

# Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

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## Poetry.

### "If it be possible let this Cup pass from me."

Let this cup pass, my Father! I am sinking  
In the deep waters which surround my soul,  
And bitter grows the draught which I am drinking,  
And higher rise the waves that round me roll.

Forsake me not in this my need extremest!  
Let not Thy strengthening hand elude my grasp!  
I know Thy love, even when Thou harashest seemest,  
Father most merciful! let this cup pass!

Life hath not laid her hand upon me lightly,—  
I have known sorrow, disappointment, pain,  
Have seen hope clouded when it burned most brightly,  
And false love fade, and false friendship wane.

But now, fresh chains about my heart are linking,  
And to my lips is pressed a fuller cup,  
And from the draught my shuddering soul is shrinking,  
Father! I cannot, cannot drink it up!

What have I said? Will not thy grace sustain me!  
Is Thine arm shortened that it cannot save?  
Powerless indeed if Thou my God disdain me,  
I can do all things with the help I crave.

Haste Thee to help me! that, on Thee depending,  
I may have strength to say, "Thy will be done."  
If this cup may not pass, Thine angel sending,  
Aid me, as Thou of old didst aid Thy Son!

And Thou, my Saviour! once our weakness sharing,  
Tempted in all things, yet untouched by sin,  
Hear my wild cry; leave not my soul despairing,  
Help me the cross to bear, the crown to win!

—Episcopal Recorder.

## Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

### A Western "Tourist at home."

[LETTER NO. I.]

The Annapolis Valley—Bear River—Hillsburgh  
—Its Churches.

BRO. SELDEN,

As many of late are giving the results of their travels perhaps I shall be pardoned for transmitting a few thoughts gleaned in a tour at home. The heart leaps at the thought of leaving the dust of the metropolis and spending a few weeks in midsummer among the green hills, and waving forests. My tour lay along the Great Annapolis Valley. Nova Scotians are beginning to appreciate this noble feature of their country, as appears from the rise of land, and the rapid improvements in agriculture, style of buildings, &c. My intention was to reach Digby, so as to spend the Sabbath with the little Baptist Church in that place. Leaving our carriage at Bridgetown, the fine little steamer—"Experiment," gave us a pleasant excursion as it bore us on meandering through the meadows and marshes, that spread a green carpet over the bottom of the valley, for the distance of 15 miles or so, to Annapolis town, and then straight as an arrow across the Basin to Digby. Thus in two or three hours, as quietly as in a parlor, we took a journey which would require a day's jolting, and much horse flesh to accomplish. After spending one night in the latter place, and finding that the church were enjoying the labors of our young brother Goucher, we went by a hired conveyance to Bear River, about nine miles to the south. If the taste and skill of man would cooperate with the beauties of nature the earth would not have many little Edens fairer than this place. The view as you approach it, from the west, is enchanting. In viewing it from any direction you see some peculiar beauty. That from the Indian Chapel, on the hill south of the place, is perhaps the finest. Here, you have the steep hillsides, the streams and factories, and busy hum of men at your feet, the river, with its bridge, its shipping, its fishing weirs, and its green banks stretching to the Basin, and the North Mountains beyond. The bridge is at the head of the tide, three miles from the shore. Several vessels lay here, some of which were newly built. Above the bridge the river separates into several branches, I counted five. These

streams have washed away the rock, forming deep ravines, and abounding in mill seats. In or near the place are ten saw mills, including two gang mills, two grist mills, a carding machine, and a factory for lasts, blocks, laths, &c. The village is just rising into importance. Near it, the hillsides are exceedingly steep. Some of the houses are deep in the glen; others on the brow of the precipice. Fruit trees are here abundant—and especially the cherry. The cherry tree flourishes as if it were indigenous to the soil. From this fact about the middle of July, the place has special attractions for many strangers, who manage at that time to pay it a visit. It would be well if there were no Sunday visitors for gathering fruit. I noticed a considerable infraction of the Sabbath. I was told of one man (not "a Baptist") who very conscientiously attended the prayer meeting himself and at the same time allowed his men very industriously to rake hay. This rising town has not only the advantages of a seaport, but also of a fine country around it. This is especially true of that part of the country on the W. bank of the river between the bridge and the basin, called Hillsburgh, which consists of excellent farms. At the north end of this settlement is the 2nd Hillsburgh Baptist Church, formed in 1842, now numbering 103 members. In the south end of the bridge is the first Hillsburgh Church, formed in 1823, now reporting 121 members, Rev. Obed Parker has charge of both these Churches. At his request I spent the Sabbath with the first Church, preaching twice, and addressing the Sabbath School. They are engaged in building a Meeting House. It is 40 by 60 feet, with a basement story, walled up of fine cut granite for a vestry. It has also a fine steeple, in the form of a rotunda, having, I think, three stories in the gothic style, each decreasing upward in size, and surmounted by a globe. From its commanding position it seems to look down upon the village directing the eye and the heart to heaven. May they enjoy the blessing of God, and succeed in their noble effort. There are also in this place an Episcopal Church, and active Methodist society. This letter is sufficiently long, so I must conclude.

A TOURIST AT HOME.

Aug. 13, 1857.

[LETTER NO. II.]

Digby Neck—Sandy Cove—A Similitude—Prosecution of a Baptist Minister by the Bishop of Nova Scotia.

MY DEAR SIR,

If you deem these communications worthy of a place in your valuable journal, you are welcome to them. If not the retrospection, and penning of them will be useful at least to the writer. In my last I had not time to speak of the Christian hospitality of the friends at Hillsburgh, and of the Rev. Obed Parker and his family.

On Monday morning, Bro. Parker kindly consented to go with his carriage to Sandy Cove on Digby Neck, about 15 miles west from Digby. One object in going thither was to become acquainted with some of the Baptist friends in that quarter, and especially with the talented pastor of the Church—Rev. J. C. Morse. Bro. Morse has in his audience many of the hardy sons of the deep, especially native and American fishermen. As a mark of the esteem in which he is held by his people, his salary is raised this year from £150 to £200. Acquaintance was also renewed with an old and beloved teacher, A. M. Gidney, Esq., a visit was made with him to the great vein of quartz, a mile to the eastward, a dinner at his own house, followed by pleasant reminiscences of old scenes witnessed in Queen's county, more than twenty years ago.

Another object, was to see the place. No one will wonder at this curiosity who has read the following remarks of Dawson—"Sandy Cove is more like something a poet or a painter might dream of, than like an actual reality in our usually tame province of Nova Scotia."—Acadian Geol. p. 76. The neck or the ridge of the North Mountain, dividing the St. Mary's from the

Bay of Fundy is about two miles wide. On the south side is a little Bay embosomed in the rocks, forming a good harbor. On the north side is another of less importance. Between these there is a break in the mountains like that at Digby Gut, only not so deep—leaving the ground considerably above high water mark. Midway between there is a little fresh water lake, which is supposed to be the crater of an extinct volcano, with the trap rocks towering above it on the west, and especially on the east, apparently to the height of three or four hundred feet. As we looked on that little sheet of water, great thoughts came rushing upon us. We could almost realize that where the cool spring now rises, once rose up a fiery stream of melted lava. The white water lilies were floating on the surface, like pale stars in the firmament. A couple of these lilies were gathered for our herbarium as a memento; and we thought of the great herbarium lying east and west, whose leaves extend from Blomedon to Brier Island, and embrace within their ample folds the plants of almost every clime. This huge volume lying on its table of sandstone, its back towards the great valley, gilded with the vertical sun; its top ornamented with the green pencillings of nature; its edge dipped in the dark water colors of the Bay; how rich is it in the stores of natural science. The floras and the faunas of sea and land are treasured here. Each frost-dissolving spring unfolds a leaf, to display its fossils and its gems. The restless wave—that stone hammer of the ocean—is ever hewing down its flinty scroll and exposing its rocky "testimony." If we believe our senses the top of the N. Mountain was thrown up in a melted state by volcanic action. If so the basin of this little lake may have been "a volcanic focus," and the high rocks around it the once molten stream now cooled. Our next effort was to climb the precipice to gain an extended view. If a dense fog which prevailed during most of our stay had not hindered we might have seen Grand Manan and the shores of New Brunswick on the North, and the shores of Weymouth across to St. Mary's on the south. From the density of the fog however, and the fierceness with which it was driven against the rock, by the S. W. wind that howled in a furious hurricane around the summit, we experienced a scene of greater sublimity than any distant view. Approaching cautiously to the edge, we could look down through the haze, and see at an apparently great distance below us a flock of sheep grazing peacefully at the bottom. Raising our eyes and looking on the elements which raged around, we were reminded of the "palpable obscure" of Milton, of his "confusion worse confounded," and of that chaos on which Satan spread his wings and soared. After we had left, a heavy rain fell, and cheered us once more with a clear sky. Some African tribes believe that Europeans came from beneath the Atlantic which accounts for the straightness of their hair, and whether we draw the same conclusion or not, we felt like those that had emerged from beneath a sea of fog. Let those who wish to escape the sultry heats of summer visit the "Neck."

On our return we spent one night with an aged brother Nichols. We learned from him an incident which occurred more than half a century ago, of some interest to Baptists. He was the innocent cause of bringing down the wrath of the episcopacy upon a humble Baptist minister, and of establishing the principle of equal rights at least in one particular. In 1800 he was married by Rev. Enoch Towner. In 1801 Mr. T. being complained of by the clergyman of Digby for performing this rite, and was prosecuted by the "bishop of Nova Scotia." The parties were cited to Halifax before the court. Being advised by Father Burton, and defended by lawyer Robie Mr. Towner gained his cause. This should remind us of our liberties, and of the part which Baptists have always taken in securing the rights of man, and in disenthraling the church from state control. I must now conclude.

Ever yours,  
A TOURIST AT HOME.

August 18th, 1857.

## Religious Miscellany.

### A time to dance.

A BALL having occurred in the parish of a worthy minister, at a season of peculiar seriousness among the youth of his pastoral charge, and many of them, from conscientious motives, having declined to attend, their absence was attributed, erroneously, to the influence and interference of their pastor, who, in consequence, received the following anonymous note:

"SIR—Obey the voice of holy Scripture. Take the following for your text, and contradict it. Show in what consists the evil of that innocent amusement of dancing. Eccles. 3: 4: 'A time to weep, and a time to laugh: a time to mourn, and a time to dance.'

"A TRUE CHRISTIAN,  
BUT NO HYPOCRITE."

The minister immediately wrote the following reply, which, as the note was anonymous and without address, remained in his own possession for some time, when he communicated it to the public, thinking it might meet the eye and correct the opinions of the writer of the note and others:

MY DEAR SIR—Your request that I would preach from Eccles. 3: 4, I cannot comply with at present, since there are some Christian duties more important than dancing, which a part of my people seem disposed to neglect. Whenever I perceive, however, that the duty of dancing is too much neglected, I shall not fail to raise a warning voice against so dangerous an omission. In the mean time, there are certain difficulties in the text which you commend to my notice, the solution of which I should receive with gratitude from, "a true Christian."

My first difficulty respects the *time* for dancing; for, although the text declares that there is a time to dance, yet when that time is, it does not determine. Now this point I wish to ascertain exactly, before I preach upon the subject; for it would be as criminal, I conclude, to dance at the wrong time, as to neglect to dance at the right time. I have been able to satisfy myself, in some particulars, when it is not "a time to dance." We shall agree, I presume, that on the Sabbath-day, or at a funeral, or during the prevalence of a pestilence, or the rocking of an earthquake, or the roaring of a thunder-storm, it would be no time to dance. If we were condemned to die, and were waiting in prison the day of execution, this would be no time for dancing; and if our feet stood on a slippery place beside a precipice, we should not dare to dance.

But suppose the very day to be ascertained; is the whole day, or only a part, to be devoted to this amusement? And if a part of the day only, then which part is "the time to dance?" From the notoriously pernicious effects of "night meetings," in all ages, both upon morals and health, no one will pretend that the *evening* is the "time to dance;" and perhaps it may not be immaterial which portion of the daylight is devoted to that innocent amusement. But allowing the *time* to be ascertained, there is still an obscurity in the text. Is it a *command* to dance, or only a *permission*? Or is it merely a declaration of the fact, that, as men are constituted, there is a time when all the events alluded to in the text do, in the providence of God, come to pass? If the text be a command, is it of universal obligation; and must "old men and maidens, young men and children," dance obedience? If a permission, does it imply a permission also to refrain from dancing, if any are disposed? Or, if the text be merely a declaration that there is a time when men do dance, as there is a time when they die, then I might as well be requested to take the first eight verses of the chapter, and show in what consists the evil of those innocent practices of hating, and making war, and killing men, for which, it seems from the text,