

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

By Rev. Charles Tupper, D. D.

CHAPTER V.

LABORS WHILE AN EVANGELIST.

(No. 7.)

Finding myself much exhausted and enfeebled while devoting my whole time exclusively to ministerial duties, and those of a mental nature, I judged that some physical exercise, besides that of travelling, was necessary for the improvement of my health. Time, however, appeared to me too precious to be spent in mere sportive exercise or recreation, even with this object in view, if it could be so employed as to subserve this purpose and also to effect some other good. I was aware that some persons regarded it as degrading to the ministerial character to engage in manual labor. Doubtless it is inconsistent with the calling of one who is professedly devoted to the work of the ministry, to neglect any part of his sacred vocation in order to acquire wealth by some worldly occupation. But the attempt to preserve or recover health by a moderate share of productive and useful labor is evidently commendable; while engaging in any of the childish and carnal diversions that are congenial to the inclinations of the unregenerate, tends to depreciate the minister in the estimation of serious and considerate people. I am not aware of ever having spent an hour in any such way since "I became a man, and put away childish things." With these views—still retained—I volunteered my service to assist friends, as my strength and due regard to my appropriate duties permitted, in securing their hay and grain. This course was found, then and subsequently, to be conducive to health.

While laboring in Parrsborough, I dined one day at the house of a gentleman where one of the guests indulged freely in idle and light discourse, and interspersed it with sarcastic remarks, caricaturing a sentiment held by the Baptists, of whom he knew I was one. Regarding the language of the prophet, "The prudent shall keep silence in that time, for it is an evil time," as applicable to that case, I remained silent. At length this jocular guest looked across the table directly at me, and accosted me with the inquiry, "Mr. Tupper, do you believe that man is an accountable being?" "Yes, Sir," said I, "I believe that 'men shall give an account in the day of judgment for every idle word that they shall speak.'" This reply produced the desired effect; for the caricaturing ceased, and the tone of the conversation became improved.

In the latter part of the month of August I baptized five persons in different parts of Parrsborough. It was encouraging to be assured that in two of these cases Divine influence had attended my feeble efforts, and rendered them effectual to the salvation of the soul. One of these persons, to whom reference was formerly made, having been under deep concern about fourteen months, had occasioned me much anxiety; but the steadfastness of faith, and boldness in the cause of Christ, now evinced—and happily continued—afforded me strong consolation.

One of the five was a married woman, who stated to me that she felt diffident about naming the subject to her husband. In compliance with her wish I spoke to him of it. He at once said, she was at liberty to do as she thought right. He, moreover, took her to the place of meeting, and accompanied her to the water. As soon, however, as she was baptized, it seemed as if Satan actually entered into the man. During the time of religious service he was riding violently to and fro before the house, like a madman; and at the close of it he came in, shook hands with his wife, bidding her farewell, and did not return to the house that night.

Some people, without at all considering the merits of the case,—a wrong of frequent occurrence,—were almost ready to stone me. Many readily quoted against me that homely text, 'Cursed is he that parteth man and wife.' One man, meeting me the next morning, accosted me with the remark, "Mr. Tupper, this is a dreadful thing you have been doing!" I replied, "If your wife wished to be baptized, and I should ask your leave, and you tell me 'she was at liberty to do as she thought right,' would it be wrong to baptize her?" He admitted that it would not. "That," said I, "is exactly what I have done."

Friends informed me, that the man expressed a fixed determination to forsake his wife and

family, and to leave the country. When, however, I ascertained that he was getting some supplies for them before his departure, I concluded he would not go far, nor remain long away. Accordingly, when my next visit was made to the settlement where he lived, he travelled several miles to meet me, in order to take me to his house; and acknowledged that he had done wrong in complying with a strong temptation, that suddenly assailed him, from the evil one.

(It may be added here, that the young man, noticed in last No. who so strongly resented the rebuke administered, ere long became reconciled to me; as I find recorded in a subsequent part of my Diary.)

On again visiting the people at Little Fork, I learned with pleasure that some who had been strenuously opposed to our sentiments had now cordially united with us. Bro. David Harris, whose labors were highly useful in different localities, had recently baptized 11 persons in this place.

In October I spent some days at River Philip and Westchester. At the former place I baptized 2, and at the latter 4. From the members of the church embracing these two settlements, I received a unanimous and urgent invitation to take the pastoral charge at the commencement of the year 1819. Though not ignorant of the increased responsibility that would devolve upon me in the event of my acceding to this request, yet attachment to the people, the success attending my labors there, and a knowledge of their need of pastoral aid, prompted me to regard the proposal favorably. On my return to Amherst a similar invitation was presented to me by the Church there to spend a portion of the time with them. Though they were few in number, and evidently in a low state with reference to religious exercise, yet these considerations seemed to furnish reasons why I should comply with their request, as pastoral labor was obviously much needed there.

Having evidently derived strength from manual labor to enable me to perform more of my appropriate work, my Diary for October 20th, 1818, contains a recognition of the favor of an improved state of bodily health, and some spiritual consolation graciously afforded; and records my having been engaged in the public worship of God daily for sixteen days in succession, preached seventeen sermons, attended two conferences, administered baptism twice, and the Lord's Supper once, and heard two sermons.

For the Christian Messenger.

A wrong use of the Cloth.

Nova Scotians have generally a becoming veneration for Ministers of the gospel. This certainly is very proper, and of vast importance to ministers themselves, as well as to the good cause they advocate. This principle should be studiously cultivated by every lover of Zion. In order to this it should be carefully guarded from abuse.

None can so well sustain its healthy existence and none are so capable of abusing it as are ministers themselves. One of the methods of abuse, of which we have to complain, is the use of ministerial honors for the purpose of trade. This may be done by any one who may choose to come down from the neighboring republic, with the credentials of a minister, to sell books, pictures, &c. Having this business supplemented, strengthened and propelled by the functions of his holy office, he is enabled to do a thriving business, and avoid the hotel expenses of himself, his assistant and horse.

The apology usually made for this practice is not entirely satisfactory, i. e., "Ill health." I submit if a man can constantly travel, and trade, and preach, if he cannot as well perform pastoral duties, so far at least as the physical is to be consulted.

It is unnecessary. An honest trade in this country, if it be properly conducted, will pay, without being thus supplemented, or in any way abusing christian hospitality.

It is a withering disgrace when the honors of the ministry are used in pressing a trade so vehemently that an individual is obliged to buy against his own judgment, or to refuse in terms that are not proper to be used to a minister of the gospel.

It is to be desired that those thus engaged will find a better way of earning a livelihood and save the religion of Christ from scandal.

REV.

Few things are necessary for the wants of this life, but it takes an infinite number to satisfy the demands of opinion.

For the Christian Messenger.

Resolutions proposed.

DEAR BROTHER,

I send you a copy of the Resolutions proposed by me at the Convention, but which were withdrawn under circumstances beyond my control. I have only to express my great regret that an opportunity was lost, by availing ourselves of which we might have consolidated friendship and union with our brethren in the United States. The resolutions, I am assured, were acceptable to a majority of the meeting, and would have been passed, almost without opposition, had it not been for the interference which led to their withdrawal. They were carefully prepared, so as to avoid the appearance of partisanship.

Yours truly,  
J. M. CRAMP.

Acadia College, Aug. 24, 1864.

Whereas, the objects of this Convention being chiefly denominational, the public declaration of opinion on passing events has been but seldom expressed;—

And whereas, it may be proper to deviate from our ordinary course, if unusual occurrences in the world's history demand attention, or great principles require to be solemnly re-affirmed;—

And whereas the death of the late President of the United States, and the termination of the civil war recently raging in that country are events which, considered from a christian point of view, furnish matter for serious and instructive reflection;—

Therefore resolved,—

1. That the assassination of His Excellency Abraham Lincoln, late President of the United States, was an act of cowardice, treachery, and malice diabolical, which cannot be contemplated without the greatest abhorrence, nor condemned in terms too severe;—a deed, such as savages perpetrate without exciting surprise, but which, in countries called christian, indicates that civilization is relapsing into barbarism;—a melancholy illustration of human depravity, in its lowest depths of degradation;—

2. That in tendering to their brethren of the United States this expression of their sympathy on an occasion so calamitous and so fraught with mysteriousness, the members of this Convention would at the same time congratulate them on the happy close of a war which has been attended by an unprecedented destruction of human life, and has laid on their country a burden of no common magnitude and pressure;—

3. That as friends of universal freedom—the natural birthright of man—the Baptists of the Lower Provinces, now assembled in this place by representation, do declare their hearty satisfaction and delight at the prospect of the downfall of slavery in North America—regarding that system as essentially unchristian, atrocious, and demoralising—pregnant with mischief alike to the oppressor and the oppressed—and totally incompatible with the enlightenment of the nineteenth century, and the high claims of humanity and religion;—

4. That in the present juncture of affairs on this Continent it is especially incumbent on all christian people to supplicate Almighty God on behalf of rulers and judges, supreme and subordinate, beseeching Him to grant them wisdom, prudence, and impartial and enlarged kindness—so that wrong-doing of every kind may be put down—that the interests of all, even the meanest and lowest in the scale, may be cared for and secured—and that "righteousness," which "exalteth a nation," may be everywhere triumphant;—

5. That in the judgment of this Convention it is the duty of public men, and more particularly of ministers of the gospel and conductors of the Periodical Press, to cherish and inculcate brotherly feelings between the inhabitants of the neighbouring Republic, and of these British North American Provinces—inasmuch as it is evident that the well-being of both dominions will be promoted in every respect by the maintenance of harmony—that distrust and alienation are unreasonable and injurious—and that a lasting peace between Great Britain and the United States will enable those countries, by God's blessing, to control the affairs of the nations, and to diffuse throughout the world the unspeakable benefits of civilization and christianity;—

6. That the praiseworthy efforts now in progress for the improvement of the emancipated slaves in the United States, whereby, being educated and instructed, they may be better qualified to enjoy the privileges and discharge the duties of their citizenship, deserve the patronage and liberal support of the churches of Christ in every part of the world.

For the Christian Messenger.

Rev. John Sprott to Rev. John Geddie.

August, 1865.

TO THE REV. JOHN GEDDIE.

Your visit to Nova Scotia has been duly appreciated by all denominations of Christians, and most deeply the zeal for Foreign Missions. It has a tendency, by a free intercourse, to break down those inveterate lines of party spirit which too often have separated wise and good men. Your earnest preaching and solemn prayers

must awaken among ministers their sleeping energies, and induce them to gird on all their armor, and put forth all their strength in the cause of their Master. We need fire from heaven to burn out our corruptions and to impress into our hearts more life and spirit, to fit us for the duties of life. We have some learned men in the denomination, and we gratefully acknowledge their value. But chemistry will not heal a broken heart. All the sciences will not smooth a pillow on our death bed. A learned ministry is good; but we need a holy and a pious ministry. Piety is the mainspring of success in ministerial labours. When Doctor Tholock was in Scotland, he complained of a dead orthodoxy and a low state of religious feeling. Doctor Chalmers says that our creeds and confessions are effete, and the Bible is a dead letter. Baptists and Methodists say that few are being converted. Revivals seldom occur. We cannot deny you the praise of energy, zeal and earnest preaching. Since you returned you have not amused your audiences with the strange sights which you had seen in foreign lands; but have devoted your time and talents to promote a warm-hearted christianity among all denominations, and I hope infused your fervour and zeal into the bosom of others. In Annetum you and your companion met with naked savages dancing round a burning oak, eating raw fish and dwelling in mud huts. By the blessing of God on your labours they have become men and christians, and you say that domestic worship is universal among them, and that is more than can be said of our best churches. You have stamped your character on the natives, they have imbibed your spirit and caught your example. If you do not rank with the orators of Greece and Rome, your name may be mentioned in the same breath with the venerable Doctor Carey, Baptist minister in India, Ward, Williams, Moffat, Whitfield, Wesley, and other revered names which blossom sweet from the tomb. The conversion of such men was a great blessing to the world, and they have given a strong impulse to the church. I am old enough to remember when Carey sailed for India. At that time we could scarcely believe that there were heathens at home; and if there were heathens abroad we did not care for them. War was then the applauded achievement of mankind. Great Britain was a barrack and the continent of Europe the battle-ground, and regiment after regiment were sent away to the harvest of death. All ranks were forced into the army. Like Paddy, I was compelled to volunteer, and go into a volunteer company, with Virgil in the one hand and a gun and bayonet in the other. I was not in the battle of Balanahink, fought in June, 1798. But I well remember hearing the firing of the great guns across the Irish Channel. I am the oldest soldier and the oldest minister in this Province. All my early companions sleep in death. I have sometimes thought I might have been better with them; yet I am thankful that God in mercy has spared me, and given me more time to repent and reform, and prepare for my sure abode.

We have many warm-hearted christians in Nova Scotia, among Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists. When I get among them I scarcely know the difference; they all call me father. It is a beautiful feature of present times that religious controversy has nearly ceased among us. If we are not united in everything, we may be united in all that is essential to a life of faith and holiness. It is still to be lamented that there is much unsanctified talent and wealth among us. Our people are deeply worldly-minded. We keep an open door for the refuse of all markets. Men who have lost fortunes at home come here to make them, and they are not always scrupulous about the means they employ. Unless ministers strike their hearers hard and cut them deep we can make no impression. Whatever qualifications a minister may have, he cannot succeed without strong faith, true spirituality and great earnestness.

JOHN SPROTT.

For the Christian Messenger.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEACON CALK SHAFNER

Died at his residence July 26th, in the 84th year of his age.

Bro. S. united with the Baptist Church in Nietsux, more than fifty years ago, and was soon chosen deacon. While health permitted he was always at his post, and ready to cheer the heart of his minister and comfort his brethren. His gifts in prayer and exhortation were very acceptable to the church. Bro. S. placed no confidence in himself, his hope was entirely in God and salvation through Jesus Christ. He was always willing to talk upon the subject of re-