

The Cow-Fish of South America.

One day, the fishermen brought us a fine "Poixe boie," or cow-fish, a species of manatus, and is particular abundant in the lakes in this part of the river. It is a female, about six feet long, and about five feet in circumference through the thickest part. The body is perfectly smooth, without any projections or inequalities, gradually changing into a horizontal semicircular flat tail, with no appearance whatever of blind limbs. There is no distinct neck; the head is not very large, and is terminated by a large mouth and fleshy lips, somewhat resembling those of a cow. There are stiff bristles on the lips, and a few distinctly scattered over the body. Behind the head are two powerful oval fins, and just beneath them are the breasts, from which, on pressure being applied, flows a stream of beautiful white milk. The ears are minute holes, and the eyes very small, the color is a dusky lead, with some large pinkish white marbled blotches on the belly. The skin is about an inch thick on the back, and a quarter of an inch thick on the belly. Beneath the skin is a layer of fat of greater or less thickness, generally about an inch, which is boiled down to make oil, used for light and for cooking. The intestines are very voluminous, the heart about the size of a sheep's, and the lungs about two feet long and six or seven inches wide, very cellular and spongy, and can be blown out like a bladder. The skull is large and solid, with no front teeth; the vertebrae extending to the very tip of the tail, showing no rudiments of posterior limbs; the fore limbs, on the contrary, are very highly developed, the bones exactly corresponding to those of the human arm, having even the five fingers, with every joint distinct, yet inclosed in a stiff, inflexible skin, where not a joint can have any motion. The cow-fish feeds on grass at the borders of the rivers, and lakes, and swims swiftly and paddles; and though the external organs of sight and hearing are so imperfect, yet these senses are said by hunters to be remarkably acute, and to render necessary all their caution and skill to capture the animals. They bring forth one, or rarely two, young ones, which they clasp in their arms, or paddles, while giving suck. They are harpooned or caught in a strong net, at the narrow entrance of a lake or stream, and are killed by driving a wooden plug with a mallet up their nostrils. Each yields from five to twenty-five gallons of oil. The flesh is very good, something between beef and pork, and this one furnished us with several meals, and was an agreeable change from our fish diet. Travels on the Amazon.

Matters in Iowa.

I wish all discontented New England farmers could be out West this summer. It would teach them a lesson which they very much need to learn, viz., to stop croaking. Of all the hard, dull, blue times I ever knew in Massachusetts, the present times in Iowa are the bluest. Property of all kinds, except money, has depreciated from one-third to one-half its estimated value a year ago. There is not half so much money circulation as there was a year ago. The crop wheat and oats, in a large part of the State, is less than half of last year; and in many instances will not pay for harvesting. My nearest neighbor has sold his wheat in the field for the price, i. e., as many bushels as he sowed. Another neighbor does not consider his worth cutting. The season has been very wet, more so than was ever known before. Weeds and vines are rank enough corn and potatoes doubtful, as yet. Moreover, almost everybody is in debt, and, likely in molasses, can't get out. The harder ones, the worse off he becomes. Borrowing not only sinks him in deeper trouble; for interest high, and property is stationary, or still depriving. Many will be obliged to give up their farms, one-half and two-thirds paid for, to cancel the balance.

The prospect for another year is dark enough. Immigration from the East has been less than usual, few improvements are being made. We have nothing to eat for some time to come. And save the farmers of Massachusetts; and in addition to that, they have other comforts and conveniences which cannot be had here. Nevertheless, as Mrs. Hemans has beautifully sung: "The blindest soul is not all gloom; The dearest heart is not all sadness; And sly'er the darkest doom, The lines some lingering beam of gladness." There it, it would seem, some good grow out of all evil and trial. It will curtail some of the reckless speculation which has raged for years past, it will show men the folly of running in debt, and the advantages of the cash system. Men are too eager to be rich and independent labor; too much bent upon their own gratification and self-will; too impatient of the restraints of morality and religion. All this needs a powerful check, and the hard times would have been of but little benefit, if they had passed away as men wished and prophesied. The famine will not only be more bitter another year, but will effect a more thorough cure. Prospects will, doubtless, return again, sometime, but speedily; and, herein, Gov. Seward, who found a recovery as rapid as the depression, has led himself a mistaken prophet. -Cor. to England Farmer.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

New Church at Tusket Lakes.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

An Ecclesiastical Council was convened at Tusket Lakes, on the 14th inst., at the call of a number of the members of the Baptist Church at Tusket, who had previously requested a letter of dismission from that body, for the purpose of forming another church, to be known as the Baptist Church of Tusket Lakes.

The Council consisted of the pastors and brethren from the 1st Yarmouth, 3rd Yarmouth, South Yarmouth, Ohio, Lake George, and Tusket Churches, and the Rev. Wm. Hobbs, of Ragged Islands.

Brother Wm. Churchill was chosen to preside, and Rev. Jos. H. Saunders, Secretary.

Prayer by the Rev. James A. Stubbart. Deacon A. Lent and brother John Hatfield, of the Tusket Church, and three of those brethren wishing to join the new church, by invitation, took their seats in the council.

After hearing the reason assigned by the brethren and sisters, and prayerfully considering the circumstances, their council advised to proceed with the organization.

The Rev. Wm. Hobbs was appointed Moderator.

Prayer was offered by Rev. H. Angell. A number of the brethren and sisters asking for organization, presented themselves.

The Chairman read the articles and covenant of our churches, to which they assented; the right hand of fellowship was presented by the Rev. Jas. V. Tabor, and an address to the church was given by the Rev. Jas. A. Stubbart.

The church, by ballot, chose brothers Jacob H. Gavel and Wells Hamilton to be deacons; when they were publicly set apart to that office, by laying on of hands and prayer, the reading of the Scriptures and appropriate remarks.

Brother Abraham S. Lent was appointed Church Clerk. These interesting services closed by singing. May the prayers of that day be answered, and the engagement then entered into be fully sustained, then shall this "small one become a thousand," and exert a powerful influence for good on the surrounding districts.

I remain, yours faithfully, JOS. H. SAUNDERS, Secretary.

Ohio, Yarmouth, Sept. 16th, 1858.

P. S.—The Lord has been graciously pleased to smile upon us during this summer. Since my ordination I have had the pleasure of baptizing five youthful believers. We look hopefully to the future. Death is also doing its work among us. During the last two weeks I have preached three funeral sermons. I expect to leave home the first of next month to fill the mission assigned me in Shelburne county.

For the Christian Messenger.

Acknowledgement.

DEAR BROTHER,

I have often thought that my dear people might justly censure me for not having acknowledged their repeated acts of kindness to myself and family in a public manner as is common now-a-days. They have not, however, even hinted the like to me, nor do I think it probable that such a thought has ever crossed their minds. I have therefore cogent reasons for believing that their various and multiplied gifts are the fruits of genuine Christian love, and not mere "baits to catch the praise of men." They are entitled to general Christian esteem, not only for being actuated by so pure a motive, but also for having learned how to increase their unworthy pastor's affection for, as well as to perpetuate his stay amongst them.

Every year since my first acquaintance with them, which was in 1842, I have received annual tokens of love and friendship at their hands, such as Donation Visits, the proceeds of which have increased my little stock of worldly goods from twenty to thirty pounds a year, as well as to originate not a little domestic happiness, and make a father's heart glad—on whom rests the duty of providing for some six or seven helpless children. They have also made me a present of a silver watch, valued at £8, a harness, £4 10s., about £30 in cash, and a few days ago between 4 and 5 tons of good hay. These form no part of my salary. What these dear brethren and sisters and friends have still in store for me, I am unable to foretell, but sure I am that "their hearts are still as great as when they first bestowed."

There are fathers and brethren and beloved sisters in Christ to whom I feel greatly indebted

for the success which has attended my feeble efforts to promote the cause of truth and gather souls into the Lord's Shiloh in this portion of his moral vineyard. Their prayers, exhortations and consistent christian walk have greatly facilitated my labours amongst them. It is my earnest prayer and desire that they may all continue to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel," and that they may increase in number, piety and influence. And I beg that they will accept my sincere and humble thanks, for all their Christian regard and kindness which they have so freely lavished upon me and my dear family during our sojourn amongst them. May God enable me by his grace and Spirit to "make full proof of my ministry," and whilst enemies are shouting "Divide and conquer," our watchword shall be "Union is invincible."

Yours in Christ,

JOHN C. MORSE.

Sandy Cove, Digby, Sept. 16th, 1858.

HOME MISSIONS.

Mission Tour in P. E. Island.

To the Missionary Board:

DEAR BRETHREN,

I would have rendered an account of the mission you were pleased to assign me in February last, long before the present period, were it not that the breaking up of the roads early in April, and family duties summoned me from my field of labor, after having spent four weeks in the service of the Board. I was desirous of filling up the entire mission above mentioned and therefore delayed writing, expecting from time to time, if possible, to accomplish the same, but did not succeed in doing so. Of late, however, through the blessing of God, I was enabled to spend three other weeks in this extensive field. As respects any Agency in favor of the Home Missionary Society, I soon found that the pecuniary pressure of the times would compel me to relinquish any idea of the kind, and therefore endeavoured as far as in me lay, to preach Christ crucified as the great remedy for ruined man, and collect all I could on behalf of the Board. I preached thirty sermons, took part with my ministerial brethren in six or seven other religious meetings, who cooperated with me in some localities, and rendered me essential assistance,—namely, brethren Shaw, Burnett, and McLeod. I also visited a number of households. I labored during my mission in the following places:—Upper and Lower Grand River, Three Rivers and its environs, Uigg, Belfast, Forty-nine, West and Dog Rivers, &c., &c.

I was much gratified to find an interesting Sabbath School at Grand River, in connection with the Baptist cause there, chiefly through the praise-worthy efforts of brother John Frost, who, with his excellent partner, take great pleasure in accommodating our ministers. At Three Rivers there appeared evident tokens of "a good time coming." The congregations were unusually large and attentive: indeed the same may be said of all the other settlements referred to. I would just state that in the most of those places it is almost as necessary to preach in the Gaelic language as it is to preach the Gospel; hence I was not allowed to get rusty in the language of my own native land. I can truly say that the longer I was in the field, the more my mind became imbued with the spirit of preaching, and the more reluctant I felt to retire.

Received in aid of the mission:—

Table with columns for location and amount. Includes entries for Grand River, Three Rivers, Belfast, North River, West River, and Cavendish.

Total, (Island Currency,) £10 16 9

(Halifax Currency,) £9 0 0

Yours, &c.,

MALCOLM ROSS.

Bedouque, P. E. I., Sep., 1858.

Halifax County.

DEAR SIR,

In accordance with the requirements of the Home Missionary Board, I herewith submit the following report of labor performed:

I spent eleven weeks in the service of the Board—five were in Jeddore, three at Bay of Islands, one in Dartmouth and vicinity, and the remaining two at various places along the shore, viz., Indian Harbor, St. Mary's River, Liscomb, Shear Harbor, etc.

I preached forty sermons, attended three conference and two prayer meetings. A considerable part of my time was spent in going from house to house, trying to learn the feelings and wants of the people, and speaking to them of the great salvation. I found this the more necessary, as in most places it was difficult to gather a congregation more than once during the week.

As regards results, I have not much to report, and yet I trust the effort has not been altogether in vain. In all the places visited the people seemed willing and glad to hear the word, and the fruit may perhaps appear in due time. At Jeddore there were some manifestations of good. The Spirit of God seemed at work in the Church, healing old grievances and uniting brethren more firmly in the bonds of love. Four persons gave evidence of a change of heart and were received for baptism. Others were under deep concern, and, I hope, will soon be free. God speed his own work, and His name have the praise.

It is very desirable that a permanent mission should be established between Jeddore and the Bay of Islands. The latter place has been much neglected of late, and the little Church that was there is very much scattered.

Late in the autumn is probably the best time for missionary labor along the shore. The men are chiefly away in the summer, and those who fish out of the harbors are obliged to go so far out that they can hardly attend a week-day meeting without losing the whole day.

Hoping that men and means may be at your disposal to send the gospel to all the destitute portions of our Province,

I remain, yours,

D. F. HIGGINS.

To Rev. R. McLearn, Chairman Home Missionary Board. Sept. 4, 1858.

Mira Bay, C. B.

DEAR BROTHER,

Although we have not been blessed with a revival of religion, yet we have reason to thank God and take courage on account of the favorable indications we are permitted to witness. Throughout this field there is a growing attention to the means of grace. Our congregations are on the increase. Prejudice is falling and the young people seem determined to hear for themselves. I know of only one conversion during the year, that was a man of family at the Southern Head, he stood much in the way, but is now helping forward the good cause. I preach in his house once or twice in each month, and hence I have the privilege of preaching to the poor and otherwise neglected. I am hoping and praying that God will yet pour out his Spirit in that place and convert many souls. In the winter they can be gathered on a week-day. The Meeting-house in Cow Bay is finished on the outside, and is a respectable little edifice. We have met in it three Sabbaths. The meetings there are well attended. We have two small Sunday Schools in operation—one in Cow Bay and one in Mira Bay. My preaching arrangements on Sabbaths are, for the present, as follows:—one Sunday at Mira Bay Meeting-house in the morning, in the afternoon at the School-house, 19 miles up the River, or some two miles across the Gut; the next Sabbath at Cow Bay in the morning, and in the afternoon at the Southern Head, or at Round Island, about half-way between Cow Bay and Mira Meeting-house. In all places the attendance is good. I have received £5 from the collectors, on behalf of the Society.

Yours, &c.,

D. P. McQUILLIN.

Mira Bay, Sept. 6th, '58.

Gaelic Mission in Cape Breton.

During the past six months I have preached seventy-eight sermons, and delivered 155 Lectures on the Scriptures. At St. Ann's there is a great desire to hear the word preached. A large field is now open to us. The waters are already troubled.

Yours, &c.,

HUGH ROSS.

P. S.—I have received eleven pounds on behalf of the Society. To Rev. R. McLearn, Chairman Home Missionary Board.