

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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WHOLE SERIES.
VOL. XXV....No. 30.

Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

"Let us Pray."

Yes 'Let us pray.' Earth's hours are being numbered,
The angel of the covenant shall come,
And they who live, and they who long have slumbered,
To God's great judgment shall be gathered home.

Yes 'Let us pray.' The world to arms is waking,
God's mercy may no longer be abused,
The long-forged fetters of the slave are breaking
The captive exile hath neth to be loosed.

Let us pray thankfully, for He who holdeth,
Nations and kingdoms of the earth at will,
Above the rush and roar of human passions,
Shall lift a voice that saith, "Peace, be still."

Let us pray humbly on, for we are sinful,
And every act of ours is stained with guile
And can the High and Holy One of Heaven,
Upon the pleadings of earth's children smile?

Oh Christ! the glories of thy cross can never,
By human worshippers be understood,
Not 'till we've crossed the deep and mystic river
That winds between us and the throne of God,—

Can we e'er know the weary night of anguish,
That bore upon Thy body on the tree,—
Or know the fullness of that cup of trembling,
That wrung the cry "Hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Let us pray earnestly, for sinners passing,—
The cross of Christ in cold and cruel scorn,
Still careless of the love so full of blessing,
The love that all their grief and sin hath borne.

Oh! sinner can ye turn away so lightly,
Will love nor pity bring thee to the cross?
Do earthly hours for thee pass all so brightly,
Hast thou not found amid earth's gold some dross,

That the Great Alchemist might brighten for thee?
Or give thee heavenly jewels in its stead,
Hast thou no wish to come before thy Father,
To ask, or thank Him for thy daily bread?

Hast thou no cares that only Christ can lighten?
No garments stained, His blood can purify?
No solitary hours his love might brighten?
No wish for Heaven when thou com'st to die?

Dost thou not fear to cross the rapid river?
Without a Saviour's loving hand to guide,
When earthly light is dimmed who will deliver
Thee from the surgings of that gloomy tide?

Come sinner kneel, with those who wrestle for thee,
Think of the fearful price thy ransom cost?
Come wanderer, come! the lone and weary hearted,
Kneel and pray earnestly, or all is lost?

S. I. E.

Hillsdale, July 14th.

Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD V.

From A. D. 1821 to A. D. 1828.

LETTER XXXVII.

DEATH OF ENOCH TURNER.—ORDINATION OF R. MCLEARN.
REVIVALS IN CORNWALLIS, NEWPORT, CHESTER, AND
YARMOUTH.—ASSOCIATION OF 1828.—CHURCHES ADD-
ED.—ACCOUNT OF THE FORMATION OF THE CHURCH IN
GRANVILLE STREET, HALIFAX.—CIRCULAR LETTER.

My Young Friend,

Enoch Turner, one of the old ministers, of whose early public labours some account was given in my fourteenth letter, died in November, 1827. He had removed to Argyle in 1806, where his ministry was greatly blessed. In 1816 he returned to Sissiboo, his former residence, and remained there till 1825, when he complied with the request of the brethren on Brier Island, who invited him to settle among them. This was his last field of effort. In September, 1827, he had a paralytic seizure, which enfeebled him exceedingly, both in body and mind. "It was, however, with great reluctance," said James Lent, whose sketch of Mr. Turner's life and labours was published in the *Christian Messenger* nearly twenty years ago, "that he remained away from meeting, and often, when he could not walk to the meeting-house, some of his dear brethren would lead him home. He continued in this state for about two months, when he was visited with a second attack, which so impaired his health that he never visited the meeting-house again. A few days before his death he seemed to possess his reason perfectly. He had been greatly afraid of the pains of death, yet often said he was sure he had tasted the love of God, and that God

was his unchangeable friend. The day before his decease he sat up all the day, and seemed to others to be recovering; he walked out of the door, but said he knew the Lord was about to call him home. It was observed a few hours before his death that his breathing was short. Mrs. T. said to him that she was afraid he was dying. He replied, he believed he was, and knew he should be happy. He then put his hand to his throat, as though he could not speak, and looking round with a smile expired without a groan, and apparently without any pain. His remains were interred at Sissiboo. An appropriate discourse was delivered by the Rev. Samuel Bancroft, from 2 Sam. iii. 38, 'Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?' Mr. Towner was nearly seventy-two years old.

God preserves the succession. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children." Another labourer was already in the field, and his public designation to the work took place but a few months after the removal of Enoch Turner. I refer to brother McLearn. He was ordained at Rawdon, March 10th, 1828. The sermon was preached by Joseph Dimock, from 1 Cor. iv. 1. George Dimock proposed the usual questions. T. S. Harding offered the ordination prayer and gave the right hand of fellowship. James Munro solemnly charged his young brother to "make full proof of his ministry." "He is a young man of promise," said Mr. Manning; "the Lord be with him!" He had mentioned him in his journal some time before, styling him "a very interesting youth"—"that apostolical young man"—and referring especially to his "natural capacity"—"sound principles"—"solid experience"—and "his thirst for the knowledge of God, and to be all, all given up to the Lord."

In the spring of 1828 there were hopeful appearances of religious prosperity in several of the churches. Writing to the Editor of the Magazine, Mr. Manning said,—"The attention of the people on the North Mountain, in Peregux, and in Canard Street, (places in the northern and eastern parts of Cornwallis) is called up to the great concerns of religion. A goodly number are hopefully converted. Nine have offered themselves to the church, and are received; and it is thought that a number more will soon come forward. For three years we had rain at the west, and now the shower hangs over the east. May it increase until we hear 'the sound of abundance of rain!' At Newport the work was "slow in its progress, but genuine in its operation." The Church at Chester enjoyed a revival which is thus described in the letter to the Association; "Some time in winter one of our brethren who had moved into the woods between W—, and this place, being grieved, with others, to see the Lord's day profaned by idleness, hunting, visiting, &c., began to collect such as would assemble with him for prayer meeting, and to read a sermon. This course was soon owned and blessed of God, and its influence spread among such as visited the settlement and attended these meetings from Chester. As the fruits of the good work which thus commenced, two persons were baptized on the first Lord's day in April, five on the first in May, seven on the first in June; and on the third Lord's day of the same month, ten more offered themselves for baptism. The work is still progressing in a glorious manner."

Much more remarkable was the progress of the cause at Yarmouth. "For two years past," said the Church, "the God of Israel had been moving by the influence of the Divine Spirit upon the hearts of many. Backsliders were reclaimed, and returned to their Father's house, and several additions were made to the church. In September last our whole number was one hundred and fifty. In October, Elder T. Ansley visited us, in the fulness of the gospel of the Son of God, and laboured in unison with our dear aged pastor, Elder H. Harding, for the space of four months and a half, in building up and establishing the Church here in the apostolic order. During that time, and since, many souls have been born to Christ, and the following additions have been made to the church, viz:—thirty-seven restored and united, eighteen added from sister churches and others adopting our

articles of faith and order, and one hundred and eighty-six received by baptism. During the last eight months two hundred and twenty-nine members have been added to the church, and the total number now is three hundred and forty-four. There are also eighty-two candidates for baptism. O what wonders God hath wrought! The waters of eternal life are not abated, and there is still a Macedonian cry in our highly favoured land, 'Come over and help us.'"

The Association met in 1828 at Horton.—Charles Tupper preached the introductory sermon, from 2 Corinthians iv. 7. James Munro was Moderator; Charles Tupper, Clerk; William Chipman, Assistant Clerk.

Four churches were admitted to the Association, viz., Yarmouth—Granville Street, Halifax—Pugwash—and the second Cornwallis.

The Church at Yarmouth had been out of the Association eighteen years, having withdrawn in 1809. The abandonment of the practice of open communion led to the renewal of fellowship with sister churches.

The second Cornwallis Church was constituted Jan. 9, 1828. Numerous conversions had taken place in the "Western Settlement," as it was then called, and the brethren in that district desired a separate organization, which was amicably effected. A council was called, according to the usual custom, but T. S. Harding was the only minister present in addition to the pastor. That, however, was of small importance, as there were no difficulties in the case, all the parties being agreed, and the propriety of the step being generally admitted. The church consisted of fifty members when it joined the Association.

The formation of the church at Pugwash has been mentioned before. It reported thirty members.

A narrative of the circumstances which led to the establishment of a new Baptist interest at Halifax will furnish information of a peculiarly encouraging nature. The influence of that event on the subsequent proceedings of the denomination renders it desirable to give a full and particular account. One of the brethren concerned in the movement has placed in my hands a statement of facts, the substance of which I will present ~~very~~ nearly in his own words.

Until about the year 1818 the preaching of the ministers of the Church of England in Halifax was utterly devoid of all that savoured of vital religion. A dry morality universally characterised the instructions of the pulpit, and the text might often have been more appropriately taken from *Cicero de Officiis* than from the bible. As Cowper says:—

"How oft, when Paul has served us with a text,
Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully preached!"

The Rev. Mr. Temple, a minister of the Church of England, who came out as private chaplain to Lord Dalhousie, was the first evangelical preacher of the episcopal persuasion in Halifax. The Rev. J. T. Twining (afterwards Dr. Twining), then chaplain of the garrison and curate of St. Paul's, was probably indebted, under God, to Mr. Temple for the important change which took place in his own views and experience. It soon appeared in his preaching. Under his ministry, and that of Mr. Temple, several persons attending St. Paul's church were awakened and converted.

About the same time the Rev. Hibbert Binney, father of the present bishop, and stationed then at Sydney, C. B., began to preach evangelical truth. The divine blessing attended his labours. Among the converts were some who afterwards joined the Baptists in Halifax.

The preaching of the gospel in Halifax was much opposed by the late Bishop Inglis, then Rector of St. Paul's, as well as by the clergy and laity generally, and an open rupture soon took place between the Rector and Mr. Twining, which led to the dismissal of the latter from the curacy. As he was a very popular preacher, and highly esteemed by the community, the dismissal produced a great sensation in the parish, and it was finally resolved by his adherents to secede from St. Paul's and establish a separate interest. The resolution was carried into effect. About three-fourths of the congregation left the

church, and hired an old meeting-house built for the Methodists, where Mr. Twining preached for several months to crowded congregations. Meanwhile large sums of money were collected among them—ground was purchased—and the chapel in Granville Street was erected, at a cost of £2250.

It had been supposed that the seceders could retain their connection with the Church of England, as is the case with many congregations meeting in proprietary chapels in the old country; but the strong opposition of Dr. Inglis, the rector, prevailed against them, and Mr. Twining, finding that there was no hope of success, and fearing to imperil his own position in the Church, discontinued his separate labours. The great body of the seceders returned shortly afterwards to St. Paul's.

But the new converts could not retrace their steps. They had seceded from principle. The spiritual food which they now desired was not to be obtained at St. Paul's, and therefore they did not return to that place of worship. They held prayer meetings at each other's houses, and on Lord's day they met with various congregations in the city. This course did not prove satisfactory. Their views were what is termed Calvinistic, which precluded their union with the Methodists. Sound doctrine was taught among the Presbyterians, but the religious aspects of those communities presented no attractions to souls that "hungered and thirsted after righteousness." Certain efforts which they made to procure the services of an evangelical minister of the Church of England, by correspondence with the late Rev. C. Simeon, of Cambridge, England, were unsuccessful. They were shut up to entire separation.

"One of our number," says the friend who has supplied this information, "brother Ferguson, who had a family connection with the late Mr. Manning, had heard Baptist preaching in the country, and had become acquainted with the late Rev. John Burton, who preached in a small Baptist meeting-house in Halifax, but whose chief ministrations were among the coloured people at Preston and Hammonds Plains. The practical and experimental nature of Mr. Burton's preaching, the soundness of his doctrine, and especially the christian sincerity and affection which marked his character, and had won him the good-will of all who knew him, attracted our regard and esteem; and although he was by no means remarkable as a preacher, and his church and congregation in Halifax was small and despised, we at once attached ourselves to his ministry. We were thus led for the first time to a consideration of the peculiar views of the Baptists, and as we had in a great measure become divested of mere denominational prejudices, we were prepared to embrace the truth as we found it in the Bible. Several of us were soon fully convinced of the scriptural nature of those views, and resolved to unite with that body of christians. The others were not long in coming to the same conclusion. As nearly as I can now recollect, there were from fifteen to twenty persons present, about one-third males, who composed our little company. Brother Ferguson was first baptized [by Mr. Manning, July 9, 1826] and subsequently all the rest, at intervals of time longer or shorter."

The place of worship occupied by Mr. Burton being "very confined and inconvenient," and the church under his care being chiefly composed of persons resident at Preston and Hammonds Plains, it was judged advisable to make new arrangements, whereby the citizens of Halifax might be induced to attend the preaching of the gospel under Baptist auspices. Accordingly the chapel in Granville Street, which had been left in an unfinished state when the secession fell to pieces, was purchased for the sum of £850, and appropriately fitted up.

The selection of a minister was the next care. The views of the friends on this subject were thus expressed in a pamphlet published in 1828:—"The same concern for the spiritual welfare of their fellow-sinners which had influenced these friends in their purchase of the chapel soon brought to their notice another serious consideration. This was the general character, in point of information and understanding, of