

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

By Rev. Charles Tupper, D. D.

CHAPTER VI.

RESIDENCE AT RIVER PHILIP.

(No. 6.)

Our Association met in Sackville, N. B., on the 21st day of June. Rev. J. Munro was chosen Moderator, and C. Tupper, Clerk. Rev. E. Manning preached the Introductory Sermon, from Ps. lxxxix. 14, 15. Some of the letters contained cheering intelligence. The Church in Chester, under the charge of the amiable and excellent Joseph Dimock, had received an accession of 66 members by baptism. Before the close of the session I was urgently requested to attend a funeral. My Brethren agreed with me in the opinion that it was my duty to comply with the request, and so gave me leave of absence. At this session three Brethren were ordained as Evangelists, namely, Samuel McCully, Charles Millar, and Timothy Robinson.

In July I made an extensive tour through Cornwallis and Aylesford, where my ministerial labors were commenced. In these places, as well as in my present field, the state of religion was evidently low. It was cheering, however, to meet with old and tried Christian friends, and to find them still steadfast in the faith, and pursuing the path of the just.

Soon after my return home I baptized a valuable brother at River Philip, Ralph Thompson, who was subsequently a help and source of consolation to me. Having been spared to an advanced age, he has undoubtedly died in the faith, and entered that rest which remains to the people of God. Shortly after this baptism two persons were led forward in this ordinance at Amherst, to the strengthening of the little band there.

On the 5th of August, the day before I was 26 years of age, I noted having just finished committing to memory the Saviour's Sermon on the Mount—Matth., 5th, 6th, and 7th—in the original; and completed the reading of the 1st book of Homer's Iliad also in Greek. The 2nd and 3rd books were afterwards perused by me. As, however, my principal object in studying languages was to increase my knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, and the Greek of Homer differed widely from that of the New Testament and of the Septuagint, it did not seem to me expedient to proceed farther in the study of it; especially as my numerous duties allowed me but little time for study, and a great part of my life was certainly now passed.

In general it is an act of imprudence to report to an individual what is said of him by another, especially if it be adapted either to foster pride, or to excite resentment. A knowledge, however, of harmless remarks made respecting one, may, in some instances, be serviceable. A case of this kind may be here recorded. A friend told me, that a Doctor to whom I had applied for medical aid, in conversation remarked, "Mr. Tupper is a man of slender constitution. I judge he is now about thirty years old. He will probably live to be fifty two, or fifty three, if he takes care of himself." It was, of course, evident to me that, if the Doctor could not judge more accurately—not within four years—how long I had lived, he was quite liable to err in his conjecture how long I would live; but his closing hypothetical remark rested with weight on my mind. Though I have not always taken as much care of my health as I ought, yet, as means and ends are intimately connected, the suggestion led me to reflect more than formerly on the duty of endeavoring to preserve my life, and the means proper to be employed for that purpose. It induced me to exercise an increase of caution to avoid, as far as in me lay, irregularity with reference to sleep, and the reception of my meals, excesses both in the quantity and quality of food, and exposure to cold and night air after preaching. It has tended also to make me careful to keep my feet dry and warm, and my person well protected from the inclemency of weather, and to take exercise in the open air, especially manual labor.

Surprise has been expressed that I would wear warm overshoes and one or two great coats down to the water, and then lay these off and go into a place where the ice had been cut away, and baptize fifteen or twenty persons, without any indication of feeling cold, or sustaining injury. But I have always deemed it the part of prudence, and of duty, to make my-

self dry and warm immediately after, and to take some warming drink. I am not aware of having ever suffered any inconvenience from this exercise, nor that any one of those whom I have baptized—above five hundred in number—ever has.

The preservation of my life to the seventy-second year of my age, with the continuance of sufficient strength still to labor in the Lord's vineyard, is undoubtedly to be ascribed to the kindness of Providence; but the exercise of prudence, induced in a great measure by the remark noticed, has evidently been an important means of preserving both.

P. S.—Brother Rand's suggestions, (C. M. Nov. 22.) are kindly received, as they doubtless were well intended. He was mistaken, however, in supposing that I "abandoned the practice of fasting." I retained it, and recommended it in private conversation, from the pulpit, and through the press. In my Autobiography (C. M., May 24, 1865.) I spoke of it as a "scriptural practice" and "evidently proper;" but stated that "it may be carried to an extreme," and that in consequence of ill health, and injury sustained from fasting "frequently and rigorously. I conscientiously concluded that it was my duty, at least to diminish my former frequency and length of fasts." This is what I did.

While, however, fasting by wholly abstaining from food, appears to me a duty, incumbent on those who are able to practice it, plainly inferable from Scripture, I can not regard it as paramount to the express command of God, "Thou shalt not kill"; and I agree with the Westminster Assembly of Divines, that "The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life" as well as "the life of others." At the time referred to in my "Sketch" I had been purposing to preach from the text "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." It seemed to me requisite by these means first to get the evil spirit, fallen nature, and even human nature, cast out of myself. It is but candid to confess, that the contemplated sermon has not yet been preached by me. Had the course which was pursued for some months been continued, I might, peradventure, "have been a holier and happier man;" but there exists not a doubt in my mind that my usefulness in this world would soon have terminated, for I would have been a dead man.

For the Christian Messenger.

OUR NECESSITIES.

No. 2.

My Dear Sir,—

There can be but little doubt that we need, as a denomination, a more rigid adherence to the word of God; indeed this cannot be too strictly maintained; laxity in this, even in what some call minor things, is often the precursor of grievous departures from the faith and practice. Many of the antisciptural dogmas and practices of the present day have crept into creeds and ceremonies in this manner. Hence the necessity of respecting the authority of God's word in all things.

In theory there is no difficulty in this. All Christians readily assent to it. It is in the application that the difficulty arises. There are so many conflicting considerations, that the decisive authority is lost sight of, or is overpowered. We have an instructive illustration of this in the conduct of those to whom the Saviour put the question, "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" Luke xx. 4. The reasoning and the answer are familiar to every Bible reader. So is it we fear in the present day, men reason and are governed therein by consequences, rather than by the truth. In consequence of this the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ, in many instances, are resolved into expedients, and when expediency does not forbid, they may be observed, if otherwise neglected. God's commands are imperative; our business is to know and obey them. To do this we should use every instrumentality and embrace every opportunity to learn what God requires of us. That ascertained, our next duty is to obey, and this duty, be it whatsoever it may, admits of no compromise. There is no equivalent for it. Saul's sparing the best of Amalek's oxen and sheep, although avowedly for sacrificial purposes, was no extenuation of his disobedience, nor the tilting of "mint" a substitute for "the weightier matters" of the law.

The imperative character of the commands of the Redeemer teaches us also the fact that He, alone, is our "Lawgiver," that aside from His statutes there is no legislation for the government of His people; that He only appoints the ordin-

ances of His church, and therefore whatever may have been substituted for His commands or added thereunto, is utterly without the sanction of His authority. Whoever carefully reads His sermon on the mount, will see with what matchless care and faithfulness He weeded the sayings of men from His own authoritative commands, and a close examination of His word, would, in many cases, shew the necessity of such a work in the present day. Vain is that worship that "teaches for doctrines the commandments of men."

The doctrines of the Gospel demand no less reverence. Underlying, as a "brief corner stone," the hope of every Christian must be, the great truths thereof. The strength "of hope that maketh not ashamed," depends very much upon a clear perception of these. Seen in their relation to facts, they show their adaptedness to the condition of fallen man, revealing not only his sinful helplessness, but the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, whereby he is saved from wrath. The depravity of man so total in its character; the sovereignty of God as exhibited in the doctrine of election, and in every act of His mercy; the real point at issue between God and the sinner,—the wilful opposition of the heart, exhibited in a voluntary neglect of the remedy provided, are, in the opinion of the writer, too seldom clearly put, either from the press or the pulpit. It is no valid reason for this that they involve difficulties beyond the reach of human wisdom to explain or remove; if truths they are to be received and proclaimed on the authority of God. This would be reverence for God's word, because it is God's word. To reject these or any other truth, on the ground of not being able to reconcile them, or it, to other truths, is to make our disability the standard of their worth, rather than the authority of God. It is to be feared that, in the present day, these cardinal points of doctrine do not receive that prominence which their importance demands, and hence, a knowledge of the sinners true character, and of God's gracious dealing with him, are but imperfectly apprehended.

Another necessity seems apparent, (viz.) a more decided and uniform piety. This, having time, and your indulgence granted, may form the subject of another letter.

REVERA.

Wolfville, December 4th, 1865.

For the Christian Messenger.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.

There are few, perhaps, among Bible readers whose hearts have not often been touched while contemplating the conduct of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus relative to the dead body of our adorable Redeemer. He in whom they believed had been rejected by his and their own nation: condemned by the very Council of which they were members; forsaken by all his immediate followers; delivered to the Romans, and put to death as one of the vilest of malefactors; and now hung on a gibbet a stiffened corpse. But none of these circumstances deter these noble men from paying the last tribute of respect to the "Teacher come from God." They delight in expending a part of their wealth to do him honour. They purchase fine linen and myrrh and aloes; and then go to Pilate boldly and ask the body of Jesus. The request is granted. It may be that Pilate, stung with remorse for the part he had acted in procuring the death of Christ, hopes to make amends for his fault by allowing him honourable interment. It is evening. The full moon has risen in "cloudless majesty." In silence and with downcast eyes do these holy men approach the cross. How gently do they withdraw the rude spikes from his hands and feet, and remove the crown of thorns from his head! With more than woman's tenderness do they carry their beloved Lord to a sepulchre; a new sepulchre, prepared for, and owned by one of themselves. So fast flow their tears that they scarce need water to prepare the body for the tomb. "Then took they the body of Jesus and wound it in linen clothes with the spices," and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

It may be that some of us have often said in our hearts, while reading this sublime simple narrative, "O that I could thus show my love for my Lord!" The same tragedy will never be acted again. He who was dead has risen and now occupies the highest seat in the universe. But do not the scriptures teach that Christ regards a kind act done to one of His followers, as done towards himself? Is not the church the body of Christ? If these be facts, we do not lack opportunities to do that which is as pleas-

ing in his sight, as was the conduct of Joseph and Nicodemus. Are any of Christ's followers sick—let us visit them. Are any of them destitute of the comforts of life—let us feed, and clothe them. Does the world treat any such with neglect—let us shew that we are their friends. More especially in times of religious declension. Let us follow the example of these primitive Christians. Never has there since been so dark a time however as when the Founder of christianity died on the cross. They were not afraid even then to shew their attachment to Christ. Do our hearts sink within us because so many apostatise from Christ, and some who profess to love him, absent themselves from the prayer and conference meeting and even neglect to commemorate his dying love? So far from forsaking his ordinances or his worship because others do let us seek to embrace the remembrance of his love and shew to all around that He is to us indeed precious.

If we had the spirit of these men we would not be indifferent even in regard to the house in which we worshiped. It is the duty of but few churches to build expensive places of worship. But however plain the house it should be kept perfectly clean, and during the winter season well-warmed. Want of attention to these little things sometimes render the house of the Lord contemptible in the eyes of the world.

Dec. 4th, 1865.

SIOLA.

For the Christian Messenger.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. BEULAH ROSE.

Died Oct. 21st, Beulah, the beloved wife of Dea. J. Kelley Rose, of West Yarmouth, and daughter of the late Isaac Landers, aged 60 years. In her childhood she was converted and though all her youthful days was enabled to live as a Christian. For some reason not known to the writer of this she did not publicly unite with the Church of Christ until Aug. 20, 1837, when she was baptized by our late bro. Jackson, and united with the 1st Yarmouth Church. When the West Yarmouth Church was formed, she removed her membership to it, and then continued one of its most faithful and devoted members till she was called from earth. She is mourned for by a sorrowing husband and children as an affectionate wife and mother. By a large circle of friends, as an obliging neighbor, as one that could always be trusted and consulted in the hour of trial with safety and profit. In the conference and prayer meetings we miss her, for there her voice was often heard with pleasure. She did not express her love to God and her fellowship for the church by some silent sign, alone. In her last hours she was very joyous. Hers was indeed a pleasant death-bed.—Com.

DEACON JAMES C. ROBBINS,

Of Ohio, Yarmouth, died Sept. 17th, 1865, aged 34 years. Our bro. first found peace in believing during a gracious revival of religion in January, 1856, and was baptized by Elder Reid. On the 23rd of Jan., 1864, he was chosen to the office of Deacon. By the grace of God, "he was" truly, "a burning and shining light." Religion was his theme—the service of God his delight. His duty he measured by his ability.—

"All that I have, and all I am, Shall be for ever thine."

Was the standard of his action, to be like his Saviour the crown of his ambition. If among the talented he did not stand the highest, among the pious he had few superiors. His gifts were acceptable and profitable; nor were they stintedly used. He knew how to pray. Continued practice enabled him to excel in this heaven-born art. For Christians every where he had a strong affection; but especially for the welfare of the young—"the lambs of my Redeemer," as he was wont to call them—he yearned with an undying solicitude. In the Sabbath School, as in all other labors of the church he is missed and mourned for; for there he constantly filled his place with ready hand and heart. His last illness was short and very distressing. In it he often remarked that a sick bed was a poor place for preparation to die. To him death had no terrors.—Com.

CAPTAIN JOSEPH DAVISON,

Died in Hantsport, August 12th, 1865, in the 46th year of his age. He commenced a sea-faring life at an early age, and took charge as Master, at the age of 20. His natural disposition was very amiable, his conduct, courteous and gentlemanly, and his general character presented a high standard of moral integrity. He professed faith in Christ at a time of revival of religion in this place, and was baptized by the writer in March 1857, from which time he walked as a worthy member of the church, to the day of his death. He continued going to sea until disease obliged him to retire to his happy home in the bosom of his family, where he lingered some time over a year, greatly supported by the grace of God till in unshaken confidence and firm hope he fell asleep in Jesus. By his death, his family is deprived of a kind husband and father, and the church and community a worthy brother and faithful friend. Capt. Davison had buried his two youngest children within a year of his own death, the youngest an only son about 4 months old, and a little daughter 5 years of age.