

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letter from New Zealand.

A letter from Mr. Levi W. Eaton of Auckland, New Zealand, formerly of Pugwash, gives us the sad intelligence contained in the following notice:—

"Auckland, July 7th, 1862.

The Schooner Pole Star, Capt. George Eaton, in the 24th year of his age, eldest son of Levi W. Eaton late of Pugwash, Nova Scotia, sailed from this Port on the 30th day of April last for Napier, and has not since been heard of. All hopes of his safety is despaired of; with a crew of five men and eleven passengers. He has left a sorrowing widow and one son, father, brother, mother and sister to mourn his loss.— Wesleyan please copy."

Mr. Eaton also gives a few other items, as follows:—

"DEAR BROTHER SELDEN,—I receive the Messenger regularly and a welcome messenger it is to me. I did intend to have given you some more account of this far off land, but must deter it to some future time, as my grief is such at present that I cannot write much. I fear he is gone and we know nothing about it, but suppose it will remain a mystery through time. It is one of those providences that we cannot account for, which makes it so much more painful. We sorrow not as those that have no hope, he was sober and steady, and almost his last act in his own house, the morning he left home, was to kneel and pray with his dear wife and little son. God knows all about it, and we know he does all things right, however dark and mysterious they may be to us. The port (Napier) on this coast is about 400 miles distant from this place. About fifty hours after he left here a vessel was seen bottom up in about the position he would be in and we now have no doubt but it was his vessel. He had sailed Master of her for about five months, had made five voyages in her and had been the most successful man that ever sailed out of this port and had gained for himself a reputation that no other man ever did that came to this place, but poor boy he is gone no more to return, you will please insert his loss in the Messenger as he had many friends in Nova Scotia that will then hear of it.

Yours in the best of bonds,
LEVI W. EATON.

For the Christian Messenger.

Light and Darkness.

MR. EDITOR,—

Since the days of Job, there has ever been a struggle for the supremacy between the sons of God, and the followers of Satan. Although that was several thousand years ago, yet the contest now seems as warmly pursued as in the days of Job.

LIGHT.

On the 25th of September, 1862, agreeable to notice given in your paper, a Convention was held in the Baptist Meeting House at Windsor. The Sunday School scholars of Windsor, and the adjoining Township with a number of other scholars and teachers were in attendance.

After the exercises of the children had gone through, which were very creditable to teachers and children, a number of resolutions were adopted, accompanied with eloquent and very impressive speeches respecting the usefulness of such schools, shewing them to be only second to the preaching of the gospel, for the conversion of sinners. An Essay was read by the Rev. Mr. Freeman, which was well received. Speeches too were warmly and eloquently delivered, showing they had the subject fully at heart. Rev. J. L. Murdoch opened the meeting with prayer, the Rev. D. M. Welton presided as Chairman. Mr. William Sabine read, and conducted the examination of the scholars. He is an active teacher in the Sunday School, and on this occasion showed himself to be a powerful advocate of Sunday Schools.

DARKNESS.

Only a few rods distant, and at the same time, a great concourse of people had assembled to witness a horse race. One horse and party were from Halifax, the other belonging to Windsor. Both parties were highly excited with the hopes of winning, and with a certain quantity of a stimulus much used on such occasions. The Halifax horse won the race, the stakes were, I learn, fifty pounds a side. The private bets were many and large. Some lost their all, and in consequence their families must suffer. The fruits of horse racing are very many, to begin with—drunkenness is the first which prepares the way for all the rest, lying, deception, fighting, swearing, and everything bad, gambling with dice, &c. &c. Our roads here are prostituted to the purposes of a race course. Your city will not allow it, and we would like it much if they were prevented here. Several ladies were prevented, by

this nuisance, from travelling the road, to attend the religious meetings alluded to. Several times this summer have the public been thus deprived of the right use of the road, for which we have only in return the many fights and drunkenness and other obscenities which make humanity shudder. Will our Legislators please attend to their duties, as guardians of our roads, and pass an Act which will prevent them from ever being used for such purposes. If horse racing is for the country's good, let them purchase a piece of ground, giving the government the control of it, but let us not be so unjustly deprived of our public thoroughfares.

BILDAD.

For the Christian Messenger.

Our "Articles" again.

DEAR BROTHER,—

I have just examined the Minutes, and find that no action relating to a Revision of "the Articles" was taken at any of the Associations. I learn from this that there is a feeling of indifference or of decided hostility to such a movement. If the former, it arises, I suppose, from a belief that it is not a matter of very great importance, and that "the present version" answers the purpose well enough; in other words, it is the result of want of thought upon the subject, and of a careful examination of its claims. Now every Baptist Church has, or ought to have a great deal to do with its Articles of Faith, and its Covenant, and therefore it cannot be a matter of indifference whether or no they are as perfect as they might be.

But then, a feeling of real opposition may have prevented a consideration of this subject at our Anniversaries. If this be the case, the question assumes a still more serious form, and one must go about a discussion of it with great care. In the first place, the advocate of a change subjects himself to the danger of being regarded as a heretic. To speak disparagingly of the Articles, unless for the purpose of bringing the doctrines they teach into dispute, has been a thing so rare, that this is almost the first thought that suggests itself to a cautious mind when they are alluded to in any other than the highest terms of commendation.

But should I succeed in convincing your readers that I am "sound in the faith," and yet declare my belief that there might be an improvement in our "Articles and Covenant," I would yet have much to contend against. They have now been in use for some time. Our "fathers" loved and revered, if they did not introduce, them. Our present ministers and churches are greatly attached to them; they are engraven on the tablet of their memory as well as of their heart; and they have been appealed to in so many disputes, that we have at last come to regard them as almost inspired, and it seems like sacrilege to think of altering them.

I am not thoroughly posted in the history of this document. I believe it is the only one of the kind that we, in this Province, have ever used; and I have been told that it was imported from some part of New England. It has certainly served an excellent purpose, and done a great deal of good, but I am sure no thoughtful person would urge any, or all of these as sufficient reasons for perpetuating it intact. Some, however, may contend that it is so well written there is no possibility of making any real improvement in it. I confess I am of a different opinion, I gladly admit that it contains much that is good, and little, if anything, that is evil; but let any candid man compare it with the work of J. Newton Brown, commonly called the New Hampshire Articles, and if he is not convinced that some profitable alterations might be made in it, I will consent to remain silent upon the subject henceforth forever.

The question then resolves itself into this, Can no important amendment be made in "Our Articles?" and if there can, Why should it not be done?

Should no one be disposed to take any farther notice of the subject, I shall still have one source of gratification, arising from the thought that the cause in which I have volunteered is a just one, the work I have advocated is good and necessary, and time will do more toward its accomplishment than anything else.

I therefore cheerfully once more subscribe myself

A BAPTIST PASTOR.

[We may inform "a Baptist Pastor" and the Pastors and members of churches generally, that in consequence of the "Articles of the Faith and Practise of the Baptist Churches in Nova Scotia," being out of print, we are preparing a New Edition. They will be ready in a few days. —ED. C. M.]

For the Christian Messenger.

Reminiscences.

DEAR EDITOR,—

May I ask the favour of the insertion of this short reminiscence in your esteemed paper; at the time of the departure of my revered parents, we had not the advantage of a religious periodical wherein to insert the Obituaries of the day, and since we have enjoyed the privilege I have neglected that duty, hoping some more experienced relation or friend might have supplied that need. I however regret that my means for more full information are so imperfect.

Yours truly,
SIMON FITCH.

A BRIEF MEMOIR OF THE LATE SIMON FITCH, ESQUIRE, AND BATHSHEBA HIS WIFE,

Whose demise took place within a few days of each other, viz.: my mother, Nov. 12th, 1824, and my father the 21st of the same month.— They were both descendants of English families; my father's ancestor, the Rev. James Fitch, was born in Essex and emigrated to America, and closed his life and labours in the Township of Lebanon, Connecticut, and was much celebrated as a faithful minister of the Gospel, of the Presbyterian order, as the epitaph upon his tomb stone shews, which I had the gratification to see in 1824. I also procured a chronological list of our ancestry and family down to the present period.

My father was born in the township of Lebanon, Connecticut, and emigrated to this country a little before the American Revolutionary War, with his father, the late Ebenezer Fitch and family. They resided for some years in Cornwallis, where he married Bathsheba, daughter of the late Deacon Huntington, of happy memory. He finally settled in Horton where he and his companion spent the remainder of their days in peace and quietness, they were both from infancy brought up strict Presbyterians and continued so, in faith and practice, until about the time Mr. Henry Alline itinerated through the country. My father was awakened under his powerful appeals to the unconverted, and being convinced the foundation he rested upon for the hope of salvation was insecure and that mere morality could not save a soul, he sought that salvation through the atonement of a crucified Saviour. Thus through the teaching of the Holy Spirit he was brought to renounce his false hope, and clearer light breaking into his mind, he was led to embrace the way of Salvation through the merits of a crucified Redeemer, and enjoying the love of the Saviour which cheered him in all his walk through life. After experiencing what he considered vital religion, he seems to have felt a desire to run in the ways of God's Commandments and enquired with the Apostle, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" The response seemed to be "Arise and be baptized." I have not the exact date of his baptism, but am inclined to think it was about the year 1830, and probably during the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Pearson, a faithful minister of the Gospel from Yorkshire, England, who laboured for some considerable time in the Baptist Church in Horton. My father was contemporary with those pious, good, useful men in the Church, Deacons Benjamin Kinsman, Peter Bishop, Ezra Reed, Daniel Lockhart, with many others of the like stamp for usefulness in the Church, and uniform upright conduct in all their relations with their fellow men. These all, having faithfully served in their day and generation, have gone to their eternal rest. My father was always forward and willing in any engagement or good cause, to the extent of his power to do his part. His house was ever open and free to entertain the ministers and servants of the Lord, and he thought it a privilege to do so, he was one of the kindest of parents and his children loved and revered him, he steadily kept up the worship of God in his family, both morning and evening, offering the tribute of prayer and praise. Thus he continued through life to manifest the true christian character. On the day of his death, which was the Sabbath, he was visited by Deacon Daniel Lockhart; they had sweet converse together in matters pertaining to the Kingdom during his lucid hours, (for at times he was partially deranged) but seemed nevertheless to be in an extacy of joy until he drew his last breath, when we trust he entered into the joy of his Lord.

My mother possessed a kind and amiable disposition naturally, and manifested the traits of the true christian character in all her deportment. She was baptized by the Rev. T. S. Harding, soon after he became Pastor of the Baptist Church in Horton. She was exemplary in her family, the Bible was her constant companion, the contents of which she consulted every day steadily. She brought up her children in the fear of the Lord, catechised and endeavoured to instil into their young minds true christian principles. Meek, and retiring in her deportment, the surrounding poor could best eulogize and appreciate her generous and unostentatious acts. She was taken ill in November, 1824. On hearing of her illness I went in company with Mr. Harding to see her, we found her patient and apparently resigned to her heavenly Father's will. On being requested to pray he asked, "What shall I pray for?" She responded with a degree of energy, "That I may be prepared for the kingdom of Heaven." The next day while she lay in apparently a calm and composed state she gave directions about some family affairs. Shortly after one of the attendants went into her room to see how she was, when, to the astonishment of all, her spirit had passed away "above the clouds of even."

A Methodist minister, who was present at her funeral said that her departure was like a translation. "The memory of the just is blessed."

For the Christian Messenger.

Revelations xxii. 9.

MR. EDITOR,—

A writer in the Messenger of the 24th, "Should-like-to-know" the true meaning of the passage he quotes from Rev. xxii. 9, and raises the enquiry whether the "being here speaking meant to convey the idea" "that he was either an angel or a departed spirit."

To answer this implies that we have a scriptural idea of what angels are; what they are to us; and what the spirits of the just made perfect are. Our sources of information on these subjects are the scriptures, and the rational exercise and consciousness of the human mind on what is revealed.

On this, as on other doctrines, we must go to the divine book, with our minds free from our own worldly human speculations and opinions, and draw our conclusions from the obvious meaning of scripture. And doing this, I see no reason why we should not admit the explanation of the angel in its plain and obvious meaning that he was "the fellow-servant of the apostle" and of "his brethren the prophets," "and of them which keep the sayings of this book,"—and believing this revelation, deduce from it as a just and necessary conclusion, that the spirits of the just made perfect, when absent from the flesh, and with their spiritual bodies, which the apostle says we have, (1 Cor. xv. 44.) are angels,—the heavenly messengers—our "guardian angels." Such scriptural and rational teaching comes home to the human heart with peculiar emphasis. To think that man can claim kindred with angels, and that the language of the Poet is likewise the language of truth,—

"Angels are men in lighter habit clad."

and

"Men are angels loaded for an hour."

The scriptures and our consciousness assure us that we are continually surrounded by good or evil spirits, that the good are our guardian angels,—and that as we voluntarily yield to the suggestions and influences of the one or the other, is our weal or our woe.

The scriptures expressly teach the nearness to us of these heavenly visitants.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear Him."
"He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways."
"Angels rejoice over one sinner that repenteth."

But what are angels who thus sympathise with us in our flesh, and who administered also to our Saviour in his suffering humanity, when tried and tempted in all points as we are, but without sin.

It would take a larger space to adduce fully the scriptural evidence and illustration of this. A suggestive remark is all that this notice can give. Angels are men in spiritual bodies who once lived on this earth: the good angels are the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven,—as may be naturally inferred from Rev. xxii. 10. Angels were always seen as men throughout the scriptures. Abraham saw three angels as three men in the plains of Mamre. Lot and Jacob, and Gideon and Manoah saw angels as men. The two angels which were seen at the sepulchre of the Lord are expressly called "young men." Moses and Elias were seen at the transfiguration with Jesus as men.

When we think of angels, we should think of them as men. It is in agreement with scripture evidence throughout, and it is in agreement with our higher rational perceptions.

I must, however, hastily conclude, and leave unsaid much that might be added in proof of the truth indicated, and practical application of this bible doctrine.

DISCIPULUS,

Wolfville.

Religious Intelligence.

BAPTISTS IN AMERICA.—The American Baptist Almanac for 1863 sums up the total of Regular Baptists as follows:

In the United States—
Associations, - - - - - 588
Churches, - - - - - 12,648
Ordained ministers, - - - - 8,018
Members, - - - - - 1,037,576

In the British Provinces and West India Islands are:

Associations, - - - - - 18
Churches, - - - - - 714
Ministers, - - - - - 463
Members, - - - - - 71,767

Other denominations that practice immersion are computed as follows:

Anti-Mission Baptists, - - - 60,000
Free-will Baptists, - - - - 58,055
Six-Principle Baptists, - - - 3,000
Seventh Day Baptists, - - - 6,686
Winebrenerians, - - - - - 14,000
Campbellites, - - - - - 350,000
Tunkers, - - - - - 8,200