

Correspondence.

for the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY REV CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

CHAPTER IX.

SECOND RESIDENCE IN AMHERST.

(No. 6.)

As the Association in 1829 was held in Yarmouth, which is remote from Amherst, domestic affliction prevented my attendance. It was cheering, however, to learn, that the gracious work which commenced in the western parts of the Province on the preceding autumn, had extended far and wide. In addition to great numbers that had become connected with Churches previously in the Association, there were five new Churches received at this Session, containing an aggregate of 323 members; of whom a large majority were undoubtedly happy fruits of this extensive revival.

On the 27th day of August Mrs. Tupper, who had long been in a very feeble and afflicted state, was delivered of a daughter. Serious illness was subsequently endured by the mother, the child, and the step-daughter who lived with us. For a full month we were obliged to have watchers during the nights. The sick, however, were graciously spared; and this daughter was subsequently a source of great comfort to me, as she kept house for me, and took care of me, during the time that I was a widower, and very lame; and she is now the only child whose society I can frequently enjoy, as she is settled near me, and is a member of the Church under my pastoral care.

My step-daughter, who was brought extremely low by sickness, appeared to profit by the affliction suffered; and after her recovery professed faith in Christ, and was baptized by me on the 18th day of Oct. following.

Though the state of religion during this year seemed generally low in the field of my labor, yet we had some encouragement, as there were 9 added by baptism to the Churches under my charge.

On the last day of the year I called a meeting in Amherst for the formation of a Temperance Society. In a private interview with Bro. Samuel McCully, who came to attend the meeting, but had not yet avowed an intention to join the Society, I remarked to him, that we had always moved in unison, and it had been my invariable practice to call on him, when present, to take an active part in every public meeting; but in this case my situation was a trying one; for he could not consistently speak in favor of the object, unless he joined the organization. After a short conversation, and a slight pause, he remarked, "Probably it will be best for me to advocate the cause, and join the Society." He did so; and ever continued to be a consistent advocate of the cause. A set of Rules had been previously drawn up, and 7 persons, including myself, had subscribed them. At this time 13 additional signatures were obtained. The Society was therefore commenced with 20 members. As the pledge, then usually adopted, specified only that "we will abstain from the use of all distilled spirits," an individual inquired "if the free use of wine would be regarded as consistent with membership?" I replied, that in my opinion it would not; for if we intended to suppress intemperance, we must in all consistency, abstain from all that can intoxicate.

This was my invariable practice from the first; as undoubtedly it was that of many others. After a time, however, it was found needful to amend the pledge, so as to exclude all kinds of intoxicating drinks.

On the first day of January, 1830, I delivered a discourse in Sackville on Temperance, and Bro. David Harris followed with an earnest address. We had then the satisfaction of forming a Temperance Society, consisting of 17 men and 11 women. The change of views that had been effected in a number of persons on this subject, within a short space of time, was highly gratifying and encouraging.

The 21st day of the same month another meeting of the Cumberland Temperance Society, located in Amherst, was held. The cause was evidently progressing. Several persons of considerable influence joined the Society at this time. The number of members was increased to 41. They appointed me President, and Bro. McCully, Vice President. About six dollars were contributed for the purchase of Temperance Tracts for distribution. At a second Temperance Meeting in Sackville, May 10th additional members increased the Society to 71. It was man-

ifested that several intemperate persons had already derived much benefit from the efforts put forth.

While in a feeble state of health, and oppressed by numerous cares, toils, and trials, the success attending my endeavors to promote the noble cause of Temperance, was highly cheering. A friendly letter, also, from Rev. Dr. Ira Chase, in which he expressed his full approbation of my editorial labors, afforded me much encouragement.

On the 7th day of June I completed the perusal of the Bible in Latin, partly in the Vulgate, a portion in Castalio's Version, and the New Testament principally in Beza's. Some increased acquaintance with divine truth was evidently derived from each; but Beza's Version appeared to me preferable to either of the others. I had now read the whole Bible through in five languages, namely, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, and English. On the 11th I finished the second perusal of the Old Testament in Hebrew.

The 23rd of the same month I providentially met with an opportunity to obtain a copy of Luther's Translation of the Bible in German, a Dictionary of that language, with the definitions in French, and a grammar. Having purchased these books, I presently commenced the study of German. It soon became evident to me, that this language might be easily learned.

Having gone to St. John, N. B. I several times visited a colored man under sentence of death. He had been addicted to drunkenness, and, when under the influence of liquor, had frequently abused his wife. On one occasion during his stay at a tavern, in dread of ill treatment she fled to the house of another woman of color. Suspecting that she had gone thither, he pursued her. The woman denied that she was there, refused him admittance, and took up an axe in terror, to prevent his entrance. He wrenched it from her, and killed her with it. Rev. Mr. Wood, a Methodist Minister, and I—probably others also—labored diligently, by exhortation and prayer, to lead him to repentance, that he might be saved. He did, indeed, express hope that he obtained forgiveness from God; but his exercises appeared to me altogether visionary and vain. To the last there were no indications of true penitence.

This lamentable instance of the dire effect of using intoxicating drink, excited in me increased earnestness in efforts for the promotion of Temperance. I labored sedulously to establish a Society in St. John. Some favored the object; but we did not succeed at this time. It afforded me much pleasure, however, to aid in the furtherance of one recently established in Norton; where I attended a pleasant Session of the Baptist Association of New Brunswick. By the holding of frequent meetings, at which lectures and addresses were delivered, by conversations in families, and admonitions to individuals, the cause gained adherents, and the Societies in Amherst and Sackville were so increased by the close of the year as to number about 100 each. By diligent efforts an encouraging commencement was also made at West Brook, River Philip, Pugwash, and Dorchester. There were, indeed, some instances of defection; but the good effected was too manifest to be denied, and it far exceeded the most sanguine hopes at first entertained with reference to immediate results.

In my view intemperance is so great an obstacle to the interests of vital religion, by holding the unregenerate in the chain of Satan, and by drawing professors of faith into gross impiety, that a minister of Christ is well employed, in his appropriate work, when putting forth zealous and continuous efforts for its suppression.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Ministry and Temperance again.

REPLY TO "P. G. W. P."

Mr. Editor,—

Your correspondent having given himself ample time and space to do justice to my article and his subject, it will be interesting to note his success. * * *

What is his answer to my inquiries respecting the true relation between Temperance and Religion? Simply, that to preach the gospel to a drunkard seems to him "like casting pearls before swine." In other words that drunkenness is a sin which the Gospel is incapable of removing, the drunkard a character that it is not adapted to reach. Now Mr. Editor, who is your correspondent? Surely he has never preached that Gospel which he regards as so inefficacious. Has he himself ever received it? Does he credit the declaration that "it is the power of

God unto salvation to every one that believeth," or this "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe?" * *

But I will not follow a bad example by arguing against him, but endeavour dispassionately to examine his position. And first I would ask Is it Scriptural? Do we find prophets or Apostles inculcating such a sentiment? Do any of our Lord's teachings favor it? Who among the great lights of ecclesiastical history so understood the Bible? Which of our fathers would have been found willing to accept such an interpretation? We have heard of those who have become "wise above what is written"—I will not say "wiser than their teachers"—but "to the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." See Gal. vi. 8.

But is it in accordance with the teachings of enlightened reason? In what condition is "the habitual inebriate" prepared to receive Temperance "principles" that is not suitable for successfully proclaiming to him the simple Gospel? Indeed, is there not encouragement to stimulate to the latter work that we search for in vain to incite to the former? And are not Temperance men frequently compelled to declare that they have little hope of saving drunkards?

But supposing success possible, what is really effected by it? My opponent asks will any one venture the assertion that God disapproves of Temperance when disconnected from Religion? I reply, nothing less than the heart is acceptable to God. Nor am I authorized to believe that He will be satisfied with mere morality; or if it were pleasing to Him that He has called the ministry to labor for it, indeed our Lord plainly declares of moralists "the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." "God is angry with the wicked every day," no matter under what "generous impulses" or how successfully they may labor to advance "the cause of all mankind;" notwithstanding the opinion of our friend that such an idea is "preposterous," and however much it may be opposed to the natural heart.

With regard to Felix—the only passage he has not given up—I think "P. G. W. P." would find it difficult to prove that Paul "reasoned" upon the propriety of abstinence from intoxicating drink, or if he did, that did not follow the advocacy of "righteousness," or was not represented as inseparable from it. And were all Temperance advocates to "lecture" in the same way I do not doubt that it would secure Divine approval.

But my opponent tells me that these are the arguments "used by a class of ministers who are not Total Abstinents," and occupies no little space in discoursing thereupon. Now admitting it—which I only do for the sake of argument—I would ask what of it? Am I to be held responsible for the abuse of the views I advocate? Away with such a notion! What truth has always remained unperverted? On the contrary, are not the most important those most frequently and fearfully "wrested?" But who would dare to hold the God of truth accountable, or argue from this that His word is falsehood?

As respects his remarks upon my next paragraph, I would say it is easy to call a statement an "absurdity" but not always easy to show wherein lies that absurdity, and if the "question" was "foolish" may it not be regarded as a scriptural method of disposing of foolish arguments? See Prov. xxvi. 4, 5. * *

But having failed to show him where my difficulty really is, let me now state distinctly, that in the Church of Christ I find the "organization" to which he points me in "secondly," and in which his "thirdly" bids me labor with all my regenerated powers. And since it is a common and very proper argument with members of one Temperance organization when asked to give their support to another that they cannot labor efficiently in more than one, so I maintain that the Church meets every Temperance requirement. At any rate he is bound to show what a minister may accomplish by uniting with a Temperance Society that he cannot in the position to which he has been "divinely called." And having done this his next duty will be to answer the inquiry "who hath required this of your hand?" Nor will it be sufficient to tell us that our Lord "condescended to mingle with publicans and sinners" unless he can show that it was for the purpose of aiding them or receiving their assistance in reforming and saving the world.

And since he has plenty of light to import, let me remind him that this is "the point"—although he imagines that respecting it "no argument is necessary"—and that it is not worth his while to occupy himself with side issues or uncalled for and unkind remarks. And unless he can be brought and kept to this, I greatly fear

your readers will feel themselves called upon to decide which of us is most worthy of the title.

Yours very truly,
IGNORAMUS.

[We have found it absolutely necessary to curtail our friend's communication, but believe we have omitted nothing essential to the discussion. We doubt if a continuation of it will be desirable. At any rate, whatever is further written must be very brief.—Ed. C. M.]

For the Christian Messenger.

Psalmody and Praise.

No. 4.

The usefulness of a choir depends on continued effort. A high standard gained will lapse to that of the former congregational standard without the utmost vigilance and careful supervision. The chorister may be lacking in firmness, enterprise, or energy, the clamors of some persons in the congregation for old tunes and against new ones, and negligence of taste and style, may eventually discourage him. Again, unless the choir has been composed of large numbers originally, one is married, and her husband having little or no interest with the choir or singers, of course removes her place in the congregation, another removes from the congregation, another suffers from sickness, or is borne away to that choir above, and the seats are soon vacant. In such circumstances I would suggest that the chorister should have a singing class in connection with the Sabbath School. The Bible Class might become the choir of the Sabbath School, and all be taught at some period through the week, the principles of vocal music, the singing being varied, and all from the Note-book. Thus from the Sabbath School Choir, the vacancies in the choir of the church could be filled, and the work of praise be ever prosperous and creditable.

One great cause of decline in all choirs is the small number of singers, originally, and the too frequent repetition of old tunes. The singers become negligent in their practice and choir attendance, because of the absence of food for their musical taste, and, no variety affording an inducement for continued interest, the choir meetings die out: the little practice of the voice induces weakness of the vocal organs, and the singing is unsatisfactory even to the singers. Some unusually stormy or dull season then assassinates the institution, and the choir is dead. Too frequent repetition of the same tunes is an evil productive of so much negligent performance, so many fatalities to good taste and singing, that it cannot be sufficiently condemned, unless where the most scrupulous attention is paid to the rendition of each, as if it were, at each repetition, as a new tune.

One effect of a good choir is to render a minister pleased with his people, the congregation become better listeners, and so the sermon becomes a better sermon; while the refining influence causes the hand of grateful respect to be extended to the choir and thus an enviable state of relationship of heart to heart and soul to soul is established. The pastor's field is often enlarged, and a wide sphere of usefulness ensues.

I will now proceed to give some general hints and observations, on musical performance as it is, and as it should be; noticing, by the way, the various suggestions which have occurred to me while visiting various choirs in Halifax and vicinity.

Every person should possess sufficient knowledge of the principles of vocalization to be capable of singing in concert with others when desired. No person, unless destitute of ordinary intelligence, need ever despair of learning to sing, if disposed to apply themselves to the study. Experience, during a long professional career, has confirmed this opinion; and, although when properly conducted, singing commences to be taught in early childhood, any person who can become a good reader or talker, can be taught to sing, if placed in charge of a scientific instructor. We have faith in science, having witnessed almost impossibilities accomplished by its means. For the encouragement of parents, we may assure them that any child, if taken at an age of from two to ten years, can be taught to sing, if placed under instruction and musical influence, and it possesses any powers of imitation. The phrase "I have no ear for music," is an absurdity. No one could be taught to speak intelligibly who possessed no power of discrimination between sounds. The absence of musical talent in many families is the absence of music to imitate. Many persons delight in music, whether instrumental or vocal, yet who never have been known to sing; and who, if asked