

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

Our Brother, Rev. R. McLEARN, on the evening of his departure, suddenly opened his eyes, and exclaimed with energy, "All right!" "I'd rather die to-night!"

ALL right! all right!
I'd rather die to-night!
I have no wish to live;
No cause to grieve:

My hopes are firm, my prospects bright;
Triumphant over death,
Joyful I yield my breath:

Children, and friends, and all I have, I leave
In thy safe keeping, O my God! this night,
In fullest confidence—thou wilt receive
The sacred trust—I die in peace.—All right!

All right! all right!
I'd rather die to-night!
Why should I cling to life?
I'm weary of its turmoil, toil, and strife:
I long for rest.

And holy voices from the realms of Light,
Are calling me away—peace fills my breast,
And all is bright!
Oh! I shall die to-night!
All right! all right!

My peace is made with God:
I long have trusted in a Saviour's blood:
He's been my Life, my Light:
No merits of my own I plead,
With me, and for me, all I need
In this dread hour I find in Him—and to-night,
While on eternity's bright verge I stand,
And full before me beams "the better land:"
My dying testimony I add for Him
Who died to bless me, and my soul redeem;
His love sustains me now, and in his might,
I triumph over death and hell—all right!

Oh! I would die to-night
Shouting "All right!"

Rather than rise again to life and health,
To full prosperity, and ease, and wealth,
And worldly honors, for long coming years:
How empty, vain, and false, the world appears,
As seen by me to-night,
Through that soft heavenly light,
Which breaks upon my sight,
From the celestial spheres!
All right! all right!

His ways are right, all right, and always right.
When the deep fountains of my soul were stirred;
In early youth, and He, the Eternal Word,
Became my constant, all absorbing theme,
To live, to labour, and to die for Him—
That choice was right, all right.

When wounded, crippled, driven from the field,
With weapons broken, but unslung shield,
I dropped into the rear—the mortal sight
Failed to discern it; that was right, all right.

I see it so to-night:
Still was I called to struggle midst the fight,
For Him, for Truth, tho' in a different sphere
From that I willed—but I was needed there:
The Master willed it, and 'twas right, all right;
My work is ended, and I die to-night,
All right! all right!

Yes, brother, it is right, all right!
Go to thy longed-for rest, go, die to-night!
We would not longer keep thee here; Oh, no!
Thy work is done, well done, now brother, go
To thy reward on high—our tears will flow,
For much we loved thee; and we sorely grieve
To part with thee—thou diest, and see live;
Still live to struggle midst the deadly fight.
Brother, we, too, had rather die to-night
If it were right—

If we were right: ready like thee to go,
From danger, sin, and suffering below,
To yon bright land of sunshine and delight.
But that same grace will bear us safely through.
Our faith grows strong to-night:
Brother, we catch the light
From thy visions bright—

The heavenly walls seem blazing full in sight,
And mingled echoes from the eternal spheres
Prolong their sweet vibrations to our ears—
ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT!

August, 1860.

S. T. R.

LOSS AND GAIN.—Dr. Payson, in his dying hours, said he could have saved himself much trouble in life if he had only believed that the Saviour's presence was enough to fill him with joy, if all the earthly comforts were taken away. He found it so in sickness, but could not quite believe in health. A poor, simple man with none of Payson's imagination or fancy, once said in a similar spirit, with his dying words: "I have lost all my property; I have lost all my relatives; my last son is dead. I am all alone, old and poor; but it makes no difference—Christ never grows old; Christ never is poor; Christ never dies; and Christ never will forsake me."

Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD III.

From A. D. 1800 to A. D. 1809.

LETTER XVII.

NEW CHURCHES IN THIS PERIOD:—RAGGED ISLAND—ARGYLE—ENOCH TURNER'S LETTER RESPECTING IT—CORNWALLIS—EDWARD MANNING'S RE-ORDINATION—ONSLow—AMHERST—WILLIAM FREEMAN'S LETTER.

MY YOUNG FRIEND,

There is a very scanty supply of materials for the history of our denomination during this period. Printed documents are still wanting. Even the Minutes of the Association were not published till 1810. Our information must be derived from traditional recollections, from letters, and from the journals of American ministers who visited the province for missionary purposes, and afterwards reported their proceedings to the societies by which they were employed.

The old preachers seldom remained long at home. Not that they travelled for pleasure, or for gain. Theirs was a nobler object. They toiled and suffered to win souls. It mattered not how rude the accommodation, how uninviting the fare, how perilous the journey;—they heard the cry of the perishing, and they rushed to the rescue, prompted by pure benevolence, and regardless of the difficulties that were in the way. Incidental notices and allusions in their correspondence refer to these facts, not unfrequently hinting at domestic privations occasioned by the absence of the head of the family, or offering words of consolation under an unexpected extension of that absence. It was by these tours of evangelization that the power of religion was maintained and the truth spread abroad. While ministers were so few in number, the spiritual necessities of the people could be supplied in no other way.

Five new churches were constituted in this period. The first was on Ragged Island. John Craig, as stated in a former letter, returned to that district after a short stay at Shelburne. He re-engaged at once in gospel labour there. His endeavours were successful, and in 1804 a church was organised. John Burton assisted Mr. Craig on that occasion, and afterwards associated, whether associated with other ministers or not, I am unable to say, at his ordination as pastor of the church.

A church was formed at Argyle in 1806. A full account of it is given in the following letter from Enoch Towner to the Editor of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine. It is dated "Argyle, April 13th, 1807."

"Reverend and dear Sir,
"Though unacquainted with you after the flesh, yet I trust I am a partaker with you in the blessed spirit of the gospel and engaged in the same glorious cause of the Redeemer. The great Head of the church is pleased to indulge in the pleasure of inviting lost sinners to come to the fountain of the blood of the slaughtered Lamb of God, for the salvation of their souls. We have heard with pleasure of the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom in many parts of the world, by means of your Magazines. Perusing these accounts has awakened in my soul sensations which I cannot express, which induce me to address you with this freedom, and which I trust you will pardon, when you shall hear of the work of God in these parts.

"I was formerly settled over a Baptist church in the Township of Digby, in the county of Annapolis, where God was pleased to bless my poor labours to that people. Here I lived some years, and improved my gifts, travelling abroad but seldom, as my circumstances in life would not permit. And having my heart much knit to that people in the bonds of the gospel, I have found severe trials at the thoughts of leaving them, to preach to those who were destitute in other places.

"On the 16th of July last, I set out on a journey to Argyle, where I arrived on Saturday the 18th, late in the evening. The people not having notice of my coming, and the next morning being very rainy, but few attended meeting. I was requested to stay another

Sabbath, which I did, and also preached several times in the course of the week. Religion was at a very low ebb among the few professors, who belonged to a church formerly established by a Mr. Frost of the *New Light* persuasion. After his death the Church was re-established and increased under the ministration of other preachers, whose labours had been blessed to the salvation of many souls; they still holding the baptism of believers non-essential to fellowship in the church of Christ. Oh that all Christ's ministers would endeavour to impress on the minds of his people the necessity of obedience to his high commands! The broken and scattered state of the church was great; all discipline was done away. Nevertheless, there were a few mourning souls that would not be comforted, because God's heritage lay waste.

"Here I tarried the next Lord's day, and preached from Solomon's song; v. 16., and in the afternoon from chap. i. 8., and the Lord was pleased to bless the opportunity. The set time was now come to raise his people from the dust. The work began in the following manner; there was a young woman who had been awakened the winter before, by hearing some young people sing and discourse upon the happiness of religion, in the township of Digby, the impression of which had never left her, till this Sabbath evening, when she found peace and joy in the gospel. Her feelings led her to exhort her young companions to turn to the Lord. Truly we may say, he is a God working like himself; for the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in the hearts of the king's enemies, and many were brought to bow to the sceptre of king Jesus, and proclaim salvation in his blessed name. Oh, he is a wonder-working God; may I ever lie at his feet, and crown him Lord of all! Here I saw the Lord had begun his work, and hence could not find it my duty to leave the place.

"The young professors manifested a desire to follow their Lord's commands and to be buried with him in baptism. It was my sincere desire they should; but here being no church for them to covenant with, as most of the old professors (as I observed before) could not see the expediency of baptism, I was at a loss how to proceed, but resolved to follow the Lord's command to teach and to baptize. Accordingly, a Conference meeting was appointed to hear their experiences, when nine came forward. The old professors and seven young converts, and were baptized the fourth Lord's day after my first arrival at this place. The Lord owned his blessed ordinance to the conviction of a number; and it was made a precious season to many. After this the work spread with great power, and people assembled from all parts of the town, and some from the adjoining towns. I thought it proper to send for brother Harris Harding, as he was much more acquainted with the old professors than I was, particularly as he had formerly laboured among them, and as many had professed under his ministry. Our meeting was in order to see if we could settle a church; but it proved to no purpose at this time. However, ten came forward and were baptized. We both went into the water together, to show that we agreed in heart and practice. The glory of the Lord seemed to overshadow the place, and move on the baptismal waters. But it still looked dark as to settling a church, for the most of the old professors stood as before. I now thought it proper to form those that had been baptized into some order, and for that purpose offered them a covenant, which they cheerfully signed. But God was working, out of our sight, in the minds of those old professors. For in a few days from this time there were twenty-two came forward to baptism. And oh, this was a wonderful day indeed! Here was seen a mother, son and wife, and grand-daughter, all following their Lord into the water! Here was one man seventy years of age, and a little boy only ten! Now was the desire of my soul accomplished in this thing, in that the Lord had united the old and young professors in one body. They requested that they might commemorate the death of their Redeemer; I accordingly administered the Lord's supper to them, and it was indeed a blessed feast to many; for they were stayed with flagons, and comforted as with apples (Sol. Song. ii. 5.). What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? Now they came

flying like clouds or doves to the windows before a storm. Baptism was administered five Lord's days successively, until seventy-eight joined the church. After staying there thirteen sabbaths I was under the necessity of returning to my people. I tarried there four weeks, and then returned to this place again. This was the last of November. I found the Lord was still at work, though not so powerfully as when I left them. Several acknowledged a work of grace to have been wrought in their hearts during my absence. But the cloud seemed to return again; for there being a number of men who follow the seas, on returning home to winter, seeing such an alteration in the place, they were struck with deep solemnity. Many were wounded to their hearts, and made to groan under the weight of their sins. There were not many of them who came out openly to profess religion, until the past month, when a young man who had been under great distress all winter found comfort, and after preaching, could not refrain from ascribing glory to God for his unexpected deliverance. The divine presence very sensibly filled the place—many giving glory to their Redeemer, and many deeply wounded with a sense of their sins.

"The last Sabbath in March twenty came forward and were baptized. There were five baptisms in the winter season. Twenty-four have told their experiences, who are not yet baptized, and a number of others are under hopeful impressions. The work is still going on in this place, and spreading rapidly in different parts of this province.

"I am, Sir, your unworthy brother in Christ.

ENOCH TOWNER."

When Edward Manning became a Baptist he zealously inculcated the principles which he had embraced, and they were received by almost all who were converted under his ministry. In the list of members, this note is generally appended to each name, after that time—"baptized by immersion." This raised the question of communion. Mr. Manning was gradually led to the adoption of Strict Baptist views. He saw, as indeed has been acknowledged by all Christendom, that baptism must precede the Lord's supper, and therefore that an unbaptized person has no right to the latter ordinance. He made known his convictions, and strove to induce the church to agree with him. Great dissension followed. Much bitterness of feeling was displayed. At length the necessity of separation was manifest, and Mr. Manning with some others withdrew, in order to establish a Baptist church. It was accomplished in August, 1807. On the 28th of January, 1808, Mr. Manning was ordained pastor of the new church. The ordination sermon was preached by Isaac Case, one of the American ministers mentioned above. John Burton gave the charge, and Theodore Harding the right hand of fellowship.

I have repeatedly referred to the labours of the brethren in Onslow. After Harris Harding's departure, the other brethren continued to visit that place occasionally and Baptist sentiments soon appeared among the people. Nine persons were baptized by Theodore Harding in 1799. Sixteen more were baptized by Joseph Crandal and Edward Manning, in 1804. Others were added in the same way in subsequent years and the baptized began to hold separate meetings for worship. There was much opposition to the Baptist cause, and the ignorant and bigoted did all in their power to hinder its progress, and to annoy those by whom it was maintained. Guns were fired at them as they returned from their meetings. Bridges were partially taken up, to the peril of those who had to pass over them. The sect was everywhere spoken against. Nevertheless, it grew and multiplied. The desirableness of forming a church on Baptist principles had been felt for some time and the object was at length accomplished. In the year 1809, Nathan Cleaveland, a member of the church at Horton visited them. A Baptist church was formed, and Mr. Cleaveland became its pastor.

In the same year a church was formed at Amherst. The gospel had been often preached in that place by the brethren already named. Mr. Manning took occasion to call the attention of the people to the ordinance