

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

By Rev. Charles Tupper, D. D.

CHAPTER VIII.

PASTORATE IN ST. JOHN.

(No. 2.)

On the Sabbath after my arrival in the city there were four persons baptized by my predecessor. As one of these was the captain of a ship, and the ordinance was administered in the afternoon, there was a large assemblage of people, including many sailors and numbers of drunken men. One of this class seized me by the arm, saying, "If I fall, you'll fall." Though this situation was not a pleasant one, yet no resistance was attempted; but the first favorable opportunity was improved to extricate myself quietly from it. So dense, however, was the crowd, that it was out of my power to obtain a position from which the administrator and candidates could be seen. The only means whereby I could ascertain when a person was baptized, was by hearing a shout and roar of laughter from the irreverent rabble, of whom numbers were perched upon adjacent wharves. (When the ordinance was subsequently administered by me, it was deemed expedient to choose an earlier hour, when there would not probably be so many, if any, persons present in a state of intoxication.)

At the commencement of my labors there, the only Baptist Church in the city and suburbs contained but about 120 members; and there was no other minister of our denomination resident in St. John—the population being then about 9000—or within 30 miles in any direction. Having presently obtained a list of the members—an invariable practice with me on taking the charge of any church—I endeavoured to look after the spiritual welfare of each individual. While engaged in the discharge of this duty, in the early part of my labors there, a lady who did not profess religion remarked to me, "You must visit the sinners, as well as the saints." This admonition has often occurred to me in the subsequent course of my ministerial labors.

To change my mode of living from habits of economy and frugality—always living within the means—to those deemed respectable in a city, was no easy task. The kind sisters whom we consulted with reference to furniture for our apartments, doubtless wishing to have that of their minister equal to the furniture of genteel people in the city in general, proposed an expenditure quite beyond the means possessed. As I had but little property besides a small place, which neither could be sold for its value nor let, the outlay required would have involved me in debt, without any reasonable prospect of being able to pay. Not only did my conscience revolt at this, but it appeared to me the part of duty to practise such economy as would enable me to afford some assistance to persons in pressing need. A case had recently occurred in which I was called to visit a very sick person in the night, where the family had no light, nor means to procure even a candle. The thought of expending so much in superfluities—a thing undoubtedly done by many—as to put it out of my power to contribute to objects of benevolence, or the relief of persons actually suffering from want, was to me intolerable. I therefore winced at the proposal to expend ten dollars a piece on the windows for curtains. It accorded with a remark made by an aged and respectable man resident in the city, that some people lay out much money to let the light into their houses, and then expend more to shut it out.

Under these circumstances I stated my views frankly to one of the principal parties who had given advice, to this effect, "that the Church doubtless, proposed to allow me as much as they consistently could, namely, £150 per annum, which might, if frugally used, support me, with my wife and five children; but it would cost about £50 for house rent, fuel, and milk, leaving only £100 for food, clothing, charitable objects, &c., &c., and that it would unquestionably cost at least £100 to furnish our apartments in a style equal to that proposed for the window curtains. Being a person of discernment, she readily perceived and admitted the correctness of my statement; and promised to use her influence—which she did to good effect—to have every thing placed on as moderate a scale as would be at all becoming my situation.

About the middle of March, having ascertained that there were a number of persons in the

city and suburbs who had been baptized, and some of them were members of Baptist churches in the places whence they had come, I commenced making special efforts to induce them to obtain dismissions and unite with the Church where they were dwelling. This should in all cases be immediately done by the persons themselves; but if it be neglected, pastors, and indeed other members, ought to use their influence to have it effected. In this matter my efforts were not in vain.

Strong commendation of the labors of preachers is liable to do them harm; but there are cases in which an expression of approval may be serviceable. In the course of the spring my health being feeble, and my spirits depressed, apprehensions arose in my mind that my services were not acceptable. While these fears held me in a state of dejection, one of the principal brethren, a man of some note, at a conference meeting expressed a high appreciation of the value of my services, and the edifying nature of my discourses. This tended to encourage and strengthen me in the work of the Lord.

Early in the month of May I went to Amherst for the remainder of my family and effects. After pleasant interviews with tried friends in that region, we set sail in a small vessel on the 18th. We had a tedious passage; and Mrs. T. who caught a severe cold by getting her feet wet while going on board, became very ill, and so continued for a length of time after we reached St. John. How exceedingly checkered are the scenes of this life!

On Lord's day morning, May 28th, I enjoyed the pleasure of baptizing three candidates, who had given satisfactory evidence of having experienced a gracious change. The morning was calm and pleasant, the people assembled were quiet and attentive, and the season was solemn and delightful. At the subsequent administration of the Lord's supper the number of communicants was comparatively large, and a happy state of Christian union appeared to prevail.

Having recently furnished some communications for the Christian Watchman, in one of which an apology was offered for proposing an exposition of a portion of Scripture different from that given by the Editor, I received a letter from Mr. Nichols, the publisher, in which he remarked, "Your communications, I can assure you, are very acceptable, not only to us, but to our readers. We are often asked, Who is the author of those excellent communications signed Philographes?" This statement led me to hope that my pen might be beneficially employed, and stimulated me to use some diligence in that department of labor.

For the Christian Messenger.

A day at the Grande Ligne Mission.

DEAR BROTHER—

After an absence of several years I have revisited the Grande Ligne Mission. I left Montreal for that purpose on Monday afternoon the 9th inst., and returned the next evening.

It is a sacred spot—consecrated by the prayer of faith, and by self-denying, ardent, persevering labour. God's blessing has rested on it in no ordinary measure. Evangelical Protestants, and especially Baptists, should regard it as their duty to render it liberal support.

Madame Feller is still the presiding spirit of the place. Long may she remain so! Physically enfeebled by the paralytic seizure which she suffered some time ago, she is wonderfully vigorous in mind, and as warm-hearted as ever. It is delightful to listen to her pithy, fervent, wise sayings, expressed in her own peculiar English, and always "fitly spoken." And it is almost amusing to observe how every thing, down to the minutest details, is played before her, for advice or direction. She is the "Mother" of the establishment, and her children are distinguished by affectionate obedience and devoted deference to her will.

Next to Madame Feller is brother Roussey, her constant associate in toil and suffering for thirty years past. Gentle and unassuming in his deportment, and so fearful of intrusion as to be sometimes deemed a man of cool reserve, he is nevertheless prompt and energetic, clear sighted, firm without rashness, and undismayed by opposition.

The work of the Lord has prospered greatly under the superintendence of these esteemed servants of the Saviour. Like-minded labourers have been raised up from time to time, who have united with them in the holy enterprises and have shared largely in the same spirit. It is believed that as many as fifteen hundred souls have attained a saving acquaintance with the truth. Some have been transferred to the

church above many have emigrated to the United States; there still remain about five hundred persons, rescued from the thralldom of error and sin, "the Lord's freemen," serving Jesus to the best of their power, according to his word. There are eight churches, composed of baptized believers, and managing their spiritual affairs by the light of the New Testament.

A very interesting baptism occurred last month. Seven persons professed faith in the Saviour. An aged man and his wife, their daughter, one of the teachers at Longueuil, and three of the pupils were "baptized into Christ" in the presence of a large congregation, mainly consisting of Romanists, who always attend in great numbers on such occasions, and behave with marked propriety. Our friends have recently constructed a very commodious baptistry near the Mission House. The water of a small stream is conducted into a reservoir, fifty feet long, which is always in readiness for the administration of the sacred rite.

Other baptisms are expected to take place shortly. There is no difficulty with converted Romanists on this subject. They read the New Testament, and naturally come to the conclusion that baptism is the believer's path to the church.

I hope that a "French Baptist Association" will soon be formed in Canada East. There are abundant materials for it. Such an institution would be highly serviceable to the cause, by consolidating and extending the union of the brethren, and developing talents and resources.

In the course of the day I visited the garden and the farm, and walked among the graves of the departed, with some of whom I had "taken sweet counsel" in years gone by.

Skill and carefulness are eminently displayed in the management of the temporal affairs of the Mission. They "gather up the fragments," so that nothing is lost. The produce of the farm and the garden furnishes a large portion of the food of the household. Last winter, when meat was unusually dear, the other stations received valuable aid, in supplies of pork and various kinds of vegetables from Grande Ligne.

A severe simplicity reigns in the establishment. Food, furniture, dress is of the plainest description. The Lord's money, contributed by his people, is carefully husbanded.

It was a very happy day that I spent at the Grande Ligne Mission. In the evening I had the pleasure to meet four of the missionaries, who had assembled to consult on the affairs of the Mission, and to set things in order.

This is a very interesting department of the missionary field, and deserves liberal encouragement. If any of our brethren have money to spare, let them send it. The wants of the Mission are just now very serious. I shall be happy to receive and transmit the contributions of the brethren.

Yours truly,

July 19, 1866.

J. M. CRAMP.

For the Christian Messenger.

What a Minister may do, and be a Minister.

Mr. Editor—

While I regard as wise and admirable the Address delivered by the learned and Reverend President of Acadia College, to the class recently graduated at that institution, yet on one point I think it a little one-sided, perhaps extreme. It is certainly desirable that a minister of the gospel should give his whole time to the work of the ministry; yet it is certain that some of the best, holiest, and most efficient ministers with whose labours the church has been blessed, devoted a part of their time to other work. No doubt, they considered the circumstances in which they were placed, justified this employment of their time. Some of the Apostles caught fish after they were called to preach as well as before. The life of the Apostle Paul affords a striking example of the union of labour in the gospel with other labour. In the very height of his apostolic labours and success, he employed a portion of his time in working at his trade of tent-making. I hope the Rev. Doctors will not be offended at this reference. It is truly apostolic; and if they cannot admire and commend, they had better be silent. Nor was this a solitary instance in the life of the apostle. Indeed while this divine man maintains his right to receive a support, and sometimes did receive it, from those to whom he preached the gospel, and for whose spiritual welfare he laboured with marvellous power, self-denial and success, it seems to have been not an uncommon practice with him while so engaged to support himself by the labour of his own hands. (See 1 Cor. ix. 1-15, also chap. iv. 12.) While preaching the word

of life to the church at Ephesus, and to other churches and disciples in Asia Minor, for three years, he supported himself during the whole period by the labour of his own hands. (See Acts xx. 34.) Let this fact be pondered and the pious horror felt by some at the profanation or unfaithfulness committed by a minister, engaging in any other than ministerial work, will give place to admiration, sympathy, and determination to remove as far as possible the necessity that compels such exhausting labour. While preaching, too, at Thessalonica, the apostle and co-adjutors, Silvanus and Timothy, supported themselves in like manner—by their own labour. (See 1 Thess. ii. 9, 2 Thess. iii. 8.) While preaching at Corinth for a year and a half, he received no support from the people, not wishing to be burdensome to them; what he and his companion Barnabas needed, was supplied by contributions from brethren in Macedonia, and probably in part by the labour of their own hands. (See 2 Cor. ii. 9, 1 Cor. ix. 6.)

These facts showing as they do the very foot prints of the great Apostle to the Gentiles are very important and instructive on the point now discussed. Though possessed of power to perform miracles, he used no such power for his support; he preferred for this purpose to work with his hands during a part of the time in which he was fulfilling his great mission of preaching Christ crucified and His unsearchable riches.

Now, I ask—Did Paul in so doing, as occasion required, or an uncommon benevolence and self-sacrifice prompted, leave the ministry, or prove in the least unfaithful to his calling and work? Did he cease to be in profession and reality an apostle of Jesus Christ? Was he less so than Peter and the other apostles who, it seems, received their support from the people? Was he less the minister and ambassador of Christ to the churches and peoples to whom he preached in the name of the Lord? Nay, verily. (See 1 Cor. ix. 15, 2 Cor. v. 20, xii. 12-14.)

Where shall we find a brighter example of consecration to God, and devotedness to the welfare of the church and the souls of sinners than the life and labours of the Apostle Paul furnish? Where indeed but in Him who was not of earth, but from Heaven,—and who lived and spoke, loved and laboured, suffered and died,—as man never did?

Now it may possibly have been a loss to the people that they had failed to recognize or neglected to carry out the divine rule as to ministerial support—"That those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel;" (1 Cor. ix. 14.), but it is plain that the apostle did not consider that by so doing he had incurred loss in the view of God and eternity,—that he had committed sin, had left, or was leaving his divine calling and work, or had he been unfaithful to Christ, his church, or the souls of men. And on the review he felt no regret, made no confession as if he had done wrong, but gloried the more because of the course he had taken in this respect. (1 Cor. ix. 15-23, 2 Cor. xi. 9-12.)

It seems then a point made out from the facts adduced from the Scriptures, that a minister may without sin or unfaithfulness combine secular labour with the work of the christian ministry. The Apostle of greatest renown and usefulness did this. So did several of the most devoted of his companions and coadjutors. Can it be wrong for ministers now, when the labour and sacrifice are required of them by circumstances which they cannot control, to act in a similar manner? Who will authoritatively declare that it is? Censured indeed they may be,—but it will be difficult to show that of necessity, and without regard to circumstances,—they are wrong.

However, in censuring them for the course ministers are sometimes compelled in this respect to take, care should be had lest censure be cast also on the Apostle of the Gentiles, and on his companions and co-adjutors who trod in the same steps. Unwilling to trespass further on your time and space just now, I will reserve other remarks I design to make till next week.

I remain respectfully,

GEORGE ARMSTRONG.

June 27th, 1866.

For the Christian Messenger.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

HANDLEY NELSON, A SABBATH SCHOOL SCHOLAR.

Died, at East Aylesford, on 19th June, Handley Nelson, son of James E. and Eliza Nelson, Shubenacadie, aged 12 years.

Handley was a fine little fellow and of excellent character—used no profane language, that indeed was very distasteful to him, but a habit to which too many alas, both older and younger, are sadly addicted. He was very fond of the Sabbath School, and never was absent when he could be present, and was very diligent