

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Father Harris Harding, and the Revival in Yarmouth, in 1807.

MR. EDITOR,

Every relic of the early history of our denomination in this province is fraught with deep interest, and ought to be carefully preserved as a memento of the apostolic piety and zeal of the founders of our churches. They were men "full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith," raised up to accomplish a great work, and divinely qualified for it, and the result was, that "much people was added to the Lord."

Yours truly, HENRY ANGELL.

Yarmouth, March 7, 1857.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. Harris Harding to the Editor of the Mass. Bap. Miss. Magazine, dated January 30th, 1807.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Mr. Chipman, with whom I am intimate, requested me to write to you, and give you a brief account of the gracious work of God, which of late has been made manifest, in the salvation of a number of precious souls in this part of the Lord's vineyard.

Previous to the Lord's pouring upon us the gracious effusions of His Holy Spirit, there had been a great declension in religion, attended with great discouragement of soul in believers, and coldness, backwardness, and neglect of religious duties.

On the next day I administered the ordinance of baptism to six of them, before a large and serious assembly. From that time the work of God began to make its appearance. Several were pricked to the heart. Our meetings were crowded, and awed by the presence of the Holy One of Israel. His truth, like barbed arrows, penetrated the souls of many, and extorted the cry, "What must I do to be saved?"

About this time brother Theodore Harding, on his way from the States, visited, and preached three times among us, to the approbation of all, and I trust to the good of many. The Lord's arm was gloriously revealed. For some weeks there was scarcely a day in which some one or more did not profess a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus, in their soul's conversion.

Brother Chipman visited and preached four Sabbaths with us, soon after brother Harding left us. He rejoiced greatly to see what the Lord was doing, and our bowels were much refreshed in Christ, by his preaching and labours of love.

Our church was formerly upon the open communion plan, consisting of Congregationalists and Baptists, but since the late happy revival of religion, having satisfaction from the word and testimony of God, they have unitedly adopted, and settled upon the Baptist system of faith and practice; and it is wonderful to see how God has owned and blessed His sacred ordinance to

the conviction of sinners, and the comforting of saints. Frequently have we seen the power of God visibly displayed, on such baptismal occasions, through the last fall and winter thus far advanced. Brother Chipman assisted me in administering the ordinance to a considerable number while he was here; and the Sabbath after he left us I baptized a number more, and have continued to do so every Sabbath since. Neither the inclemency of the weather, which sometimes proved very unfavourable, nor the delicacy of some person's constitutions, prevented their following their Lord, or obeying His righteous command, so that since the fifth of October last, one hundred and forty persons have been enabled to obey the Lord in that institution, and with the greatest propriety and spirit of devotion have sung and applied Mr. Leland's hymn:

"Christians if your hearts be warm, Ice and snow will do no harm."

I have good grounds to think upwards of two hundred persons have been savingly united to Christ, since the time mentioned above; some of whom are aged people, who have been living without God in the world for many years, and are now brought to his feet, acknowledging his mercy, and his sufficiency of grace abounding to the chief of sinners. Their grey hairs, which a short time ago were their shame, now indeed are their glory. Likewise a goodly number of precious youth and children, are made with joy to "remember now their Creator," and with melting hearts declare to others, what great things Jesus of Nazareth had done for their souls. Some of them are wonderfully drawn out with bowels of pity, tenderness, and compassion for their unconverted friends and neighbours; whilst others are enraptured, and greatly delighted with the divine beauties and excellencies of a glorious Redeemer, so that our meeting-house many times has seemed as if filled with his glory, and his people constrained to say, "I love the place where thine honour dwelleth."

At Argyle and Barrington, two townships next eastward from this, God has also been pleased to revive His gracious work of late. In the former, through the means of brother Towner, a faithful godly Baptist minister, whose labours God has been pleased to crown with abundant success, where he is a settled pastor, I cannot ascertain the exact number, but I believe upwards of seventy have been baptized there, within a few months past.

A number, I have recently heard, are brought to a saving knowledge of Christ, at Barrington, where they have no settled minister, but the particulars I have not learned.

Please to excuse the freedom and brevity of this from a stranger; and when you can find leisure favour me with a line.

I am, Sir, yours, chiefly for Christ's sake, HARRIS HARDING.

For the Christian Messenger.

Book Agency.

MR. EDITOR,

For some seven years past I have been engaged more or less in the circulation of books, in the western parts of the Province, chiefly in the counties of Amherst, Digby, Kings, Queens, and Lunenburg, and part of Yarmouth. During that time I have distributed many hundred volumes of religious books by sale; and many thousand pages of tracts gratuitously. The latter having been supplied me for circulation by the Religious Tract Society of London.

The different associations have been in the habit for some time past, of reporting their views, as to the desirableness of the extensive circulation of religious books and tracts throughout the province, and I have seen at times statements in the Christian Messenger, of Societies being formed in different localities—and at different times, to carry out the said object. But I have never seen or heard any formal or authentic statement, that they were in active operation. And enquiries are sometimes made if they are, but I presume, but little has at present been done in the business, and that, unsuccessfully in a pecuniary point of view. I only presume so, and that, not in any invidious manner; and if I am mistaken, I hope to be forgiven. I censure no individual or party, but I expect if it has been unsuccessful, it has arisen from an error (in judgment) in attempting to sell them at the residence of the purchaser, at the same price that they are sold in New York or Boston. No doubt the motive which induced the adoption of such a course, was good. But there are expenses of freight, and, sometimes damage of books as well as

the remuneration of the Agent for his time, and his small amount of sales compared with those of a large book store in a city; and then again the difference of currency; all make it requisite that a somewhat higher rate of price be charged in travelling through this province, than in New York or Boston.

The agent must be paid from some source. If he is employed by a Church, or Society, and his remuneration is not derived from the people, or the books sold, there must be a fund raised in some other way, and in the present day it seems people have, or think they have as many calls on their benevolence as they know how to meet. And if the fund has to be raised by subscription, or donation, it is very likely to be at the expense of a like diminution from the subscriptions to the funds of the Union Society, Home, or Foreign Missions, Bible, College, or some other cause, which need all they at present get, and more too. The plan I pursue, is to add about one-fifth to the Boston price retail, and from an experience of several years I find that, this is as low as can be done, taking into account, difference in currency, damages, postage of letters, and carriage of parcels, etc.

If this plan is adopted, each purchaser pays his own Colporteur, or Agent. The public may be supplied with useful and religious reading—the minds of the young, as well as those more advanced in years, may be furnished with wholesome instruction, which may be an antidote to much of the pernicious trash, which would otherwise occupy their attention, if this be not furnished them. Something they will read, in the present day.

We often read in the C. M., of the destitute state of many districts, of the means of religious instruction—and especially as regards the living ministry. As this is the case, is there not the greater need that such deficiency be supplied by the printed preaching of many, who thus, though long since dead, yet speak by their writings. And I think that we may, and ought to expect the blessing of God on such efforts, as well as on the preached Word. A book for 1s. 3d., or 1s. 6d., may convey instruction to the ignorant and comfort to the afflicted and distressed, may be perused again and again, and with the blessing of God, may be the substitute for the preaching of the Gospel in destitute districts, and a valuable Auxiliary to those places which have a regular ministry.

I purpose visiting the County of Lunenburg, after visiting Queens, and shall be glad to receive the patronage of Christian Ministers and friends, in the places I may visit.

I have done pretty well in this county, considering the depression of the times. I thank the friends one and all, for their kindness where I have been, and ask them where I may yet visit, to endeavour to have something in the shape of cash, to supply themselves with a good Book when I call.

And to some whom I may visit, and with whom cash may be very short, I would respectfully advise the abandonment of the use of tea and coffee—and especially tobacco. It may be done if there is only the will, and determination. I know they are expensive, useless, and in most cases injurious—they are never needed until habit has made them so, and I have no doubt (though some at the Western Association had) that Tobacco destroys more lives than Alcohol—bad as it is.

DANIEL PALFREY. Liverpool, Q. C., 2nd March, 1857.

European & Foreign News.

London Correspondence.

[From our Special Correspondent.]

LONDON, Feb. 27.

GREAT FIRE AT TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD CHAPEL.

MR. EDITOR,

About 1756, the celebrated George Whitfield had erected for his ministrations a very large Chapel in Tottenham Court Road. It seated nearly 2,500 persons, and was thronged with multitudes eager to catch every word that fell from the distinguished orator's lips. Every religious man has heard of George Whitfield, and the marvellous power his addresses possessed. Eminent practical, chiefly addressed to sinners and exhorting them by every plea that truth could urge and imagination assist in enforcing—George Whitfield's sermons stirred up the hitherto inert masses of London's poor to religious emotion. More popular than even Mr. Spurgeon is now: more remarkable, because possessed of greater mental powers, and standing nearly alone

in his peculiarity, that great and good man associated Tottenham Court Road Chapel inseparably with his name, and, dying, left it a memorial of his work.

The Tabernacle, Moorfield's, (also erected by Whitfield) appears to have been united under the same management as Tottenham Court; that of trustees. At the Centenary services of the Tabernacle, held in 1853, Dr. Campbell stated that Tottenham Court had then three years to run before a similar Centenary; but spoke of the two being one cause, and of his former conjunction with the Rev. John Richardson, minister of the latter place, as co-pastor, before leaving the pulpit for the editorial chair.

Connected therefore as Tottenham Chapel was with Whitfield, it may be suitable to recall more fully what kind of man, what style of preacher he was.

"I bless God," says good John Newton, the rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, "that I have lived in this time. Many were the winter mornings I have got up at four to attend his Tabernacle discourses at five; I have seen Moorfields as full of lanterns at these times as I suppose the Haymarket is full of flambeaux on an opera night. As a preacher, if any man was to ask me who was the second I ever had heard, I should be at some loss; but in regard to the first, Mr. Whitfield exceeded so far every other man of my time, that I should be at none. He was the original of popular preaching, and all our popular ministers are only his copies."

But who can describe his simplicity, earnestness, tenderness, eloquence, and power—that deep-toned mellifluous voice—that telling manner, and those magnificent bursts of secret passion—which spell-bound his vast auditories?

The reminiscences of Whitfield as a preacher which Cornelius Winter has bequeathed, are precious things. He says, "I hardly ever knew him go through a sermon without weeping more or less; and I truly believe his were the tears of sincerity. His voice was often interrupted by his affections; and I have heard him say in the pulpit, 'you blame me for weeping; but how can I help it, when you will not weep for yourselves, though your immortal souls are upon the verge of destruction, and for ought you know, you are hearing your last sermon, and may never more have an opportunity to have Christ offered to you?'"

His freedom in the use of his passions often put my pride to the trial. I could hardly bear such unreserved use of tears, and the scope he gave to his feelings; for sometimes he exceedingly wept, stamped loudly and passionately, and was frequently so overcome that for a few seconds you would suspect he never could recover; and when he did, nature required some little time to compose herself."

Winter remarks, that when Whitfield treated upon the sufferings of our Saviour, it was not without great pathos. He was very ready at that kind of painting which frequently answered the end of real scenery. As though Gethsemane were within sight, he would say, stretching out his hand, 'Look yonder: what is that I see? It is my agonizing Lord.' And, as though it were no difficult matter to catch the sound of the Saviour praying, he would exclaim, 'Hark! hark! do not you hear?' You may suppose that, as this occurred frequently, the efficacy of it was destroyed; but no; though we often knew what was coming, it was as new to us as though we had never heard it before."

Hume, the infidel historian, pronounced Whitfield the most ingenious preacher he ever heard, and said it was worth going twenty miles to hear him. What an appeal was that which he describes himself as having heard in the Tabernacle: 'The attendant angel is just about to leave the threshold of this sanctuary and ascend to heaven; and shall he ascend and not bear with him the news of one sinner among all this multitude deemed from the error of his ways?' To give the greater effect to this exclamation, Whitfield stamped with his foot, lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, and cried aloud, 'Stop Gabriel! stop, ere you enter the sacred portals, and yet carry with you the news of one sinner converted to God?'"

But Winter properly remarks, 'It was only by hearing him, and beholding his attitude and tears, that a person could well conceive of the effect.' Gillies says, every accent of his voice spoke to the ear; every feature of his face, every motion of his hands, every gesture, spoke to the eye; so that the most dissipated and thoughtless found their attention involuntarily fixed."

We hallow Minster piles for their antiquity, gorgeous architecture, ecclesiastic and historic mementoes. Though Tottenham Court Chapel possessed no "fretted roof," Norman arch, nor Gothic window—though kings lay not there, nor mail-clad warriors reposed in grim effigy on marble tombs: though all plain and unpretending exteriorly and interiorly, it yet possessed associations and memories which made it hallowed ground: for many a now living man could say, of himself and ancestors—"we were born there:" born to newness of life, regeneration from sin, and discipleship to the Crucified. Before all this, the "dim religious light" of arches and rainbow-hued window, pales: and spiritual emblems give place to spiritual realities.

Alas, that we must say, much of this sacred edifice no longer stands! Between the hours of three and four on Monday morning, the 23d Feb., the neighbourhood was aroused by discovering the Chapel in