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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

Life wears away.

Life wears away
Like the rosy flush on the morning cloud,
Like the flower's perfume by the strong wind bowed,
Like the sunbeam's smile, like the night's dark shroud,
Life wears away.
Life wears away
Whether we do the good we may—
Whether we spend it in work or play,
Freeze in December or dance in May,
Life wears away.
Life wears away,
With its pleasures and pains, its hopes and fears,
Its losses and gains, its smiles and tears;
We may beckon to time, but he will not stay—
Life wears away.
Life wears away!
With its restless nights and toilsome morns,
Love crowns us with joy, or hate with thorns—
The heart beats on with its loves and scorns—
Life wears away.
Life wears away!
But heed it not, so look beyond,
As a child for his home, with yearning fond;
We may laugh at Time, that he will not stay,
And smile in peace as life wears away.

Biographical.

For the Christian Messenger.

Memoir of the Rev. Samuel N. Bentley, A. M.

BY THE REV. HENRY ANGELL.

It is the testimony of inspiration, that "the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance;" and while we may regard this truth as having a special reference to the *recognitions and rewards of eternity*, we have many cheering proofs that it is frequently verified in *time*. The influence of the lives and labors of the devoted servants of Christ is *never lost on earth*. Those who have been converted through their instrumentality will never forget them, the effects of their labors will be felt by future generations, and reach onward to eternity; while the records of their excellencies and deeds, will ever be a precious legacy to the church; and a constant incentive to higher attainments in the divine life, and greater usefulness in the church, and the world. To "glorify God" in them, and for them is our duty, and any memorial of their worth, however frail, that will to any extent accomplish this, we should carefully secure. In this, as well as in other respects, we may express our gratitude to God for *His gifts*, our high estimate of elevated piety, and may be animated to follow the example of those "who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

Influenced by these considerations, the writer, with mournful pleasure, records these brief memorials of a "brother, beloved in the Lord," with the regret, however, that the materials he has been able to secure are so scanty, and also, that our recently departed and excellent brother, Rev. Richard McLearn to whom this work was at first entrusted, did not live to perform it.

Samuel Newcomb Bentley was born at Upper Stewiacke on the 4th of July 1822. His parents were for many years exemplary members of the Baptist church in his native village and according to his own grateful testimony carefully instructed him in the principles of religion. His father was suddenly summoned to his rest, during the summer of 1855. From the concurrent testimony of those who knew him, he appears to have been a man of industrious habits, of sterling integrity, endowed with a vigorous understanding, and truly devoted to his God. He sustained for many years the office of deacon in the church, and "purchased to himself a good degree" in the faithful discharge of his duties. The mother of our departed friend is still living.

Home influence and training have much to do with the future course and spiritual well-being of the young. A child trained "in the way he should go," seldom "departs from it,"

Brother Bentley's experience is another accession to the many and encouraging evidences of this truth. The writer has more than once, heard him express his high estimate of parental instruction, and also, his affectionate regard for those beloved parents, who, in his early years, "allured" him "to brighter worlds, and led the way." The writer travelled with him to the Western Association convened at Clarence in 1855, and it was during the first session of that body that tidings of his father's death reached him. This painful announcement almost overwhelmed him, yet he manifested the most entire resignation to the divine will. We passed the ensuing night together at the house of a friend and before lying down to rest he proposed we should mutually pray. In his prayer, he spoke of his irreparable loss, and poured forth his expression of gratitude to God, for the guardianship, and example of such a father, new a saint in glory. No one could have listened to that prayer without the abiding conviction that there is a *powerful influence for good*, in the counsels and instructions of a pious parent.

Of the early days of our brother, we have learned comparatively nothing except what we gleaned from conversations with him in times past. He was it appears of a pensive turn of mind from childhood. He was at times, troubled about the welfare of his soul. Deep convictions of sin, often cast a shade over his youthful pleasures. He feared death, trembled at the thought of his own vileness, and God's holiness. At length God in mercy "delivered his soul," and he found "peace, in believing" in Jesus. He ever afterwards looked back to the eighth day of July 1838, as the memorable period when he "passed from death unto life." Two years after this he made a public profession of religion. He was baptized by Rev. Abraham Stronach, October 25th 1840, and admitted to the fellowship of the Baptist church, Upper Stewiacke. He often alluded to the period of his consecration to Christ in baptism, as one of the happiest seasons in his life.

A year or two after this, he commenced a course of study in the Institutions at Horton. At that time he proposed to devote his future life to the work of school teaching, although even then he had serious thoughts about the work of the *christian ministry*. His extreme conscientiousness, however restrained him from devotion to a service so solemn and responsible, until he was fully convinced that in doing so, he was "approved of God." He was always a firm believer in a *special call* to the gospel ministry. By this he did not mean an audible voice, or a mysterious omen bidding him bear the message of mercy to the guilty and the perishing, but an ardent quenchless desire for the work, a modicum, at least, of qualifications for it, and a deep conviction that he could be neither useful or happy, could neither do the will of God or as fully discharge his duty to a perishing world, in any other vocation. In after years his convictions became more mature, as his consecration to the work has proved, and the signal manner in which God blessed his labors has fully justified his choice.

He remained at Horton about three years, after which he taught school in New Brunswick. In 1848 he repaired to the Newton Theological Institution, Mass., where he pursued the regular course of study, preparatory to the christian ministry. While a student at Newton he preached his first sermon. It was delivered in the Merrimac Baptist church, Boston, on the 7th of May, 1848, from Luke xix. 41-42.

Thus equipped for his *good work*, he returned to Nova Scotia, resolved, with true christian patriotism, to devote his remaining days to the advancement of the Redeemer's cause, in his native land. After a season of itinerant labor, chiefly in portions of the province destitute of "the ministry of the word," his attention was providentially directed to that field of christian toil in which he was destined to put forth his most vigorous efforts, and achieve his greatest success.

The history of the Baptist cause in Liverpool and its vicinity is full of interest. Its commencement, was indeed "the day of small things." The church was organized upwards of 40 years ago, and met for worship for several years in a room in the humble dwelling

of a poor widow.* They were feeble and despised by the world, but God was with them, and the widow's lowly abode was often "the gate of heaven," and became the spiritual birth-place of many souls. The fervent prayers of this devoted band "availed much." Precious pentecostal seasons ensued, under the preaching of Father Ansley, Rev. I. E. Bill, and others. The church greatly increased in numbers and influence. Plain, but commodious houses of worship were erected in town and at Milton. In 1850, during the successful pastorate of Rev. R. B. Dickey, it was thought desirable to form a new interest in town. A church was accordingly organized, consisting of 42 members. Brother Bentley having recently returned to the province, the attention of the brethren in Liverpool was directed to him, as a suitable person to take the pastoral oversight of the new church. He was accordingly invited to visit them. After attending the first session of the Western Baptist Association, held at Yarmouth, he immediately repaired to Liverpool, and commenced his labors, June 15, 1851. He was soon after called unanimously to the pastorate, which call, after prayerful deliberation, he accepted. He was ordained Nov. 23rd, 1851, in the old Baptist meeting house. The services, which were highly interesting, were conducted by Rev. Messrs. Dickey, Delong, Jas. Parker and Armstrong. Many observed the deep solemnity and awe with which Brother Bentley assumed the responsibilities of a pastor.

Brother Bentley's first two years in Liverpool was a season of anxious, and apparently unsuccessful toil. The congregation was small and did not materially increase. The place of worship was inconveniently situated, being at one end of the town, and at times was almost inaccessible, the road leading to it being occasionally overflowed by the tide. The people generally became warmly attached to their pastor, and cheerfully co-operated with him in his "work of faith," still there were no *ascertained* cases of conversion to God. Brother B. was at times much discouraged, and his faith was sorely tried. He feared he was not the right man for the place. "The people" said he, to the writer with tearful eye, "are very kind, very united and prayerful, and my love to them increases, but oh, my heart's desire is not realized, souls are not saved." Though discouraged, he did not wane in efforts. He seemed only to work the harder. God was doubtless trying his faith, and fitting him more fully for his work.

About this time (1852) Brother Bentley's attention was turned to the *Foreign Missionary field*, and he became deeply impressed with the conviction that it was his duty to preach the gospel to the heathen. He had thought seriously upon the subject before. While a student at Newton he had frequently conversed with two of his class-mates who were under appointment to the Foreign field, and he had felt his mind stirred to a kindred sympathy with theirs. Apparent want of success in his present field of labor caused him to fear that, like Jonah of old, he had disobeyed the Lord, and in consequence of this his impressions returned with resistless power. At a deeply interesting *Missionary* meeting, held in connexion with the Baptist Convention, assembled at Sackville N. B. in 1852, at which time Rev. Arthur Crawley was accepted as foreign missionary, Brother Bentley touchingly alluded to *his own convictions*. A committee was appointed to confer with him upon the subject. After prayerful consultation, they wisely concluded, that as Brother Bentley's health was feeble, it would be injudicious to appoint him to a foreign field. This decision was confirmed by the Convention at Nictaux in 1853. Brother Bentley was keenly disappointed. At first, he felt unconcerned to the decision, and thought of offering his services to the American Baptist Missionary Union. A brighter

* I allude to the late Mrs. Dolvar, a mother in Israel, she was baptized by Rev. D. Nutter, and united with the Liverpool church at its organization. The church, being few in number, and unable to build a place of worship, met in a small room in her house. Her zeal and activity kept the church from extinction. When the 2 or 3 male members declined to conduct the meetings, she gave out the hymns herself, engaged in prayer, and encouraged the other sisters to do likewise. Her house was the home of the ministers of Christ, and she maintained her love to the cause until death. She died in the triumphs of faith, Dec. 26th 1856 aged 84. Her record is on high.

day however began to dawn upon his labor at Liverpool, and he gradually became convinced that the united opinion of his brethren was the "voice of God." A few years afterwards, when his health was in a very critical state, he said to the writer, "it is difficult for me to give up my fondly cherished desire, but my brethren were right. I now see I am not fitted to endure the hardships of foreign missionary labor." The comforting words addressed by the Lord to his servant David, who was not permitted to fulfil his heart's desire in the erection of the temple, might with propriety be applied to our brother, "thou didst well, that it was in thine heart," as also Matthew Henry's judicious comment on the passage; "sincere intentions to do good, shall be graciously approved, and accepted of God, though Providence prevent our putting of them in execution."

In the summer of 1853 a costly and substantial sanctuary was erected by the people in the centre of the town. It was opened for the worship of God on the 22nd of July. The venerable T. S. Harding was present, and preached the dedication sermon. The congregation began rapidly to increase, and often on Sabbath afternoons the meeting house was crowded. Brother Bentley preached with unusual unction and power, and many were deeply impressed. Two young persons gave evidence of conversion, and were baptized, four others followed shortly afterwards. As the interest increased it was thought desirable to hold a series of meetings. Rev. John Francis visited Liverpool at the time on an agency for Acadia College, and rendered timely aid. The spirit of God seemed gently to descend upon the people. Saints were quickened, backsliders reclaimed, and souls hopefully converted. Brother Bentley appeared awakened to new life. His appeals in the sanctuary were exceedingly tender and solemn, and his visits from house to house were greatly blessed. One baptismal season will long be remembered. The solemn rite was administered in the baptistry which had just been erected in the church, and the scene was rendered unusually impressive, from the fact that each of the candidates had been the subjects of many prayers. There were the father and son, together "putting on Christ." The former had for years been an influential merchant in the place, and had long struggled against his convictions. But fervent prayer was answered and grace had triumphed. There too, were the husband and sister of one of "the excellent of the earth," who in an adjoining dwelling was fast wasting away with consumption, calmly awaiting the summons to her rest above. Her desire was now accomplished, and she could cheerfully say, "now Lord let thine handmaid depart in peace for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." There also were a brother and sister the children of one who had once been a baptist minister. Sad changes had separated them for years. They had recently met again, to unitedly embrace the Saviour, and confess him before the world.

The heart of the pastor was cheered by the gracious revival. "Tearful sowing" was now followed with "joyful reaping," and our brother from that time, was greatly strengthened in his faith in God. It was remarked by many that after the revival he preached with greater freedom of utterance, and with more confidence and fervour than previously.

In 1854 and 55 he frequently performed missionary tours in Shelburne Co. chiefly to Ragged Island and Sable River. These visits were very acceptable to the people. Several persons dated their first religious impressions from discourses delivered during these excursions. The church at Ragged Island invited him to the pastorate, but his usefulness in Liverpool constrained him to decline the invitation. In the spring of 1855 Brother Bentley's labors were greatly blessed, and the church was again visited with a delightful "time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." The good work spread to Milton and Port Medway, and a large number were added to the churches. During the revival Brother Bentley's health gave way before intense labour for the welfare of souls, and fears were for a while entertained that his work on earth was nearly finished. He thought so himself, yet he would not retire from his post. He appeared resolved to die "in the harness." Although unable to preach, he attended a