to the work on April 28th, 1677 and the present ministry having commenced on September 2nd, 1877.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman,
Jan: 28. 78.

Church Meeting, Jan: 28th.

578. Prayer having been offered, the minutes of the two preceding meetings were read and confirmed. The minister reported the death Mr. Joseph Salt, who in a calm and strong faith passed to his rest on the 12th instant. Allusion was also made to the remarkable circumstances which led to his conversion previous to his union with this Church in Sep., 1869.

579. Dismissions were granted for Georgiana King and Edmund Wright, to the Church in Walsworth Road.

580. On the report of the visitors, it was unanimously agreed that Sarah E. Day, Sophia Culpin, and Thomas Waller be received into fellowship after baptism.

581. The testimony of brethren O'Dell and Chambers having been given, it was also agreed that Elizabeth Rennie be admitted to the Church.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman (Apr. 4. 78)

Church Meeting, Apr: 4. 78.

582. The minutes of the last meeting having been read and confirmed, it was stated that the dismissions of

1878.

Georgiana King and Edmund Twigg had been sent to the Church in Walsworth Road.

583.
The Minister reported the death of Sarah O'Dell on March 12th, who fell asleep in Christ, after having been a member of the Church for nearly twenty nine years.

584.
On letters of dismission from the Churches at Lee, Kent, and Heywood, Lancashire, it was agreed to receive into fellowship Sarah Shaw, and Mary Halsey, the former having previously been a member of the Church.

585.
The accounts of the Poor Fund, the Minister's Fund, the Incidental Fund and of the Burying Ground having been read by brethren M. H. Foster and Halsey, it was unanimously agreed to pass the said accounts, and that the thanks of the Church be presented to Messrs Foster and Halsey for their services.

586.
It having been stated that Mr Braund had rendered great assistance during the past few months in financial matters pertaining to the Church, it was resolved, on the motion of brethren M. H. Foster and Halsey, that the best thanks of the Church be given to Mr Braund, and that he be requested to act as Financial Secretary, continuing to give similar assistance to the Deacons. Mr Braund, having acknowledged the thanks of the meeting, consented to do so.

587.
On the motion of Mr Braund and Mr G. W. Russell, it was decided to hold the Good Friday Sea Meeting, as usual in previous years.

J. G. Marchant, Chairman.
June 27-78.

1878.

588.

At a short meeting of the Church on Monday evening, April 22nd, on the motion of brethren F. Foster and G. W. Russell, the Minister and Mr. M. H. Foster were requested to act as delegates of the Church at the forthcoming session of the Baptist Union in London.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman June 27th

589.

At a meeting of the ^{Church} at the close of the Prayer Meeting on May 6th, the Minister was instructed to apply to the Church at Queen Street for the re-transfer of Mr. and Mrs. Comford to our fellowship, and for the dismissal to us, also, of Mrs. Bullin, from the Church at Shefford.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman, June 27th

Note: Mrs. Bullin was not received, the Church at Shefford being unable to grant a dismissal. 3.9.78. Oct. 31.78

Church Meeting, June 27th.

590.

After devotional exercises, the Minister reported the death of Mary Caldwell, who passed to her rest on May 14th. Report was also made of the baptism, on March 14th, of Sophia Culpin and Sarah E. Day, and on May 9th of Thomas Waller and Abigail Stanford with the admission of Sarah Day and Thomas Waller into fellowship. It was further reported that Sarah Shaw and Mary Hamer had been received into the Church.

591.

After reading a letter of transfer from the Church at Queen St., it was unanimously agreed to receive back to our fellowship our friends the Rev. J. and Mrs. Comford.

592.

It was agreed to apply to the Church at Union Chapel Luton for the dismissal of Elizabeth Morris.

593.

Dismission was granted of Ellen Lane to the Baptist Church at Kingston on Thames.

594.

The Minister, and Messrs M. H. Foster and A. Braund were appointed to represent the Church

595.

at a meeting of the Hertfordshire Baptist Churches at Dagnall St. Chapel, on July 1st, to be held for the purpose of forming a new County Association, which has been rendered desirable by the withdrawal of the Independent Churches in the County from the Herts Union.

596. Notice of motion was given, by Mr. M. H. Foster, for altering the time of the Lord's Supper from the afternoon of the first Sunday in the month to the morning of the first Sunday and the evening of the third.
H. G. Marchant, Chairman, Sep: 26th.

Church Meeting, Sep: 26th.

597. Prayer was offered by Mr. William Foster. The Minister then reported the following deaths: - (1) That of Ann Wilshere, on Thursday Sep: 19th, at the age of Seventy-five years. Having been baptised in Dec: 1843, Mrs. Wilshere had been a member of the Church for thirty-five years. (2) That of Elizabeth Comford, who after a week's illness, was called suddenly to her rest, ^{on Sep: 24th} leaving three children and her husband, the Rev. J. A. Comford, to mourn their loss. (3) That of Lizzie Cousins, a young member of the Church, and a Sunday School Teacher, who was also suddenly removed from us, after a few days of severe suffering.

598. On the testimony of a satisfactory dismissory letter from the Church at Union Chapel, Luton, it was agreed to receive into fellowship Miss Elizabeth Morris.

599. The following persons were proposed for admission after baptism: John Hen^d-Aylford, and his daughter, Aylford;
visitors: Brethren M. H. Foster and Halsey.
Hume Burges, and his wife, Clara Annie Burges;
visitors: Brethren W^m Foster, & Jacob Russell.

1878.

600.
According to notice previously given, Mr. M. H. Foster moved that the Lord's Supper, for the three remaining months of the year, be administered at the close of the morning service on the first Sunday in the month, and at the close of the evening service on the third Sunday in the month. On the understanding that the question should be reconsidered at the Annual Meeting, the motion was carried by a vote of 37 for the alteration, and 14 against it.

601.
The meeting having been moved to deep solemnity by the reports of the three deaths, made at its commencement, after singing hymn 653, special prayer was offered by brethren Woodfield, Mr. H. Foster, and the Minister, that those bereaved might be comforted, and that the loss to the Church might be sanctified to the watchfulness and renewed zeal of its members.
H. G. Marchant, Chairman, Oct. 31. 78.

Church Meeting, Oct: 31 st.

602.
After prayer by Mr. Halsey, and the confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting, brethren Wm. Foster and Jacob Russell reported on the cases of Mr. and Mrs. Burges. Their letters having been also placed before the Church, it was unanimously agreed to receive them into fellowship. The minister stated that for the present, the consideration of Mr. Ayford's application to join the Church would be postponed.

603.
Leave was given to apply for the transfer of Ellen Arnold from the Church at Stotfold, and that of Hannah Ayford (formerly Edmonds) from Union Chapel, Luton.

604.
It was agreed to dismiss our sister Hannah

1878.

Butterfield to the Independent Church at Weybridge, Surrey, under the ministry of the Rev. F. Baron.

605. At the request of the S. School Teachers, brought before the Church by Mr. Halsey, it was agreed on the motion of brethren Chambers and Woodfield to give up the first Thursday evening service in each month, in order that the Minister might on that evening hold a Preparation Class for the S. School Teachers.

606. Mr. Halsey reported the death of Susan Sexton, who had died suddenly after a short illness. It was noticed that our Sister had been a member of this Church for twenty-two years, she having been baptised by the Rev. John Broad, and admitted into fellowship in August, 1856.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman, Jan: 1. 1879.

Annual Church Meeting, Jan: 1st, 1879.

607. The number of friends at the tea, party, perhaps, owing to very unfavourable weather, and to much sickness in the congregation, was unusually small. The evening gathering was larger, but probably below the average of previous years.

608. The meeting began with singing hymn 465, after which Ps. 48 was read, and Mr. W^m Foster offered prayer. The minutes of the last Meeting having been adopted, the dismissions of Ellen Arnold and Hannah Ayford were read, when it was unanimously decided to receive these friends into the Church. It having been announced that Hannah Butterfield had been compelled ^{by illness} to return from Weybridge, and that under these circumstances the Rev. F. Baron had sent back the transfer, the Minister moved that our friend's name be retained in its old place on the Church Roll. This was agreed to unanimously. (cf. minute 604).

609.

Dismissions were granted of William Reeves and of Susan Frances Reeves to the Church at Leicester under the pastoral care of the Rev. F. B. Meyer, and of Emily Ellard to Walsworth Road.

610.

After remarks by brethren M. H. Foster, Jacob Russell, J. H. Briden, G. Halsey, F. Griggs on the proposed alteration in the time of the Lord's Supper, it was decided by a large majority to revert to the former practice of the afternoon administration.

611.

The death of Harriet Button was reported by the Minister. Mrs Button had been received into fellowship, after baptism, in the year 1846, and had been a member 32 years. Her end was peaceful.

612.

Notice was given by Mr. F. Foster that at the next meeting he would propose that the time for beginning the week-evening services be altered to half past seven.

613.

The following Statistics for the Year ending Dec: 31st were then read by the Minister:

Additions

By Profession through Baptism:

Sarah E. Day; Thomas Waller 2.

Baptised, but not received into fellowship: Sophia Culpin

Baptised, but previously a member; Abigail Stamford

By Testimony:

Elizabeth Reanie, Hame Burges, Clara A. Burges 3.

By Dismission from other Churches:

Sarah Shaw; Mary Hamer, the Rev. J. A. and Mrs Comfort, and Elizabeth Morris 5

Total Additions during the Year 10.

Removals.By Dismission to other Churches

Louisa Daintree, to Union Church, Spaldwick.

William Owen, to the "Free Church", Caversham.

Georgiana King, and Edmund Wright, to Walsworth Red.

Ellen Lane, to Kingston on Thames.

Total Dismissions 5

By Death:

Joseph Salt; Sarah O'Dell; Mary Caldwell;

Ann Wilshire; Elizabeth Comfort; Lizzie Cousins;

Susan Sexton; and Harriett Button.

Total Deaths 8.

(It was noticed that the average age of the eight members who had been called to their rest during the year amounted to 62½ years).

Total Recreals 13.

A further decrease of three members is thus shown for this year, leaving the total membership, as read from the Church Roll, at 272. The number of resident members amounts to that of non-residents to . The average attendance at the Lord's Supper during the year was 141, as against 130 for the year previous.

Non-Resident Members are the following:—

Lane Rebecca, Horbiton, no. 7	James Daniel, Littlebourn, Wingham, no. 105
Lane Richard, Horbiton, " 9.	Weatherhead Susannah, near Henley 109
Parkins Frances, Luton " 57.	West Amy, Leicester 117
Shepherd Amos, Tollyn " 64.	Aitken Harriett, Yarmouth 123
Robottom Elizabeth, Dover " 70	Brown Emily, Surrey 125
James, M. A. Mrs, Wingham " 78	Ruston Martha, Chatteris 127
Brown Samuel, Surrey " 82	Webb Ellen, Montreal 136.

Ellwood, Frederick, Sandon, No. 152.
 Savaders Susan (late Bullard) Dunstable, .. 154.
 Warr, M. A., London .. 190.
 Grills, E. A., ? London .. 194.
 Hilton Henry, near Baldock .. 205.
 Toestwood Priscilla, Lower Horwood .. 221.
 Skinner Amelia, Wandsworth .. 255.
 Toaller Thomas, West Kent .. 265.
 Reeves, Susan F. Leicester

Jackson Louisa, Westminster, 153.
 Hilton Ellen, Stotfold, 167.
 Laughton Elizabeth, America, 192.
 Berrill, W^m A., Australia, 200.
 Burls, Ed. J. P., Godalming, 208.
 Stanford Abigail, Wandsworth, 220.
 Hamer Mary, Lancaster, 260.
 Reeves William, Leicester

615.
 Allusion was made during the meeting to the reduced number of the diaconate, the minister stating that some early opportunity would have to be taken for the election of fresh deacons, to fill up the vacancies which had been caused partly by death, and partly by non-residence.

H. G. Marchant, Chairman, March 20. 1879.

Church Meeting, March 20th, 1879.

616.
 After prayer by Mr. M. H. Foster, the minutes of the Annual Meeting were read and confirmed. The minister reported the death of Mary Salisbury Cook, who after a membership of nearly 32 years, entered into rest on the first Sunday morning of the New Year: also that of Elizabeth Law, who having been a member with us for 41 years, died at Luton on Jan. 18.

617.
 Brethren M. H. Foster and W^m Foster were appointed visitors to F. H. Monti, who seeks admission to our fellowship.

618.
 It was agreed to apply to the Church at Tolleshams

for the dismissal of Sarah Osborne, formerly a member with us.

Dismissions were granted of Amelia Skinner, to the Church at East Hill, Wandsworth, and of Mr. and Mrs. Ellwood, to the Church at Sandou.

From a recent conference on the subject at a Deacons' meeting, it was announced that, in accordance with the former custom of the Church — "All new members, not having previously been of our fellowship, will be received openly at the Lord's Table; but friends who re-join the Church, after a term of absence, will be re-admitted at the Church meeting, and while their re-admission will be announced at the Lord's Table, they will not again be expected to receive the right hand of fellowship.

The Minister, with brethren M. H. Foster and Halsey, having been appointed delegates to represent the Church at the forthcoming meetings of the Baptist Union, the meeting was closed with prayer.

It was agreed to hold the usual tea meeting on behalf of the Missionary Society on Good Friday next.

J. G. Marchant, Chairman,
May 15. 1879.

Church Meeting, May 15th, 1879.

Prayer was offered by the Rev. J. A. Comfort, after which the minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed. Report was made of the death of our brother James Law, who died at the close of last month, after a membership of 33 years. His end was one of calm trust in his Lord and Saviour.

On a letter of dismission from the Church at Wood St. Chapel, Walthamstow, Sarah Osborne was cordially received back into our fellowship.

625.

On the testimony of brethren M. H. and W. Foster, it was agreed to receive into our Communion Mr. J. H. Monti, who for about two years past has been assisting in the Sunday School at Preston, he having shortly before that become a convert from Roman Catholicism.

626.

The Minister was authorised to apply to the Church at Auckland Hill Chapel, Lower Norwood, for the dismissal of Sarah Elizabeth Day, formerly a member with us.

627.

The following were proposed for membership, after baptism:

Rosa Jelly: Visitors, Messrs Halsey & Morgan.

Frances Wheeler: " Messrs W. Foster & Woodfield.

George Smith: " Messrs M. H. Foster & Pryor.

628.

The Annual Financial Reports of the Minister's Fund, the Incidentals' Fund, and the Burial Ground Fund were presented by Mr. M. H. Foster. In the last of these, only a balance of only a few shillings remained in the Treasurer's hands, a considerable decrease being shown in the net proceeds compared with those of recent years. A marked improvement was shown by Mr. Foster and Mr. Braund in the contributions to the Fund for incidental expenses, the total subscribed being considerably in advance of that which has been given for several previous years. In consequence, however of an increased expenditure, and a previous debt, there was found to be a sum of £7.8.7³/₄ due to the Treasurer. Some discussion arising as to the heavy cost of Gas for the year, a sub-Committee consisting of brethren F. Foster, J. A. Comfort, and Albert Braund was appointed to inquire into the whole question of our gas consumption, and asked to report thereon at an early meeting. The accounts of the Church Funds were then passed, the thanks of the Church

being cordially voted to brethren M. H. Foster, Halsey, and Braund for their services in the management of our general finance.

The Poor Fund account was presented by Mr. Halsey. Owing to an unusual amount of sickness and death, only a few shillings remained in hand. The thanks of the Church were given to Mr. Halsey, and this account also was duly passed.

629. It was announced that at the next Church meeting the officers hoped to be in a position to ascertain from the brethren the number of fresh deacons which it might be thought desirable to appoint, and also to communicate to the Church the customary method of proceeding with the election.

630. The Church being asked to wait at the close of the Lord's Supper, on the afternoon of June 1st, it was proposed by the minister and Mr. Dodwell, and carried unanimously that the following brethren be the delegates of the Church to the first annual meeting of the Hertfordshire Union of Baptist Churches: The minister and Deacons, with Messrs A. Braund, J. Pryor, R. O'Dell, G. W. Russell, and F. Griffis.

H. G. Marchant, Chairman, June 12. 79.

Church Meeting, June 12. 1879.

631. After prayer by Mr. Griffis, the minutes of the last meeting were confirmed. The minister reported the death, on the sixteenth of May, of Mary Buckingham who after a long illness, accompanied by many severe trials borne with much patience, and even joy, passed

to her rest above; also the death of Mary Bullard on June 6th. We thank God for the hope that both of our friends were "more than conquerors" through Jesus Christ.

632. On the dismission of the Church at Auckland Hill, Lower Norwood, Sarah Elizabeth Day was received back to our fellowship.

633. It was agreed to receive Rosa Jellz, Frances Wheeler, and George Smith, after they have been baptised.

634. The Minister proposed Rebecca Brown, of Gosmore for membership after baptism. Brethren O'Dell and Morgan were appointed visitors.

635. The report of the Sub-Committee, consisting of Messrs F. Foster A. Braund and the Rev. J. A. Comford, ^{on the question of the unusual consumption of Gas} was laid before the meeting by brethren Foster and Braund. The Committee recommended that an additional Meter be erected to supply the School Room the Lecture Hall, the Vestry, and two lights for the Pulpit. The estimated cost of this work was stated to be about £5 or £6. The following resolution was then passed unanimously: "That the suggestion of the Committee be adopted, and that the question of the standard for the pulpit service be left to the Committee and Mr. Marchant."

636. Election of Deacons. - Resolutions as to the election of deacons were passed as follows: "That future elections to the office of Deacon in this Church, till such time as the brethren may see fit to alter this regulation, shall be for a period of three years, instead of for life." "That a meeting be held on Thursday next, June 19th, when we proceed to the election of two additional brethren to serve the Church in this office."

Mode of Election. - "That the method of election be

as follows: - 1. Three brethren shall be nominated by the Church, it being understood that it seems desirable that such nominations should be made by some of the Senior Members ~~not now~~ ~~not~~ now in office. 2. The minister and the present deacons shall also come prepared to nominate three brethren whom they may think fitted for this important office and work. 3. The six or less number of names so brought before the Church shall be alone considered to be in nomination, and that on these names the decision of the Church be taken by ballot, each member having two votes, which shall be given to two different names.

The meeting was concluded with singing and prayer.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman, June 19.

Church Meeting, June 19. 1879.

After prayer by Mr. Morgan, the minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The Chairman reported the following deaths: that of our sister Rebecca Lane, wife of our deacon Mr. Richard Lane, for some time past resident at Norbiton, Surrey, who had been a member of the Church for 41 years; also that of our sister Hannah Sanderson, of Preston, who had been a member for 30 years.

On the very interesting report of brethren O'Dell and Morgan of their interview with Miss Rebecca Brown, of Gosmore, it was unanimously agreed that, after baptism, our friend be admitted to membership.

The following resolution was carried without dissent, most of the members voting for it with evident sorrow: - "That in the absence of any sufficient manifestation of penitence for their sin, William Crawley and Emma Shepherd

1879.

be excluded from our fellowship on the ground of immorality.
 fervent prayer was subsequently offered for their restoration.

Election of Deacons. The nomination of the Senior
 members of the Church was communicated to the meeting
 by brethren G. W. Russell and F. Griggs. The names of brethren
 so nominated for the diaconate were those of the Rev. J. A.
 Comforth, ^{Henry} Smith Woodfield, and John Morgan. Mr. Henry
 Foster stated the nomination of the minister and deacons
 to be as follows: J. A. Comforth, Smith Woodfield, and
 John Pryor. After remarks by Mr. Halsey, and a few
 words of wise counsel by our Senior deacon Mr. Dodwell,
 the Messrs Halsey, F. Griggs, and F. Foster were appointed
 Scrutinizers. The ballot was then taken on the four
 names in nomination, when the number of votes was
 as follows: Mr. Pryor 8; Mr. Morgan 22; Mr. Woodfield
 35; Mr. Comforth 57. Brethren Comforth and Woodfield were
 therefore declared elected. Thanking the Church for this mark
 of confidence, both of our friends consented to accept office
 and serve the Church so far as they might be able.

A special Prayer Meeting was announced for
 next to welcome our brethren to the diaconate, and to ask
 God's blessing on them in their future service. The meeting
 was concluded by prayer from brethren Mr. H. Foster, C. D. D.,
 and the Chairman.

F. G. Marchant, { Chairman,
 Aug. 18. 79.

Church Meeting, Aug. 18. 79.

The Minutes of the previous meeting having been confirmed,
 the honourable dismission was granted of Mr. Richard
 Lane to the Church at Kingston-on-Thames. Mr. Lane

having joined our fellowship in 1839, had been a member with us for forty years, and for many years one its deacons. Regretting his removal, and commending him earnestly to God in prayer, the brethren unanimously voted his transfer.

On a letter of testimony from the Rev. John Dixon, Superintendent of the Hitchin Wesleyan Circuit, it was agreed to receive our brother William Whaley into fellowship.

Brethren J. A. Comfort and N. O'Dell were appointed visitors to Annie Chambers, daughter of our brother Mr. Daniel Chambers, who has applied for baptism and admission to the Church.

The meeting was concluded with prayer by Mr. H. Foster.

J. G. Marchant,

Chairman, Sep. 24. 79.

Church Meeting, Sep. 21st.

The Minutes of the last meeting having been adopted, the Minister reported the baptism on Sep. 11th of Mrs. Burgess, already a member with us; of Miss Ella Broad, of Wandsworth, grand-daughter of the late Rev. John Broad; and of Miss Annie E. Chambers, the daughter of our brother Mr. Daniel Chambers.

Brethren O'Dell and Comfort having reported on their interview with Miss Chambers, she was unanimously admitted to the Church.

John Ayford was proposed for baptism and fellowship, brethren Tom and Mr. H. Foster being appointed visitors.

J. G. Marchant

Chairman, Oct. 23.

Special Church Meeting, Oct: 23rd.

648.

Prayer having been offered by the Minister and Mr. Wm. Foster, the Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed, after which on the report of brethren Wm. and M. H. Foster it was unanimously agreed that after baptism John Clifford be received into fellowship.

649.

The Minister communicated to the Church the fact that he had recently received an invitation from the Rev. C. W. Spurgeon to become Classical Tutor in the Metropolitan Tabernacle College, and that having received the assurances of Mr. Spurgeon and the Deacons of this Church that such an engagement need not separate him from his ministry in Hitchin, he had accepted Mr. Spurgeon's proposal. It was further stated that the work in the College would, all being well, be commenced in January next, and that it would require Mr. Marchant to be in London on four days in the week, but that he hoped to take both the week services with fair regularity.

Mr. Marchant then withdrew, in order that the Church might speak with more freedom on this matter, and the Chair was taken by Mr. M. H. Foster, who laid before the Meeting some suggestions as to the most desirable courses which, in the judgment of the Deacons, were open for the consideration of the Church. On the recommendation of the Chairman the Meeting was then adjourned for a week.

Adjourned Church Meeting, Oct: 30, th.

650.

Mr. M. H. Foster again presided. After singing, reading the Scriptures, and prayer, a letter was read from the Rev. John Aldis, of Canterbury, asking for the dismission of Mr. Pauls to the communion of the Church.

under his care, which was granted.

651. The Minister's announcement again coming under the consideration, the following resolution was moved from the Chair.

"That the Church having heard the Pastor's statement that he has accepted the invitation of Mr. Spurgeon to become Classical Tutor at his College regret that by this work they will be deprived of a measure of Mr. Marchant's pastoral oversight: at the same time, feeling that his usefulness may thus be increased, they earnestly desire him to continue his ministrations among them. After some discussion in which most of the brethren took part, the resolution was carried almost unanimously.

652. Adjourned Church Meeting, Nov: 3rd. Mr. M. H. Foster presided. After devotional exercises, the following resolution was proposed, and carried: — That Messrs John Morgan, R. O'Dell, Pryor, Braund, and G. W. Russell, with the Pastor and Deacons, constitute a Committee to devise the best means for carrying on the pastoral work of the Church. Prayer was subsequently offered by several of the brethren for the blessing of God on both Minister and People under these somewhat altered arrangements for future labour in His service.

J. G. Marchant, Chairman, Jan: 1. 1880.

Annual Church Meeting, January 1st, 1880.

653. After Tea, which was attended by a goodly number of Church Members, the evening meeting was commenced by singing Hymn 465, and by the reading the closing portions of Romans VIII and 1 Cor. I. Prayer was then

offered by Mrs. Chambers.

654.

The minutes of previous meetings having been confirmed the dismission was granted of Mrs. Ruston to the General Baptist Church at Chatteris.

655.

The minister stated that the officers of the Church had decided to order no Communion Cards for this year, but that the Deacons would count the attendance at each celebration of the Lord's Supper, and that the result would be reported at the next Annual Meeting.

656.

Resolutions sent up from the Teachers' meeting relative to the need of the School at Preston of more Teachers, and of the desirability of warming our own School Room were read to the Church.

657.

The minister then read the Annual Record of the Church Statistics, which was as follows:—

Additions.—

1. By Profession through Baptism, or otherwise.

Joseph W. Montie (previously baptised); Rosa Jell, Frances Wheeler, George Smith, Rebecca Brown and Annie Chambers (baptised); John Asford (awaits baptism).

Baptised, but not added to the Church:—

Clara Annie Burges (already a member), and Ella Broad (who has since joined the Indep. Church at Woadsworth).

Total Baptisms during the year 7. Awaiting baptism, but admitted to membership, 1.

Total new members received by Profession 7.

2. By Dismission from other Churches:—

Ellen Arnold, from Stotfold; Hannah Asford, from Luton.

Sarah Osborne, from Walthamstow; Sarah E. Day,
from Lower Harwood; William Whaley, from the
Wesleyan Church, Hitchin: Total — 5.

Total Additions

12.

Removals.

1. By Dismission.

William and Susan Frances Heeves, to Leicester;
Emily Ellard, to Walsworth Road; Amelia
Skinner, to Wandsworth; Frederick and Mary
Ellwood, to Sandon; Richard Lane, to
Kingston on Thames; E. J. Bauls, to Canterbury:

Total Dismissions

8.

2. By Death.

Mary Salisbury Cook; Elizabeth Law; James Law;
Mary Buckingham; Mary Bullard; Rebecca
Lane; Hannah Sanderson; Harriett Aitken

Total Deaths

8.

3. By Exclusion.

William Crawley; Emma Shepherd.

2

Total Removals 18.

Total Additions 12

Decrease in Members

6.

Present Number of Members

266.

The Minister called special attention to the decrease in attendance at the Lord's Supper, and supplied the following table from the record of the Communion Book for the past five years:

Attendance at the Lord's Supper for the Past Five Years.

	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875
Jan:	126	148	135	138	153
Feb:	105	151	144	125	157
March	134	150	122	158	145
Apr:	112	157	131	156	152
May:	129	160	135	169	149
June	117	137	144	118	122
July	138	151	106	151	153
Aug:	108	124	121	153	139
Sept:	112	138	142	137	142
Oct:	128	141	130	156	127
Nov:	133	130	143	138	149
Dec:	110	103	154	156	153
Total Attendance	1452	1690	1607	1755	1741
Average Attendance	121	140 $\frac{5}{6}$	133 $\frac{11}{12}$	146 $\frac{1}{4}$	145 $\frac{1}{2}$

At the close of the Report, and after a few remarks by the Minister, earnest and unusually forcible addresses were delivered by brethren M. H. Foster, Woodfield, A. Jelly, Barker, O'Dell, and W. G. Russell.

The Church Roll was read by Mr. Foster at an earlier part of the evening.

The meeting was concluded with the Doxology and the Benediction.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman.

March 4. 1880.

Church Meeting, March 4th.

657. Prayer was offered by Mr. M. H. Foster. The Minutes of the Annual Meeting having been confirmed, the Minister proposed Annie Ellis for membership after baptism. Brethren William Foster and J. A. Comfort were appointed visitors.

658. The Minister was authorised to write to the Church at Dalton for the dismissal of Miss Martha Hunt, formerly a member with us, and ^{to the Church at Bridport for that} of Miss Miriam Comfort the sister of our deacon, the Rev. J. A. Comfort.

659. On a resolution moved by the Minister and Mr. M. H. Foster, Sarah Elizabeth Day, who was baptised and admitted to the Church in March 1878, was suspended for twelve months for immorality.

660. Mr. Halsey informed the Church that the Heating Apparatus for the School Room and the Lecture Hall had been put in, and that the cost of that and the recent alteration in the Gas Service would probably amount to upwards of £30 which must shortly be paid.

It was decided to hold the Good Friday Tea Meeting, as usual, on behalf of the Foreign Mission Fund.

H. G. Marchant, Chairman, Apr: 8: 80.

Church Meeting, Apr: 8: 80.

661. After singing and reading the Scriptures, prayer was offered by Mr. Cooper. The minutes having been confirmed, brethren W. Foster and J. A. Comfort cordially recommended Annie Ellis to the Church for fellowships, after baptism. The testimony given

by the visitors and the minister as to the Christian remembrance of this young friend created a somewhat unusual interest, and it was unanimously agreed to receive her.

662. The dismission of Miss Martha Hunt, from the Church at Dalston, having been read, she also was cordially admitted to membership.

663. Ellen Arnold was dismissed to the Church at Hastings, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Wm Barker.

664. Brethren Henry Foster, Halsey, Comfort and the ministers were appointed delegates to represent the Church at the forthcoming meeting of the Baptist Union. It was also stated that the officers had agreed to entertain the representatives of the Hert's Union at the Annual Meeting in June next.

665. The accounts of the Minister's, Incidental's and Burial's Funds were read by Mr H. Foster. The Incidental Account was particularly encouraging, a small balance in hand being shown for the first time during the past twelve years, while, as was stated to the meeting, this result had been obtained with no help from the Burial Fund, which in former years had handed over its balance of from £6 to £11 in aid of the account for Incidental Expenses.

666. Mr Halsey then read the Balance Sheet of the Lord's Supper Fund, from which it appeared that ~~about~~ assistance had been rendered, in some way from 2/6 to 10/-, to about one hundred cases during the year. The Church very heartily voted its thanks to Brethren Foster, Halsey, and Braund for the

services which they had kindly rendered in connection with these accounts.

Some discussion followed as to the difficulty of obtaining Supplies for the village Churches. On the understanding that the question must shortly come up for reconsideration, the meeting was concluded with singing and prayer.

J. G. Marchant,

Chairman, June 3. 80

Church Meeting June 3. 1880.

Mr W^m Foster having offered prayer, the Minutes of the last meeting were read and adopted.

On the motion of brethren H. Foster and D. Chambers brethren J. A. Comfort, Smith Woodfield, W. Foster, John Morgan, Pryor, G. W. Russell, Alfred Jelly, and Robert O'Dell were appointed delegates to represent the Church at the meetings of the Hertfordshire Union to be held in Lilehouse Lk. Chapel, Hitchin on Wed^{nes} next, June 9th, it having been explained that the Minister Messrs H. Foster and Halsey would be present as members of the Union Committee.

On the motion of two of the deacons it was resolved, that the names of the following members, who had all absented themselves from the Lord's Table for periods varying from 3½ to seven years, should be erased from the Roll: — George Hair, Amos Shepherd, Jesse Payne, James H. Norton, and Elizabeth Laughton.

Names of other absentees having been read by the Rev. J. A. Comfort, and the members having been requested to communicate with them, the meeting was closed with prayer.

J. G. Marchant, Chairman, Sep. 2. 1880.

1880.

Church Meeting, Sept: 2. 1880.

Prayer was offered by Mr Chambers, after which the Minutes of the previous meeting were adopted.

671. The Rev. J. A. Comfort having during the past few weeks communicated by letter with several non-resident members letters were read from the following absent friends asking still to be retained on our Church Roll: Fanny Gedney, Emma Francis, M. A. Salter, Elizabeth Morris, Mr + Mrs James, and Louisa Jackson. The request of these friends was complied with. A communication of the same kind was received from Edwin Rudd, which it was agreed to further consider at the next meeting.

672. On the application of Susannah Wetherhead, who has for some years been in service in a clergyman's family, her name was erased from the Roll. The name of Rachel Parker was also removed, she having joined the Baptist Church at Vernon Chapel, King's Cross Road ^{about 150 years ago,} and being now under the impression that she had been regularly transferred, which does not appear to have been the case.

673. The following were proposed as Candidates for Church Membership, after Baptism:

Mary Ann Dowton; visitors, Brethren H. Foster + Halsey
Elizabeth Underwood; " " Wm Foster + J. Morgan
Jemima Strickland; " " Woodfield + Chambers
Mary Ann Kitchener; " " J. A. Comfort of Prayers.

674. Brethren M. H. Foster, Halsey, Comfort, Pryor, and G. W. Russell were appointed delegates of the Church to the Autumnal Meetings of Baptist Union, to be held in London during the first week in October.

675. Mr George Halsey, stating that on account of

indifferent health, the increasing claims on his time by business, and other reasons he had for some time wished to do so, formally resigned the office of deacon to which he had been elected in February, 1870. Brethren M. H. Foster & J. A. Comfort having expressed the thanks of the Church for Mr. Halsey's past services, and the regret which was felt that he could no longer retain the office, moved the acceptance of the resignation, which resolution was then passed by the Church.

The Minister expressed his personal thanks for the special assistance which the deacons had given during the past few months of his absence during the week at the Met: Lab: College. Particular reference was made to the assistance given by the Rev. J. A. Comfort and Mr. Woodfield in visiting the sick, and to the Secretarial and other service also given by the former. The meeting was closed with singing and prayer.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman, Sep. 23. 80.

Church Meeting, Sep: 23. 80.

After prayer by Mr. Henry Foster, the reports of the visitors were given on the cases of the candidates proposed on Sept. 2nd, when it was unanimously agreed to ^{receive} into fellowship after baptism Mary Ann Downton, Elizabeth Underwood, Jemima Strickland, and Mary Ann Kitchener. The meeting was closed with prayer by Mr. Woodfield.

F. G. Marchant

Chairman, Nov. 14: 80.

Church Meeting, Nov: 11. 1880.

Prayer having been offered by Mr. Merritt, the minutes of the last meeting were confirmed. The Minister reported the death of Deborah Valentine, who having been a member of the Church for fifty-nine years, and the Senior member on the Roll for nearly three years, passed peacefully to her rest towards the close of last month. The death of James Wilson on the previous evening, Nov. 3rd, was also reported, he having been a consistent member of the Church for thirty-seven years.

Permission was given to apply to the Church at Wadhams Street, Weston Super Mare, for the dismission of Hannah Mary Comfort, sister of our deacon, the Rev. J. A. Comfort.

Mr. Wm. Foster called attention to the poor attendance at the Sunday Morning Prayer Meeting. After remarks by several brethren on the desirability of sustaining both this Prayer Meeting and the monthly Church Meeting more efficiently the meeting was closed with singing and prayer.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman, Dec: 16. 80.

Church Meeting, Dec: 16th, 1880.

The meeting was commenced with singing, after which prayer was offered by brethren Morgan & Woodfield.

The minutes having been read & confirmed, the death of Catherine Crawley was reported to the Church, this sister having been in honourable membership for forty-four years.

On receipt of a letter of transfer from the Wadhams Street Church, Weston Super. Mare, it was unanimously agreed to receive Hannah Mary Comfort into fellowship.

A letter was read from Mr. Richard Johnson,

formerly a member with us, requesting that application might be made to Camden Road for the transfers of himself and Mrs Johnson to the Church here; also those of Tom Richard Johnson, Annie E. Johnson, and James Healey Johnson from the same Church, and of Emily E. Bayley their adopted daughter, from the Church at New Barnet. The minister was unanimously instructed to apply for these dismissals.

A letter was read from the Rev. Daniel Wilshere, of the Bahamas, cordially thanking friends of the Church and Congregation for their present of a Communion Service in October last.

On the motion of the Rev. J. A. Comfort and Mr. G. W. Russell, it was agreed, if convenient, to hold the New Year's Meeting on Monday or Thursday of the first week in January. The meeting was closed by the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman, Jan: 3. 81.

Annual Church Meeting, Monday, Jan: 3rd. 1881.

After Tea, at which a goodly number of Communicants were present the evening Meeting was commenced by singing, reading the Scriptures, & prayer was offered by Mr. Chambers. The minutes of the preceding meeting were read & confirmed.

A letter was read from the Church at Camden Road dismissing Mr. M. Johnson, Miss A. S. Johnson & Miss J. R. & J. H. Johnson, who were accordingly received into fellowship.

The Pastor proposed Miss Emily Johnson for Baptism & Membership, & intimated that the Misses & Misses would be Baptized at the same time. *Visitors Brethren Comfort & Halsey.

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On the motion of Miss^{rs} Woodfield M. H. Foster, it was decided to appoint the Rev. J. A. Confort - to the office of Secretary to the Church. The Roll was then read by M. M. H. Foster which showed that careful revision, the Church contained 257 members. The Pastor then laid before the Meeting the following Statistics showing that, during the year, there had been, -

Additions (1) By Profession 5

Annie Ellis, Mary Ann Boston; Elizabeth Underwood, Annina Brickland; John Anderson having been baptized tho' previously admitted.

(2) By Dismissal from other Churches 2

Martha Hunt, Ann Dalston, Hannah Mary Confort from Wista Super Mare.

Removals. (1) By Dismissal to other Churches 3

Martha Ruston, to Chatteris, Ellen Arnold, to Hastings, Rachel Parker, to Vernon Chapel Kings Cross.

(2) By Death 6

Elizabeth Cressy, Miriam Brown, Harriett Aitken, Deborah Valentine, James Wilson, Catherine Cook.

(3) By Erasure 6

George Hait, Amos Shepherd, Jesse Payne, James H. Norton, Elizabeth Loughton, Susannah Webb.

Additions 7. Decrease 15. Decrease for the Year 8.

Attendance at Lord's Table

Jan. 145. Feb. 142. Mar. 136. Ap. 124. May 134. June 133. July 140. Aug 119. Sep. 111. Oct 130. Nov 140. Dec. 141. average 132 1/2

Appropriate & practical Addresses were then delivered by Messrs
M.H. Foster, Jacob Russell, Smith Woodfield, L. Halsey, John
Beard (of South Africa), R. Johnson, J. Morgan, & F. Foster.

After singing the Customary Hymn, the Pastor closed the
Meeting with Prayer & the Benediction.

H. G. Marchant, Chairman.

Jan. 27. 81.

Church Meeting. January 27. 1881

Prayer was offered by M.H. Foster & Minutes of a preceding
meeting were read & confirmed.

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On the testimony of brethren Compton & Halsey, it was agreed
to receive Miss Emily Johnson into ^{after Baptism} fellowship; and Miss Emily & Bayley
by letter of Transfer read from the Church of Mr. Barnett.

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The Pastor then proposed the following Candidates for Membership
Miss Charlotte Hayward. visitors, brethren M.H. Foster & W. Foster.
Miss Emily Dickett. visitors, brethren Woodfield & R. Johnson.
Miss M^{rs} Rainford. visitors, brethren L. Halsey, & J. Morgan.

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Applications were read for the following letters of dismission
Mr M. A. Myers to the Jarvis Street Baptist Church Toronto.
Mr W. Cousins to the Congregational Church Newport Pagnell
Miss Sarah Shaw to the Baptist Church ^{St. Peter} Ashby-de-la-Zouch, -
and were granted accordingly.

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Mr Johnson then called the attention of the Church to the needs
of a poor during the seven seasons; and on the motion of
Messrs M.H. Foster & R. Johnson, it was resolved that a Collection
for that object be made on a morning of the First Lord's Day, in Feb^r.

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The Pastor having suggested the desirability of publishing
a Manual, containing the Sermon on the New Year's Motto, Statistics
of the work & Societies of the Church, Names & addresses of Members, &c.,

on the motion of Mrs. R. Johnson & Mrs. Morgan it was unanimously agreed that such a Manual be published for the present year as follows & May

Attention was called to the Rule of the Church requiring that the preachers regularly on the Village Preachers' Plan should have the sanction of the Church:— it was resolved on a motion of Mrs. In. Morgan & C. Halsey, that the Rule of the Church be amended to.

After Prayers by a Pastor & a Benediction the Meeting closed
H. G. Marchant, Chairman

Feb. 17. 81.

Church Meeting. February 17. 1881

After Prayers offered by Mr Cooper, the Minutes of the preceding Meeting were read & confirmed

In reply to a question asked by the Pastor, the Steward stated that the Collection for the first Sunday - February was in the Morning. £6.10.6½: - Afternoon £5.0.3 & also £11.11.0

The testimony of the visitors appointed to visit Miss Charlotte Gatward, Mrs. Emily Whitton, Mr. Mr. Rainsford was then heard; and being unusually interesting, & satisfactory, it was unanimously agreed to receive them into fellowship

Permission was then given to apply to the Church at Walsworth Road for the dismission of Lucy Hutson

On the motion of Mrs. R. Johnson & M. H. Foster it was unanimously agreed to have a Congregational Tea on Thursday March 17.

It was proposed by the Secretary & seconded by Mr. R. H. that the friends be asked to give the Trays for the Congregational Tea, with a view to clear the debt remaining on the

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ratified for warming the School Rooms & Vestry. After some discussion as to the desirability of such a course, it was at length agreed to carry out the proposal.

On the motion of Mrs^{rs} Woodfield & W. Foster it was decided to have the Missionary Tea & Meeting on Good Friday as usual.

After singing, & Prayers offered by the Pastor, the Meeting closed.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman

March 31. 81.

Church Meeting, March 31. 81.

Prayer having been offered by Mr. Wm Foster, the Minutes of the last meeting were confirmed.

The death was reported of Thomas Dodwell, who passed peacefully to his rest on March 14th, after membership with this Church during 38 years, having been dismissed to us from Long Crendon in 1843, and having held the office of Deacon since May, 1849, a period of nearly 32 years, for the last 14 of which he had been the Senior member of the diaconate. Thanks were given to God for the long and faithful life which had been so consistently and usefully spent in the service of Christ.

The baptism was reported of Charlotte Galtward, Emily Johnson, Emily Newton, Annie and Patten Ekins, Mr. and Mrs. Rainsford, and of Harold Doggett.

On the dismission of the Church at Walsworth Road it was agreed to receive Lucy Hutson into fellowship.

The Minister stated that on account the weak state of the Rev. J. A. Comfort's health he had wished, for a time

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at least, to be relieved from the offices and duties to which the Church had called him. Expressing the sympathy felt for Mr. Comfort in his illness, the Minister stated that the other officers cheerfully agreed to undertake the duties of their fellow deacon and Secretary till he might be able to resume them.

408.

Mr. M. H. Foster then laid before the Church the Annual Accounts of the Ministers, the Incidental, and the Burial Funds. The funds for Incidental Expenses again shewed a marked improvement on the accounts of recent years. The Rev. J. A. Comfort having read the Balance Sheet of the Poor Fund, on the motion of Mr. M. H. Foster, Messrs J. R. Johnson and Grigg were appointed auditors of all accounts for the past and the ensuing year.

Mr. J. R. Johnson having called attention to the fact that no Sunday School account had been presented, Mr. Grigg kindly undertook to name the matter to the Teachers, saying that if the Church wished it he had no doubt the Teachers would be pleased that the S. School account recently passed at their own meeting should be laid before the Church.

409.

Notice of motion to alter the time of the week evening service from 7.15 to 7.30 having been given by Mr. Woodfield, and reference having been made to the Recognition Service of the Rev. W. G. Lewis, on the previous evening, as Minister of the Sister Church at Dagnall Street, St. Albans, the meeting was closed by singing and prayer.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman
May 2. 81.

Church Meeting, May 2nd.

After Prayer by Mr Chambers, the Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

710. Messrs Tom Johnson and Griggs having reported that they had audited the accounts of the several Funds named in the preceding Minutes, these accounts were passed unanimously.

711. In accordance with the request of the Church Mr Griggs read the financial balance sheet of the Sunday School Fund for the year terminating in September last. It having been explained that this account had already been audited by Mr Braund, it was unanimously passed by the Church.

712. On the motion of Mr M. H. Foster and Mr Johnson, the appointment of Mr Braund as auditor of the S. School accounts for the ensuing year was confirmed.

713. It was moved by Messrs Woodfield and F. Foster and passed that the week evening services, for the future, begin at 7.30 instead of at 7.15 o'clock.

714. A cordial vote of thanks was given to Mr Braund for his services during several past years as Treasurer or Secretary to the Baptist Foreign Mission Fund. On the motion of Messrs M. H. Foster and J. A. Compton, Mr Tom Johnson was unanimously requested to take the offices thus relinquished by Mr Braund.

715. Notice of motion was made by Mr F. Foster that the Lord's Supper should be occasionally administered in the Village Churches.

F. G. Marchant,
Chairman, June 23. 81.

Special Church Meeting, May 30. 81.

416. The Church having met at the close of the Prayer Meeting, the following brethren were proposed by Messrs G. W. Russell and Wm Foster as delegates to the Annual Meeting of the Herts Bap^t Union to be held on June 1st, at Watford: — M. H. Foster, J. A. Comfort, G. Halsey, J. Pryor & R. O'Dell. The resolution was passed unanimously.

417. The Minister was authorised to write for the dismissal of Isaac Iberson, from the Congregational Church at Chesterton Cambridge.

418. Miss Alice Jeeves and Miss Lydia Butcher were proposed for fellowship after baptism, Messrs Woodfield and J. A. Comfort being appointed visitors in the former case, and Messrs Wm Foster and R. Johnson in the latter.

H. G. Marchant,

Chairman, June 23. 81.

Church Meeting, June 23rd, 1881.

After Prayer by Mr John Morgan, the minutes of the last meeting were read and adopted.

419. It was moved by brethren Fred. Foster and seconded by M. H. Foster "That it would be for the benefit of the Church, and for the welfare of our village Congregation if arrangements could be made by which the Lord's Supper should be celebrated at stated times in the village." After some discussion, this resolution was carried unanimously. It was proposed by the Minister & Mr Bennie, and carried, "That

The Pastor and Deacons, with brethren F. Foster, Morgan, R. Johnson, and Chambers be a Committee to consider some suitable plan for giving effect to the foregoing resolution, and that they be requested to report their recommendations at the next meeting of the Church.

420. It was agreed to dismiss Louisa Jackson to the Commercial Road Church, Oxford; and Mrs Charles Leonard, formerly Sarah Johnson, to the First Congregational Church in Westwood, Kalaska Co. Michigan.

421. On the testimony of the brethren Woodfield, and Comfort, with that of Mr Chambers and the Ministers, it was unanimously resolved that Alice Jeeves be admitted to fellowship after baptism.

422. Mr R. Johnson, who stated that he might not be able to be present at the next Church meeting, reported on his interview, held in London, with Lydia Butcher, a daughter of our esteemed member Mrs Butcher. Mr Johnson spoke of the case as one of considerable interest, in that one so young should have been led to deeply feel her sinfulness, to earnestly seek it, and to give such satisfactory testimony that she had received it. He cordially recommended her to the Church. As our young friend would not return home for a few weeks, and Mr Wm Foster had not seen her, the application was referred to the next meeting for further consideration.

423. ✓
 The Minister stated that the officers having taken into consideration the diminished number of the diaconate occasioned by the recent death of Mr. Dodwell and the withdrawal of Mr. Halsey recommended that steps should be taken at some early meeting of the Church for the election of two or three additional deacons.

424. ✓
 Mr. Bayshaw who has for some time kindly undertaken the superintendence of the S. School at Preston, stated that he should be unable to do this after the close of next month though he might attend occasionally and take part in the work. Expressing the thanks of the Church for Mr. Bayshaw's past services, the Minister urged the friends to do what they could to prevent the Preston School from going back.

The meeting was closed by singing & Prayer.

H. G. Marchant,
 Chairman, Aug: 12. 81.

Church Meeting, Aug: 12th, 1881.

Prayer having been offered by Mr. Chambers, the Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

425. ✓
 The of the Committee chosen to consider the most suitable plan for occasionally administering the Lord's Supper to Christian friends in the Village Congregation was deferred till the next monthly meeting.

426. ✓
 Additional testimony having been given by Mr. Wm. Foster on the case of Miss Lydia Butcher, it was unanimously agreed that after baptism she should be admitted to the Church.

427. ✓
 On the letter of dismission from the Congl. Church at Chesterton, Cambridge, it was unanimously agreed to receive Mr. Isaac Ibberson to fellowship.

128.
The Minister was instructed to apply to the Church at Canterbury for the transfer of Mr Burls, who has again come to reside in Hitchin.

129.
In reference to Minute 723, of last meeting, the Minister stated that the officers had agreed to recommend the election of three additional deacons. The Minute of June 12th, 1879, as to the mode of election having been read, a Church Meeting for the fresh election was called for Thursday next, when it was understood that the Church should come prepared to nominate three brethren and the officers three, and that on the six or less number of names so nominated the ballot should then be taken.

130.
After considerable ^{introduced by Mr John Morgan,} discussion, on the desirability of maintaining the rule that all village Preachers shall be required to preach before the Church, or before some deputation from the Church, Mr Fred. Foster gave notice of a motion for rescinding the rule, to be considered at the next monthly meeting.

Special prayer having been offered by the Minister and Mr John Morgan for Divine Guidance in the forthcoming choice of additional deacons, the meeting was concluded.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman
Sep: 8th, 1881.

131.
Special C. M., Aug. 18th, 1881.
For the Election of Three Additional Deacons.

The Minute ~~of last~~ calling the present meeting having been read for information, the Chairman called on the brother appointed by the Church to declare the

nomination which had been agreed on by the members.

Thereupon, Mr. R. Johnson, said that having been appointed by the Church in connection with brethren G. W. Russell and Chambers to act as scrutineers they had opened the hitherto sealed papers half an hour before the present meeting and found the ballot of the Church to be as follows:

Mr. J. Morgan 31; Mr. R. Johnson 24; Mr. F. Foster 11; & Mr. G. W. Russell 11.

The Minister stated that the unanimous nomination of the Officers was for brethren John Morgan, R. Johnson, & F. Foster.

This singular unanimity of the nominations was a matter of deep thankfulness to all present, and was specially commented on as an indication of the gracious guidance of God in answer to the special prayer which had been offered for Divine direction. & Brethren G. W. Russell & R. Johnson having successively wished to withdraw their names, the Chairman, thanking them for generously putting themselves in the hands of the Church, pointed out the inexpediency of any statement being made at stage which might influence the vote, and ruled that the Church was incompetent to declare its mind except through the ballot already agreed upon.

The ballot for the election was then taken with the following result: Mr. Morgan 54; Mr. Johnson 54; Mr. Foster 50; Mr. Russell 18.

Mr. Morgan & Mr. Foster accepted the call of the Church, and thanking the brethren for the confidence

shown in them, earnestly asked the prayers of them all. Mr. Johnson, on account of ~~difficulties~~ the great claims which his daily duties already made on his time and strength, said that, while he sincerely thanked the Church, he found it impossible to accept the office. Subsequently, at the earnest request of the Church, Mr. Johnson consented to reconsider the matter, and to communicate his decision to the brethren in the course of a week or fortnight.

The meeting was concluded with singing and prayer.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman.

Sep. 8. 81.

Church Meeting Sept. 8. 1881

After prayer offered by Mr. Briggs, the minutes of the two preceding Church Meetings were read & confirmed.

A letter was read from Mr. R. Johnson, stating that after prayerful consideration he had come to the decision, that he could not accept the call of the Church to serve in the office of deacon; at the same time he would gladly help the church in visitation, or any other work, - out of office.

The Pastor expressed the regret felt at Mr. Johnson's decision, & announced that no further election of deacons would take place, until the expiration of the period of office of the brethren last elected.

Mr. F. Foster moved the resolution of which he had previously given notice. "That the ^{rule} resolution in the Church Book requiring the Village preachers, before being placed on the plan to preach before the Church, or before a deputation appointed to hear them, in the villages, be rescinded. This resolution was seconded by Mr. Renne,

Carried

A letter was read from the Church at Canterbury dismissing Mr. Durb's four fellowships, who was most cordially welcomed back

Church Meeting, Sep: 29. 81.

738.
The Minutes of the last meeting having been adopted the dismission was granted of Miss Amy Weak, to the Church at Belvoir Street Leicester.

739.
Brethren Wm Foster and Burds were requested to visit Emily Mayo, who was proposed for fellowship, after baptism.

741.
A resolution was moved by brethren F. Foster and John Morgan, and being subsequently amended on the suggestion Messrs J. R. Johnson ^{and Burds,} and the Minister ^{was} passed as follows: "That any person desiring to become a village Preacher shall be appointed on the Quarterly Plan only under the following conditions:—

1. The brother in question shall be voted on probation for six months at a Quarterly Meeting of the village Preachers.

2. During the six months, the candidate shall be expected to preach at least four times, if possible more; and the village Preachers who follow him on succeeding Sundays (and any members of the Church who may have opportunity) are requested to enquire into the nature of the Candidate's gifts, and the acceptableness of the services which he has conducted.

3. At the end of six months' probation, a month's notice may be given at a Church Meeting only by the Minister, either of the Deacons, or by a recognised member of the village Preachers that he will propose the name of the Candidate for election at the next monthly meeting of the Church, at which meeting the Church, as it may judge best after hearing the reports of the services which the Candidate has conducted, may instruct his name to be placed on

the roll of Authorised Village Preachers, may recommend an additional six months' probation, or may advise the Candidate not to pursue a work for which he does not seem to be qualified.

4. That printed lists for the Quarterly Plan be prepared, headed only by the names of the brethren who have been duly appointed by the Church as Village Preachers; it being understood that the names of Casual Supplies, or brethren on probation may be written in the body of the Plan in making up the quarterly Engagements.

F. G. Marchant, Chairman.
Nov: 11th, 1881.

Church Meeting, Nov: 11th, 1881.

After prayer by Mr Chambers, the minutes of the last meeting were read. The resolution touching the election of Village Preachers having been somewhat altered by the Minister, the Church unanimously sanctioned the alteration and confirmed the minutes in the amended form.

742. On the motion of the Minister & Mr Morgan it was further resolved that the brethren M. H. Foster, Wm Foster, Smith Woodfield, John Morgan, F. Foster, D. Chambers, Wm ^{Robert Odell,} Barker, James Rennie, Edward J. P. Burks, Frederick Gripps, Samuel Parker, Alfred Jell, James Morgan and James Skinner be forthwith placed on the printed roll of our recognised Village Preachers.

743. On the testimony of the brethren Wm Foster, E. Burks, & the Minister it was unanimously agreed to receive Emily Mayo into fellowship after baptism.

744. Leave was given to apply to the Church at Croydon