

# Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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## Poetry.

### What must I do?

"SINCE I first discovered Jesus to be the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, I have more than once met with a poor sinner seeking peace at the foot of Sinai instead of Calvary; and I have heard him now and again, in bitter disappointment and fear, groaning out, 'What must I do?' I have said to him, 'Do! do! what can you do? what do you need to do?'"

Nothing, either great or small,  
Nothing, sinner, no;  
Jesus did it, did it all,  
Long, long ago.

When he from his lofty throne  
Stooped to do and die,  
Every thing was fully DONE;  
Hearken to his cry:

"It is finished!" Yes, indeed,  
Finished every jot,  
Sinner, this is all you need;  
Tell me, is it not?

Wear, working, plodding one,  
Wherefore toil you so?  
Cease your DOING; all was done  
Long, long ago.

Till to Jesus' work you cling  
By a SIMPLE faith,  
Doing is a deadly thing,  
Doing ends in death!

Cast your deadly doing down,  
Down at Jesus' feet;  
Stand in him, IN HIM ALONE,  
GLORIOUSLY COMPLETE.

## Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

### The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD V.

From A. D. 1821 to A. D. 1828.

LETTER XXXIX.

STATISTICS OF THE PERIOD.—ERRORS CORRECTED.—MR. MANNING'S MEMOIR OF LEBBEUS HARRIS.—ACCOUNT OF —TAYLOR, THE COLOURED BROTHER.—PUBLICATIONS ON THE BAPTISMAL CONTROVERSY.—WILLIAM ELDER'S—ALEXANDER CRAWFORD'S.—WINTER OF 1826-7.

#### My Young Friend,

The general history of the period now under review has been recorded. The following is a summary of the statistics:—

Year.	No. of Churches.	Added.	Dismissed.	Excluded.	Died.	Total.
1822	18	100	15	13	8	1401
1823	"	89	6	21	12	1421
1824	21	147	15	20	6	1545
1825	22	97	4	19	20	1580
1826	25	125	12	10	27	1634
1827	26	53	15	25	58	1605
1828	30	118	71	11	25	2049

In preparing this table I have been compelled to deviate from the printed Minutes of the years 1827 and 1828, in consequence of the gross inaccuracies which were discovered in them. The total number of members for the year 1827 is set down as 1711. Now, the total number for 1826 was 1634, and the returns show a decrease of 45, which would reduce the number to 1589. The numbers given in the Minutes, however, amount, not to 1711, but only to 1384. Three churches, containing 121 members, are altogether omitted in the column of "Total," and one church is reported one hundred short of its actual number; so that we must add 221 to 1384, which gives us 1605. Then as to 1828:—the total is said to be 1772, which should be 1769, according to the printed figures. This cannot be right, for it declares the increase to be only 164, whereas four churches were added that year, containing upwards of 400 members. But the first Halifax church is omitted. That church reported 280 members the year before, which number, added to 1769, shows 2049 as the actual strength of our denomination in 1828. This was an increase of 50 per cent since 1821.

The deaths of two ministers, John Hull

and Enoch Towner, have been reported. Many brethren and sisters were removed to the better land during the same period, of whom no record was kept on earth, but whose lives were fruitful in christian deeds, and who died "in the Lord." Some brief notices of others have been preserved. One of them I give in full. It is a Memoir prepared by Mr. Manning, and published in the Magazine.

"Mr. Lebbeus Harris was born in Connecticut (then a British Colony) in the year 1746. His father, the late Lebbeus Harris Esq., moved to this province when it was first settled by the English. The subject of this memoir, it appears, did not come with his father and the rest of the family to this country at first; or if he did, went back again to New England. While he remained there he experienced, as he trusted, a work of saving grace in his soul. Shortly after this he returned, or first came, to this province, being then quite a young man. Not long after his arrival, he was united in marriage with Miss L. DeWolf, daughter of the late Nathan DeWolf, Esq., of Horton, with whom he lived in love and harmony about fifty-eight years. Mr. and Mrs. Harris had a numerous family of children, most of whom have been called away by death, and some have given evidence that they died in the Lord. There are still five, who, with their amiable mother, survive to mourn the loss of so excellent a father; one of them is Elder David Harris, now minister of the Baptist Church of Fredericton, New Brunswick. [Elder Harris died in 1853].

"Mr. Harris was a modest man; and as experimental religion was not much talked of, and, it is thought, was not much known by the people in Nova Scotia, when he returned from Connecticut, he made no public professions till the late Henry Alline commenced his ministerial course. At that time numbers were awakened to a concern for their souls, and some believers, who had been too much conformed to the world, were aroused from a black-slidden state. Among others Mr. Harris came forth and avowed his Lord, to the great joy of many. He united with Mr. Alline in the Congregational order, and continued in that order till the year 1799, when he and his beloved consort, with twenty-six more, at one time were baptized in this town, upon a profession of their faith, by the Rev. T. H. Chipman.

"Mr. Harris had removed into Cornwallis some years before, where he continued until his death. He, with the writer of this sketch, and a number more, continued with the congregational brethren, upon the open communion plan, as it is called, until the year 1807, when a considerable change took place in regard to religious matters, and a church was constituted upon Calvinistic principles, and what is called close communion was established. This resolution crossed the tender feelings of the sympathising Mr. Harris and his companion. They always seemed to have an affectionate regard for the regular Calvinistic Baptists: but how could they leave their Congregational brethren, whom they so much esteemed, and by whom they were so highly esteemed in return?—The subject, however, being much agitated, and a reformation already commenced, our worthy brother Harris, who was a man of some reading, and especially conversant with the scriptures,—after much prayerful investigation, saw his way clear to unite with his Baptist brethren. Accordingly, he and his dear aged partner were received into full communion by the Baptist church in this town, in which communion and secret fellowship they remained until his decease. This took place, after a lingering illness, on Lord's day the 20th of May, 1827.

"His funeral was attended on the Tuesday following, when a discourse was delivered in the Baptist meeting-house, Canard Street, from Job. v. 26:—'Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season.' This text appeared to be very appropriate, as the deceased lived to a full age, and was apparently ripe for glory.

"Mr. Harris was, in various respects, an uncommon man. As a husband, none could be more kind;—as a father, none could be more tender;—as a brother, none could be more affectionate;—as a friend, none could be more true;—and as a neighbour, none could be more peaceable, harmless, and ob-

bliging. He was a man of prayer, in secret, in the domestic circle, and in the church of God. We shall long remember his modest, affectionate, awfully solemn, and truly evangelical prayers. 'The memory of the just is blessed.' It is said that he was never known to have a quarrel with any person. He never had a suit in a court of law, as he never sued, nor was ever sued by any one. He aspired after nothing more, in this world, than to be an honest, christian farmer. He might truly be said to be 'not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.'—Thus lived, and thus died, one of the most amiable characters in Nova Scotia. As he entertained the hope, so he evinced the piety of a real christian for upwards of sixty years. He was beloved and universally respected by all who had any knowledge of him.

"Some may think the portrait is in too high colours. But a gentleman high in office, who was well acquainted with the dear departed Mr. Harris, not less than threescore years, after his interment remarked to the preacher, who had delivered in substance what is stated above, 'You have said a great deal, and well you might, but you have not said the one half.'

"It is devoutly to be desired that professors of religion in these provinces, and throughout the world, would follow the example of the deceased Mr. Harris in many particulars; but especially in one, viz., so to conduct their affairs, if possible, that they may not have occasion to be engaged in controversies at law, as alas! too many frequently are, to the injury of the cause of God."

I take the following narrative from one of Mr. Ferguson's letters to Mr. Manning. It is dated May 1, 1827.

"We have lost another of the followers of Jesus, whose death is severely felt by us—our coloured brother Taylor, of the Plains [Hammonds Plains]. I have often spoken to you of him. He was an eminent saint, and lived in the affections of God's people here. I never knew a coloured brother that possessed so vigorous a mind, nor a mind so deeply imbued with truth. Taylor lived for eternity. While he rendered honour to those that were above him, he feared not man.

"An epidemic raged amongst the negroes in that settlement this winter. Above forty died, having hope in their death. Taylor was with them all, ministered to their spiritual wants, and preached at their funerals. The same fever seized him on the 21st of April, and he sunk under it in nine days. We knew not of his illness until after his death, and this is the more distressing to us, as we fear that he wanted common comforts. Poor dear fellow! I would have hastened to him at any moment.

"I cannot say how anxious I have felt that you, my dear friend, should know our departed brother. Never saw I more humility, or more true dignity, in any man. Truly, I never saw him without feeling my own inferiority. He looked to me like what he was—the son of a king. He was always afraid of appearing forward, and it was only of late that I began to get him near our friends. He prayed in the meeting at the last administration of the supper.

"His loss to the coloured brethren is irreparable, and to the church we are about to form above what you can conceive. We looked to him as the connecting link of that chain that should bind them and us together. There was nothing like a regular gradation of mind (if I may express myself so) from the lowest in the scale to him. There is not one left that we can place, in any good degree, confidence in—not for want of honesty, but judgment. They are an interesting people. God has jewels among them, and we dread, to them and to the cause of God, the consequences of bad teaching. Poor Taylor was as immovable as a rock. Arminianism never held up its head in his neighbourhood while he lived. With what energy, when Mr. Hull and myself visited him last summer, did I see him bear testimony to what he emphatically styled 'the eternal truth of the eternal God!'

"I have no particulars of his death, other than that he was delirious until within a few hours of his death, when his mind was restored, and he talked of his soul and eternity with composure. We are making provision for his widow, who, with six children, almost infants, are in a very destitute condition."

Taylor was a christian hero. He possessed a large measure of the "spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." He was a rich man—"rich in faith." He was an illustrious member of the "royal priesthood." Would that there were many more like him, of all colours!

The progress of our denomination in the province naturally excited general inquiry respecting the sentiments held by us, and the foundations on which they rest. Controversy followed. It was commenced by the Rev. Mr. Ross, Presbyterian minister of Pictou, who published a treatise on infant baptism (or, as we call it, infant sprinkling) in 1811. A few years afterwards another volume appeared on the same side, by the Rev. J. Munro of Antigonish, also a Presbyterian minister. "The Baptists," it was remarked, "confident that the New Testament impartially viewed, is the best possible treatise on their side, took no notice of these publications, but quietly laboured to promote evangelical knowledge, as the best means of promoting the Baptist interest, which they believe to be identified with the best interests of mankind."—About the year 1822, the Rev. George Jackson, a Wesleyan Methodist minister, renewed the warfare, in a series of "Letters." A Reply was issued in the following year. It was entitled, "Infant sprinkling weighed in the balance and found wanting; in five Letters, addressed to the Rev. George Jackson, Wesleyan Methodist Missionary; being a Reply to his Letters in defence of Infant Sprinkling. By William Elder." This was an octavo pamphlet of 56 pages, closely printed. It was a respectable compilation, and appears to have produced a powerful impression, for not only did Mr. Jackson defend himself, at great length, but Mr. Ross entered the field again, and thus added "a fifth clerical treatise to those already published in these provinces, to defend infant sprinkling, or rather, to wage war against the Baptists in the person of Mr. Elder." Alexander Crawford, a Scotch Baptist minister, resident in Prince Edward Island, replied to Mr. Ross. His work was a bulky pamphlet of 135 pages, entitled, "Believer baptism, as opposed to unbeliever sprinkling. In two Essays:—first, on the Abrahamic Covenant; second, on Christian Baptism." The Contents were—

"Essay I. On the Abrahamic Covenant. 1. The nature of a covenant. 2. The blessings of the covenant. 3. The ratification of the covenant. 4. The token of the covenant. A view of the allegory in Gal. iv. An Epitome of the Abrahamic Covenant.

"Essay II. On Christian Baptism. 1. The meaning of the ordinance. 2. The subjects of the ordinance. 3. The objections answered. 4. The practical uses of baptism. 5. Mistakes concerning baptism. 6. Mistakes consequent on baptizing unbelievers."

A private collection was made at the Association in 1826, amounting to ten pounds, to enable Mr. Crawford to publish his work. It appeared in 1827. Mr. Crawford attended the Association that year, and preached from 2 Cor. 5. 17: "an able discourse," said Mr. Manning; "but a little tinctured with Sandemanianism." He made a similar remark respecting Mr. Crawford's pamphlet:—"The more I read the better I like it, though I think it is a little tinctured with Sandemanianism, or what we would among us call the peculiarities of the Scotch Baptists—, which I think rather an injury to his book, though they do not, it is true, enter into the essence of the controversy. Yet his opponents will no doubt avail themselves of those peculiarities to cry down this most valuable publication. He boldly asserts that there was but one covenant made with Abraham, and yet proves that there were two; but he calls the first 'type,' and the second, 'anti-type.' Yet the Holy Spirit by Paul distinguishes them in the plural—the 'first' and the 'second'—the 'old' and the 'new.' I am sorry that in some things he has been somewhat eccentric; for I believe him to be a man of God—a man of talent—and greatly enlightened in the scriptures—and an able advocate for believers' immersion;—and sprinklers will have pretty hard work to confute his arguments, take them as a whole."

It will be but fair to let Mr. Crawford