

Biographical.

For the Christian Messenger.

Memoir of the Rev. William Chipman.

BY J. M. CRAMP, D. D.

(Continued.)

An account of Mr. Chipman's conversion, in his own handwriting, has been discovered since his death. It is too long for insertion here; but it is a document of so much interest, that its publication as a separate article may probably be deemed advisable.

Mr. Chipman fully sympathized with all our denominational efforts. He did not act, as some, who seem to think that the liberality of their churches in support of our Institutions will be detrimental to their own interests, but set the example of activity and benevolence. He engaged in the educational enterprise with heartiness, under a deep sense of its importance and utility, and its bearing on the welfare of the denomination. His name appears in the first list of Directors of the Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society, in the management of which Society he took part, as Director, or member of the Executive Committee, during the whole of his public life. He was one of the Secretaries of the Society for fourteen years, and on the death of Father T. S. Harding was chosen President, which office he held till his death. He was also many years Secretary of the Board of Domestic and Foreign Missions. In these official relations he proved himself worthy of the confidence reposed in him, tempering zeal with caution, and administering affairs with judgment and energy. If he was not ardent enough to be rash, he would not suffer enterprise to be chilled by the calculations of mis-called prudence. He was like the children of Issachar, who "knew the times, what Israel ought to do," and were prepared to do it.

Though he was not one of the appointed delegates (probably on account of his youth) he was present at the meeting of the churches in Lower Granville in June, 1800, when "The Nova Scotia Baptist Association" was formed. He acted as Clerk of the Association in 1814, and as Assistant Clerk in 1821, 1823, 1827 and 1828. He was again appointed Clerk in 1829, and held that office till the division of the Association in 1850. His brethren felt that they could not make a better choice, and the event justified the wisdom of the selection. The records of our body were kept with admirable correctness, and in the transaction of the business of the Association great advantage was continually derived from his sagacity and orderly habits.

The Temperance cause found in Mr. Chipman one of its earliest and warmest advocates, and he endeavoured to promote its progress in his own field of labour by the inculcation of sound principles, by consistency of practice, and by the encouragement of suitable agency. His efforts were not at first favourably received; the apathy of some, and the opposition of others prevented success. But he lived to witness a great change in the usages of society, and he succeeded so far in his own church that a rule was "unanimously adopted, not to admit any in future to her communion except they become members of the Temperance Society."

"Every man hath his proper gift of God." One can serve the church in one way and another in another, and he who faithfully uses two talents will as certainly have his Lord's approval as he who is entrusted with five. "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour." Mr. Chipman was not distinguished by brilliant talents, vigorous imagination, or elegant style and manner;—such gifts belong to the few men of mark whom God occasionally bestows on the churches;—but he was an honest, industrious, conscientious servant of the Saviour, whom the Great Master blessed to the conversion and edification of many. If he had infirmitates—who has them not? If he was not free from mistakes—who is free? If he sometimes erred in judgment—who among us is infallible? "In many things we all offend." Our departed brother was keenly sensible of his imperfections, and "groaned, being burdened," under the consciousness of remaining sin. He "walked humbly with his God," and the light of God's countenance cheered him.

During the summer of last year Mr. Chipman visited many of the churches, both in the Eastern and Western parts of the province, and preached frequently, much to the satisfaction of his christian friends. He was in a peculiarly happy frame of mind all the time, and spoke and conversed with such clearness, force, and

unction as excited general admiration. His sermon at the Eastern Association, held at Truro, will be long remembered. It was founded on Ephes. v. 25-27. While he described the glory of the Church of Christ—its internal, external, and eternal glory—he spoke as one who believed, and loved, and hoped, and expected ere long to realise the "fulness of joy," and the "pleasures for evermore," reserved for God's people.

As winter approached symptoms of natural decay became increasingly evident. An accidental fall enfeebled him exceedingly, and he was confined to the house, for the most part, for some months previous to his death. His experience in that lengthened season of retirement was singularly joyous. He was happy in his God and Saviour. His views and feelings may be illustrated by an extract from the Circular Letter written by him for the Central Association in 1858.

"We participate through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ in some foretastes, sometimes rich foretastes, and a sufficiency to make us long and wish for the society of the just made perfect. There are, it is true, some who are so divinely favored while here, that for the moment they can say—

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
Till called to rise and soar away
To everlasting bliss."

But such seasons are even with them short and with many comparatively rare, and none can be fully satisfied to drink always from the lesser streams, but will be longing to drink from the fountain head of divine influence. It is, however, a blessed state to be in, to have cause to say with holy Job, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' and like Paul 'I know whom I have believed.' Again, 'I am now ready and the time of my departure is at hand, I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.' Now in the foregoing there is a blessed assurance to the several individuals named, viz., David, Job, and Paul; but Paul spoke of the same assurance in reference to all who love Christ's appearing. And Christ also supports the doctrine of assurance, 'I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, and no man shall pluck them out of my hand, nor out of my Father's hand.' And Paul says that 'this life is hid with Christ in God, when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.' Then why may not Christians who are born from above draw divine comfort here, while possessing such a hope both sure and steadfast, and contemplate the blessed fulfilment of all God's sacred promises, and dwell more and more upon that moment when death shall afford them a happy and blissful passport to everlasting and increasing joy. To such when death comes, victory over their last enemy is sure, and they can strike that blessed note, 'Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

A letter addressed to the writer on the 17th of February last contains the following passages:—"I can assure you, my dear brother, that in the course of sixty-seven year's experience in the divine life, as I trust, the above sentiments [referring to a communication he had just received] have been verified in my experience; and more especially as I draw nearer and nearer to my eternal home, my hope is more and more confirmed in Christ, of heavenly bliss at last. And in my late affliction God has been graciously pleased to confirm my former views of the doctrines of grace, more and more; and never did I entertain more exalted views of all God's marvellous works, especially the great work of human redemption, in all the concomitants resulting therefrom—from the choice of his people in Christ to their eternal glorification in heaven's glorious mansions. Oh! how secure are all the chosen of Christ, bought with Christ's blood, and conquered by divine grace, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and made meet to dwell for ever in the presence of Christ, and see him as he is! What a glorious hope of a blissful immortality; the gospel inspires in the heart of every true disciple of Christ! And, as you remark, what a blessed union will then be enjoyed by all the purchased inheritance! How consoling the thought that then we shall see our loved ones who have gone before us—and be forever free from sin—and be holy as God is holy, in kind, but not in degree. This thought affords heavenly consolation even here, a rich foretaste, no doubt, of this happiness being ours. Bless God for his infinite goodness in its bestowment! This may be considered his dying testimony. In a strain similar to this he frequently spoke,

as he was able, to friends and brethren. He could truly say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

A day or two before he was deprived of speech, a sister in the church whom he much prized and loved called to see him, with one of her sisters. On approaching his bedside she remarked, "You are almost home." "Almost home," was his reply. On her saying, "This is Harriet A." he did not at first recognise her, but after a short pause he exclaimed, "Is this the dear sister that used to write such beautiful letters? My dear sister . . . suffice it to say that I love you in the Lord Jesus Christ." He seemed as if he would have added more, but his powers were then fast failing.

On Thursday July 6, he was seized with violent convulsions, followed by a stroke of paralysis, which affected his right side. Two days after, when those about him intimated that they thought him to be dying, he said, "If this be death, welcome the summons; blessed sleep!" He lingered, however, several days, but mostly in a state of partial unconsciousness, a gentle pressure of the hand being the only token of recognition he was able to give. That, too, ceased: life ebbed gently away, and just at sunset, on Friday, July 14, he fell asleep in Jesus. The "days of the years of his pilgrimage" were fourscore and three years, seven months, and fifteen days.

The funeral took place on Monday, July 17. Friends came from many miles round to shew him honour at his death. After prayer in the house, by the Rev. A. S. Hunt, A. M., a long procession was formed, headed by the pastor and ten other ministers. The coffin was carried into the meeting-house and placed in front of the pulpit from which the deceased had so often proclaimed the gospel. The building was filled to its utmost capacity, and numbers were compelled to remain outside. After the usual preliminary exercises, a sermon was preached by the writer (at the request of the deceased), at the close of which the Rev. Dr. Tupper offered some observations, and bore affectionate testimony to departed worth. The text of the funeral discourse was Psalm lxxiii. 23, 24. The procession was then re-formed, and "devout men" chosen for that purpose by their former pastor, carried him to his burial. The hymn commencing, "Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb," was sung at the grave. Prayer was offered by the Rev. E. M. Saunders, A. M., the present pastor of the church; and the remains of our venerable brother were committed to the "dust in sure and certain hope."

Mr. Chipman was twice married. His first wife—Mary McGowan Dickie, daughter of Matthew Dickie, Esq., whom he married in February, 1803; died in May, 1826. She was the mother of nine children (Professor Isaac Chipman was one of them), three of whom survive. Mr. C.'s second wife—Eliza Ann Chipman, daughter of Holmes Chipman, Esq., to whom he was married in May, 1827; died Oct. 23, 1853. She had twelve children, of whom eight are still living. Of these eleven survivors of an unusually numerous family, six are sons, and five daughters.

"I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Rev. xiv. 13.

"The memory of the just is blessed." Prov. x. 7.

"He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness." Isaiah lvii. 2.

ERRATA in the first Part of this Memoir—
Column 3. Line 25 from top, for "had," read "have."
"43" for "42" for "vocation," read "vacation."
"28 from bottom, for "two," read "ten."
"8" for "blackshirts," read "backshirts."
"1" for "overflowing," read "overflowing."
Column 4. Line 44 from top, for "if," read "is."
"56 from bottom, for "few," read "few."
"48" for "sorely," read "sorely."
"8" for "after," read "often."

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A SKETCH.

SOMEWHERE about three quarters of a century ago, a singular scene was transacted in a small country store, in Lower Cornwallis. Several young fellows were engaged in playing cards. One of them—his name was William—well skilled in the art of shuffling and placing the pieces of pasteboard, was not enjoying the game though apparently all absorbed in it.

Strange feelings of late had stolen over him, and certain fearful words were flitting like demons before his imagination—DEATH, JUDGMENT, AND ETERNITY,—causing his soul to shudder and shrink, and his knees to tremble. So terrible became his emotions at length that he could endure no longer. He rose up from his seat in the midst of the game, retired to the back part of the store, fell upon his knees and begged for mercy, promising that if God would forgive him this once, he would never play at cards again. But for the world he would not have betrayed his weakness to his companions in sin. So with marvellous inconsistency he prayed for liberty to finish out that game; and with a spirit somewhat composed returned to the table and played it out. He found next day that his religious convictions were deepened, and his resolution to break off all his evil courses strengthened, so marvellous is the loving kindness of God. He will hear the cry of incipient penitence and faith, though mingled with ignorance and unbelief. "For his mercy endureth forever."

But another test awaited William; and that upon which, probably, his whole future career turned. He was passionately fond of dancing. Young, active, fine in form and features, respectably connected and possibly somewhat more polished than some of his companions, they were wont to look up to him as their leader. There was to be a dance that evening down in the neighborhood of what is now called Canning. William had been invited and was expected to go. It would be strange and dull without him. His absence would be an unaccountable thing. All day his heart dwelt upon the scene. Strange, wild conflicting emotions agitated his soul. Should he yield to the temptation and go, something within told him that all would be over with him, and his soul would be eternally lost. Should he refuse, what reason would he give? or how lift up his head again before the face of man? What could he do? while these wild emotions were sweeping over him, in his distress he called upon the Lord, and his cry came in before Him, even into his holy temple. "An unseen hand was laid upon him. This could calm the tempest, and say "peace! be still." He had been all day asking the Lord to give him strength to resist the temptation to join the company, as they came along. And now came the moment for action as well as prayer. Looking out at the window he saw them on the road. Seizing the key of the store, he locked the door in the inside and retired to the room above, where he usually slept. Watching the party as they came on, he prayed and struggled with the temptation more earnestly. He felt certain that they would mistrust where he was, that they would bang away at the door, and call him. But they did not. Seeing the door shut, and the key out, they probably supposed that he had gone on, and so moved quietly along. Then came a slight re-action—some few misgivings. He gazed after them with eyes and heart until the winding road or intervening hills had shut them out from his view. It was a terrible struggle, but he had triumphed.

A few days after the above occurrence, a young man was seen wending his way on horseback, through western Cornwallis, in through Aylesford, and Wilmot, and down towards Lower Granville. He was small in stature, his eyes of a dark hazel hue, and his hair literally as black and as glossy as a raven's. He was alone—sad, sorrowful and desponding. Since that never-to-be-forgotten day, when by divine grace he had decided to break off from his sins and from his worldly companions, his earnestness to obtain everlasting life had been intensified. With a heavy burden on his back, and an open book in his hand, in which ever and anon he read, and wept as he read, he was running hither and thither for help—for alas, he knew not where to go. But word had reached Cornwallis of a reformation in Granville, where the Rev. James Manning was preaching with power. And poor William thought that were he only in Granville, he too might be converted. So he told his father how he felt, and begged permission to go to Lower Granville. His father was not at the time a professor of religion, and could not exactly comprehend the feelings of the lad but as there was some business in Annapolis Royal, that he could attend to, he finally consented. And so, hoping, fearing, praying, William moved on. In due time he reached the place, and found that the Lord was among the people of a truth. Day after day he attended the meetings. Sinners trembled, saints rejoiced, and the broken hearted and heavy laden found rest and peace. But there was nothing for him. The scenes around him seemed only to deepen the darkness in which his soul was plunged,