

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY REV. CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

CHAPTER XV.

PASTORATE IN AYLESFORD AND WILMOT.

(No 17.)

When I left home to visit Halifax on important business, Sept. 30th, 1867, my health was quite feeble, and both that day and the next were very stormy. Travelling in an open wagon, and being obliged to proceed slowly in consequence of the bad state of the roads, I greatly feared that the exposure would subject me to serious illness; but the urgent necessity for my attendance at the time appointed impelled me forward. Through the kindness of Providence, on my return home my health was evidently improved. It is remarkable, and calls for gratitude, that, though my field of labor is large, and a part of it mountainous and peculiarly exposed to snow-drifts, yet during the last quarter of the year 1867, and the whole of 1868, I never failed, through indisposition, storms, bad roads, or any other cause, to fulfill a single appointment. In two instances rain prevented the people from assembling, but it did not hinder me from going to the place appointed for preaching.

Besides attending to the discharge of my numerous ordinary duties, in the course of the winter and spring I assisted Brethren in holding Foreign Missionary Meetings in the different sections of five Churches, including two West and two East of my own field, for the purpose of raising funds for the support of sister DeWolfe and native preachers in Burmah. In these meetings, 18 in number, I took a leading part, as my junior Brethren requested me, as Secretary of the Board, to present the principal facts connected with our Foreign Mission to the assemblies. It afforded me much comfort to be enabled to aid in these services, which were evidently attended with salutary effects, both in the obtaining of funds for this good work, and also in promoting the spiritual welfare of those with whom they were held.

Though friends kindly endeavored to make me happy, yet the latter part of the autumn, the winter, and the early part of the spring were, in general, passed in a state of loneliness and sadness. These sensations, as time rolled on after the decease of my beloved wife, instead of being diminished, became increased and intensified. For a length of time it seemed to me scarcely consistent to think of entering again into married life at an age so far advanced. My dear departed consort, however, whose counsels were usually wise and prudent, feeling a deep interest in my welfare, had, during her illness, affectionately advised me, in the event of her dying before me, not to break up my establishment and board out; for she was aware I would not be happy in that state. She recommended, therefore, that when I could meet with a suitable person, whose views, habits, and feelings were congenial with my own, and would be willing to cast in her lot with me, I should marry again. She remarked, moreover, that she did not deem it important as to any particular length of time that should first elapse.

When, therefore, in the order of Providence an opportunity was afforded me to form an acquaintance with a lady who seemed well adapted to the situation, I thought seriously of following the advice which had been so disinterestedly and kindly given me. With the parents of the person toward whom my thoughts were turned, the late truly venerable George Dimock and his amiable wife, I had formed a pleasing acquaintance in the early part of the year 1816; as Newport was the first place to which I went forth to preach the gospel. They were both eminently pious; and each evidently possessed a very kindly disposition. So highly and so universally was Bro. Dimock esteemed, that when he was ordained over the people where he was born, and where he constantly lived, Rev. Edward Manning, with evident propriety, selected for the text on the occasion of his Ordination, in 1820, the words of Paul relative to Timothy, (Phil. ii. 22.) "Ye know the proof of him." My long-continued acquaintance also with our late pacific and excellent Bro. Joseph Dimock, and other members of the family, of similar spirit, especially Mrs. Sarah Freeman, who was for many years one of my near neighbors, and invariably evinced an extraordinary degree of kindness and readiness to aid in times of trouble, tended to impress my mind favorably with reference to their niece.

She was of a suitable age, 59, had no incumbency of children, as only two were living, and they comfortably settled, she had been a member of the Baptist Church in Newport forty years, and was held in high esteem by all the other members, and, indeed, by all her acquaintance, as a sincere and active Christian, and a kind hearted and amiable woman.

As a mutual attachment (which happily continues) was found to exist between us, we were united in marriage May 5th, 1868. Some who at the first notice of this measure deemed it unwise, have since been convinced that it was judicious.

After an agreeable visit to our relatives and Christian friends in Cumberland and Dorchester, we spent some time with the people of my charge, and then proceeded to Freeport, to attend the Western Association. By the appointment of my Brethren I preached in Freeport on Lord's day morning, June 21st, from Ps. cxlii. 6. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." My leading object was the promotion of Christian harmony. In the afternoon Mrs. Tupper and I, in company with the Pastor of the Church and several others, crossed the Grand Passage, to unite with the people in Westport in the exercises of public worship. On our return we narrowly escaped a watery grave. The boat was small, and there were ten persons on board, so that she was quite too heavily laden; and the conflicting tides, coming in from opposite directions, rushed upon us with such violence that we shipped several seas. We who were on board, and people on both sides of the Passage, greatly feared we could not reach the shore. Though I enjoyed some degree of steadfast reliance upon Christ, and endeavored to console alarmed ones near me with the hope of heaven, yet I greatly desired to be nearer the Lord, and to possess a firmer confidence in Him. Through His manifest care we all escaped safely to land. There was much joyfulness, and I hope some thankfulness for this deliverance.

For the Christian Messenger.

"THE FREE AND THE PEW SYSTEM."

Dear Brother,—

I have read with much interest your recent article under the above heading. Of late the same subject, has been pretty thoroughly ventilated in the pages of the "Christian at Work"—a live paper, with which I wish all your readers were familiar. With your permission, I will transcribe a few extracts, in the order in which they have appeared, regretting that your limited space compels me to greatly curtail. These, however, will, I think, prove, at least, suggestive.

Yours very truly,

A READER.

"The Walnut St. Presbyterian Church, St. Louis,—Rev. J. H. Brooks, D. D., Pastor—has abolished the system of rented pews, and is now virtually a "free" church. Last year this church raised its funds for religious and charitable purposes, \$8,751, upon the Gospel plan: 'Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him.' This plan worked so easily and succeeded so admirably that it was adopted with but one dissenting vote, not only for raising the funds for benevolent purposes, but to defray all the current expenses of the church."

"The Antioch Baptist Church of New York City, has rented no seats for more than six years, and yet has not only been self-sustaining but has done a large amount of mission work besides. This church is composed of less than 250 members, none of them wealthy, and with few exceptions, quite poor in this world's goods. The means for sustaining the church are raised by free will offerings on the Lord's day. During the year ending May 1868, this church gave its pastor over \$2,000.00, paid \$800.00 for room rent, exclusive of gas, fuel, and sexton hire—in a word, paid all its expenses and contributed about \$1,000.00 to other benevolent objects. If this church has sustained itself with free-seats, any church can."

"A writer in the Boston Recorder advocates from his own experience the plan of supporting ministers by free-will offerings of the congregation every Sabbath. His present church gave three times as much in a year as it did under the old plan of pew-rents, subscriptions, dunning and home-missionary aid."

"The Main-street Congregational Church, Peoria, Ill., have heretofore relied, financially, upon pew renting. This has never been satisfactory. Some have had scruples against it in principle, and the plan has never furnished funds sufficient to meet expenses. At the beginning of the present financial year it was determined to throw wide open the doors and seats of God's house, and to depend upon weekly Sabbath contributions for the Pastors' salary and all expenses. [Then follows a description of the plan adopted.] Fully double the amount has thus been raised than was ever before paid in the same time as pew-rents. Indeed, while the expenses are greater than ever before, they have all been met and more on this voluntary plan. Thus the per centage to a collector has been saved, and the pastor gets his salary weekly instead of

having to live on it three months before it is his. The funds have never before been raised so easily, or with so little trial to the people. Their church tax comes so gradually that at the end of the quarter they hardly know that they have paid anything. And then it is so Scriptural that all good people will rejoice at the success of the experiment.

"There are three churches in one of the growing cities of Iowa that sustain their ministers by voluntary contributions taken each Sabbath morning. One church has tried it for three years, and finds it the surest, easiest, simplest, most profitable and best method they have ever tried to meet their expenses. People give more money in this way during the year than they would give by subscription or renting a pew, and then no one is annoyed by being obliged to collect the subscriptions. So that the rule given by the Apostle does work well, and at the same time God's house is free. When will our church officials do God's business on His plan, and trust God and His people for results?"

"The Tabernacle Church, Chicago, has received 214 to its membership during its first year of existence. The pastor says, 'This unprecedented growth of the congregation is largely attributable to the fact that the sittings in this church are free, and that the rich and the poor here meet together as worshippers of a common Father, no social distinctions molesting or making a fraud.'"

"We have adopted the voluntary system of supporting the Gospel, by giving on every Lord's day, with encouraging success. I am satisfied it is the true way. We have a small church, with only about fifty members, in a country town, (Granville, Ill.) yet since last August our cash receipts from Sabbath to Sabbath have averaged about \$20.00 a day. Before that we had been dragging behind at a miserable rate. We have a notice posted up in large letters in the vestibule of the church: 'This church adopts the Apostolic rule of giving on every Lord's day for the support of the Gospel—an act of worship.' Many a small sum is thrown into this collection, cultivating the habit of systematic giving which otherwise the church would never get."

"The offertory for the current expenses of the Free Church of St. Mary's, Brooklyn, and for the liquidation of a debt incurred by the erection of a rectory, amounted yesterday to \$1,027.47, making for the whole season of Lent, and including Easter Day, \$2,548.54. This statement may possibly encourage some congregations who contemplate changing from the pew to the free system."

"There are three churches in this town, (Kokomo, Ind.), numbering 3,000 inhabitants. All have the free-seat system. All flourish vastly better than they could any other way. Indeed, otherwise, I doubt if some could stand."

"As we have informed you before, our method of receiving support is that of free-will offerings every Sabbath morning, after the example of the primitive churches, and according to the directions of Paul. We have no pew rents nor subscription book, and consequently no dunning nor complainings. The offerings are laid on the altar, as one of the acts of public worship, and the minister lives of the altar. The church has raised nearly twice as much as they ever did before. They are pleased with God's plan, and animated with the prospect of supporting themselves."

"The Springfield St. Congregational Church, Boston, six months since, assumed the whole responsibility of its pecuniary support. It adopted the system of free seats and Sabbath collections for the support of the Gospel. The rate of giving has been raised some five hundred per cent. over that of the previous year, and a larger amount realized than could have been gathered on the renting system."

"The funds for the expense of St. Luke's Church will be obtained through the weekly offertory, which is, in fact, the only scriptural plan of sustaining a church. At the inauguration of the Free and Open Church Association a year ago, there were but two free churches in Brooklyn; there are now forty, and it is to be hoped that others will soon be induced to see that the pew system is not only positively sinful, inasmuch as it is directly opposed to the teachings of Christ and His Apostles, but the free system actually produces money, not only for the expenses of the church, but also for all charitable objects connected with it."

"The people once trained in the system, of joining their prayers and their alms as an act of worship, will give for any other object with the same free and ready liberality. Evidence of this is afforded in St. James' Church, Milwaukee, by their raising and paying out within the last fourteen months over, \$38,000.00 without selling or leasing a foot of the new church, or even having resorted to a fair or any other expedient."

"During the year Mr. Spurgeon has received in voluntary offerings for his various benevolent operations about \$140,000.00. This magnificent sum was gathered week by week, in the boxes at the doors of the church."

In the latest number of this valuable monthly is an article on the "Instability of the Parochial relation," from which I make the following extract:

"The only remedy or relief so far as we can see, is to put the Gospel, where Christ and His Apostles placed it; making it free to all: offering it 'without money and without price.' It is now, for the most part, on a secular and money basis. So long as this is the case, the struggle will be to rent the pews at the highest rate, and pay the current expenses. * * * Banish the secular and money idea from preaching. Give the minister a voluntary support; gathering it from the rich and poor, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, 'as the Lord has prospered them;' and then, as we think, the best people will have the services of the best ministers, and the best ministers will have no complaint to make of a stinted and insufficient salary. It will be a

return to at least one primitive usage. It will be an important step toward the peace of the churches, and the conversion of the world."

All this is in striking accordance with the following from an able article in the Baptist Quarterly for April, 1867, on "the Fundamental law of Christian worship:"

"The presentation of gifts to God is the authorized order of responses for the blessings of redemption. An act is more emphatic than a word. Strong affection always ripens into reciprocal benefactions. Hence God will withhold no good thing from them that love Him, and hence the presentation of their bodies as living sacrifices is the reasonable service of believers. The offering of weekly gifts ought to be recognized as a Christian institution. It is indispensable to the maintenance of the Apostolic fellowship which was miraculously inaugurated on the day of Pentecost; it is emphatically enjoined upon churches and groups of churches (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2;) it offers the only practicable base of operations for the financial independence of Christianity and the reconstruction of the world; and is therefore the most emphatic response which men can render to God for the blessings of salvation."

For the Christian Messenger.

MOVEMENTS OF REV. MR. GEORGE.

OXFORD, August 2nd, 1869.

Dear Brother,—

Since the Association in Onslow I have visited the Eastern N. B. Association held at Jemseg, where much interest was manifested in Foreign Missions. It is evident that our New Brunswick brethren will not be backward in this great work. At meetings held in Gagetown, Maugeville and Fredericton, they gave assurance of much sympathy for the enterprise. I also attended the P. E. Island Association held at Cavendish.

The spirit of the Master took possession of the minds of those assembled at the Conference meeting on Saturday and controlled each subsequent session. "I never attended such an Association," was the remark of old and young as they departed from the place where the blessedness of the gospel had been so sweetly enjoyed. At that place I met some very excellent brethren, and got acquainted with some whom I had met before that will be ever remembered with deep love. How frequently we meet, not as brethren in Christ who love each other but as cold and reserved men presenting those sides of our characters that are not calculated to excite mutual love, and cause us to look back to the meeting as one of the times when we sat together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. True we separate holding exalted opinions of each others abilities, but we do not "love as brethren" unless we present loveable qualities.

Everywhere throughout the Island I met people who felt they had a work to do for the heathen, and gave a cheerful response to the appeals made for contributions. We may expect valuable aid from our brethren there. Returning to N. S. via Shediac I came to Amherst, where last Sunday was spent in company with Bro. Miles, the Pastor being away; after which I visited Pugwash, from thence came to this place where I spent yesterday among the people with whom so many happy though laborious days have been passed. In the morning we met in a grove near Bro. Gilbert Purdy's, at least two hundred and fifty were present and listened attentively to the word of life. Brethren Miles, Corey and Morrow were present, each of whom took part in the exercises. In the afternoon a large congregation assembled in the Baptist meeting house in River Philip, and gave good heed to the truth spoken. In the evening we met in the Methodist house in Oxford, I felt it to be a good, though sad day.

How hard to say Farewell to those with whom we have toiled in the vineyard of the Lord. It gives me much pleasure to find Bro. Corey doing so good a work for this people, already he has a place in their confidence and esteem. No doubt he is the right man in the right place. Next Lord's day I expect to spend in St. John, and the following at Hillsborough and Hopewell, after which I will proceed to the Convention.

From what I can learn, a Foreign Mission will be generally supported by all of our people to the extent of their ability, yet it takes some time to bring the matter fairly before them as other things have been urged upon them as possessing stronger claims. However I have no fears, and feel more than ever convinced that God would have me give my life to Foreign Missionary work.

I remain, your Brother in Christ,

WM. GEORGE.

The stock, certificates, bonds, deeds, and other representatives of money left by Baron Rothschild, weighed over a ton.

A lark singing contest took place the other day at Halifax, England. The first prize bird was seventeen years old, and it sang ten minutes; the second prize bird was twelve years old, and it sang 94 minutes.