

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY REV CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

CHAPTER X.

A YEAR ON PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

(No. 1.)

In May, 1853, I took charge of the Baptist Church at Tryon and Bedeque. My venerable Brethren Edward Manning and Theodore S. Harding had performed a missionary tour on the Island in the autumn of 1832, and ordained three Baptist Ministers. There were John Scott, of North River, who preached in Gaelic only, Benjamin Scott, at Lot 49, who preached only in English, and John Shaw, of Three Rivers, who could preach in both these languages. Consequently the Island was not destitute of any ordained Baptist minister. These, however, resided a long distance from the field of my labor; and there were many other places in which numbers of the people were desirous of Baptist preaching. It was, therefore, arranged at the first that, besides discharging the pastoral duties to one Church, I should devote a portion of the time to missionary labor.

On the 28th of June Mr. Donald McDonald, under whose ministry many people were exercised with extraordinary convulsive affections, preached near the place of my residence, and I attended his meeting. On a former occasion he had treated me harshly; but he now invited me to take a seat by him. He stated to me that he and some of his adherents had the gift of tongues, and the power of effecting miraculous cures, and that they made no use of the memory, &c., and that he did not now select a text, but opened his Bible promiscuously at the commencement of his discourse, and preached from that passage on which his eye first lighted. After proposing a number of questions to me, he asked me the meaning of Eph. iv. 5—"One faith, one baptism"—inquiring what baptism it was? On my expressing the opinion that it was water baptism—connected with faith, as if this answer furnished proof positive with reference to my state, he immediately replied, "You are an unregenerate man." "I assure you," said I, "Mr. McDonald, with me it is a very small matter to be judged of man's judgment." "It is not man's judgment," said he, "it is Jesus Christ speaking through me; and I have not said a word since I came in here but it was just Jesus Christ speaking through me." As, however, he seemed not to regard me as yet convinced of the correctness of his decision, he waved his hand toward his adherents, and added, "There are numbers of witnesses here who will rise up and make oath that you are an unregenerate man." His sermon which followed was in keeping with his preliminary observations. Some who were present when he preached there the last time before, informed me, that his Bible opened to the same text. (1 Cor. i. 30.) "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." It seems difficult to imagine by what process he managed to draw out of this text the sentiments which he advanced from it—very far from it—namely, that the unconverted are not bound to obey the law of God, "for," said he, "a king cannot command rebels;" that the flesh and blood of believers are not required to keep it, quoting in support of this (1 Cor. xv. 50.) "Flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God;" and that we must not trust in Christ's obedience to the law, or His righteousness, but that the regenerate child, whose "name," he said, "is Jesus," does perfectly obey the divine law.

Though these views were manifestly wild and extravagant in the extreme, and it was evident to me that both preacher and people placed quite too much confidence in the convulsive exercises prevalent among them, yet I could by no means pass the same judgement on them that he pronounced on me. Perhaps some of his people would, on his testimony, have adventured to make the oath which he affirmed they would, but not all, for I was credibly informed that one of them said afterwards, "I do think Mr. Tupper must be a good Christian man, or he would have got angry." In the inscrutable arrangements of infinite Wisdom it is undoubtedly sometimes permitted, that there should be a great amount of error and wild-fire intermingled with a portion of real piety.

In the early part of July some indications of serious awakening among the people living near my residence, in Bedeque, afforded me encouragement. It also gave me much pleasure to unite with my esteemed friend, Rev. Mr. Patterson,

the Presbyterian Minister resident there, in successful efforts for the promotion of the Temperance cause. In this good work we labored most cordially.

In my evangelistic labors I visited a Scotch Settlement on the road to Charlottetown. As the people generally understood Gaelic only, bro. D. Crawford, kindly accompanied me, and sung and prayed in their language, and likewise delivered an address, designed to impart to them the substance of my discourse. The people appeared very attentive, and grateful for the visit. When the time for retiring to rest arrived, the mistress of the house where the meeting was held scattered some hard bunches of straw on the floor—not a very clean one—spread a blanket and coverlet over the straw, and we lay down. I did not, however, enjoy very comfortable rest. Our host, doubtless with much intended kindness, set rum before us, and invited us to drink. This gave me occasion urgently to recommend total abstinence. The thought naturally occurred to me, how much better it would have been to expend the money laid out for rum in the purchase of a tick to enclose the straw, instead of having to scatter it on the floor.

In the autumn a visit from my dear Brethren Wm. Chipman and I. E. Bill, sent by our Home Missionary Board, cheered and aided me in my work. It had appeared to our aged and experienced Brethren Manning and Harding desirable that certain Churches on the Island, regarded as Scotch Baptist, should be united with our associated Churches; and Brethren Chipman and Bill, having visited some of them, concurred in this view. By mutual agreement, therefore, a special Meeting was held, on the first day of October, at Lot 48, in which these Brethren, with me and other delegates, met delegates from several of these Churches. The principal obstacle to the contemplated union seemed to be what was called "The Marriage Question." Both parties agreed that it is desirable for believers to have believing consorts, and persons of the same denomination; but we maintained, that the marriage of a church member with one that is not, or that does not profess to be regenerated, may be tolerated, while our Scotch brethren deemed it indispensable to exclude immediately for this; but they would restore on a profession of repentance, and allow the penitent to retain the unconverted partner. Numbers spoke on each side; but the discussion was principally conducted by my worthy Bro. John Shaw and myself. It is probably rare that a debate is carried on with so much mutual kindness, candor, and seriousness as was exhibited throughout this. As is usual in such cases, neither party conceded the point at issue. The result was, however, that numbers of those present expressed a willingness to unite with our Association, on condition that their Churches should be allowed to exercise discipline in this case according to their own view of duty, and to decline admitting to communion such as had married unconverted partners, and had not been restored to fellowship on confession of their fault. Maintaining the independence of the Churches, we, of course, acquiesced in this proposal.

The visit of our Missionaries to the Island at this time was evidently useful in thus preparing the way for an increase of union among the different Baptist Churches, as well as in furthering the interests of truth and piety in various other respects.

For the Christian Messenger.

An Inquiry.

Mr. Editor,—

I believe it to be the general practice of the British and Foreign Bible Society to re-elect its officers, President especially, from year to year, and seldom, if ever to make a change, unless resignation, removal or death makes it absolutely necessary. A reference to the printed reports of the Society will sustain this opinion. Even in Branch Societies there is a strong adherence to this custom. Hence any departure therefrom very naturally awakens a little curiosity.

I am informed by a report of a meeting of the Society lately held in Wolfville, at which the officers for the ensuing year were elected, that the Venerable President of Acadia College, whose connection with, and support of the B. F. B. S. for nearly half a century has been widely known, and who was most active in bringing into existence in this place the present society, and who had sustained the office of President until the present meeting, was then removed by the appointment of another to that office.

There are several considerations that awaken a desire to know the reason of this unusual course of procedure. The Rev. Dr. represents

a large and influential part of the inhabitants, not only of this Village, but of the Province generally. His position as the President of the University of Acadia College, his connection with the Theological Department of that University, his standing as an author, his relation in various ways to the cause of evangelicalism, all combine to make the act of his removal a matter of grave importance to its members.

Why, a denomination of so many thousands as are the Baptists, among whom there always have been, and still continue to be, many of the warmest supporters of, and most cheerful contributors to the Bible Society, notwithstanding the provocations to the contrary, should be thus wounded by the undeserved disrespect of their aged friend and brother, remains unanswered.

It will be remembered that Baptists here and elsewhere have invariably thrown open their churches and ever welcomed Bible Agents to their pulpits and homes; that the Pastors of their churches have been among the foremost to aid them in their agency, that especially in this place their contributions have exceeded all others, and as these things are remembered the wound will deepen, and yet, it is hoped, it will be borne with christian forbearance. Nevertheless the question returns, Why was it inflicted?

Bishop Medley, in his official capacity, in terms clear and explicit gives his reasons for the expulsion of one of his curates. He is open and above board, notwithstanding his sneers at the "sect of the Baptists," and the undue severity of his language towards his offending curate; but the hidden reason for this thrust at Dr. Cramp, and through him at the great body of Baptists elicits the inquiry, Why was it made? from your correspondent.

Jan. 7, 1867.

ALPHA.

For the Christian Messenger.

Psalmody and Praise.

No. 5.

HALIFAX AND ITS CHOIRS.

Halifax—its musical standard, its musicians, and musical society, are subjects of thought and animadversion every where; though Halifax and its public seem somewhat unconscious of it.

There are few places on the continent where the stranger requires the assistance of friends more than in Halifax. The all important "introduction" or "letter of recommendation" is the only legitimate key to acquaintance; and a stranger, lacking one or both of these, finds Halifax an uninteresting city. But this cannot be said of every circle in Halifax, any more than of other cities of similar character. The literary student, or scholar, the really refined and intellectual traveller should never seek to ingratiate himself into the favors of this class of persons, as their characteristics would only offend his democratic tastes and sensitive nature.

Musicians, on the other hand, of every circle, if really accomplished, seldom require such recommendation of the equally accomplished stranger; his attainments being sufficient for the purposes of introduction, and his subsequent conduct sufficient guaranty for continued respect and estimation. Musicians, generally, are a courteous, friendly, cheerful, refined and intelligent portion of any community; and there exists among such, everywhere, a kind of brotherly fellowship and feeling almost like free-masonry. There are many musicians in Halifax; and, consequently, there is a great deal of social relationship and fraternity among the social circles, which otherwise would not be.

In conversing with persons in their various occupations, one is sometimes surprised with the discovery of worthy musical attainments in individuals whose external appearance indicated no such taste and refinement. Yet such, in large communities, where, every year, new aspirants claim the proud position of the aristocrat, and where the formerly wealthy, equally, suddenly sink to poverty and obscurity, must ever be the case; and the traveller and the experienced person soon learn to recognise this continual upward and downward circulation of the social element. The specific gravity circulation of the ocean element seems no more natural, no more a contingent to its state, than does this specific gravity of the elements of society. Again, the manifest advantages derivable from the present advanced state of educational privileges and opportunities is, I believe vastly more conducive to the benefit of the lower and middle classes than of the upper. Influences of a more private and uncontrollable nature, of more subtle, yet more powerful character, restrict much the liberties of aristocracy, yet hold no rein upon their less pretentious brethren, of the humbler orders. This being the case, democracy progresses while

aristocracy, confined within the narrow limits of jealous conventionalism, remains. From such a state of passive socialism, one might almost imagine an eventual exchange of influence: democracy gaining in *numeric* power what aristocracy possessed in other and pecuniary influence. If we legitimately trace out the tendencies of this rapidly growing influence of democratic superiority, we shall even now find it crowding over the bars of conventional restriction, and occupying, with credit, many of the posts of influence and emolument, of usefulness and respectability.

In the church, in the society, everywhere were, *practical attainments*, musical or mental, are required, the studious, energetic, aspiring ambition of those whose evenings are devoted to self culture and improvement, and whose delight is in success at any sacrifice of pleasure until attained, every where do we perceive these persons advancing. In consequence of this do we frequently meet with honest worth and merit in the unprepossessing habiliments of the greasy artisan, the industrious, hard-fisted mechanic, and the unpretentious woman.

Merit and modesty are thus often found almost too unpretending to be useful; almost too difficult to claim their due modicum of respect.

Enlightened minds yield credit to merit because they cannot longer refuse it; and the proud son of the millionaire, the daughter of the aristocrat, applaud with increasing earnestness, the successes of the mechanic and the artisan. These radical changes upon the road to improvement and a more convenient state of sociability and intercourse, immediately and forcibly strike the observing visitor whose comparing, inductive eye scans the social circles of the formerly supercilious aristocracy worshipping Halifax.

During a somewhat lengthened stay within the precincts of old "Chebuoto's churchy city," I have been privileged to a thorough understanding of its musical taste, society, influence, ability by talent, by education, and various facilities of its promotion and usefulness; and, in supplying to the *Messenger* readers my conclusions and reviews, I do so because of the absence of much of the knowledge of this, both in town and country. Having visited personally, various choirs in the city, and having done so for the express purpose of a comparative review of the musical and social standard, I now submit my conclusions, hoping they may at least entertain.

Halifax has about a dozen choirs, averaging perhaps twelve singers in each. There have been quite a number of public music teachers, and instructors in vocalization, during several years past. The standard of these has been little higher than in the country, with two or three exceptions. There have, of course, been many private instructors.

In consequence of the absence of proper criticism, the public vocal performances are, to the professional singer, very frequently, exceedingly flat; yet the public for various reasons tacitly appear satisfied. This state of the public taste induces a similar perpetration again and again, and Halifax credit suffers proportionably. A connoisseur from the music halls and concert rooms of Europe or the United States, fails to see the merit of very many of our performances in public; the public journalists praise every thing possible, and seldom or never denounce the spurious and bad.

A few *real critics*—persons of taste and ability—*leaders*, would greatly benefit our public taste and performances by a well applied, honest supervision of everything solicitous of public patronage and appreciation. Halifax needs and asks this of its professionals, and the public require it from the journalists, who are mainly responsible for its absence. In Europe, and the United States, how different the standard because of the careful scrutiny of public aspiration after merit and credit!

The points of a performance should be analytically examined, and the faults, as well as the virtues, stand or fall by their approach to the acknowledged standard. Why should it not be so here? Halifax has musical critics, a worthy few, and I suppose the printer's request only is required to induce any real lover of this delightful art to give it elevation. It is impossible, and ever must continue so, to distinguish true merit without criticism to mould it. The uncriticised, always praised and commended musician, rapidly becomes oblivious to his faults, as also too proud to acknowledge them. This state of things is fatal to society, as well as to the singers usefulness; and the unsparing, honest, analyzer of his merits, who publicly reviews his performance, is his only friend. Most singers are flattered into what they are not; and many frightened, by an expose of their faults, without justice to their merits, out of what they are.

Musicians, in public, are not to be the target