

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Mission to Pictou County.

EXTRACT OF LETTER FROM REV. JAMES STEVENS, To the Secretary of the Nova Scotia Home Missionary Board.

DEAR BROTHER,

I left home on the 26th of August, spent the following Sabbath in South Rawdon, preached three times in that community, attended a temperance meeting, and took a collection for the Home Mission, amounting to 17s. 8d. Preached once in Upper Rawdon, and from thence proceeded to Onslow, preached three times there and proceeded to New Annan, where I preached once and passed on to River John, here I spent two Sabbaths, preached twice each Sabbath and several times during the week. I next visited the town of Pictou, preached once in town, and passed on to Merrigomish, where I spent three Sabbaths. The Saturday previous to leaving there I collected the Baptist friends in conference, when they entered into engagements to hold a conference meeting monthly, from that time forward. The day following I administered the Lord's Supper to the Church, returned to Pictou, preached in town, attended an evening prayer-meeting with the brethren, and returned to River John. Since I commenced labouring in this county, I have explored the field from this settlement to Barney's River, a distance of about fifty miles, and have endeavoured thus far to preach the Gospel of Christ faithfully, and affectionately, in the respective places which I have visited. Although I have not yet observed anything special as the result of my labour, yet I would humbly trust that some effect may have been produced, that will eventually become manifest, to the praise and glory of God. In this county there are only about 45 professed Baptists, whose principles and practice are in accordance with those of the Churches comprising the Nova Scotia Baptist Associations. In every part of the county which I have visited, I have endeavoured to enlist the sympathies of the people in the Missionary cause, and, in this have met with considerable encouragement. An Auxiliary Society is being formed in this county, the funds of which will be committed to the direction of the Nova Scotia Baptist Home Missionary Board.

Although a considerable amount of missionary labour has been performed in this county, within the last few years, but little now appears as the fruit of all the effort that has been made. The fact so often brought before the denomination, that the mere flying visits of missionaries in the eastern part of our province can effect but little, is particularly applicable to this county. Permanency is the only plan that will succeed here.

It is quite evident that the first step towards carrying out a plan of successful missionary labour in this county, is the erection of a Baptist meeting-house in the town of Pictou. This could be easily accomplished if the Baptist Churches in the province would afford a reasonable portion of aid towards its object. This being accomplished, and a suitable Missionary Board in town—a good congregation would soon be gathered, and the mission wholly sustain itself in the county.

It would be useless to attempt the establishment of a Mission here, or any other place, where the missionary would have to depend upon the generosity of other denominations for their meeting-house to preach in, or to resort to a Town-Hall, or some private room as has frequently been the case. The kindness of Christian friends in the several places where I have laboured since I came to the county, has contributed to my comfort, and in some instances encouraged my heart, in this region of spiritual darkness and dull formality.

Intemperance is still spreading its destructive influence in this county, and but little effort is made to arrest its progress. Professors of religion who make no effort to stay this fearful plague, will be found guilty when inquisition shall be made for blood. How can they excuse themselves? One poor fellow, in a state of intemperance, fell across the railway, at New Glasgow, the other day, and was crushed to death by the train in a moment, another stabbed to death on board a vessel in the harbor of Pictou, by a man in a state of intoxication, and another in town lately died with the horrors, brought on by strong drink. O when will the people awake to righteousness.

Yours truly, J. STEVENS.

River John, Oct. 30th, '57.

Zion lengthening her Cords and strengthening her Stakes.

NEW MEETING-HOUSE.

The Rev. Charles Randall writes:—

"I may just say that we opened our new Meeting-house, near Weymouth, for divine worship, on Sabbath, the 1st instant. We had no ministerial assistance, and so had to do the best we could ourselves. Its dimensions are: 40 feet long by 35 feet wide, with gallery across one end, the whole is snugly finished with pews without doors, and furnished with stoves, lamps, books, &c.—The whole costing about £300. On the day following—Monday the 2nd—the pews were sold, for an amount that about covered the expenses of building, so that our house will be free of debt. We now need a revival of "pure and undefiled religion" amongst us. For this, dear brother, pray, and not only that we may be revived, but that all our churches may be blessed with the out-pouring of the Spirit of the Lord."

"OBSERVER" writes from CORNWALLIS:—

"The Baptist Meeting-house in Pereaux, Cornwallis, which was erected some ten years since, at a cost of £175, had remained in an unfinished state until the present Summer, when a considerable number of the wealthier inhabitants chose a Building Committee, and undertook to bear the expense of finishing and furnishing the building, upon the conditions that the pews should be sold at public auction, and that from the proceeds of the sale they should receive remuneration. Upon these terms the house was immediately finished, at a cost of about £275. The pews were all sold on Saturday, 7th November, and the Committee realized from the sales £550, equal to £100 above the whole cost of the house.

"On Sunday, Nov'r. 22nd, the house was opened to the public. Rev. Robert Morton, the pastor, chose for his text, Psalm cxxii. 7.—'Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces.' The almost impassible state of the roads prevented many from attending who would otherwise have been present.

"This house has been erected by united contribution, and reflects great credit upon the inhabitants of Pereaux and vicinity.—This house contains 38 pews on the ground floor, and is capable of seating comfortably 220 persons, while the gallery will seat 120 more; but with judicious management the house will contain and seat about 500 persons. It is heated at present with one stove, but the people are about to avail themselves of the conveniences of a hot-air furnace."

For the Christian Messenger.

Revival in Parrsboro'.

[We regret that the following communication has been overlooked for two or three weeks.—Ed. C. M.]

MR. EDITOR,

Dear Sir,—Believing that it ever affords the readers of your valuable paper pleasure to hear of the cause of God advancing, I send you a few lines to inform you about this revival.

As soon as I returned from the Association I had the pleasure of baptising one convert in this place, and a few weeks after another in Diligent River, which called out a great congregation, to whom I endeavoured to speak on the all-important subject of religion. There was no Baptist Church there at that time, and our prospects appeared small.

About five weeks ago brother Alfred Parker and myself agreed to hold a series of meetings at Diligent River, but not having a house at our command we had to depend upon others. The Lord opened the heart of Mr. J. Cannon, and he allowed his new house to be used for this purpose, which was very suitable, both for size and situation.

We labored together for some time,—brethren of different denominations, especially the Methodist, afforded us assistance. The meetings were very solemn—sinners were weeping, and asking what they must do to be saved. We continued the meetings about five weeks, and there were very few families who were not interested about the salvation of their souls.

I have baptized in all twenty-three, and there are many whom we hope are converted to God, that have not gone forward in that ordinance. Deep solemnity appears resting upon the region round about, and we look for great things.

We anticipate holding a series of meetings at Westbrook, commencing about the twenty-fifth of the month, and would kindly invite our ministering brethren to assist.

I wrote to several ministers to come and assist

in the organization of the Church, which took place on the 24th ult., but none came in time to render any assistance, so that all the labor fell upon me, which I performed to the best of my ability, and, I believe, to the satisfaction of the people generally; and I believe it has caused some to embrace those views which we hold, and which are founded upon truth.

After the Church was organized brethren Miles and McKeen came and preached, which made a deep impression upon the people. God grant that it may be lasting!

Brother Parker is still with me, and affords valuable assistance. We are now on our way to Apple River, hoping that God will bless our labors there also. Pray for us brethren. O for more of that blessed Spirit that was in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours, in Christian affection, THOMAS KIELOR.

Advocate Harbour, Oct. 2nd, 1857.

For the Christian Messenger.

Death's Selections among my Neighbours.

Thirteen years have passed away this day, since the writer of this sketch became a resident in this neighbourhood, and during that brief period how many millions of the human race have paid the penalty due on account of sin—have closed their eyes in death and their destiny has become fixed for ever. But death has not confined his operations to other lands, or other localities, but has been busy in this neighbourhood selecting his victims. We have seen those whose heads had been whiten'd by the storms of seventy or eighty winters, sicken and die, who have given evidence by their lives, of the realities of that religion which they have professed. Again we have seen others—heads of families—beloved and respected by all around. A few months pass away and how changed is the scene, death has been commissioned to enter their dwelling. In some instances the husband has been called; in others the wife, and again both have been taken and the children left. At such times and on such occasions, if our hopes are bounded by the narrow scenes of time, how dark and mysterious do such dispensations appear to the survivors. We cannot trace the footprints of Jehovah's love. We are led to exclaim with one of old, "All these things are against me." But the light of revelation lights up the darkness. We trust numbers of those to whom we refer still live in that better land, safe from the storms of life.

Did your limits permit we might speak of the numbers of youth and children carried to the silent tomb, but we will only further refer to the family of Captain Spence. Mr. Spence was a sailor, but while remaining at home during the winter of 1848, a pitch-fork accidentally penetrated his thigh, which after months of suffering, was the means of his death. The husband is removed, but four blooming children yet remain dependant on the widow. Six years revolve and we are again called to sympathise with her in the death of Sarah, the eldest, in her 21st year. Sixteen months are numbered with the past, and disease again enters that dwelling; John, the eldest son is now the victim, and after five months of languishing is carried to his grave, in his 19th year. Time speeds on, Wave follows wave in quick succession, and in October of the present year, Catherine, another daughter of seventeen summers, after experiencing the value of religion to support the christian during scenes of protracted suffering—she too has passed away to meet her beloved relatives before the throne of God.

If life be not in length of days In silken locks and furrowed brow But living to the Saviour's praise, How few have lived so long as thou.

November 15th, 1857.

For the Christian Messenger.

Donation Visit.

On Wednesday, the 22nd ult., the brethren and friends at Glenville having a desire to contribute towards the comfort of their pastor, the Rev. H. Charlton, according to previous arrangement, met in the School-room, (it being 20 miles from his residence), where they enjoyed a very interesting and pleasant session. After partaking of the rich repast provided several addresses were delivered. The money and other articles contributed amounted in value to about £10 14s. 6d. The Church is at present but a "little one." May it soon become "a thousand." Visits such as this have various benefits arising from them; one of which, and not the least, is, that they promote Union. May others "go and do likewise."

ONE PRESENT.

Nov. 12th, 1857.

P. S. The friends of our pastor will be glad to hear that Mrs. C., who has been suffering from a long and severe attack of typhoid fever, is now recovering.

Religious Intelligence.

The Future of India.

When we are told that due regard must be had to the "religious prejudices" of the Indian peoples, we are persuaded that other questions will come up too, such as, what is religion? and what is to be included in the catalogue of religious prejudices? We are certain that much confusion of thought exists on this subject, even in this country. For two thousand years it was a "religious prejudice" in India to burn living widows on the funeral pile of their dead husbands; and once a year to strangle and drown infants at the Isle of Saugor. It is within the memory of most now living that the idea of treating these doings as "religious prejudices" was abandoned, and they were condemned as acts of murder. And we must deal with many more "religious prejudices" in the same fashion; and by force of law raze those temples to the ground whose walls are covered with filthy and obscene pictures, and whose festivals are one continued scene of loathsome profligacy and vice. It will be one happy result of this great calamity, that not only in India, but here at home, some clearer light will be thrown on this question of "religious prejudices;" and much foolish sentimentalism, which has had a wide and dangerous influence, swept away!

The conviction that Divine Providence has suffered India to fall into British hands with the ultimate view of bringing it under the sway of Christianity, is taking root in the public mind; and our neglect of duty, on this momentous subject, is freely confessed, and we doubt not, truly felt. The Government has been conducted, for the most part, in a spirit purely commercial, as if its sole end were the amassing of wealth. The higher end has been lost sight of and forgotten, and the House of Commons, and the British people have, by their indifference, sanctioned this neglect. It would seem that some such a calamity as this mutiny, with all its horrors, was needed to rouse the nation from its criminal apathy.

Unquestionably the future policy of the Indian Government should be tolerant of the religious rites of the people, provided they are not openly gross and obscene.—Such rites are, however, public nuisances, and must be suppressed. But this policy should be based on the morality and justice of Christianity, and have for its object the social progress and civilisation of the people. While, on the one hand all unnecessary interference with the religious practices of the people should be studiously avoided, on the other, there must be no hesitation to interfere where the welfare of the people, good government, and public peace require such interference. The great principle of the Christian faith should be the basis of the political system—the laws should be framed in accordance with their spirit—and they should be the standard of right and wrong. The men into whose hands the administration of public affairs in India is placed, should regulate and guide it by the motives which these principles supply. Doing their own proper work, dispensing justice, and protecting the community, and leaving all spiritual agency to the care of spiritually-minded men, they ought not to be deterred from doing justice by any "religious prejudices" whatever. All tyranny, cruelty, and immorality, should be punished as such. They may spring from passion or from creeds. No matter. Deal with them as criminal acts. Persecution must not be permitted, nor abandonment of duty winked at, though the authority of the Koran, or the Vedas, be pleaded in justification thereof. Let no man suffer in life, property, or freedom, because of his religion; still less should a native suffer if he becomes a Christian. Caste must no longer be allowed as an excuse for not doing what the public service requires. Let this be known as a condition of employment. No native can plead that he is treated unjustly, if you tell him this beforehand. In this way you neither prohibit nor sanction it. Some cruel rites have been put down. Do the same with those that remain of brutality, obscenity, immolation, torture, murder; and punish their abettors, even though they tell you they are sacred things, and are a part and parcel of their religion. This is but justice; and on no pretence, though urged by the high priests of Mohammedanism or Hinduism, should its sanction be set aside. While we do not require the expulsion of the Koran or the Vedas from the public schools, we insist on the permission to use the Word of God in them. That has hitherto been shut out. We say, let it come in. We ask no favour, no patronage, no pay. But we also say, that the Government must not favour, patronise, and support Mohammedan superstition or Hindu idolatries. To use the homely adage, we insist on "a free stage and no favour."

The Christian people of England must then arise. In their hands are now placed vast responsibilities; let them be true to their position and duty. They can, under God, make the Parliament and Government feel their influence; and in the calamities which have fallen on a Government hitherto carefully ignoring Christianity, they must see this truth, that to insure the Divine protection and blessing they must obey His command, to preach the gospel to the peoples committed to their care. Instead of relaxing our efforts, they should be redoubled. These calamities would have been vastly more serious if Christian missions had not, in some measure, done their work in India. Let the church of God determine to flood the land with an augmented spiritual agency. If we would avert the recurrence of these dreadful scenes, we must do this. Nothing but the prevalence of Christian truth among the nations of India can give stability to our rule, or peace to the people.