

For the Christian Messenger.

Correspondence.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY REV CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

CHAPTER VIII.

PASTORATE IN ST. JOHN.

(No. 4.)

On Mrs. Tupper's return from the country her health appeared considerably improved; but it soon began to decline again. My indisposition continued and increased. On the 30th of August I became unable to sit up, and was therefore wholly confined to my bed. My medical attendant regarded the principal disease as bilious fever. I endured much distress in my body and limbs. Had this been a sudden attack of illness, it would not have so clearly indicated the necessity of my removal; but as it had advanced gradually, and evidently proceeded from causes connected with my residence in the city, there seemed no reason to doubt that, in the event of my becoming able to remove to the country, duty would demand the adoption of that course. I therefore sent a renewed and earnest request to the Church to release me. They expressed much reluctance; but ultimately agreed to comply with my request.

This was one of the most distressing and trying sicknesses ever yet endured by me. My mind was, in general, in a state of depression. Anxiety to leave a place in which it seemed almost impossible for me to regain strength enough to do so, undoubtedly tended to aggravate the disease. It was deemed needful for me to have watchers; and as there were scarcely any individuals who were willing to discharge that duty alone, and as two would disturb my sleep, I chose to dispense with them, since they evidently did me more harm than good.

My good Brethren in Nova Scotia had intrusted to me the superintendence of the printing of their Minutes of Association. Though utterly unable to sit up, yet, a substitute could not be found, it appeared to me so important to have this done, that I required the proof sheets to be brought to me, and corrected them while lying on my bed of suffering.

Through the kindness of Providence in process of time medical aid began to afford me some degree of relief. As the water of the city had evidently proved injurious to me—doubtless my nerves were considerably affected—I could not endure to use it as drink in any way, not even in herb tea; and therefore proposed to the Doctor to allow me to use milk. This, he maintained, would increase the fever, and consequently be productive of pernicious effects. Though it was always obvious to me, that one who employed a physician should observe his directions, yet in this extraordinary case, as I could not live without some liquid, I determined to make trial of my own course. It succeeded admirably. During the rest of the time of my continuance in the city my constant diet was dry toast—without butter—and milk, morning, noon, and night. This agreed with me, and I desired no other food or drink.

As fast as my returning strength permitted, I called on Christian friends, and took leave of them in private, accompanied with mutual expressions of esteem and affection. At Conference, September 28th, I assigned explicitly my reasons for removing, and presented a letter containing a valedictory Address. In response my reasons were acknowledged to be sufficient and satisfactory; and the Clerk was directed to prepare a reply to my letter, with a dismissal also for Mrs. Tupper. On Lord's day, October 1st, my farewell discourse was delivered to a large assembly from 1 The. ii. 17. "But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time, in presence, not in heart."—At the close of the service the Church tarried, and a letter of approbation was presented to me, expressive of their full satisfaction with my labors and deportment, and their ardent desire for my welfare. Thus terminated my brief pastorate in St. John.

It seemed, indeed, a mysterious Providence which compelled me to return to the country after a residence of only nine months in the city. One special benefit, however, which resulted to me from the afflictions endured then was obvious, namely, that they tended to reconcile me to the endurance of the toils and trials attendant on the labors of a minister travelling on an extensive circuit, and exposed to storms, cold, fatigue, and various hardships and privations. All these appeared like pleasure in comparison with the distresses which evidently

resulted from a residence in the city; and they have subsequently been borne with much more cheerfulness and alacrity.

It may also be noticed, as a cause of gratitude, that in a financial point of view no material loss was sustained. Though we had some of our effects carried to St. John by land in the winter, and removed our family and principal effects thither and back again by water, bearing all the expenses, and were obliged at different times to pay for medical attendance, yet at the close of the year 1826—3 months after my return—according to a pretty careful reckoning my property had increased one pound in the course of the year. My income has usually been quite moderate, but, through the Divine blessing attending economy—both my wives have been industrious and frugal—if I mistake not, my property has increased a little every year; probably the least in 1826 of any one in fifty-two years since I commenced in life, with comparatively nothing in my possession. The course adopted at the first, and hitherto followed, namely, that of living within the means, has not probably deprived either me or mine of any real enjoyment; and it has unquestionably preserved me from much disquietude and many trials. From long experience of its salutary effects, both in a worldly and in a spiritual point of view, it is respectfully commended to my juniors in the ministry, and, indeed, to my fellow men without exception.

ERRATUM.—In C. M., Aug. 22, No. 3, col. 4, line 59, for "part," read fact.

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"BE A MINISTER."

MR. EDITOR,—

As I am reminded by my Rev. Brother Skinner of a Charge delivered by me at an ordination some five years since, at New Cornwall, Lunenburg, and am pretty plainly charged with inconsistency in now entertaining a different view, it will not, I think, be deemed improper for me to say a few words by way of explanation and reply. But in the outset I must say that supposing my good brother had proved me inconsistent, he would have accomplished something much more effective, had he shown that my present view is inconsistent with the word of God. This he had not done. A man may survive his inconsistency and be all the nearer to the truth for it; while there is reason to fear that some people are dying of consistency. I do not however think it impossible to harmonize the views expressed at the time referred to with those lately put forth by me. But this I will not undertake; for as respects bro. Skinner, it is wholly unnecessary, and what I shall say will perhaps be deemed fully as satisfactory by the general reader. A brother Minister pleasantly says,—Bro. Skinner has sent you a heavy shot from an Armstrong gun. If so, I will only say that he has been kind and considerate enough to send along also a shot proof protector which rendered the missile entirely harmless. I tender him my grateful acknowledgements. Why after all his writing and firing my worthy brother admits all I want. Hear him. He says: "That such exceptional-cases have existed, and do and will exist where the paucity or poverty of the people, or other circumstances, render an adequate support (to a minister) impossible, no one will deny. In these cases there is but one course for the minister, and that is to seek some other employment in connexion with the ministry whereby he may save himself from the reproach of 'having denied the faith' and being 'worse than an infidel.'" I am very thankful for this admission. Now if my brother holds this view, notwithstanding his cordial belief in, and unqualified approval of my charge at New Cornwall, I do not see why his surprise should be so great at the views lately presented by me, or why he should deem it inconsistent in me to say that the general rule as to ministerial support (1 Cor. ix. 14.) has exceptions. He cannot surely deny me the privilege of believing precisely what he believes; nor can he justly or consistently charge me with inconsistency in now saying that there are exceptions, though they were not mentioned or hinted at in the utterances at New Cornwall. I am free to admit that the exception under its own limitations appears to me now in a much clearer and stronger light than when the charge named was delivered;—a somewhat careful examination of the word of God led me to see the exception as clearly as the rule. I am bound to respect both,—each within the limits where it applies, or in which it is designed to operate. The whole truth in respect to a principle is not presented, unless the exceptions are given as well as the rule. On this subject the scripture

gives both. As the incident which induced the examination stated, is not wholly irrelevant, I will perhaps be pardoned for mentioning it. At an Ordination in Prince Edward Island now over three years ago the brethren assigned to me the delivery of the Charge,—which was in substance the same, and in form almost the same as that delivered at New Cornwall. Next day when dining at the house of a respectable merchant, it transpired that my host was a preacher of the Gospel, connected with a Pædo-Baptist denomination. To an expression of surprize on my part at the discovery, and of congratulation on his being engaged in so good a work, my friend replied in substance as follows:—"I fear, sir, that, after what you said yesterday in your charge, I have no right to preach, or that I cannot continue to preach." I felt sorry for the inference drawn, but could not well deny its correctness, as the Charge seemed to give no countenance to cases like his. I felt still more sorry when my friend added with much earnestness,—"I did not yesterday care so much for my own position and feelings, but I did feel deeply for brother ———, (mentioning the name of a worthy and devoted Baptist minister present at the ordination, and whom I highly respect and sincerely love,) who has I know been compelled to attend to other matters than preaching the gospel. I fear, continued this good brother, (a man of superior mind and intelligence,) that your brother minister will be much grieved and discouraged by what you have said;—and moreover I apprehend that the people will mis-apply it, and blame him, whereas I am pretty sure the blame belongs elsewhere; for circumstances have forced him to his present course, I subsequently learned that another minister present at the same service was grieved, if not discouraged, by the same portion of my address. It caused me grief that inadvertently I should discourage brethren or weaken their hands in the work of the Lord, when for ought I knew they were doing as well as they could, and whose labours, I doubted not were more effective than my own. But my remarks seemed to cut off these brethren, or allow no place for them as faithful workers in the vineyard of the Lord. From these circumstances I was induced to look anew at the subject, and soon became convinced that I had put the matter in two positive and dogmatic a form, and resolved that when again performing a similar duty, I would somewhat qualify these positive utterances. I would not now any more than formerly say to a brother, "Be a Minister and a farmer,—be a Minister and a merchant,—be a Minister and a doctor,—be a Minister and a school-teacher, &c. But in accordance with the intimation already given, I would, among other things address him as follows:—"My dear Brother, Be not, if possible, a Minister and a farmer, be a Minister;—be not a Minister and merchant, be a Minister;—be not a Minister and a school-teacher or inspector, be a Minister;—be not a Minister and a doctor, be a Minister. But should you, my brother, be compelled by necessity for the gospel's sake to make tents, cultivate the ground, teach or inspect schools, build houses, or boats, write books or print them, or to do any thing else not repugnant to christian life, and ministerial decorum and propriety,—be a Minister EVERYWHERE and act in all things as in the sight of God, and with the aim be doing all the good you can, and you may hope, through grace to receive from your Divine Master a commendation similar to that given her of whom it is said—"she hath done what she could." Happy the minister who shall thus be commended!—The Lord will not condemn us for not doing other people's duty. In conclusion, I commend the faithfulness of bro. Skinner's memory, am thankful that the Charge referred to was made a blessing to him, am right glad that he has been able to carry out what has been so well remembered;—and I hope that neither from insufficient support, sickness in his family, tightness of purse, or lack of means to educate his children, he will ever be compelled to burthen himself with other than ministerial work. But should necessity require it, I pray that my beloved brother may have grace and strength sufficient for the increased and overwhelming burden. And when he has passed through this discipline for a short time, I am much mistaken if he does not fully believe that there are much worse things in the church and in the world than for a minister to take hold and help himself and family while pursuing as best he can his sacred calling, when his people fail either from lack of willingness or ability to furnish enough for his support. If bro. Skinner sees nothing, "a little one-sided, or extreme," in saying that a minister should "not buy farms," I can only say that his vision differs considerably from mine.

Respectfully yours,
GEO. ARMSTRONG!

Bridgetown, August 29th, 1866.

LETTER FROM ITALY.

The following is from a letter just received from a "Nova Scotian abroad," travelling in Switzerland and Italy, who is expecting shortly to return and settle, probably in Halifax, in the practise of his profession. We could have wished for a little fuller detail, of what he saw on the European continent.

MILAN, 28th June, 1866

My dear Brother,—

I am now in that fair land, which "kissed by the breath of heaven seems colored by its skies," where the balmy air, the trellised vines, the rustling of the quick-eyed lizard, and the glistening villages all strike one with an appreciation of its luxuriance and beauty. For the last two or three weeks I have been drinking in the inexpressibly grand and sublime beauties of nature, so prodigally bestowed throughout Switzerland and Italy, and which I never before knew how to appreciate. I dare not attempt to give you a description of what I have seen, as I consider that men of genius and talent who have written volumes on these objects of world-wide interest and admiration, have failed to portray their beauty and grandeur in their true light. I will however give you a synopsis of our tour; and leave you to judge from books, somewhat, of how greatly we must have been delighted. From Paris we came to Geneva by rail, and from Geneva to Martigny in the valley of the Rhone, partly by boat, partly on foot, and partly by rail. Here we commenced in earnest to see what we could do as pedestrians, for only as pedestrians can one truly, and rightly enjoy the scenery of Switzerland. On Saturday the 16th, we started from Martigny, crossed the "Col de Balme," (6784 feet) the boundary between Switzerland and France, and descended to Chamouny (3238 feet). Here we spent a day and then commenced the "tour of Mont Blanc," crossed the "Mere de Glace," an immense sea of ice three miles wide and said to be forty-five long, the "Col de Volza," (5571 feet) into the valley of "Mont Joy," and far up the valley at "Mont Boraut," (4242 feet), we spent the night in an inn of very humble pretensions. The next morning we ascended the next pass, the "Col de Bon homme," (7558 feet), ascending steep rocky slopes where vegetation disappeared, until our path for hours traversed immense snow fields. The summit of the pass being reached we again ascended to an Alpine village, (4667 feet). Then the Col de la Sagui (?) (7799 feet) through the pass of the great St. Bernard to Comagu and Aosta (1841 feet) in Italy. From Aosta we crossed the Matterjock (?) (10,226 feet) to Termato (?) in Switzerland, thence to Buig (?) in the valley of the Rhone, and across the Simplon to Lago Maggiore in Italy. From Pallazza on the Lake we came by boat to Sesto Calende and to Milan by rail, no one who has not seen the Alps, and Swiss and Italian scenery can fancy how much there is to interest. More than one day we travelled over thirteen hours, and almost fancied ourselves not fatigued. We think nothing of over thirty-five miles per day, and when on a good road, I think, average nearly three and a half miles per hour all day. Our knapsacks weigh probably ten pounds. We have a good standing colour. Our faces and hands at first blistered. But with the aid of a lotion of glycerine, we have rendered them proof against further injury. We have glorious appetites and sound slumbers and are two jolly independant boys. My comrade is a young surgeon from London. To-morrow we go by train to the field of battle and hope to see an engagement. We both have been strongly tempted to volunteer as surgeons under Garibaldi. The Italian government are poor, and the pay would not be large. The Austrians are offering at the rate of six thousand dollars a year for English Surgeons, and I should almost against my sympathy incline to look at it in a financial point of view if I were to join the army. * * * * * As it is I think I shall not think of it. After getting a peep at warfare, we go to Lecco, then up the lake to lake Como, and Bellinzana, then through the great St. Gotthardt to Lucerne. Then back and down the Rhine. I had the honor of dining with the Superior of the Great St. Bernard. Their hospice is open free to everybody, and they pay what they please. No one could be better treated than we were. I might spend an hour in describing each of several most interesting objects, but dare not attempt it, so picturesque and so grand is everything on all sides. Whole days we have travelled through vallies or rather gorges when close on either side rose thousands of feet high snow capped mountains, leaving scarcely room for the mountain torrent and our meandering path. Cascades