

For the Christian Messenger.

Home Mission Agency.

LETTER FROM REV. I. J. SKINNER.

MR. EDITORS,—

Your readers will expect to hear occasionally from the Agent of the Home Missionary Board. I shall therefore endeavour to furnish from time to time some account of my proceedings.

I commenced my agency the 23rd January, at New Germany. This is comparatively a new country. The soil is generally fertile, well covered with timber and presenting an inviting field for the Lumberman and Agriculturist. Many of the farms are in a thriving condition, amply repaying the toils of the hardy husbandman. The Baptist church has been greatly impeded in its progress, in times past by trials and conflicts of various kinds; but its prospects are brightening. The faithful labours of their Pastor, Rev. W. H. Caldwell, seem to have been blessed to the awakening of a greater interest in religious matters on the part of the Church, and to the hopeful conversion of sinners. They labour under considerable disadvantage for want of a suitable place of worship. Their meeting house is one of those old poorly-planned, badly-built and never-finished castles, (with all due reference to those who built it) which are to be seen in many of the rural districts, bearing the name of a place of worship, but presenting an appearance both externally and internally, calculated to inspire anything but devotional feelings. But it should not however, be forgotten that even this place unsightly and uncomfortable as it is, has been made the theatre of most remarkable displays of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. I had the pleasure of attending a meeting for the purpose of devising means to procure a better building. The spot is agreed upon, and a committee appointed; the greatest struggle will be to obtain requisite means. I know their circumstances and will venture to say to those whose property may be reckoned by thousands and who perhaps worship in splendid and costly edifices, that a hundred dollar bill, or indeed one of any amount, enclosed to Rev. Mr. Caldwell, or to Bro. David Lantz, will give no offence; but would be received with many thanks.

I next visited New Cornwall a place situated between New Germany and Mahone Bay, remarkable for its timber, fertile land and beautiful lakes. The Baptist church though small and feeble, has enjoyed a good degree of prosperity since its organization, some few years ago. It is an interesting locality and should be supplied with the faithful preaching of God's word.

BRIDGEWATER came next in my course. This is a thriving little village on the LaHave River, at the head of the tide. Its chief exports are lumber, cordwood and hemlock bark. Situated as it is in the midst of a largely populated surrounding country, considerable facilities for trade are enjoyed. Its religious aspect is somewhat remarkable, comprising within its limits no less than ten denominations of professing christians. There are four respectable places of worship, and efforts are being made, to build another. Seven denominations hold stated meetings.

The Baptist church numbers about a hundred and twenty members. These are scattered over an extent of some twenty-five miles. Their scattered situation, and, with few exceptions their limited circumstances, render the support of religious institutions somewhat difficult, nevertheless, according to their numbers, they have done nobly in this respect. They are at present without a Pastor. Bridgewater and vicinity present a field of labor both inviting and important. May the Lord direct some faithful messenger of the Cross thither.

I then proceeded to NORTH WEST, a settlement between Mahone Bay and Lunenburg town. There has been in the days gone by a flourishing Baptist church here; but for some years past it has seemed to decline, and is now in a low condition. Yet there are a few who endeavour to stand at their posts and maintain the standard of truth. They need a Pastor; and with the assistance of New Cornwall could give a comfortable support.

CHESTER was next visited. This is well known to be one of the oldest churches in the Province; reared under the fostering care of one of the Fathers in the Ministry, whose memory is deservedly cherished by many who have listened to the precious gospel from his lips. In the absence of their Pastor I remained over the Lord's day—preached twice in town and once at the Basin. In each of the above mentioned places, the people generally responded very readily to the claims of the Mission, as far as their means would allow.

There are in Lunenburg County, four Baptist

churches, destitute of Pastors, and the "regions beyond" where Pastors can seldom if ever visit, afford ample field for the constant employment of a missionary. Brethren and Sisters in the Lord, who are blessed with the preaching of his word from Sabbath to Sabbath, think of those who are deprived of those precious blessings. "Lift up your eyes and behold the fields already white unto the harvest," and "pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth more labourers into his harvest" and moreover, give of your worldly substance "as God hath prospered you," to send to them the word of life.

Yours faithfully,  
I. J. SKINNER.

Pleasant Valley, March 19th, 1860.

For the Christian Messenger.

Exhibition at Horton Academy.

DEAR SIR,

Last evening, March 21st, was the quarterly exhibition of Horton Academy. With some other friends I repaired to the Hall at quite an early hour, and though the evening was very stormy, was surprised to find it literally crammed. I noticed there the elite of the village, friends from a distance, and the College Faculty. The exhibition was of the highest character, reflecting much credit on Messrs. Hartt and Higgins, the conductors of the school. Instruction was blended with amusement of a high order. A number of colloquies, some of which were original, and two original essays which would do credit to college students, were delivered with much appropriateness and spirit. During the dramatic performances, the audience were made to witness the classic days of Greece and Rome; the sublime grandeur of the Alps; the life boat launched upon the stormy sea to save the perishing; and the poor Irish sailor in France, among the people of a strange language, trying to get "the loan of a gridiron" to broil a beefsteak cut off from a piece of pork. As he could not make himself understood, he got into a great rage and declared that "in Ould Ireland he would get not only a gridiron, but something to put on it." These and other scenes were enacted with great ability. I was particularly struck with the proficiency made in French. A class of little boys rehearsed a colloquy in that language. The two original essays on the discipline of the mind, and the Indians, delivered by Messrs. George Turpo Albert Chipman were models of eloquence. At the close some remarks were made by Messrs. Cramp, Sawyer and Freeman, calling the minds of the audience who had been carried away by the scenes enacted, back to the sober realities of a student's life, and the claims of religion upon those who are climbing the hill of science, reminding all of the remark of Luther that, "to have studied well was to have prayed well." The whole was enlivened with excellent music, contributed by Mr. Newcomb and his well trained choir. Truly parents would do well to place their sons in this noble institution.

ONE PRESENT.

Wolfville, March 22nd, 1860.

For the Christian Messenger.

Donation Visit.

MR. EDITOR,

With pleasure and gratitude I acknowledge the Donation visit, with which members of my church and congregation, brethren of neighbouring churches, and friends of other denominations honoured me on the 8th of Feb. The meeting was of a delightful and gracious character. Deacon, W. H. Chipman was called to the chair, and performed his part admirably. Bro. John A. Morse presented the donations in behalf of the company in an appropriate speech. Excellent speeches were made by Revs. P. F. Murray, W. G. Parker, N. Vidito, Jas. Murray, (Presbyterian), and M. Pickles, (Wesleyan); also some interesting remarks were offered by Dea. Jas. Messenger. The amount contributed was £43, which has since been raised to £44 10s; of which £28 was cash. Friends not present who kindly sent in their donations are gratefully remembered.

Considering the times, I think the people have done nobly. Their kindness in the past is not forgotten. They have allowed no year to pass during my pastorate of six years here, without illuminating and gladdening my house, one day, at least, with their presence and their gifts. In donation visits they certainly abound. May the Lord bless and enrich them a thousand fold with his grace.

Yours truly,  
GEORGE ARMSTRONG.

Bridgetown, March 5th, 1860.

For the Christian Messenger.

Obituary Notices.

DEACON ILSLEY.

Mr. Editor,—The Baptist Church in this place has been called to mourn over the sudden death of one of its deacons, bro. Nathan Ilsley who fell dead at his own door, on the evening

of Feb. 29th, while conversing with one of his sons. The deceased was converted about thirty-six years ago, and was baptized by Father Manning. For more than twenty years he has been a Deacon of the church; which office he filled with credit to himself and profit to the church. He was a man of faith and prayer, a lover of good men; sound in the faith. He was most attentive to the duties of religion, both in his family and the Church. As soon as he was converted he commenced family worship, and continued that pleasant and important observance to the day of his death. Respected by all who knew him, and beloved by the Church, his death is deeply lamented by the community at large. Immediately after the funeral the Church met in Conference. It was a time of weeping, as one after another bore testimony to his fidelity to his God and his brethren, and of his moral and religious worth. It showed how much he was beloved by his brethren, and how great their loss in his sudden removal from their midst. May God comfort and support the heart-stricken widow and children.

Yours truly,  
JAMES PARKER.

Lakeville, March 14th, 1860.

MISS ANN MERRY.

Died at Wilmot on the 27th of Jan., in the 59th year of her age. Miss Merry enjoyed from early life, the blessing of a sanctified and soul-saving ministry of the Word, and was early led to feel her lost condition and subsequently to obtain hope in God. Her deep affliction she bore with great patience for more than a year. With tears of sorrow she lamented a life unimproved. Shut up to the solitude of a sick room and in the midst of affliction, she learned and enjoyed more of Christ than ever before. The sting of death was gone. The grave had no terrors. With thanksgiving and praise she took leave of her friends and the world.

Paradise, March 13th, 1860.

MRS. FRANCIS VIDITO.

Consort of Alfred Vidito died at Paradise on the 29th of January, in the 31st year of her age. Mrs. V. was a native of Boston. At the age of 13 she experienced the grace and mercy of God, and united with the Methodist Episcopal church, of which she continued a member until death. She was modest, retiring, unassuming and a most kind, humble and trustworthy friend. Consumption had evidently marked her for its victim years before her delicate frame was laid in the dust. Her trust in God was unshaken in sickness and death. The loss is ours, the gain hers.—Com. by the Rev. N. Vidito.

MRS. JANE SLOCOMB.

Sarah Jane, Daughter of John and Sarah Suthern, was born in Halifax, March 13th, 1814. When about 14 years of age, she was deeply impressed with a sense of her sinfulness, together with her eldest brother William, and a young girl about the same age. Her parents were then living out at the Light house. They had gone to meeting, about 3 miles from home, and while absent God visited these children by his grace. When Sarah Jane saw her parents returning, she ran to meet them, to tell them what God had done for her soul. She was baptized by the Rev. Samuel Bancroft, then Pastor of the Brier Island church. In the 19th year of her age she was married to Bro. John Slocomb, and united with the Nictaux Church, and so remained for a number of years. Sister Slocomb lived in the affections of the church and of her neighbour. After passing through various afflictions and trials in the loss of children, about six years since the family removed from Hanley Mountain to Westport. On the 5th of Feb. 1860 she fell asleep in Jesus, leaving a husband and nine children to mourn their loss. The remains of our departed sister were interred at West Port on the 8th of Feb. A discourse was delivered by the writer to a large and attentive congregation from Phil. i. 21. "For me to live is Christ but to die is gain."—Com. by the Rev. H. Achilles.

Religious Intelligence.

CANSO, March 19th.—Mr. Editor.—The Baptist church here has been holding a series of meetings for several weeks. The pastor has enjoyed the very efficient aid of the Rev. Manson Bigelow. The Lord has been pleased to crown our efforts with his blessing. Fifteen have been baptized, a number more have experienced a saving change, and will be baptized, others are in an anxious state. The members of the church have been greatly stirred up. A number of them, who had sunk into apathy and carelessness, have been aroused to activity in the church, and to the enjoyment of religion. To God be all the praise.

JOHN MILLER.

CORNWALLIS.—Extract of letter from Rev. E. M. Saunders, dated March 24th:—"The 4th Cornwallis Church has been greatly revived of late. Twenty one have been added to their number by baptism. Heretofore the congregations have met in large School rooms; but they have resolved to build a commodious House for the worship of God. It is an inviting field for a pastor. The church has suffered much for want of ministerial aid. Their prospects have now brightened. May the Lord send them a good shepherd!

Other churches around are receiving additions by baptism. You will get particulars from their pastors. We welcomed one to our number last sabbath by baptism. A few more stand ready to obey the Lord."

UPPER AYLSFORD.—The Rev. Jas. L. Read writes, dated March 22nd:—"The work of Grace is still progressing in this place. Last Sabbath I Baptised nine happy believers."

THE THEATRES.—The preachers at the various theatres on a late Sunday were as follows:—Sadler's Wells: afternoon, Rev. E. H. Bickersteth, incumbent of Christ Church, Hampstead; evening, Rev. A. M. Henderson, Claremont Chapel, Pentonville. Victoria, Lambeth: afternoon, Rev. W. Landels, Regent's park Chapel; evening, Rev. J. P. Chown, Bradford. Garrick, White-chapel: afternoon, Rev. J. P. Chown; evening, Rev. J. Colbourne, incumbent of St. Matthias, Bethnal-green. Whitechapel: evening, Rev. Samuel Minton, Percy Chapel. Standard, Shore-ditch: Rev. Charles Stovel, Commercial-street Chapel, Whitechapel. Britannia, Hoxton: Mr Radcliffe, the well-known lay preacher. Of the above named theatres, the Standard and the Pavilion were opened for the first time on Sunday.—The only detailed information was respecting the above service at the Victoria Theatre. A correspondent informs us that it was complete success. "The audiences were large (numbering not less than 4,000), and far more attentive than I have seen in many chapels; evidently, too, of the sort we want to lay hold of, in great part. Sir John Lawrence and Lord Ducie were on the stage. Lord Shaftesbury read the Scriptures, and Mr. Arthur Kinnaird gave out the hymns. Mr. Chown preached from Mark xii. 6, 7." His text: at the Garrick Theatre in the afternoon was Proverbs viii. 36.

Provincial Parliament.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

MONDAY, March 19.

In our Parliamentary report last week, we very briefly mentioned the Financial Secretary had brought forward his Budget, as the Estimates for the year's expenditure, and the proposed Tariff of Duties are commonly called. This was made the subject of some warm discussion.

The revenue for 1859 was £166,705. The Estimates of what will be required for 1860 are £184,281, or, as it is given in dollars and cents, \$737,126. It is presumed this will be made up as follows:—

Table with 2 columns: Category and Amount. Includes Excise and Light duties, Casual Revenues, and balance of assets on hand.

The Estimate of probable expenditure of the Province, for the ordinary and Legislative appropriations for the year, are:—

Table with 2 columns: Category and Amount. Lists various government expenses such as Salaries of Lieutenant Governor, Legislative expenses, Revenue department, etc.

The proposed Duties on imported articles are the same as in the Tariff of last year, with the exception of those on Wines and Spirits. It is proposed to diminish the Duty on Rum from 2s. 3d. per gallon to 1s. 9d. and a slight addition to the duty on Wines. The Distilleries are to be allowed to work, on payment of the same duties as in 1858.

Hon. Mr. Howe, thought an increase of vigilance on the part of Collectors of duties, and diminishing the salaries of those employed on the railroad and lessening the working expenses would have the effect of making the revenue meet the expenditure.

Hon. Mr. Young, entered into the various items of the proposed tariff and compared it with those of the United States, Canada, and New Brunswick, showing that ours is lower than either of them, and was of opinion that if the new Government were allowed to remain long enough for these seeds to germinate and mature, a good crop might be expected to appear as the result.

Dr. Tupper, thought the sneers at the late Financial Secretary came with an ill grace from one who was unable to bring forward his figures without being prompted by other members of the government. He thought some great scheme would have been brought forward but found that with the exception of alterations in two items it was the same as that of last year.