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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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## Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

### The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD VIII.

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

LETTER LXXIII.

PROFESSOR CHIPMAN'S EPITAPH.—R. E. BURPE'S DEATH AND CHARACTER.—JAMES PARK.—DAVID HARRIS.—DR. SAWERS.

#### My Young Friend,

A monumental obelisk has been placed over Professor Chipman's grave. It bears the following inscription:—

"AT REST."

IN MEMORY OF

ISAAC CHIPMAN, A. M.

Born July 17th, 1817. Appointed Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in Acadia College. January, 1840. Drowned in the Basin of Minas, June 7th, 1852.

Meek—upright—persevering—"in labours more abundant."

DEI GRATIA.

RICHARD E. BURPE died Feb. 26th, 1853. He was a native of the County of York, N. B. His parents were Free-will Baptists. Having chosen a commercial life he obtained employment at Fredericton as a clerk, and afterwards entered into business in that city on his own account, with a fair prospect of success. But a higher calling awaited him. He was converted under the ministry of the Rev. F. W. Mites, and soon felt himself irresistibly impelled to preach the gospel. Many difficulties lay in the way. He underwent severe mental conflicts. Wordly interest stood opposed to christian duty. Other weighty considerations presented forcible arguments. Love to Christ and to the souls of men overpowered them all. He resolved to give himself up to the cause of truth and godliness, and with this in view relinquished his business and spent some time in study, first at Fredericton and then at Horton. After a course of home missionary labour he received ordination at St. George, Sept. 7th, 1837, and became pastor of a church recently formed at St. Patrick's.

From the first his heart had been set on foreign work. He longed to declare "the unsearchable riches of Christ" to the heathen. In order to accomplish this object various schemes presented themselves to his mind. At one time he contemplated going to the United States and offering his services to the American Baptist Missionary Union. Then he thought of travelling through these provinces, collecting money enough to pay his passage to India, and casting himself on the providence of God for support; or of resuming mercantile occupation till he had realised sufficient funds for the purpose. These plans were all superseded when the denomination resolved to engage in the foreign missionary cause. Mr. Burpe immediately declared his wishes and was accepted as a candidate for the foreign field. He resigned his pastorate, and entered Acadia College in January, 1840, where he was distinguished as a laborious and successful student. He graduated in June, 1844. Having visited many of the churches in both provinces for the purpose of exciting a missionary spirit among them, he was set apart to the work at Halifax, April 13th, 1845, and embarked at Boston for Calcutta, with Mrs. Burpe, on the 4th of June following. He arrived at Calcutta on the 26th of September.

An account of his missionary labours has been given in a former letter. After four years of diligent service failing health compelled him to return. His feelings on that occasion were thus expressed in a letter to Dr. Crawley, written a week after his arrival in Halifax:—

"Said indeed was the hour when we were called to part from them (their friends at home), and happy have we been since our return in the enjoyment of their society; but we can speak of greater sorrow, and of what would be greater joy, should we be permitted

to experience it. It was with far deeper depression of spirit we made preparations to leave our adopted home than the land of our birth. We had toiled for years to obtain a knowledge of the language of the people, in the hope of spending years in preaching to poor heathen the glorious gospel, and we could not see our long cherished hope, in a measure realised, in its beginning dashed to the ground without a bitter pang. And then the sad condition of multitudes called so loud for light, for the gospel, that we could not hear its thrilling voice and feel that we must turn a deaf ear to the cry, and take our departure, without bitterness of soul. Ah! we have many strong hallowed ties binding our hearts to India!" . . . "I have seen enough to make me long to return; and I will hold myself in readiness, should it please God again to give me tolerable health, to go back again whenever the Board shall think it desirable to send me."

During the remainder of his life he exerted himself on behalf of the missionary cause by attending the meetings of Associations, visiting the churches, and employing his influence in various ways. He still indulged the wish and the hope of resuming his beloved work. At the meeting of the Convention held at Sackville in September, 1852, he besought the brethren to allow him to go back, seeming to be quite unconscious of the imminence of his own danger. But the hollow cough, the sunken eye, the haggard countenance, and other signs of physical distress, declared too plainly that "the sentence of death" was on him. As winter approached the desirableness of removal to a Southern climate became apparent. He resided for a time at Petersburg, in Virginia. Thence, hoping to derive benefit from a sea voyage, he went to Florida, unattended by his family, who expected to rejoin him afterwards. St. Augustine, to which place he was recommended to go, was found unsuitable, and he removed to Jacksonville, where he died on the day above-mentioned. A letter from the Rev. J. H. M. Gardner, a Methodist minister, conveyed to Mrs. Burpe the sad intelligence of her bereavement.

DEAR MADAM.—The painful duty of communicating to you the death of your husband, devolves upon me. I was invited by the Rev. G. W. Pratt, presiding Elder of the Tampa Bay, district Fla. Conf., to accompany him to Bro. Burpe's room, on Friday evening last, the 25th inst. I did so, and found him quite ill. He was unable to converse with us, but felt and expressed great anxiety to enter into conversation. He was coughing incessantly and suffering intensely. I was convinced that his end was nigh; and determined to remain with him. This was the last attack of cough, but the difficulty of breathing still continued. We knelt beside his bed, and engaged with him in prayer. He heartily responded, and seemed to feel much, especially when God's grace and mercy were invoked upon his dear companion and children. About 9 o'clock he began to breathe much easier, and remarked that all his pain was gone. But he was sinking very fast. I then said to him, Bro. Burpe, "To live is Christ, but to die is gain." "Yes yes," said he. "O, the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ is my only hope." At another time I asked him if his hope was bright. Yes, he replied, my confidence is unwavering. His case was such a clear one, I thought it unnecessary to say any thing more to him on the subject. He had had a long conversation with Bro. Pratt before, in which he expressed a desire, if it were possible to see you and the children before he died, but wished him to understand that he had no will of his own—he left it all with the Lord. He expressed also, time and again, his unwavering confidence in God. It was enough. No cloud obscured his sight. About eleven or twelve o'clock he seemed disposed to sleep. There was no disturbance. After a while he opened his eyes and looked upon me very earnestly. I asked him if he slept? He said he thought so, and again closed his eyes. I said nothing more, but watched him closely. He seemed to breathe regularly, but with some difficulty, until about a quarter past four, the 26th, when all of a sudden he gasped for breath. I stepped to his bed, and found that he was gone. He breathed but two or three times, and died without a struggle or a groan. This morning at eleven o'clock his remains

were carried to the Methodist Church. Bro. Pratt preached a funeral discourse. After which his remains were carried in procession to the Cemetery, and after the writer of this read the burial service, they were decently interred. Perhaps it will be necessary to say that Bro. B. survived but two days after his attack.

It will doubtless be pleasing for you to know that your husband had the very best attention. He wanted for nothing. I cannot speak too highly of the indefatigable exertions and kindness of Dr. Winslow, of Massachusetts, his attending Physician, and others, whose names I cannot now remember.

I could have wished that some Minister of the Baptist Church could have been here with bro. P. It would doubtless have been a source of satisfaction. But there are none here, Bro. Pratt and myself are both Methodist preachers. But what are names. With us this was all forgotten. It were enough for us to know that Bro. B. was a christian. But yet he was more. He was a preacher of that same blessed gospel we preach. There was unity of feeling and of sentiment as regards the one thing needful. Our hearts were warmed with the same love. We could but feel as christian brethren. When I thought of the many sacrifices that he had made, to preach the gospel to the poor heathen, he was more endeared to me than ever. But he has gone to his reward, and no doubt will have many stars in his crown of rejoicing in Heaven.

Mr. Burpe was a sincere, ardent christian. He loved the truth; its power was exhibited in his life; his affections were sanctified; and as a friend, a husband, a father, he illustrated the influence of the gospel.

As a minister of Christ he was affectionately earnest. That was his characteristic. It was not intellectual might—nor brilliant imagination—nor acute reasoning—but serious earnestness—the eloquence of the heart. And its choicest theme was the love of the Saviour.

He was a genuine missionary. His tenderness of spirit eminently fitted him for the work, and he understood and loved it. When actually engaged he displayed the self-denial and heroism of the true missionary character; and so anxious was he to regard his discharge from labour as merely temporary, that he repeatedly urged the Missionary Board to restore him to the scene of toil, even though it should be necessary to leave his children in this country. He could adopt the Apostle's words, "Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all."

He did not live in vain. Souls were saved there by his instrumentality. It was God's will to save them. It was his will that bro. Burpe should be the instrument, and that he should go from Nova Scotia to Burmah for the purpose. Was not even one of those souls more than worth all the expense?

JAMES PARK died June 2nd, 1853. This brother's course was unusually short. He was ordained at New Albany, January 3rd, 1849. In 1852 he became pastor of the church at Nietaux. A long life of usefulness was hoped for. But the Lord called his servant home. He entered into rest when he had but just begun to labour. So various are the dispensations of Providence. One "dieth in his full strength;" another lives to be "old and full of days." Our Heavenly Master does not need our service. His sovereign will determines who shall be engaged for him—and where—and how long. "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

Brother Park was a humble-minded man—of retiring habits—and "affectionately desirous" of men's souls. He enjoyed the love and confidence of the church, and his early removal was deeply felt and much lamented.

DAVID HARRIS died April 15th, 1853. He was one of our veterans. Converted at the Association in 1806, he soon began to preach the gospel which had comforted his own heart, and continued to do so as long as he lived. He was ordained at Sackville, N. B., in the autumn of 1814, and became pastor of the church in that place, where he remained four years. The next two years he supplied T. S. Harding's place at Horton, while the latter was labouring at Fredericton and other parts of New Brunswick. In 1822 and the three following years he had the charge of the

church in Lower Granville. Four years were then given to the church at Fredericton. After that he took no pastorate. Having fixed his abode on the family property in Cornwallis he preached and laboured as he found opportunity, sometimes in that or the neighbouring Townships, sometimes in missionary excursions, particularly in the Eastern part of the province, where he repeatedly spent many weeks in journeying from place to place and proclaiming the glad tidings. His discourses were plain, solid, and impressive; his ministry was much esteemed by serious christians, and its fruits were gathered in almost every part of Nova Scotia.

It was not the will of God that Mr. Harris should glorify him by a dying testimony. He was suddenly smitten down by apoplexy, and passed away in silence. He had testified for his Master in his life-time. "Tell me not," said one, "how a man died. How did he live?" Nevertheless, the declarations of the trust and joy of believers in their last moments have been often blessed to those who have been privileged to listen to them.

A. F. SAWERS, M. D., died June 20th, 1853. This excellent brother's death is recorded here on account of the active part he took in the establishment of our Union Societies. I believe he may be styled the originator of that feature in our benevolent operations. His desire was that every member of our denomination should have the opportunity of assisting in carrying forward the great work in which we are engaged. The Union Society scheme accomplishes this, the rate of contribution being so low that all may share in it, while those who are able may render special aid to the objects in which they are particularly interested. Some modifications may be required now, in consequence of the extension of our efforts; but the general arrangement is good. If Union Societies were formed in all our churches, and the contributions collected every quarter, the denominational treasury would be well supplied.

Dr. Sawers was a member of the church in Granville Street, Halifax. He was a devoted christian. His life was every way worthy of his profession. He was always prepared to respond to appeals for aid, and that "not grudgingly or of necessity," but as "a cheerful giver."

He was in his forty-ninth year when God removed him to the better world. His last illness was short, and his sufferings were severe. I take the following statement from the *Christian Messenger*:—

"On Friday at his particular request one of us visited him and spent an hour at his bed side. He was not then enduring much pain, but his countenance gave unmistakable indications that his sufferings had been great, and there were symptoms hanging about him which even to an ordinary observer were calculated to excite alarm as to the final result. His mind on that occasion was calm. He evidently had a vivid conception of the truth of God, not merely in the abstract, but in its bearing on his own case. We never shall forget the earnestness and solemnity with which he spoke of eternity in relation to time, of God, and Christ, and salvation. He said that the agony he had endured was indescribable—but that in the moments of his deepest anguish, and when writhing under the most excruciating pain, he felt that the emotions of his soul were upward, and that he could look to Christ in the assured belief that he would sustain him under his trial, and, if it were his will to cut short his earthly existence, would receive him home to his kingdom for ever. \* \* He begged that we would communicate to his brethren who were that night to assemble for worship, his earnest request that they would pray to God in his behalf. 'Not,' as he energetically expressed himself, 'that my life may be spared, but that my polluted soul may be purged from sin by the blood of atonement—that whether I live or die I may abide in Christ, with God.' We saw him no more." He died on the Monday following.

Yours truly,  
August 4, 1863. MENNO.

A PRIMITIVE Christian, in the *Times*, calls upon the Bishops to bestir themselves to repel the invasion of crinoline in churches, which has reduced the accommodations a full third.