

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Autobiographical Sketch.

By REV. CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

EVENTS OF YOUTH.

No. 6.

Mankind are prone to extremes. This is true in many respects. Among others it applies to manual labor. Some are indolent, and unwilling to do as much as they are able. Others are laborious, and exceed the measure of their physical strength. The latter was my error.

It is not my intention to censure any one with reference to this matter: but it seems to me proper and requisite to suggest, that care ought to be exercised in this particular with regard to the young. While they should, by all means, be trained to habits of industry, they ought to be cautiously restrained from such undue exertion as may in any case impair the constitution.

I was brought up to the business of farming. As my brothers cultivated a considerable extent of land, and kept a pretty large stock of horned cattle, horses, sheep, and swine, there was much labor to be done throughout the year. From an early period I was kept very busy at such service as I could perform. This probably proved beneficial to me, by preserving me from many snares into which the young, especially such as are unemployed, are very liable to fall. Possessing, however, much more ambition than bodily strength, I frequently did more labor than I was in reality able to do. When I began to hoe corn, potatoes, &c. I used to dress one row while a man dressed two: but before I had half his strength, ambition prompted me to do as much as he. Indeed, I often did considerably more than an ordinary hired man. Besides doing an equal share of work in the field, there were many small jobs (by an Americanism called chores) which seemed naturally to devolve upon me as the boy. I have sometimes heard elderly men say, that in their youthful days they did not know what it was to be tired; but it was far otherwise with me.

Some persons did, indeed, notice this excess, and give me friendly caution. I recollect that the venerable Edward Manning, who was a very observant and discerning man, particularly and kindly admonished me with reference to this subject, when I was probably about sixteen years old. My parents certainly did not wish for me to injure myself; but after my return home I was aware of my obligation to them, and was anxious to do all that I could for them; and so continued to exceed the measure of my strength.

In the early part of the year 1812, which was in the eighteenth of my age, by over-exertion and repeated sudden exposures to cold, I became seriously ill; and was obliged to desist from labor, and to seek medical aid. After a few weeks my health began to improve; but a peculiar circumstance produced a relapse of illness. My eldest sister, Deborah, who was the wife of the late Silas Rand, and the mother of five children, of whom Rev. Silas T. Rand is the youngest, was at that time low with pulmonary consumption. By an amicable arrangement she had been brought to my father's house, where her relatives could continually attend upon her. On the 23rd day of April, 1812, it became evident that she was about to be removed from us. As she was a sister dearly beloved by me, as well as by the family and her acquaintance in general, feeble as I was, I remained anxiously by her bed-side. Her distress for breath rendered it necessary that the windows should be set open. As the weather was rainy, I took an additional cold, and was seized with pleurisy. It was, therefore, necessary to convey me to a bed in another room.

My dear sister, who had been a pious woman for a number of years, near the close of life had a sharp conflict with the king of terrors. Through Divine goodness, however, the cloud was finally dispersed, and she was enabled to say, just before her exit, "I'm going to glory." Had she expired in a depressed state of mind, none of her acquaintance could have consistently doubted respecting her everlasting welfare. But it was consoling to hear her thus express an unwavering confidence in Christ, and a firm assurance of endless felicity in the bright world of glory.

While this scene was transpiring in an adjoining room, my distress of body was very great. With every breath that I drew it seemed as if my side was being pierced with a sharp knife. For some time it appeared doubtful which of us would die first. The anguish of my spirit was intense. I felt persuaded that my pious sister,

who had often admonished me for my spiritual good, was about to obtain a sweet and full release from all sorrow, and to enter a state of unending joy; but it was equally evident to me, that, in the event of my immediate death, which seemed to me almost certain, I must at once sink into the regions of endless woe. I learned from distressing experience the awful and overwhelming sensations that seize a guilty soul, when conscious, under the alarming apprehension of entering presently upon an unchangeable state. Most strikingly and painfully was presented to my view the great contrast between the death of the righteous and that of the wicked. It was to me a night of exquisite bodily suffering, and of extreme mental anguish.

It pleased God, however, of His infinite goodness, to spare my life, and to restore me again to a measure of health and strength. I committed another error by commencing to labor too soon, and thus retarded my recovery. A much greater error, however, was that of failing to appreciate the Divine clemency exercised toward me, and to profit by this solemn and alarming visitation. On the return of health I became careless in reference to my soul's everlasting welfare. I was not, indeed, addicted to what are usually called vicious practices; nor did I wholly neglect prayer; but at the same time I was in reality neglectful of the great salvation. The solemnity of the scene through which I had passed was not wholly obliterated from my mind. My heart, however, remained unsubdued, and the world was still uppermost.

Letter from Rev. Dr. Forrester.

AULDEARN FREE CHURCH MANSE, 9th July, 1862.

To the Editor of the Christian Messenger.

My Dear Sir,—In the course of my inspection of the more prominent Normal Schools in England, I visited the Borough Road Institution and I feel confident that you will be gratified to receive a brief notice of the increasing prosperity and usefulness of your Alma Mater. For the information of such of your readers as may not be acquainted with the organization of this Establishment, it may be stated, that the Borough Road Normal School, is entirely directed and supported by the British and Foreign School Society,—one of the oldest educating societies in England, and marked by greater breadth of constitution than any of the other Associations in the country. It is non-denominational. It represents the associational experiment, and embraces, in its structure, men of all creeds, from the Socinian to the Calvinist; and of all ecclesiastical attachments, from the Congregationalist to the High Churchman. Its fundamental principles are:—

1st. That in all schools, established in connection with or assisted by the British and Foreign School Society, the Holy Scriptures, in the authorized revision, or extracts therefrom, shall be read and taught daily.

2nd. That no Catechism or other formulary, peculiar to any religious denomination, shall be introduced or taught during the usual hours of school instruction.

3rd. That every child attending the day-school shall be expected to attend the particular place of worship or Sunday-School which its parents prefer.

Such are the leading principles which govern the operations of this Association, which has been in existence for the last 60 years, and which, during that time, has received the support of the late Duke of Bedford, of my Lords Granville, Ducie, Russell and Brougham, Messrs. Gurney and Forster, and such like distinguished philanthropists and educationists.

The Society is under the special patronage of her Majesty who gives an Annual Subscription of £100 and other three Vice Patronesses, one President and 10 Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, Secretary, and Collector, with a General Committee of 48, and a Ladies Committee of 17.—Throughout the various Counties of England there are 245 schools under the direction of this Society, with 31762 scholars with seven Inspectors of Schools paid by the Society, besides a large number of schools in London, and in Foreign countries. The Society has also two largely attended Normal Colleges, with practising and Model Schools, viz. Borough Road and Stockwell, originally formed to exemplify and extend the methods of Joseph Lancaster, and to promote generally popular education. The Society has from time to time introduced many improvements. The Normal Institution in Borough Road (about ten minutes walk from Westminster Bridge) has gradually extended until it has covered every available portion of its site. And even after all it has been found

altogether insufficient, and another Normal Establishment has been set agoing at Stockwell, about a mile farther out of London in the same direction and about half a mile from Clapham Common. The Borough Road Institution is now entirely devoted to the Training of Male Teachers, and the Stockwell to that of Female, with their accompanying practising and Model Male and Female Schools. In the Borough Road Normal College, there are upwards of 100 Students, all lodged and boarded within the building, at an expense of nearly £4000 sterling per annum. On the day I happened to visit this establishment, the Students were being examined by her Majesty's Inspector, preparatory to their Summer holidays, but though I had not the opportunity of seeing them at their usual work, I heard several of them practise in the Model Schools. These schools are efficiently conducted. The original monitorial system has been all but superseded by that of apprentice teachers, in consequence of the encouragement given thereto by the Committee of Council on Education, and this is vastly preferred by all the teachers, as vastly more efficient. Indeed one of the main objections to the new Code of Government Regulations seems to arise from the circumstance that they would, to a certain extent, at least, be compelled to return to the old Monitorial System. I may here state that every where I found the monitorial system discontinued and abandoned. I visited the Bell or Madras School at St. Andrews for no other purpose but to see the working of this system, but even there, I found all the subordinates in the capacity of regular assistants; and on conversing with the Head-masters in the different departments, I found them all pretty decided in their condemnation of teaching the younger scholars, by means of the older ones. Whilst, however, this system may be said to be all but completely abandoned, even by those who might be supposed to be its representatives, there are, I believe, many occasions when, both with advantage to the pupils themselves and to the whole school establishment, such a system may be partially employed. But this is not the place for discussing such a topic. It was refreshing to me to find that your name was still remembered in this Institution, and that your brother is spoken of, as one of the most efficient of the Teachers in connection with this Association. I received the greatest possible kindness from all the Teachers I saw, and, especially, from Mr. Curtis one of the foremost of them, and author of several educational works of great value.

After spending a few hours at Borough Road School, and obtaining copies of all the more recently published documents relative to its operations, I proceeded to the Female department at Stockwell, accompanied kindly by Mr. Curtis. This Institution, embracing, as it does, all the more modern improvements, is generally admitted to be one of the finest and most complete of the kind in England. The organization is throughout a model. In the centre of the building, there is a large room which is appropriated to lecturing purposes. In one wing of the building, are the class-rooms for the Students, and also a day and critical lesson room; in the other wing, the dining and serving rooms, with the culinary department and laundry. In the front of the building are the Committee rooms, and the departments of the resident Superintendent. On the upper stories are the dormitories for the students, 102 in number, with ample accommodation for the officers of the establishment and arrangements for the practise of household work by the students.—The practising schools for girls and infants are connected with the main building by a corridor, but with entirely distinct approaches for the scholars. These schools were opened concurrently with the occupation of the College about a year ago, and are gradually filling. Over the whole teaching department there presides a Lady of high accomplishments, of great professional qualification, and of devoted educational zeal. From this Lady, I obtained all information regarding the working, both of the College and Practising Schools, and had the pleasure, in the afternoon, of seeing the female students engaged in their industrial work. Not only are these female teachers instructed in cutting, sewing, &c. Not only are they obliged to do up and keep tidy their own bed-rooms, but so many of them, in rotation, assist in the washing-house, laundry, kitchen &c. This I consider an admirable arrangement, as it imparts a sound practical knowledge of house-keeping and house-keeping in all its departments. There is, however, another Lady in the capacity of Lectress, who presides over all this work and to whom the students are amenable in all domestic affairs. On the Continent, wherever I went, I found this practise universal. As all the stu-

dents that are being trained to be Teachers are lodged and boarded at the public expense, so all, males as well as females, are required to do up their own rooms &c., and I was gratified to observe their rooms so orderly and so tastefully kept. The only other thing that I can notice as appertaining to the establishment at Stockwell was a Babies' School. This school is just made up of the younger children in the Infant School, the majority being under three years of age. The time I visited this school the teacher was engaged in endeavouring to make these babies distinguish the different colours. This was done by presenting the various more common colours on pieces of paper; and, upon the whole, the attempt was successful. There may be cases where the mothers of such infants may be required to work out all day for the support of themselves and their offspring, and hence, the necessity and utility of such a school; but it does appear to me that it would be vastly better both for these infants and the comfort of their homes, were these mothers able to remain at home and attend to their domestic affairs. To this the minds of the philanthropic and charitable are now directed. It is quite soon enough to send the child to school at 5 years of age.

The teachers trained by this Society have long held an honourable place in public opinion and have been sent to all parts of the world.—The colonies are placed under many obligations to it. Their success, however, has, in my opinion, sprang more from the impulse and direction they received from such men as Dunn, Cornwell, Wilks, &c., than from anything inherently good in the Monitorial System of Joseph Lancaster. Nor will these Normal Colleges of Borough Road or Stockwell lose any of their power, in the hands of their present Principals, Secretaries, or Teachers. Happily, too, the period of training, hitherto too short, is now so far remedied through the Society having placed the Institutions under Government Inspection, and having gained for it the same privilege of stimulus, assistance and encouragement, as purely denominational establishments; and a still higher and better defined training of the students will doubtless be the result.

The supporters of this Association calculate that seventeen per cent. of the children now under instruction are taught in accordance with their principles. Surely this is sufficient to demonstrate the practicability of the introduction of a National System into England. Notwithstanding the noble efforts that have been put forth during the last 30 years by the different branches of the Christian Church, aided and abetted as these have been by the most munificent parliamentary grants, there still remain about a million of schoolable children, receiving no education whatever. Nothing, in our view, is adequate to cope with this clamant and appalling destitution but a thorough National System, supported in part by the general revenue of the country, and in part by local taxation.—And along with this a compulsory enactment that all parents be required to educate their children in accordance with their circumstances either privately or at the National Schools.—Surely it is a lamentation and shall be for a lamentation to see so many fighting about shadows and phantoms of the imagination, when thousands and tens of thousands are annually perishing for lack of knowledge.

I am, yours truly,

ALEX. FORRESTER.

For the Christian Messenger.

United States Liberty!

IMPORTANT TO YOUNG NOVA SCOTIANS.

Mr. Editor.—

I beg leave through the medium of the Christian Messenger to make known a circumstance which recently took place in the vicinity of Philadelphia, which to say the least, is most cruel and disgraceful to our republican neighbours. It also shows up the course of even an enlightened country under arms.

Albert Melven, a young Nova Scotian of respectability, Watchmaker, son of Rev. Mr. Melven, of Liverpool, N. S., had been boarding with Mr. John N. Hebb, Bridgewater, part of whose store he occupied. Being unwell he concluded to travel for his health, and visit some of his friends in the United States, and to procure some material to aid him in his business.

Being young and inexperienced he did not suppose it necessary to procure a passport, but proceeded on his way in the railroad cars toward Philadelphia, but before arriving there was taken by wicked designing men, and compelled to enrol his name in a company of soldiers, to go down South to fight. It is enough to make the blood of Nova Scotians boil with