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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

First days of Spring.

B. K.

There are a few first days of Spring that bring
Warm cloudless skies,
Bright with the tokens of the coming year,
The first, the fairest and of all most dear,
To longing eyes.

Upon the gentle southern slopes, whose copse
A deeper emerald wears,
The winds, so late the breath of winter storm,
On mountain's brow now wander, soft and warm
As summer airs.

There blooms no flower within the dall, to tell
That spring is here,
But by the joy that deepens to a glow,
On earth and sky, at her approach, we know
That she is near.

Mild weary winter days welcome they come,
Those sunny hours,
That pledge and foretaste of the spring, ere yet,
On hillside or in valley she has set
Her earliest flowers.

There bloom amid life's winter hours, no flowers
Of that perennial spring,
Which comes with life to heal the ills of this,
And ope the fountain of eternal bliss,
On halcyon wing.

But peaceful days with cloudless skies arise,
Within us here,
When softly floats in mellow radiance down,
The blessed light that shall forever crown
The golden year.

Mild days of doubt and toil welcome they come,
Those peaceful hours,
We hail them as the pledge of joys sublime,
Which in the fullness of celestial prime
Shall yet be ours.

Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD VIII.

From A. D. 1850 to A. D. 1860.

LETTER LXXI.

DEATH OF PROFESSOR CHIPMAN—REV. E. D. VERY
—AND FOUR STUDENTS OF ACADIA COLLEGE.
RESOLUTIONS OF ASSOCIATIONS.—BIOGRAPHICAL
SKETCHES.

My Young Friend,

I have now to give you an account of the greatest calamity that ever befel Nova Scotia Baptists. On the seventh of June, 1852, Professor Chipman and four of the students of Acadia College, together with the Rev. E. D. Very, pastor of the church in Portland, St. John, N. B., were drowned in the Basin of Minas. The narrative of the sad catastrophe will be given pretty nearly in the words of one who was closely connected with all the parties.

The College Anniversary was held that year on Friday the fourth of June. Professor Chipman was greatly cheered on that occasion. The satisfactory manner in which the exercises of the day were conducted, and the large concourse of the friends of the Institution, with other circumstances, encouraged him to look forward to years of prosperity, the reward of past toils and sacrifices. He was thankful and happy, and frequently expressed, in his own nervous style, the high gratification he had enjoyed.

Mr. Very having intimated his desire for an excursion to Cape Blomidon, for the purpose of collecting minerals, Professor Chipman readily undertook to make the necessary arrangements, and four of the students consented to accompany them.

On Lord's-day morning, June 6, Mr. Very preached in the Baptist Meeting-house. The text was Rom. 8. 29. The discourse was a happy combination of the doctrinal and the practical. He shewed that it would be derogatory to the glory of the great God to suppose that he governs the world without a plan; that order and design mark his dealings with mankind; and that scripture uni-

formly represents the method of salvation as emanating from the wise and benevolent forethought of the Almighty, and as embracing in its comprehensive provisions all the necessities of the case. Then he pointed out the essential union of grace and holiness, and the requirement of likeness to Christ, as a component part of the redemption. The concurrence of the divine dispensations in promoting and securing that great object was clearly set forth, and the believer was directed to anticipate with holy joy the completion of the work of God in the glory of the heavenly state.

The celebration of the Lord's supper followed—a fitting accompaniment to the service. It was "a time of refreshing"—one of those blessed seasons in which the Christian rises to the dignity of his calling, and feels the elevating influence of the consideration that he is an "heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ."

The monthly concert of prayer for missions was held in the evening. Mr. Very took part in the meeting, and spoke with much energy. These were the last public exercises in which our brethren were engaged. They were connected with hallowed enjoyment.

At an early hour next morning the party left the College. It consisted of Mr. Very, Professor Chipman, the four students, viz. William E. Grant, Benjamin Rand, Anthony Phalen, and William H. King—and two boatmen, Pegez Coldwell, and George Benjamin. They were expected to return in the evening. The wind blew very fresh all day, and in the afternoon it rose to a gale, exciting painful apprehensions in the minds of those who were acquainted with the dangers attendant on exposure to rough weather in an open boat on the Basin of Minas. Alarming rumours began to be circulated, but no credit was given to them, as it was hoped that shelter had been found for the night in one of the creeks of the opposite shore. Those hopes were groundless. On the morning of Tuesday, Benjamin, one of the boatmen, reached the village, announcing himself the only survivor. His narrative of the event, taken from his lips a few hours after his return, was to the following effect:—

When they left Wolfville the weather was fine. They were three hours crossing over to the Cape, where they remained till noon. It began to blow just before they started on their return, but became calm when they were between the Cape and Long Spell. It freshened again when they were about half-way across, and veered round more to the South, heading them off towards Long Island. They tacked, and stood across for Cornwallis. When they came about again they directed their course to Long Island Creek, intending to land there, as the wind had become stronger. When they were about half a mile from the Island a sea struck the boat and half-filled her: they succeeded, however, in baling out nearly all the water, and put the boat before the wind, purposing to run in at the back of the Island. Just then (it was about four o'clock) they were struck by a heavy sea, which swamped the boat immediately. She went down stern first, and came up again bottom upwards. All, with the exception of Grant (who sunk at once) and Professor Chipman, clung to the boat, and endeavoured to get upon it, when it turned completely round till it was bottom upwards again: Rand and King were lost at that time. The remaining four still clung to the boat. They were washed off two or three times, but gained it again. At length Phalen and Coldwell were washed off together, and rose no more. Soon after, Mr. Very was washed off, but he swam to the boat, and held on to the stern for ten or fifteen minutes, when three heavy seas in succession broke over them and washed Mr. Very away, Benjamin being left alone. Professor Chipman was upon the mainsail, which had got adrift when the boat upset. He was heard to cry aloud for help, but none could be rendered. Benjamin saw him at about twenty rods distance, a few moments before Mr. Very sunk; he appeared to be then dead. The boat dragged towards the shore till it was right off the point of the Island, when it held on by the anchor, which had fallen out, the line to which it was attached not being broken. Benjamin then stripped off his clothes and swam to the shore, which he reached in a very exhausted state.

It is not surprising that in the confusion of such a struggle no words escaped the dying

men, indicating their inward feelings. All their energies were concentrated in the effort for self-preservation. The Lord understood the utterances of their hearts.

"As soon as the state of the tide permitted" (I copy from some notes taken at the time) "search was made for the bodies. The inhabitants cheerfully assisted, and upwards of twenty persons were engaged in the effort. Two were found on Wednesday—Rand and Grant; King was brought in on Thursday. That was indeed a melancholy day. In the forenoon a group of mourners gathered round the body of B. Rand. The word of God was read and prayer offered, and then his weeping brothers took charge of the remains and conveyed them to Cornwallis, for interment in the family tomb. In the afternoon we buried W. E. Grant, shedding bitter tears at his grave. In the evening we met again, and looked on W. H. King as he lay in his coffin, apparently in deep slumber—so placid was his countenance. Again we sought to soothe our souls by the word of God and prayer, after which the father of the departed youth left with his precious charge, to give it a resting-place among his kindred. He had a journey of eighty miles before him (to Onslow)—and he was alone!

"Brother Very's body was not found till the following Tuesday. He was buried alongside of W. E. Grant. The corpse of Professor Chipman floated up the Cornwallis River and was discovered by some fishermen, on Saturday, June 26, nineteen days after the catastrophe. Next morning a long procession of relatives and friends following him to the grave; and "made great lamentation over him." From the grave we repaired to the meeting-house, where a funeral discourse was preached by Dr. Cramp, founded on 2 Cor. 5. 1.

"Coldwell's body was also found, and interred at Gaspereaux. The only remaining one was A. Phalen, for whom the search proved unsuccessful."

It were vain to attempt to describe the impression produced by this calamity. In the immediate neighbourhood all was consternation and sorrow. It was the topic of every conversation and it moved every heart. Even a solitary death by what is called accident always excites sympathy. But this was not a single case. Seven lives had fallen by one blow! The stroke was felt throughout the province. Our Associations and other meetings through that summer were tinged with gloom, and not unfrequently the voice of the speaker was choked with emotion as he essayed to impress on his audience the solemn lessons to be derived from a dispensation so uncommon and so mysterious. It was confessedly a public grief.

The following resolutions were passed at a meeting of the Board of Governors of Acadia College, held at Milton, Queens Co. during the session of the Western Association:—

"Whereas it has pleased God to remove from us by death suddenly and mysteriously, our beloved brethren Professor Chipman and the Rev. E. D. Very, members of this Board—

"Therefore Resolved, 1. That the removal of these brethren, which would have been at any time an afflictive dispensation, is peculiarly trying under the existing circumstances of the College, and in view of the strenuous efforts which will be required to preserve and sustain it, in which efforts our departed brethren were prepared to engage with characteristic energy and perseverance.

"2. That while we desire to bow with Christian submission to the will of the all-wise and all-righteous Disposer of events, who has suffered this calamity to befall us and who can educe good from evil, and cause blessing to succeed desolation, we cannot but record our conviction that a great public loss has been sustained, which cannot be easily repaired, and which seriously affects the interests of the whole Denomination.

"3. That in bearing cheerful testimony to the various excellencies of the brethren above mentioned, and especially to the earnestness of their zeal on behalf of Acadia College, and of the cause of education in these provinces, it is our duty to advert more particularly to the eminent services rendered by Professor Chipman. Identified with the College from its commencement, he consecrated to it his talents, his powers, his life;—its prosperity was the great object of his desire and pur-

suit;—by his skilful management and his indefatigable efforts the edifice was raised, and will be a lasting monument of his energetic ardour;—to the benefits which have accrued thereby to the youth of these provinces he largely contributed, as one of its Professors;—and by his untiring assiduity, vigilance, and thoughtfulness, many advantages were constantly secured, and many evils prevented. His memory will be long and affectionately cherished in our Churches.

"4. That to the widow of our beloved brother Very, and the church recently under his pastoral care, and to the numerous families which have been thrown into mourning by these sad bereavements, we tender the expression of our sympathy and condolence, while we implore on their behalf that gracious upholding which can only be rendered by the "Father of mercies and God of all comfort."

Appropriate resolutions were also passed at the meetings of all the Associations. I quote from the Minutes of the Central:—

"That, considering the high esteem and respect in which our departed brethren, Professor Chipman and the Rev. E. D. Very were deservedly held—the important offices which they filled, discharging their duties with exemplary conscientiousness and devoted assiduity—and the fact that they were both cut down in the full vigour of life, the Association cannot but contemplate this affliction as marked by unusual, though doubtless righteous severity.

"That it becomes this Association to pay a special tribute of affectionate regard to the memory of Professor Chipman. Born among us, he was identified from earliest childhood with our various concerns, social and religious. From the time of his conversion till his death he evinced in an eminent measure the spirit of Christian patriotism and pious philanthropy. His labours for the denomination, and particularly on behalf of the Institutions at Horton, were accumulated and incessant, and were characterized by ardour, sagacity, forethought, self-denial, and unyielding perseverance. The spring of his activity and endurance was personal godliness, intelligent and deep-seated, blending exalted views and aims with fervent emotions. His literary and scientific acquisitions, which were of a high order, were consecrated to the cause of God. As an instructor, he uniformly secured the attachment and confidence of those who were placed under his care. He 'lived not for himself,' but for the Lord, whose grace was glorified in him, and in whose presence he will dwell for evermore.

"That the painful and afflictive manner in which the course of the students abovementioned—young men whose excellencies and talents encouraged the hope of much usefulness to society—has been suddenly terminated—while it suggests salutary reflections on the uncertainty of life, and the necessity of preparation for the great change, should also lead the churches to earnest prayer that 'the spirit of power' may rest on many young disciples, and constrain them to devote themselves to the work of the Lord."

Before I proceed to the completion of the memoir of Professor Chipman, which has been commenced in previous letters, it will be desirable to furnish some particulars respecting the beloved brethren who perished with him.

The Rev. Edward D. Very, was a native of Salem, Mass. He studied first at Waterville and afterward at Dartmouth, where he graduated in 1837. Having spent a year at the Bangor Theological Seminary, he was ordained Sept. 10, 1838, and settled in Calais, Maine, in December following. Subsequently he labored at Watertown and Belfast.—He commenced preaching at Portland, N. B., in December, 1846, and was Pastor of the Church in that place when he died. As a preacher, he was solid, judicious, instructive, and powerful. As a pastor, he was untiring, faithful, and "affectionately desirous" of the advancement of his people in fervent practical godliness and useful effort. As Editor of the *Christian Visitor*, which periodical was established in 1848, he exerted an important and very salutary influence on the Denomination. His labors in the Colportage and Book Depository Department were of the most beneficial character. He was in the 39th year of his age.

The following passages are taken from a funeral sermon preached by Dr. Cramp in the