

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Baptists in Pictou County.

DEAR BROTHER,

In my last I gave the result of the agency in Prince Edward's Island. I omitted to state my personal obligations to the numerous friends there, who kindly volunteered to convey the Agent from place to place.

My object in now writing is to make some remarks on the state of our mission field in the County of Pictou. The cause is very low, and yet there are some grounds for encouragement.

At River John the church is located in a little flourishing sea-port town. The church, as such, is only a matter of history. Though there is a sufficient number of members, and enough wealth to build a house for God, and maintain His worship; yet for some time past they have not done either. They present a sad spectacle of "forsaking the assembling of themselves together." Yet, with proper guidance, they might be rallied and induced to "strive together for the faith of the gospel."

In Pictou, 20 miles further south, there is still greater cause and room for improvement. The number of baptized believers is small. Yet there is but one efficient male member—Brother Robert J. Griffith—whose praise is among all the wayfaring brethren, if not "in all the churches." With proper effort, a Meeting-house might be built in Pictou, and a new era be inaugurated in the history of the cause there.

Nine or ten miles south east of Pictou, brings the traveller into Merrigomish. Here are situated, at convenient distances for the travelling missionary, three Baptist brethren—Olding, Lowden, and Meldrum. This locality is visited one third of the time by Brother Porter, who is stationed at Antigonish. At this last mentioned place is a regular Church, which, though scattered and peeled for some time, is beginning to assume a better aspect. Discipline is being re-established, and harmony restored in the body. The congregations are improving. Bro. P. is encouraged. It is to be hoped that the Home Missionary Board will be sustained by our people, in continuing this Mission, and also in establishing another at River John and Pictou.

Our brethren scattered in this populous and intelligent county are indeed "like a handful of corn in the earth on the top of the mountains." May the promise be fulfilled, that "the excellency of Carmel and Sharon shall be given to it, and the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon." They have all the conditions of prosperity and encouragement. They are few and despised. Yet, on this account, they can claim the promise. "Fear not thou worm, Jacob, &c." It matters not to God whether He conquers by few or by many,—oftener by few. One shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight. But those few must put on the panoply of God. It is faithfulness as well as "faith" that "overcomes the world."

I am now on my way to Cape Breton. My address for a week or two will be, North Sydney, and then Guysborough.

Yours, in the common cause,

D. FREEMAN,

Agt. of Ac. Col.

Antigonish Harbor, Nov. 12, 1858.

For the Christian Messenger.

"A Prohibitory Bill,

TO BE AFFIRMED BY THE PEOPLE, AS IN MAINE."

MESSRS. EDITORS,—

I perfectly accord with your view, (C. M. 3rd inst.) as to the expediency and desirableness of this measure. You are aware that I strove earnestly for the immediate enactment of a general Liquor Law so long as I could see any reasonable prospect of success. When, however, the subject had assumed such a phase, that it became evident this could not be obtained at present, under existing circumstances, or, if obtained, would soon be overturned, it appeared to me advisable to employ every such measure as would tend to diminish the use of intoxicating drinks, and to prepare the way for their entire prohibition. As the Grand Division had, on deliberation, determined to petition for a Permissive bill, to enable the inhabitants of every county, or township, in which a majority would vote for prohibition, to enjoy the privilege of exemption from the traffic in inebriating beverages, and this Bill had been introduced by Mr. Morrison—a staunch advocate of prohibition—I recommended the circulation of petitions in favour of it.

It appears, however, as stated in your Editorial, that the Grand Division, in its recent Session in Halifax, on further consideration of

the subject, has resolved to ask the Legislature for a general Prohibitory Law, to be referred directly back to the people, and to go into operation provided a majority of the voters give it their approval. Under these circumstances I sincerely desire that all the friends of Temperance may unite in strenuous efforts to obtain the Law in this way, and to carry it into effect.

I have recently been informed by Rev. Samuel Boothby, who resides in Maine, that their present law which was enacted in this manner, by which the responsibility is principally laid upon the people themselves, is far more effective than the former. That was considered as so connected with party politics, that some were disposed to oppose it for political purposes, and they succeeded in overthrowing it. "The people," he added, "regard this as their own Law; and they are determined to carry it out."

Brother Boothby also confirmed my former statement that a permissive bill, referring the matter to each county separately, such as that contemplated in England, and which was requested for Nova Scotia, would have produced precisely the same result. I never imagined that it would be immediately adopted by all the counties in this Province; but I was satisfied, (as I am still,) that the friends of Temperance might have secured its adoption at once in a number of them; and that, by prudent means, it might have been extended, and ultimately produced universal prohibition.

I have often said, however, that I would go for a general Prohibitory law, such as that now in operation in Maine, (which is based upon the same principle, permitting the whole people to decide upon its reception or rejection,) if that appeared to be generally thought best. The reasons why I did not myself propose it were:—1. I wished to act in concert with the Grand Division. 2. The proposing of several different measures at the same time is adapted to prevent the success of each of them. 3. I was afraid that by attempting so much at once, we would lose all: in other words, that a majority in the whole Province would vote against prohibition.

I do hope, however, since it has now been wisely deemed "expedient that the question of Prohibition should be introduced into the Provincial Assembly in such a manner that it will not be liable to be sacrificed by the influence of party politics," that a Prohibitory Bill will be affirmed by the people. But the attainment of this highly desirable object will evidently require the united, diligent, and energetic efforts of all the friends of the cause. I would, therefore, respectfully and earnestly entreat them all to avoid whatever may tend to produce disunion, and to labour harmoniously and indefatigably for the success of the measure now proposed by the Grand Division of the Sons of Temperance.

Affectionately yours,

CHARLES TUPPER.

Aylesford, Nov. 10th, 1858.

For the Christian Messenger.

To all unbelievers in Spiritual Regeneration.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—

The Master whom I love and who loves me, and loved me before the worlds were formed, informs me in Matthew 5th chapter, from 13th verse, what it is my duty and privilege to do for His sake; and in accordance with the desire of my heart and the directions of the only infallible Guide—the Word of God—I sit down to say a few words through a paper that has already treated me with great respect, though the Editor has never yet seen me, in reference to the change which the Holy Spirit of God works in the heart, mind and soul of the subject of Divine Grace.

During the last two years I have, through the Press of my native land—Canada, been bearing witness for my Master, and from the pulpit and platform as a Temperance Lecturer, as I am styled; also, in my feeble way, giving my glad evidence for Christ, and against Satan and the devices, schemes and plans that the foe of our race employs to destroy the children of men. Experience has taught me that when Satan finds himself baffled with one plan or scheme of destruction that he always has another ready to employ, and he suits his attacks on mankind according to their various tastes and weaknesses. One he destroys by one weapon, one by another, and I think he succeeds in doing a great deal of mischief in the present day, by making men believe that the Bible and the Saviour tell lies, when in St. John 3rd chapter it speaks of a new birth or spiritual regeneration. If the Devil can lure us into a false peace, when conscience and the Word of God tell us that to all out of Christ Jesus, God is a consuming fire, he has all he wants. For all the old serpent wants is the destruction of our souls, if possible, and where that is impossible, he desires to annoy us all he can! All are not as ignorant of the old liar's devices as those are whom he has succeeded in making believe that such a thing as the new birth or spiritual regeneration cannot be experienced by the sinner or the subject of Divine Grace in our day. I would ask all who are resting in a form of godliness, and in a formal faith, or trusting for salvation to the bricks, mortar, paint, putty, tin, and glass of "the

Church," visible, what the meaning of the solemn remark of the Saviour to Nicodemus was, if it did not mean that we must be regenerated, and that it was possible for us to be regenerated by the same God and the same Grace that the 2nd chapter of Ephesians speaks of as having for the Ephesians done such great things, and the same God who for the Corinthians (1st Corinthians 6th chapter) made such a change to pass upon and within some of them?

Disagreeable as it is for a man to speak of himself, my duty calls me to enquire of those who think a man cannot feel and know that he has been born of the Holy Ghost, how it is that I find myself this day writing letters on religion, and in favor of a Gospel and Saviour that I did not give even theoretical credence to three years ago? Three years ago, I was living in a dead and dark state of mind in reference to the important concern of the salvation of the soul; but I was not at all dead or asleep on political matters, for I was then Editor of one of the most popular newspapers in the Niagara District, Canada West, where for the last 22 years I have resided. Had any one introduced the subject of religion and the importance of being prepared to meet the God who in His word calls on all men everywhere to repent, I would, in all probability, either joked, or laughed, or ridiculed it off, and began to speak of the prospects of the political party or the side that I used to fight on as an Editor, and many a hard name in my day, and many a hard rap over the knuckles editorial I have seen given and taken in Canada, as is now frequently given and taken, I see, in Nova Scotia by the earnest brethren of the Press. I like well to see an earnest man when he is sure he is on the right track, my advice is the same to him that Crockett gave: "Go ahead like all snakes," but be sure you are right first. But as I have not written a political article for more than two years, the less I say about politics I think the better for the cause I am endeavoring to advance, for, in general, when the steam of partizanship in politics gets up, it takes more than ordinary piety to always evince the Christ like spirit of love, forbearance, and gentleness, that it is the duty and privilege of the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, even in the heat of debate, to manifest. How can any man, that is not a Christian, and, by Christian, I mean one in reality, as well as in name, I say, how can any one unacquainted with the mystery of the new birth explain the reason why I take far more pleasure now in preaching the Gospel than in anything else, when, as I said already, three years ago I was an infidel? As a general thing, men in the age in which we live do not act without a motive of some sort or other. The man who has no fixed principles or motives of action, and who cannot give a reason for his actions, is a madman. Now, I ask my brethren of the Press of Halifax, N. S., or anywhere else in the world, what motive would induce them to give up excellent situations, and go forth preaching the Gospel, and exposing themselves to ridicule, and much of what is spoken of in Paul's second Epistle to Corinthians 4th chapter, unless they were moved upon by something of a strong, urgent motive? And what motive can a man have except it be the love of money, the love of fame, or the love that animated Paul in the chapter above referred to? And how can a man experience this unless he experience a change in his views, motives and principles at the same time, even such a change as the one referred to in Romans 5th and 8th chapters? One thing I will say that unless they experience this change, the most able Editor in Halifax could not get up and relate a genuine Christian experience, or get up and make an extemporaneous sermon at any moment as the true child of God who has been called to preach the gospel. I wish all men to remember that I am writing this letter to glorify God, not myself, and I would again ask how it is that during the last two years I have given more than three hundred public lectures and no two of them alike, and made them all without any premeditation or study, if I have not something within me that no man possesses naturally, especially when I tell the public that until I professed to have experienced the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, no man ever heard me make a speech in public. Moreover, if the 28th verse of Romans 8th chapter is not the Word of a God of Love, and Truth, and Justice, I would ask the infidel how it is that I have always cash in my pocket, and pay all my postages, expenses of travelling, &c., and for two years that I have been travelling as a lecturer have never entered any house unless invited as a guest, and at the same time feel no uneasiness in reference to temporal matters, for more than two years experience dead in the face of a constant stream of malice, malevolence, hate and opposition from Satan and his agents, tells me that God will take care of me. See Psalm 118th.

In addition to the foregoing, to the glory of my God, Saviour, and Comforter, I desire to ask the infidel how it is that I, who was in the habit of "getting on sprees" as the madness of the inebriate is called, and sprees of from a week to two months duration, have had no desire for either liquor or tobacco, or the company of those who follow these vices, since I experienced the peace that none are partakers of except those who have been born of the Holy Spirit. See John 3rd chapter, and which all who have experienced delight in bearing witness of. See St. John 15th chapter and last verse. And I will also enquire of the infidel how it is that I who used to try hard to be what he is trying hard to make folks believe he is, am not now ashamed to acknowledge my former sins and shames, when I might as well keep them hid, and make people believe that I had always been "a right good fellow," as my companions at drinking frolics used to call me when I was posting down to hell like a shooting star, if I have not with me and in me the Comforter referred to in St. John 14th chapter.

In conclusion, brethren in Christ Jesus, you are not at all ignorant of these matters, and I trust many who take the Messenger are happy and free with the liberty that is called "madness," "foolishness," "fanaticism," and "nonsense," by many who think that to be in membership with "the Church," be that Church the Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian or Romish, means to be what Paul referred to in second Corinthians 5th chapter and 17th verse. I saw something that amused me a little and pained me a good deal in a certain Lord Bishop's charge recently, in reference to "succession," "Apostolical succession," and if the good Bishop is a successor of Paul in the regeneration of the Holy Ghost, he is not ignorant of the experience which the real child of God is no stranger to, and which we read in second Corinthians 4th, 5th and 6th chapters. If I may be permitted to give my idea of "succession" I would say that for one I feel with Paul, that I must keep my body under leet, after having preached to others, I myself become a cast-away. I hope I will continue to have grace to imitate the zeal of Paul, and also obey the commands that he gives all his successors in the faith, to be sober, vigilant, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to those that are before. Like Paul again, Sir, I feel that I am not yet perfect. Those individuals who are so happy as to arrive at the stage which some call "entire holiness," "perfection," and "entire sanctification," I am well convinced by experience and by revelation are either the especial favorites of heaven, or else they possess a nature not quite as deeply depraved as mine was by the fall, and as we, whether successors of the Apostles or not, are well aware we are all successors of Adam and Eve, and are through them dead to God until made alive by Grace,—see Romans 5th chapter 12th and 19th verses, I think it strange that the more I pray for grace and wisdom the more deep I see the depravity of my nature. At first I did not think it so bad as it is made out; but I am satisfied now that there are two depths fathomless, namely, GOD'S LOVE and HUMAN DEPRAVITY. I feel that I am getting farther from "entire holiness" daily, but at the same time my faith in the power of Grace to save, and the blood of Christ to cleanse the soul in the eyes of a God of Purity, is daily growing stronger, and my experience is that I am growing up into Christ, and growing steadily and surely in Grace and in the knowledge and love of God, and I have not a shade of fear that He will ever let me go out of the hand of His Providence and Grace in Christ Jesus. But the same Saviour who tells me in St. John 10th chapter that His children shall never perish, also, in Matthew 5th chapter, tells me what duty is in reference to what He has already given me, and duty is a pleasure to me. And I believe that I will praise Him as long as I am in the flesh, and then I will praise Him with a harp whose strings know no discord in the upper and better world.

If you think Christ will be glorified, Mr. Editor, by this poor letter, you are at liberty to publish it. I thank you for the respect with which you have already treated me since I came into your delightful Province, and among your kind-hearted people.

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

JAMES A. DAVIDSON.

Pictou, N. S., Nov. 12, 1858.

For the Christian Messenger.

Obituary Notices.

MR. JAMES DOWNEY.

The subject of this notice was born on the 8th day of April, 1792. In his youthful days he removed to Stronach Mountain, Wilmot, with his father, who was one of the first settlers of that place.

At a meeting held in his house, February 20th, 1815, the writer first publicly owned the Saviour, and invited others to embrace him. James, who was present, often referred to this event in subsequent life. About two years after this he was baptized by the Rev. Thomas Handley Chipman. Brother Ebenezer Stronach, who subsequently entered the ministry, was baptized at the same time.

On the 15th day of February, 1821, brother Downey was united in marriage with Miss Mary Cropley. They had sixteen children, of whom fourteen are still living. In great harmony and mutual kindness did this pious couple cheerfully endure the toils and trials attendant on the bringing up of a large family on a new mountain farm, in a new and remote settlement. By honest industry and frugality they were enabled to provide comfortably for their children. Through Divine goodness they have been permitted to enjoy the satisfaction of seeing a number of them confess Christ before the world.

Though there were, as is usual, waxings and wanings in the exercises of the mind of our departed brother, yet his demeanor was uniformly that of a sincere and devout Christian. During the space of about forty years that elapsed after his first profession of faith, he constantly walked in fellowship with his brethren, and shared largely in their esteem. He was evidently an upright man, an obliging neighbour, an affectionate husband, a fond parent, a true friend, and a sincere disciple of Christ.

Brother Downey's last sickness was of only about three weeks' continuance. His sufferings, which were frequently acute, were borne with truly Christian fortitude and submission. His hope remained steadfast to the end. On Lord's-day morning, the 7th inst. (Nov.) he quietly resigned his spirit into the hand of his faithful Redeemer, in the 67th year of his age.

Besides a widow and fourteen children, he has left a mother—long a mother in Israel—aged 88 years, eight brothers and sisters, and numerous other relatives and connexions. Of these,