

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

By Rev Charles Tupper, D. D.

CHAPTER IX.

SECOND RESIDENCE IN AMHERST.

(No. 7.)

In the early part of the year 1831 the state of religion in Sackville became encouraging. In the course of a few weeks 6 persons were added to the Church by baptism.

On the 7th of March I began to write for the Magazine a Review of a Pamphlet republished by Rev. Dr. G. Burns, of St. John, N.B. "The Subjects and Mode of Baptism." This was, if I mistake not, the first controversial article ever published by me. My aversion to controversy was strong. One principal objection to it in my mind was, that it very frequently degenerates into unkind personalities, recriminations, and bitter strife. Hence in many instances, the cause of true religion suffers.

As an illustration of my reluctance to engage in controversy, one circumstance may be here related. When Rev. (since Dr.) J. W. D. Gray, an Episcopalian Minister, resided in Amherst, in the time of my first residence there, we were constantly on very friendly terms. On one occasion he remarked to me, in effect, that we had enjoyed much pleasure, and he trusted mutual benefit, by conversations on subjects wherein we were agreed; and now he would like to discuss some on which we differed, as for instance, baptism. In reply I remarked, that our intercourse had indeed been agreeable, and doubtless profitable; and it was my earnest desire that it should continue to be so: but with regard to baptism it was not probable that either of us would convince the other; and I feared the discussion might produce some degree of alienation. It therefore appeared to me advisable for us to adopt the course said to have been agreed upon by some Missionaries of different denominations in a foreign field, namely, to discuss all the points on which they were agreed, before they entered on any wherein they differed. This course we continued to pursue. Years after, however, when he had published a Work on Baptism, and our silence was urged as a proof that it was "unanswerable," it seemed to me the part of duty to publish an answer to it. By such means I have often been led to engage in controversy. It has been my aim, however, to improve the style of controversial writing, by a careful avoidance of misrepresentation and personalities, and by the use of mildness, so as not to give any just ground of offence, or to produce animosity between different denominations, parties, or individuals.

In the case of Dr. Burns, as he had charged the Baptist Ministers, (p. 5.) with "practising a system of delusion," and had repeatedly challenged us, (p. 87, 88,) to meet his arguments, it seemed imperative on me, as the Editor of our Periodical, at least to publish a brief Review of his work, and to assign some reasons for not being convinced by his arguments.

Early in May I performed a short missionary tour to Pugwash, where I baptized 3 persons, and organized a Temperance Society. The Rules had been previously subscribed by some, and the number was now increased to 37. At Goose River also a Society was formed at this time, consisting of 39 members.

It was my privilege this year to attend our Associations in Nova Scotia, at Onslow, and New Brunswick, at Sackville; and to hear interesting and edifying discourses delivered by several of our venerable fathers, as Harris Harding, Edward Manning, and Joseph Crandall. The additions to our Churches were not large; but the Sessions were harmonious and very pleasant.

At these Meetings it was mutually agreed, that our Magazine should be printed in Halifax. This arrangement afforded a better opportunity to correct the proof-sheets, as the Mail from Halifax passed through Amherst one day, and returned the next.

In July an anonymous communication appeared in a newspaper, attributing to me an article which I had not written, censuring me severely with reference to my efforts in the Temperance Reform, and grossly misrepresenting the Cumberland Temperance Society. It seemed indispensably necessary, for the vindication of the cause, to publish a reply. An advocate of Temperance thought I did not treat my assailant with a due degree of severity; but remarked of my communication, "It was such as became a minister of the gospel." This observation has

frequently occurred to me when engaged in controversy, as suggesting the need of being useful so to write as to merit such commendation. One charge alleged against our Society was, the admission of children. My reply to this was, that the reason why members violated their pledge was not because they signed too early in life, but too late. General observation has confirmed this view.

In the months of August and September I fulfilled a missionary appointment on Prince Edward Island. There was then an extraordinary excitement under the labors of a Mr. Donald McDonald, who had been a Minister of the Kirk of Scotland. Many people were assailed with violent convulsive affections. Females were unable to keep on their bonnets, or even handkerchiefs tied around their heads. Strong men would be suddenly seized with trembling, and fall helplessly. Though there appeared to me much extravagance, yet I could not doubt that some who were thus exercised did become new creatures in Christ. I judged Gamaliel's advice (Acts v. 34-39,) applicable to this case; and accordingly delivered my first discourse in Bedeque from 1 Cor. ii. 2. "For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Another sermon preached in Tryon from John xxi. 22. "What is that to thee? follow thou me," appeared to be specially blessed to several persons, who soon after professed faith in Jesus, and followed Him in the ordinance of baptism. Great seriousness prevailed in a number of places visited at this time. At Bedeque 4 were baptized, at Tryon 12, at North River 5, and at Lot 49, 5. In the place last named there was evidently a good work progressing under the labors of my esteemed Bro. Benjamin Scott, who was labouring faithfully there as a Licentiate.

In the course of 4 weeks spent on the Island, besides baptizing 24 persons, of whom a considerable number professed conversion during my stay at this time, I attended 38 religious meetings, administered the Lords supper to two Churches, and ordained four Deacons.

One of the persons baptized by me at North River was Bro. James Walker. In the time of Bonaparte's wars he was in the British service on board a frigate at the bombardment of Copenhagen, in 1807. Being indisposed, he staid on the deck while the men in general were taking their breakfast, when a bomb thrown from the city caused the frigate to be blown up. Of course those who were below perished; but the deck, thrown to a distance alighted on the sea, and he remained on it. Though one of his eyes was seriously and lastingly injured, yet in this catastrophe he was graciously preserved from death. The life thus providentially and marvellously protected, has now been for many years devoted to the gospel ministry: and our valued Bro. Walker's faithful and zealous labours, principally in New Brunswick, have undoubtedly been blessed of God to the good of many souls, and the furtherance of the Redeemer's cause.

ERRATA.—In C. M. Nov. 28th, No. 5, par. 2nd, for "grand interests," read *general interests*; 4th, for "Ostervold's," read *Ostervald's*.

For the Christian Messenger.

Attendance on Public Worship.

Cornwallis, Dec. 17th, 1866.

Dear Sir,—

In reading in a paper, a short time ago, called "Golden Hours," I saw a piece, the title of which was "Why I attend Church on rainy Sabbaths," and thought it was something our church people in the country ought to read, and if you choose might insert it in the *Messenger*. The reasons given are as follows:

1st. Because God has blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it, making no exceptions for rainy Sabbaths.

2nd. Because I expect my minister to be there; I should be surprised if he were to stay at home for the weather.

3rd. Because if his hands fail through weakness, I should have great reason to blame myself unless I sustain him by my prayers and by my presence.

4th. Because, by staying away, I may lose a sermon that would have done me great good, and the prayers which bring God's blessing.

5th. Because my presence is more needed on Sabbaths when there are few, than on those days when the church is crowded.

6th. Because, whatever station I hold in the church, my example must influence others; if I stay away, why may not they?

7th. Because, on any important business, bad weather does not keep me at home; and church attendance is, in God's sight, very important.—See Heb. x. 25.

8th. Because, among the crowd of pleasure seekers, I see that no bad weather keeps delicate people from the ball, the party, or the concert.

9th. Because, among other blessings, such weather will show me on what foundation my faith is built. It will prove how much I love Christ. True love rarely fails to meet an appointment.

10th. Because, those who stay from church because it is too warm, or too cold, or too rainy, frequently absent themselves on fair Sabbaths.

11th. Because, though my excuses satisfy myself, they still must undergo God's scrutiny, and they must be well grounded to bear that.—See Luke xiv. 18.

12th. Because, there is a special promise that where two or three meet together in God's name, HE will be in the midst of them.

13th. Because, an avoidable absence from church is an infallible evidence of a spiritual decay. Disciples first follow Christ at a distance, and then, like Peter, do not know Him.

14th. Because, my faith is to be known by my self denying Christian life, and not by the rise or fall of the thermometer.

15th. Because, such yielding to surmountable difficulties prepare for yielding to those really imaginary, until thousands never enter a church, and yet think they have good reasons for such neglect.

16th. Because, by a suitable arrangement on Saturday, I shall be able to attend church without exhaustion, otherwise my late work on Saturday night will be as great a sin as though I worked on the Sabbath itself.

17th. Because I know not how many more Sabbaths God may give me; and it would be a poor preparation for my first Sabbath in heaven to have slighted my last Sabbath on earth.

Yours truly,
J. E. LOCKWOOD.

For the Christian Messenger.

Fatal Incident, with reflections.

Say, christian! man of the world! you who regularly fill your seat at the House of God, the "bower of prayer," suppose it were true what the enthusiastic Adventists teach us, and Christ came to-morrow to judge the world; suppose the last falling of meteoric stars had realized the expectations and superstitious fears of the ignorant and deluded astrologers of the world, and really precluded the awfully sublime advent of Christ in his second coming; where now were you? Where now would be the fulfilment of all your promises to God and yourself? Just think of this. And you who imagine that judgment occurs at the departure of the soul from earth, suppose the sudden contact with a runaway horse, the sudden toss from an overturning vehicle, the sudden fall of a fatal stone, or the sudden slipping away from earth and life by any of the countless multiplicity of emergencies, which are the summons to the bar of God, suppose any one of these had yesterday occurred as your door of departure from friends, kindred and happy associations, to the world of spirits, where now would be your promises, vows and hopes? Where all the fond anticipations, undreaming of wreck, the bright prospects, with no shadowing, ominous cloud to darken, which the fond heart idolized and courted to fruition? Think of this, and pray God to make you better.

A few days since, while passing quietly through a district of picturesque country, in the vicinity of one of our most populous villages, I was induced to admire the excellent taste which girted with a tall border of dark green spruce and fir, the beautifully winding and undulating road upon which I travelled. The tall dark trees threw unique and gracefully defined shadows far across to the roots of their opposite brethren, the sighing branches gracefully swayed to and fro in the warm sun, and the invigorating sea-air came deliciously in through the tangled network of branches, just thick enough for shelter, and just interlaced enough for beauty; and the universal quiet, since the woody songsters had all migrated to a warmer clime, rendered the hour, the scene, and its associations, peculiarly impressive and poetical. It seemed as if the beautiful summer goddess, reluctant to part from her dear Acadia, had suddenly returned to take a parting kiss of its sunny fields and pretty rural landscapes, its laughing, singing mountain streams and smiling waters, and was sighing in her last embrace.

Thus impressed I slowly drove along amid the alternating shadows and sunlight between, and gradually descended the southward side of a graceful undulation which led into a beautiful green valley; the red road leading down to its sweetly singing creek of sparklingly crystal water, and then, in a straight line, up the hill beyond. Just at this moment a sprightly horse appeared upon the opposite apex of the hill, attached to a large, well packed load of household furniture. Some one is "fitting" thought I; but that high-mettled animal certainly appears out of place before that clumsy cart load of furniture, bedding, and boxes. Suddenly, as if impatient and wearied of further restraint, the

noble beast tossed his graceful head. The reins became entangled in the driver's feet. The horse became affrighted and ran. The driver fell! and the heavy iron rim of the crunching, clattering wheel, pressed down by a weight of probably 1500 pounds, passed over his head. There was no check, for a human head is a slight obstacle to such vehicles, such instruments of destruction when Death wants his victim. Away went the affrighted horse, now disencumbered and unchecked, and down into the beautiful valley; and there, in an instant, in the "twinkling of an eye," still and motionless, in the prime of life and the vigor of manhood, suddenly summoned before his Master, lay the quivering form of the driver, with his head crushed and bleeding, his fearfully distorted and mangled face turned downward to the earth, and his half-opened and extended hand stretched out in death over the green sward of the beautiful roadside. Ah! as I gazed upon that beautiful, still scene again, and added to it these tragic connexions, and that pool of human blood, I thought, "Truly in such an hour as ye think not, in the midst of life, the Son of man cometh" to receive from the hands of His scavenger death, the souls of His children.

I turned from the sickening scene, and with a harrowed and dread inspired soul, thanked God that *not* his had been my fate. Had it been, that beautiful scene and surroundings, with its eventually tragic and terrible drama of one short act, would have closed my chances, opportunities and privileges of hope and forgiveness; but oh! blessed be the great Disposer of events, it was instrumental, in His hands, of inducing my earnest seeking after Christ and His righteousness, from out the slough of the backslidings of many lost years; and now I view that scene again, and bless God for its existence; for its *real* beauty appears to glad memory's eye in its usefulness to my regenerated soul. Out of its harrowing associations have sprung up, from around the prostrate form of that dead and pulseless man, flowers of feeling, quickening soul plants, which conscience, in her untiring watchfulness, had assiduously watered for many long, careless years, and now they have brought forth "fruits meet for repentance," and I am "nearer home, nearer home, one day's march nearer home!"

For the Christian Messenger.

Psalms and Praise.

No. 4.

As a refiner of the feelings, music acknowledges no equal. As a medium for conveying pleasurable emotions, its acceptance by heaven—the only art possessed in common with earth,—is sufficient to convince the most skeptical of its superlative importance. As a bond of the household relations, a purifier of the aspirations, a recommendation to society, and an avenue to earthly bliss, a knowledge of music, and the attainment of its accomplishments, together with its ever new source of delightful influence, stands unrivalled. The good singer, the musical artisan, the poet and the scholar, are among society's *first class*, and are welcomed wherever heaven's unpolluted rays of goodness, love, truth, purity and religion, shed one golden bar across the domestic life. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" finds abundant verification in the after-life of these whose early years were refined by the study, practice, and the pleasure of this delightful art. When the child becomes a man, his taste, his inclinations, his pleasures, are to be found in the society practising the same; and, in order to enjoy life at all, in all probability will seek the society of the elevated and refined, in these respects. The boy, on the other hand, whose home training possessed none of these refining influences, bursts the bonds of parental authority, and soon the seductive charms of the bar room, with its excitements and ribaldry, its boisterous merriment become food for his craving nature. Then, with no bond to cement the affections of home, which has stronger allurements than the excitement of the saloon and the revel, what power has parental authority or early training? Alas! thousands of noble characters are wrecked and strewn along the tumultuous path of life, and answer a mournful response to the enquiry. Genius, strong in the assurance of its own strength, earliest falls a victim to the smiling sophistry of the tempter. Home possessed no charm to allure, and it seeks pleasure elsewhere. Unrefined by contact with the charms and influences of heaven-born music and her daughters, such persons have failed to feel disgusted and offended with vulgar slang and the rude wit of the sot and inebriate, and they soon laughed with the drunk.