

DIGEST OF LETTERS TO THE WESTERN N. S. BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

The 1st Yarmouth Church reports praiseworthy efforts for sustaining the cause of God within their borders both by the employment of men to labor in word and doctrine, and by liberal expenditures of means for multiplying and improving their places of worship. Rev. I. E. Bill and J. Wallace, were employed to assist their pastor Rev. G. E. Day, in a series of meetings with happy results. Thirty-six have been added by baptism during the year. Monthly Missionary meetings are sustained with good attendance and lively interest, and contributions to Christian benevolence have been liberal; while a vestry has been built at a cost of about \$3000, and a new church edifice in the lower part of the town is in course of erection, and another is about to be commenced at Milton, to cost about ten thousand dollars, each.

Hebron Church laments the low state of the cause among them, and the prevalence of coldness and apathy. Still they have experienced some refreshing and some additions during the year, under the faithful labors of Rev. John Rowe, and are disposed to trust the mercy of that God who has hitherto helped them.

Pine Grove Church is not experiencing any visible tokens of God's saving power; but its members, with a commendable degree of unanimity, are working, and waiting, and hoping.

This church has two licentiates of promise in course of preparation for the ministry; practices congregational singing with satisfactory results; and supports the enterprises of the denomination by weekly contributions.

Lower Granville Church has enjoyed revival influences in two of its sections, with the addition of ten by baptism, during the year, and a gratifying amount of general prosperity. This Church, in conjunction with Bridgetown Church, sustains a native preacher in Henthada and manifests increasing interest in all the benevolent enterprises of the body.

Hillgrove Church laments the want of becoming activity in the few who seem to constitute the church, the scattered condition of the majority, the small attendance upon the preaching of the word, and the smaller still at the prayer and conference meetings, and recognizes the suitableness of their crying

"Lord if thou dost not soon appear  
Virtue and truth will flee away,  
A faithful man among us here  
Will scarce be found, if Thou delay."

1st Ragged Islands Church enjoys a good degree of union and harmony. Efforts to stimulate those delinquent in discharging responsibilities, and improving the privileges of the church, have been attended with favorable results.

Kempt Church is not without tokens of good, although it has not had large additions to its membership. There is witnessed a strengthening of faith and growth in grace among the members, and an increased attachment to the truth.

1st Digby Neck Church is waiting on God and for God; has had no additions by baptism, but is not discouraged, hoping and trusting that the seed of the kingdom sown will bear its fruit.

Litchfield Church has sustained the worship of God by prayer and conference meetings, when not enjoying the occasional preaching of visiting brethren. Cause has been given for mourning by the defection from truth of some of the members.

Long Island Church rejoices in the possession still of a little strength and the occasional visits of the Master. Prayer and conference meetings have been sustained in the absence of a pastor, and it has been found good that brethren dwell together in unity.

Sissiboo Church is experiencing a dark and cloudy time—a time of declension and scattering, but the few that have attended the stated social meetings and experienced the refreshing profit of them, have been encouraged to hope for the return of gracious, reviving influences.

Wood's Harbor Church has had its organization during the past year as the result of a gracious outpouring of the Spirit, and the conversion of a large proportion of those who now constitute its membership. The religious interest still enjoyed by this church is encouraging.

Annapolis and Upper Granville Church has experienced a revival during the year resulting in the refreshing and strengthening of former numbers, the development of a superior type of piety and earnest activity, and the addition to the church of sixteen by baptism, three by letter and two by experience. Still the church has an humbling consciousness of coming short of that excellence which should be the aim of every Christian; but that a change for the better has taken place is apparent from the more devout enjoyment of Sabbath privileges, the more earnest and spiritual exercises of prayer and conference meetings, and the greater expansiveness and fervor of brotherly love.

Springfield Church is below the standard. It is without a pastor, and alienations exist among the members. Prayer and conference meetings are, however, sustained, and the church is depending upon Christ, and asks prayers.

Liverpool Church has not enjoyed any remarkable displays of grace the last year. The Meetings for preaching, prayer and conference have been well sustained, and union and harmony prevail. Numbers of the members have moved away from the town, and the pastor is about to remove to Toronto.

Dalhousie Church has been long without a pastor and has consequently suffered declension. Elder James Reid labors with the church, at present, to good acceptance and for small remuneration; and help is asked from the Missionary Board in supporting him.

Barrington Church has swarmed during the year and sent off a colony to Wood's Harbor. Numbers are therefore small and these scattered. Because of scanty means, the preaching of the word is with difficulty sustained and the house of worship commenced, is yet unoccupied.

Pubnico Church laments apathy and indifference, notwithstanding some refreshing has been enjoyed in the improvement of the means of grace.

Nicholas Church has enjoyed an extensive revival and ingathering, during the year, in which wanderers have been reclaimed, sinners converted, and ninety aided by baptism.

Hillsbury Church acknowledges the low state of religion. Prayer and conference meetings are thinly attended, yet a few sigh and hope for better days.

Wilmot Mountain Church has experienced reviving mercy and grace during the spring. Prodigals have been reclaimed, sinners converted, and twenty-three added by baptism. The church desires higher attainments in grace, more extensive outpouring of the Spirit, and wider extension of the Kingdom.

Mill Village Church is often gladdened in the enjoyment of the stated means of grace and is making arrangements for securing a larger proportion of the Pastor's time and labor. The church has been strengthened by valuable additions from Sister Churches.

Port Medway Church is sad because left without the experience of converting and reclaiming grace; yet they are not wholly destitute of God's favor and help.

2nd Digby Neck Church.—The work of grace enjoyed the last year has not been followed by declension, or instances of grievous backsliding. Meetings interesting, and preaching adapted to the spiritual needs of the Church.

Wilmot Church has experienced a revival by which the weak have been strengthened, the fearful encouraged, sinners converted and twenty baptized.

St. Mary's Bay Church has not as a body enjoyed any special work of grace the past year, yet our section, that in which Bro. Normandy labors, the power and grace of God have been displayed, and thirteen added by baptism.

2nd Hillsbury Church sees the prospect beginning to brighten. Bro. J. Jones' services have been secured and through his instrumentality a Sabbath School has been organized and a prayer meeting opened which have increasing interest and promise.

Hampton Church hopes in God, though saddened by the low state of religion and removals by death.

Milton Church is again without a pastor. Prayer and conference meetings are well sustained, Sabbath School well attended and some have been added, during the year, by baptism.

Clements Church has enjoyed, in one of its sections, a revival of religion, by which wanderers have been reclaimed, sinners converted and nineteen baptized.

New Tusket Church has not enjoyed reviving during the year, but languishes instead; yet a few names of its membership have not hid their light. The brethren live in hope, enjoying the means of grace.

Tusket Lake Church is striving for the faith; yet their success is not proportionate to their privileges. The past year has been one of trial, yet nine have been added by baptism, and the church lives in hope.

2nd Ragged Islands Church has neither enjoyed increase nor suffered diminution during the year. It is struggling in amid darkness, and experiencing at times refreshing and illumination in prayer and conference meetings, and under the preaching of the word.

Brookfield Church reports diminished numbers, no pastor, and very many of the members indifferent to the claims of God. Yet a few strive to maintain the cause, knowing that it is not by might nor by power that the end is achieved.

3rd Yarmouth Church (Deerfield) has experienced special favor during the year. The Week of Prayer was observed with good results. The alienated have been restored, slumberers aroused, and forty youthful converts have been baptized. The church rejoices still in the enjoyment of a good degree of union and interest.

Westport Church has nothing cheering to communicate, but regrets their low state, and because iniquity abounds the love of many waxes cold.

West Sherbrook Church reports diminished numbers and a year of darkness. Yet they express hope for the future, and ask assistance from the Home Mission Board.

Caledonia Church has nothing encouraging to write. They regret their division for the organization of a new Church, and think it was unwise. They are without a pastor, yet sustain conference meetings, and desire Missionary aid.

Beaver River Church mourns its low state, the past year having been one of declension rather than prosperity. The Church is without a pastor, Bro. Cogswell having resigned.

Lower Aylesford and Upper Wilmot Church has been at work and by the divine blessing the cause has been revived in some of its sections. Believers have been quickened, backsliders reclaimed and sinners hopefully converted. In one section nine were added by baptism, in another three. The church has under advisement a division and organization for another, or the employment of an assistant pastor. A new house of worship has been finished and opened at Molyer Square in the year; and a promising candidate for the ministry has been licensed.

South Yarmouth Church enjoys the steady progress of the Redeemer's Kingdom, but does not witness the rapid progress desirable. Union is enjoyed and the new church edifice has been completed and dedicated during the year.

Digby Church has nothing of special interest to relate. Being destitute of a Pastor they have become enveloped in darkness, but having lately secured the acceptable services of Bro. J. Jones, they hope for the dawn.

Greenfield Church record their own unfaithfulness, and God's forbearance. They think their failure to grow in numbers should cause growth in humility. They apprehend the loss of the small proportion of pastoral labor they have enjoyed, and ask prayers.

Graywood and Milford Church has diminished its membership by discipline, dismissals, and death; yet through the blessing enjoyed, in connection with the stated and faithful ministrations of the word growth and prosperity are anticipated.

Ohio Church has experienced, during the year, no unusual changes. Hope progress is being made, but recognize their need of divine interposition.

Middlefield Church has had no remarkable occurrence. A house of worship is in course of construction, which is to be opened soon, free of debt.

West Yarmouth Church has been revived through the instrumentality of Rev. W. L. Parker's labors. Nineteen have been added by baptism, with the usual concomitants of a revival of religion.

Tusket Church, having no Pastor, mourns the prevalence of indifference, and a scattered membership prevents the exercise of Christian sympathy and mutual support. At Sabbath prayer meetings, regularly held, the promise of Mat. 18, 20 is sometimes experienced by them. Using earnest and self-sacrificing measures for securing ministerial labor, the assistance of the Mission Board is solicited.

Lake George Church has been revived, and thirteen added by baptism.

New Albany Church merely maintains existence amid untoward influences. Ministerial labor has been enjoyed during a part of the year, and assistance is asked.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE LATE STORM. FAITH AND WORKS. THE MULLER SYSTEM.

No. 3.

In my last communication I endeavored to show briefly how strikingly some of the objections too common even among ourselves in these days of infidelity and skepticism, which are made to the Evangelical doctrines, have been met and rebuked in the gale and late disastrous and high tides. The argument is, of course, on the principle of Butler's Analogy, merely intended to show that these objections though plausible, are futile, because they may be urged with equal force against the 'laws of nature' as against the 'Law of Faith.' But we have the evidence of our senses in the former case to prove their futility. These laws are stern and unbending. They will not yield to man's theories, nor turn aside in accommodation to man's unbelief or ignorance. This being the case, it is the height of folly to trust to those reasonings and foolish theories of vain man's device, in applying them to a case which is infinitely more momentous, viz., the Salvation of the Immortal soul.

I glanced too at the fact that knowledge is essential to faith: that God never expects us to believe without a reason—without giving us a firm solid basis, upon which to rest our faith,—even his own infallible word. So Luke tells us that after our blessed Lord's sufferings and resurrection, he showed himself alive by many infallible proofs—not one infallible proof only—but many, and not many proofs merely, but many infallible proofs—proofs so satisfactory and sufficient, as to satisfy all the demands of the most careful and candid mind. And so Paul says, "How can they believe on him of whom they have not heard?" "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

I noticed, too, that faith is an operative principle. It invariably leads to works. And as Paul and James both showed, the absence of the proper fruits of faith—that is, obedience to the will of God, proves that the faith itself is wanting. Those who took no pains to provide against the late disaster, proved clearly that they did not believe it would certainly come. When a sick man believes in the efficacy of a proscribed remedy, he takes it. When he has confidence in a physician, he yields himself implicitly to his guidance, and submits to all he prescribes. When the captain of a ship and his men have implicit confidence in their Pilot, they do his bidding and work with a will, to guide the vessel through the dangers and bring her into port. So those who really believe the momentous facts of the Gospel history, and who have implicit confidence in the blessed Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, will cheerfully yield themselves to his guidance. They will hear his voice—the voice of the Good Shepherd, and follow him. They will hear his words and do them. And so when the rain descends, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat upon their 'house' it will not fall; because it is founded upon a Rock—"And that Rock is Christ."

But how, it is sometimes asked, does all this agree with the 'Muller System?' According to that system—it is supposed, the use of all means is discarded; men of any profession or occupation need not work at all,—all they have to do is to pray and believe, and food and raiment and all necessary things will come of themselves, without any exertion on our part. Applied to the late storm, that system it is supposed, if really acted upon, would have left the dykes unimpaired, would have left the cattle and sheep on the the marshes, the salt, and sugar, fish, flour, &c., in the basement stories, exposed to the floods, and contented itself with praying and believing. And then it is triumphantly argued, that because such a course would be both unscriptural and absurd, the 'Muller System' must be false, unscriptural, and absurd. This would be solid and triumphant reasoning if the premises were true, but the premises are false.

Those wonderful men in England, on the continent, and elsewhere, I allude particularly to George Muller, Dr. Wichers, and Pastor Harms who have in these last days' been raised up to teach the world by precept and example the Scripture doctrine of Faith, and to bring back the Church to her high and holy privilege of 'living by faith'—trusting in God, and rejoicing in him at all times and under all circumstances, have no idea of faith as discovered from obedience, no idea of recommending a trust that neglects the use of such means as God has ordained. No, indeed! The distinction between trusting in God and tempting God, is beautifully brought out in our Lord's temptation. When Satan urged him to prove the truth of the promise, "He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways"—by going to the "pinnacle of the temple" and casting himself down—he answered: "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." This distinction is marked and broad. When I was endeavoring to comfort an excellent brother the other evening under the heavy losses he had sustained, and the dark prospect that lay before him, by urging him to trust in God, he replied: "You have to exert yourself as well as others." "Yes, indeed," I answered, "and you have no objections I presume to exerting yourself." But the tenor of your gloomy forebodings is, that your exertions will be in vain. Now that you have sustained so heavy a loss in the destruction of your running dykes, and because the land will be barren for several years, you see no way in which you can possibly pay your debts, and maintain your family. Now then, dear brother here is just the spot in which to learn to confide in God. And so I got the Bible and read the 46th Psalm to him. "God is our refuge and strength. A very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea! Though the waters roar and be troubled—though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Come behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the heathen. I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our Refuge." There, said I, is comfort for you.

Then I quoted another appropriate passage to him, it may be entitled 'Faith's Song of Triumph.' "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." So far as temporal necessities are concerned, no prospect could be darker than the one this heavenly song supposes. But God would still live; His resources would not in any way be diminished, nor his loving kindness lessened. He would be an object of trust, of support, and of unabated joy, a VERY PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE.

Yes, let saints and sinners; believers and unbelievers, learn the lessons the late storm is well adapted to teach. After all is done that human labor, skill, and wisdom can do to obtain the fruits of the earth and the common necessities of life, to say nothing of luxuries and wealth, how utterly dependant are we! We cannot of ourselves secure the desired results.

The harvest after all depends on a higher power, over which man has no control—except by faith—blessed be the Lord, there is power let down to mortals that moves both heaven and earth—the sea and all things that are therein, and that power is faith. And then after an abundant harvest has been sent us—and secured, as man calls secure—how unsafe it is after all; how soon is all swept away! Alas how miserable is the man who has no treasure laid up in heaven!

But, mark! no storm, nor flood, nor other calamity that has fallen, on that may fall upon the world, will in the least effect the resources of George Muller's Orphan house—or abate the supplies of any man, be he, Missionary Pastor, or private Christian, who really looks to God, and waits on him in earnest, persevering, believing prayer, for the supply of all his wants. Dear Reader, try it and you will know the blessedness of trusting at all times.

S. F. RAND.