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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

Sunset.

FROM VICTOR HUGO.

I love the evening, golden and serene,
Whether it gild old manors, dimly seen
Among their green, embowering shrouds,
Or make the distant fog a bank of fires,
Or shoot through azure skies its thousand spires,
Mid archipelagos of clouds.
O! view the sky. A hundred clouds adrift,
Heaped by the wind, grotesquely group and shift
Their nameless forms upon its plain;
Beneath their edge the pale lightnings flare,
As if, in haste, some giant of the air
Unsheathed and sheathed his sword again.
Athwart their shadows gill the sun's light streams,
And makes the straw-thatched cottage, with its
Burn like a regal palace bright; beams,
With mist disputes the vague horizon's view,
And, falling upon hazy meadows dim,
Lies shining in broad pools of light.
Sometimes I seem to see, suspended black
And huge, a crocodile, with ridgy back
And triple rows of sharpened teeth.
Along his leaden breast the sunbeams glide;
A thousand crimson cloudlets flake his side,
Or gleam like burnished scales beneath.
Anon a palace forms; then shakes the air,
And, quick as thought, the cloudy structure fair
Topples in shattered ruin down:
Far o'er the sky its vermillion turrets spread,
With downward pointing spires, hung overhead
Like mountain pinnacles o'erthrown.
These leaden, iron, copper, golden clouds—
Where thunder, lightning, storm, or whirlwind
Itself asleeps with muttered roar— [shrouds
Tis God who hangs them in the skies profound,
As hangs the warrior from his ceiling round
His ringing arms when war is o'er.
All vanishes; and, like a great red globe of brass
That's cast into the furnace's molten mass,
Hurried down the western slope,
The sun, beneath the cloven waves submerged,
Flings up a fiery spume of clouds, dispersed
In flakes o'er all the welkin cope.
O! view the sky; and while the daylight falls,
Always and everywhere, beneath its veils,
A Love ineffable behold.
Its solemn beauty masks a mystery—
Summer, when gemmed with night's embroidery;
When black and pallid, like, winter cold.

Nova Scotia Church History.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Baptists of Nova Scotia.

PERIOD VI.

From A. D. 1828 to A. D. 1838.

LETTER LI.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF JAMES MUNRO—THOMAS ANSLEY.

My Young Friend,

JAMES MUNRO was suddenly removed to another world, July 3rd, 1838. He was at Chester, attending the annual meeting of the Association, and had consented to preach the introductory sermon, in place of brother William Chipman, who was prevented by indisposition; but a violent attack of asthma, to which disease he had been long subject, confined him to his bed, from which he rose no more. After a week's illness he was dismissed to the church triumphant. He was in the 55th year of his age.

Mr. Munro was a native of Findhorn, Morayshire, Scotland. He emigrated to Nova Scotia in 1803, and landed at Chester, near which place he exercised his trade as a shipwright. About three years afterwards he was brought to God, during a revival which took place under the ministry of Joseph Dimock. He was at that time a Presbyterian, but soon became a Baptist, and was baptized by Mr. Williams (now Dr. Williams) at New York, in which city he resided a year or two. On his return to Nova Scotia, in 1808, he married, and shortly after settled at Halifax, where he worked at his trade, and where he commenced preaching, under the advice and encouragement of John Burton. It was not, however, till 1814 that he felt at liberty to give himself entirely to the work of the gos-

pel. Attending the Association at Chester that year he announced to the brethren his intention to become a stated labourer in the cause. From that time he was much engaged in missionary excursions. He was one of the first who were employed by the Association, being appointed in 1815, with Joseph Crandall, "to the Eastward of Halifax." Next year they were sent to "the Eastern shores of New Brunswick." Mr. Munro received ordination at Nictaux, June 28th, 1816. In 1818 he was engaged in missionary labour, "for eight weeks to the destitute up the river St. John," and in 1819 was re-appointed, for twelve weeks, "to the Eastward of Halifax."

In the spring of 1819 he first visited Onslow, and preached with so much acceptance that he was earnestly requested to undertake the pastoral charge of the church, then vacant by the removal of Nathan Cleaveland, the former pastor, to New Brunswick. He was unwilling to assume the office, being "of opinion" (I quote his own words) "that it required a man of peculiar qualifications to contend with success against the deep-rooted and powerful prejudices of the Presbyterians on the one hand, and the enthusiastic notions of the Newlights on the other." But he complied with the solicitations of the people so far as to give them half his time for a year. At the expiration of that term the engagement was renewed, with this difference, that he agreed to allot three-fourths of his labour to Onslow, spending the remaining one-fourth at Rawdon. He continued pastor of the church till his death, diligently and faithfully discharging the important duties of his office, and enjoying in a high degree the affectionate regards of the people and the respect of persons of all persuasions in that neighbourhood. How greatly he was beloved by the Baptists of this province many still living can testify.

When Mr. Munro commenced his labours in Onslow some circumstances had recently occurred which threatened injury to the Baptist cause. Cases of gross immorality had come to light, and the persons concerned were members of the church, who had been admitted during the progress of a revival. The prompt action of the church in the matter, inflicting in every instance the penalty of exclusion, stopped the mouths of gainsayers, and converted distrust into respect, since it became evident that Baptist principles were associated with purity, and that sin could not be cloaked or connived at. Perhaps the occurrence had some effect on Mr. Munro's mind, inducing a dislike, if not to revivals, in the popular sense of the word, to some of the measures adopted at such times. Hence he never countenanced them. One result was, that the church did not report a large increase, in any year of her history, while Mr. Munro was pastor. But it is observable that there was a steady growth, and that exclusions were few. There were forty-three members in 1820, the year in which Mr. Munro's name first appears in the Minutes of the Association, in connection with Onslow. In 1838, the year of his death, they had increased to a hundred. The influence of his ministry was felt through the whole district, and the erection of a meeting house at Truro enabled him to dispense Christian truth in that rising village, where his labours were highly appreciated.

Mr. Munro's last appearance in public was at the Lord's day evening service at Chester. He gave a short address after the sermon, which is thus reported by Mr. Dimock:—"He spoke in his usual concise and impressive manner to this effect:—I love the pure gospel. I always love to hear the gospel preached as a glorious whole, in its adaptation to the purposes for which it was intended. I have loved to hear the gospel this morning. I have loved to hear the gospel this afternoon. I have loved to hear of the ample provision that is made for the Lord's people—the suitability of the provision made to secure the safety of the church of God. Then, with an unusual elevation of voice and earnestness of manner and with an eloquence that could only flow from a spirit deeply imbued with truth, he added, 'And, poor sinners, I want to tell you that there is also in it suitable provision for you. The gospel table is spread and amply furnished, and I would say, in the language of inspiration. Come, for all things are ready.' The Spirit and the bride

say, Come. And let him that is athirst come, and take the water of life freely."

He had a great desire to preach to young ministers during the Association. "He considered they had a scene to pass through which the old ministers had never witnessed. 'False doctrines,' he said, 'abound, and error is afloat, though disguised under specious names.' But he was not permitted to fulfil his intention.

During his illness he was generally composed and happy. "Thirty-five years ago," he said, "I landed at Chester, a stranger in a strange land. Here the Lord showed me I was a sinner, and here he revealed himself to me as my Saviour. About two years after I was baptized, and now have been trying to preach the gospel more than thirty years. I am ashamed of the manner in which I have preached it. I am not ashamed of the gospel. No! but I am ashamed of the witness. I believe that what I preached was truth, and I can now rest upon it; and I know and feel that he who hath taken care of me through so many years will not forsake me at the last." When asked, an hour before he died, if he had any message to send to his wife, he replied, "No"—adding, after a short pause, "Only tell her to trust in the name of the Lord. He will be found of them that truly seek him. He has been a faithful friend to me, and he will never forsake those that trust in him."

The interment took place the next day. Joseph Dimock preached the funeral sermon, from Psalm xxxvii. 37, and an address was delivered by Mr. Manning, who was, himself in a feeble state of health, and had been unable to attend the public meetings of the Association.

I have stated that Mr. Munro was ordained at Nictaux. He was much esteemed by the church in that place, as the following record testifies:—

"On Sunday the 22nd July, a Sermon was preached by the Rev. I. E. Bill, at the Baptist Meeting-house in Nictaux, appropriate to the death of the late Rev. James Munro, from 2 Saml. iii. 38, 'Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel.'"

"As Mr. Munro, in the early part of his ministry, spent a considerable time at Nictaux, and while labouring under deep discouragements of mind, with regard to his call to the ministry, his memory is much endeared to many of the older members of this Church. It was here, that strengthened by the advice and brotherly exhortations of the late Rev. T. H. Chipman, with whom he is now no doubt rejoicing in Heaven, he became perfectly satisfied that it was God's will he should devote himself to the ministry. It was here also that he was publicly set apart to the work by the imposition of hands in 1816.

At the close of the public services of the day, the following Resolution was unanimously passed by the Church in this place. Resolved—That although this church does not deem it necessary on ordinary occasions to express by a formal vote their sorrow at the removal of the faithful from the earth, yet they believe that there are times when such a token of sympathy and estimation of character, is not only allowable, but highly proper—That they consider the recent death of the late Rev. James Munro, of Onslow, to be of one of those events which calls for such an expression of their feelings, inasmuch as his vigour of intellect, his scriptural views of divine truth, his deep piety, his ministerial faithfulness, and ardent zeal for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, as well as his firmness and decision of character, rendered him a highly valuable member of the Association—a blessing to the church at large in this Province—and an ornament to the community in which he resided:—and, whereas a sermon appropriate to the melancholy occasion has been this day preached by their Pastor, the church feel themselves called upon in this solemn manner, to evince their sympathy for the bereaved family of their beloved and departed brother—for his mourning church, and the community that was so long favoured with his religious and moral example, as well as with his stated ministerial labours."

When the Association met at Wilmot in 1839, Mr. Munro's death was reported, and a resolution passed, a copy of which is here given:—

"Resolved, That this Association do deeply deplore the great loss which the cause of God generally, and the denomination in particular, have sustained, in the sudden and unexpected removal by death of our much respected brother in Christ, the late Rev. James Munro, whose devoted life, in conjunction with his wise councils and faithful ministry, gave him a place in the confidence and affections of his brethren, and which made him an invaluable blessing to his family, to the church, and to the world."

Brother William Chipman was well acquainted with Mr. Munro, and has favoured me with an interesting sketch of his character and labours. Having observed that he was called to minister in a community that was chiefly of a Presbyterian cast, Mr. C. proceeds thus:—"He preached at first in private houses, levelling his artillery against the self-righteous and the formalist, and pressing on them the necessity of the new birth in order to the enjoyment of eternal happiness. His labours were gradually blessed, and many were brought to the experience of personal religion."

"After a time, the Baptists united with the Presbyterians in building a place of worship in Onslow, each society to hold property in the building in proportion to the sum paid in. The Baptist interest being small, they had but a small share; but as Baptist principles spread their number increased, so that before Mr. Munro's death they owned one-half of the house."

"Mr. Munro's natural talents were above mediocrity, and his acquirements were respectable. His sermons were excellent—sound—evangelical—and methodical. His argumentative powers were strong. His preaching was very instructive and edifying. His manner was pleasing and attractive, and his power to command attention was peculiar. Though he was not highly excitable or animated, yet, feeling deeply interested in the truths which he preached, he seldom failed to move others. I remember hearing him once at Bridgetown, when the Association was held there. [This was in 1833.] His text was 1 Thess. i. 4, 5. In the introduction he was moved to tears and begged of God to forgive him that he was not always ready to preach the blessed gospel; and further remarked, that he would rather all the devils in hell were let loose upon him than a guilty conscience."

"In his temperament he was very sensitive, and never would willingly suffer his own rights to be infringed on. His soundness of judgment and independence of mind tended to make him tenacious of his own opinion. Nevertheless he was a prudent man, and would not start at trifles, nor resist others, unless imperative necessity compelled him."

"Surely, he was an eminent man of God—a man of sterling integrity—uprightness—honesty—and fervent godliness."

THOMAS ANSLEY was removed by death in 1831. He was a remarkable man—eminent in fervour, love, and zeal—always ready to "endure hardness" in the Saviour's cause—and God greatly blessed him."

I have stated in a former letter that Mr. Ansley was originally an Episcopalian, and that soon after his conversion he was led to examine the subject of baptism, and was baptized by Thomas Handley Chipman, who was then engaged on a mission in New Brunswick, in the year 1802.

An uncontrollable desire to preach the gospel impelled him to "speak in the name of the Lord." His first efforts were not encouraging—but the sense of duty remained. On one occasion, we are informed, "he left home with an intention of staying away only a few days; but being constrained on his journey to make mention of the goodness of God in giving his Son to die for sinners, and to promulgate the gospel of peace, a revival took place under his ministry, and a considerable number of persons were not only awakened but also brought to a saving knowledge of the truth; and so anxious on this occasion were the people to hear, and so willing was he to impart to them the words of life, that he did not return to his family till several weeks had been spent in this happy and profitable employment."

This was the commencement of a series of itinerating efforts. He was sometimes absent from his family for weeks, and even months,