

The Moravians.
Origin of their Name—Spirit of the Moravians—The Women—Religious and Social Customs—Piety—Missions—Neatness of Herrnhut—A Pleasant Interview.

In my last letter I devoted a few words to the outward aspect of the Moravian village of Herrnhut, and to the burying ground, where lie the bodies of Zinzendorf and the other founders of the community. I wish to devote this letter to a description of some of the peculiarities of this interesting people.

They are called Moravians by us, but they do not apply this designation to themselves at all. It is true they were originally from Moravia, an Austrian province, but after being banished for their religion's sake, and crossing the Saxon frontier, they were kindly received by the wealthy and devout Count Zinzendorf, and given large estates to till and take for their home.

Organizing themselves under his direction they dropped their old appellation, and called themselves Herrnhuters, or fearers of the Lord, and styled their village Herrnhut, or Fear the Lord. They grow slowly in numbers, and began to establish other communities of a similar character, not only in Germany, but in other parts of the world. Yet such is their method of operation, that while they are most influential for good, they are still very small, and not at all impatient to expand rapidly.

Zinzendorf and the Wesleys were warm and close personal friends, yet the bodies founded by these men are utterly unlike in animus and method. We all know what the genius of Methodism is; that of the Moravians is quietness, calmness, and a desire rather to awaken other churches into a quickened life than to grow, and gain proselytes and visible power. They are on the best terms with the Lutheran church of Saxony, and with the National church of Prussia, and their schools draw many children from those outside their own ranks. The German noblemen, wealthy people in England, and influential Americans residing in Germany often send their sons and daughters to the Moravians, sure of obtaining not only excellent instruction, but the very best moral and religious training.

So far as their theology is concerned, they vary but little from what may be called the evangelical faith of Christendom. Their striking peculiarity is, that what is dead elsewhere, is a living thing among the Moravians. They have a few peculiarities, but all of them are innocent and simple, and none of them are foolish.

The women designate their age and civil state by the color of the ribbons which they wear under their neat white caps. These caps are not always worn, but in church and in general society they are invariably to be seen, not only on the heads of women and maidens, but even on girls of ten and twelve. Up to the age of sixteen the ribbons beneath the chin are dark red; maidens above that age wear pink; when they marry they put on blue; when they become widows they wear white. This is the only change of clothing which is recognized at the death of friends; they do not, like some sects, affect a joy they cannot feel, by dressing at funerals in bridal white; nor do they put on the solemn black which most nations adopt. The men have no distinguishing costume whatever, nothing but their excessive neatness characterizes them.

A Moravian community is as perfect as any thing human can be expected to be. There is no object to be attained in joining one which may not be gained in other towns, excepting the constant companionship of good men and women. It is true the linen made by the Herrnhuters is famous, still one can get as good wages in other towns as there, and those who depend on wild frivolity, and on excesses of all kinds do not gravitate to them.

The Moravians do not stand here as the Shakers, nor even as the Quakers do with us and in England. They have no peculiarities of speech, and none of dress excepting the caps and ribbons alluded to above. As one might say in perfect correctness and without any slang use of words, there is no nonsense about them.

The community is open to any one to join and stay as long as he pleases. If a Moravian marries a wife who does not belong to the community, she must join it, or he must go out, and equally so if a Moravian woman marries a man not connected with the community. If a man who is a shoemaker, blacksmith, carpenter, or what, not wishes to join a community, he may do so if there is not a surplus already of men following the same craft, but if there be, he must go to some other community where an opening for him may exist.

The community owns all the land, and has the control of all the houses, and if a man joins them and then keeps a disorderly house, or leads a wild life, he is forced to leave the place without delay. Of course married people live in families as in all other places, but those who are unmarried have what we should call Commons, or houses where they can board at a cheap rate. The one for unmarried men is called the Brothers' House, that for unmarried women the Sisters' House. The price of board is only seventy-five cents a week, and the fare, of course, is exceedingly simple. Four or five room together, and in this way the same house accommodates a large number. All labor at some occupation, the weaving of linen on hand looms being the chief industry of the place.

The Moravians are a people eminently given to psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. They have a meeting every evening of the week, and in the brothers' and sisters' houses the day is begun with a short devotional exercise. The church is very large, surprisingly so to me, who knew that the village has a population of only a thousand souls. The church accommodates

two thousand, however, and unlike German churches generally, it is always full. The secret lies in this, that the villagers in the neighborhood like to come up to Herrnhut to worship. The general tone of the exercises is still and peaceful, the sermon is not boisterous, the prayers are not loud appeals to Heaven, all is consonant with the quiet and gentle spirit which every where prevails among the Moravians. Their singing is not exceptional to this, for though massive, united, hearty, strong, a grand burst of praise, it is sustained, and free from all excitement or passion. Nothing in sacred song can be finer, and it is worth going many miles to hear it.

The interior of their church is very simple, and yet it would be harsh to call it bare. When filled with people it is a truly impressive spectacle. The men, all neatly dressed, wear devout faces, and drink in every word as if it did them real good. The women and maidens, all wearing snow white caps, and the various colored ribbons spoken of above, form a pleasant sight, as they sit with countenances fixed on the minister, or join in the hymns of praise. The children share in the gravity of the scene, and not a whisper or smile disturbs the sanctity of the place.

The order of service is not unlike that of other German churches, excepting that the prayers are oral and extemporal as with us, and not read from a liturgy. Excepting for the language and the grand scale of the singing, one might easily believe himself back in New England.

Yet the Moravians are far from being stiff and bigoted. They are liberal in the best sense of the term. They have no harsh word for other bodies of Christians, and they have in return the respect and admiration of all. They are doing and have always been doing a great work. They form the living centre of the piety of Germany. They are but twenty thousand in number, scattered all through northern Germany in villages never over a thousand large, and often not half that size. There are about eighty of their communities in all, and yet feeble and few as they are, they have thirty foreign mission stations, and three hundred missionaries carrying on their work. To them they pay a sum equivalent to \$300,000 of our present paper currency. Of course they cannot raise this enormous sum among themselves, but it speaks well for the confidence which is felt in them, that the members of other churches entrust so much to them to be applied according to their own judgment.

The Moravians have missions in every quarter of the world; in Greenland, Labrador, South America, Australia, the West Indies, Hindostan and South Africa. They are good, simple-minded men whom they send out, and though without much education, yet as they are often artisans they are perhaps as capable of doing good as the more highly trained men from America and England.

I spoke in the last letter of the exceeding neatness of the town. Every thing was like wax-work, and one could take food from the sidewalk with almost as much relish as from a plate. Not a particle of dust was visible anywhere. At the inn the landlord had nothing of the gross expression habitual among German landlords, and his house seemed like a home. In the streets were fountains of water surrounded with deep tanks containing hundreds of gallons; this was a good sign, for where water is running so profusely one generally finds that it is put to good uses. I do believe the Germans would be a cleaner race if they would introduce water-pipes into their houses, and not adhere to the old time custom of bringing it a bucket-full at a time from the spring or pump, rods away.

In the houses the people live in tenements, and those who must bring every stick of wood and every pail of water up three flights of stairs have a burden which Americans would not submit to long.

But I must close, with the remark that my visit to Herrnhut was one of the sunniest excursions of my life. The ramble across the country, the odd adventures in Bohemia, the cheerful, and hospitable, and pious Moravian village, we shall not any of us soon forget. God bless the good and true servants whom he has in that pleasant, sunny spot—W. & R.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

By REV. CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

CHAPTER VIII.

PASTORATE IN ST. JOHN.

(No. 1.)

This Chapter is intended to embrace a period of only nine months, namely, from Jan. 1st, 1826, to Oct. 1st of the same year.

It is evidently the part of faithfulness to record my errors for the benefit of others; but duty to the cause of Christ, as well as to myself, demands, that where any one has been wrongfully attributed to me, through misapprehension, a candid and correct explanation should be given.

Quite probably an incorrect impression rests upon the minds of some persons, unacquainted with the facts of the case, that in my removal to St. John, N. B. I supplanted my predecessor; as about 16 members evinced anxiety after my

arrival to retain him. It seems requisite, therefore, to rectify this gross mistake. Every thing of this nature has always been held in abhorrence by me. With reference to this matter I can most truthfully adopt the language of Paul, "I have lived in all good conscience before God unto this day." For the pastor of the church of St. John who preceded me, I entertained a high esteem and strong affection. When supplying his place at different times, in compliance with his request, it was my constant aim, as it should be that of every visiting minister, to strengthen the bands of union between the shepherd and the flock. Never was a word uttered by me, either in public or in private, with the design of drawing the affections of any from him to myself. It was my sincere and earnest desire that he should retain the pastoral office in the city.

On the receipt of a letter from the church to which he had ministered, informing me that he had written to them, stating that the climate had not agreed with his health, that before his departure he had been convinced that he must remove from St. John, and now tendered his resignation, and advised them to call me immediately—which they did—I replied, in all sincerity, that if there was a shadow of hope that he might be induced to return, and resume the pastoral charge, I could not for a moment think of being in any measure the occasion of preventing it. In answer it was stated, that from the tenor of his letter they did not conceive there was a shadow of such hope.

After my arrangement with the church was thus cautiously made, a letter came to my hand from the former pastor, written in St. John, in which he confirmed the statement formerly made, that he had resigned the pastorate, and advised the calling of me. It did not surprise me that he had returned to St. John; as that was naturally required to adjust his affairs; but there were some remarks in his letter which appeared mystical, and almost seemed to hint, that he might have remained, if a supply had not been obtained. On this I immediately wrote, both to him, and to the church, through their clerk, urgently requesting that, if he could be prevailed on to renew his labors among them, I might be released from my engagement; assuring them that my feelings would not be hurt, and that it would be no temporal disadvantage to me. (It may be remarked here, that my salary in the country was at the rate of a hundred pounds per annum, and in the city it was to be a hundred and fifty; but the increase of expenses, with other disadvantages, would be quite equivalent to the increase of allowance. Probably no one thought that my worldly interests would be promoted by my removal.) He did not answer my letter, but told the clerk that he would be glad to see me on the ground as soon as possible. The latter communicated this to me from him, and stated that there was not the slightest prospect of any such arrangement; but that the church held me to my engagement. Of course the matter was then regarded by me as fully decided and settled.

As it was arranged for Mrs. Tupper and me, with our youngest child then living, to perform the journey by sleighing, and the snow did not fall as early as usual, we were detained till the 24th day of January. The time was spent in labouring among the people of my former charge.

On arriving in St. John, with the reasonable expectation of being cordially received by all concerned, and calling on my esteemed friend and brother the former pastor, the mistress of the house where he was stopping remarked, with evident indications of displeasure, "If brother Tupper had not come, brother ——— would not have left us." This salutation fell upon me like a ponderous weight, almost crushing me. As he intimated nothing to the contrary, I presently requested a private interview, and in it respectfully sought an explanation. He at once expressed a full persuasion of the purity of my motives, and the prudence of my conduct. It was, however, quite evident to me, that he felt chafed at the readiness with which his advice had been taken by the church. Some of his most ardent friends, it appears, had been grieved and displeased at the manner in which he had tendered his resignation, while away from them, and had readily agreed to dismiss him. Apparently to quiet their perturbed spirits it seemed that he had not apprized them of the fact, that he had while absent entered into a positive engagement with another church to return to them without delay, and labor with them as their pastor. This subsequently became fully known from a letter addressed to me by a deacon of that church, who stated it explicitly, and entreated me to urge him to return to them immediately, as the cause of religion was suffering

through his neglect to fulfil his engagement with them. Not knowing these facts, however, at the time of our interview, I stated to him, in kind and sincerity, that I could not endure the thought of settling with a church in a state of division and party strife; and that even then would readily resign the pastorate, if he would assume it. As he refused to do this, the duty as imperative on me.

No untoward consequences that resulted from circumstances beyond my control, can be justly bargained to my account. It must be obvious to every unprejudiced mind, that a course more remote from supplanting could not have been pursued. The ardent desire expressed by some persons to retain their former pastor, did much harm; but conciliatory measures in time reconciled nearly all of them to the change.

If may be remarked here, as a useful deduction from this narrative—reluctantly furnished from a sense of duty—that with us the removal of one minister, and the settlement of another, are usually matters of delicacy, attended with much danger of disaffection. Hence it is obviously undesirable that such changes should take place with frequency, or without urgent necessity. No church should ever call a settled pastor, unless he is known to regard it as his duty to move. When such a change is deemed indispensable, it ought to be effected with much caution, prudence, and candor, by all the parties concerned. Self-will should be carefully avoided. Each individual should quietly acquiesce in the general voice. So great is the importance of union and harmony in a church, that it is evidently incumbent on all sedulously to "endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

For the Christian Messenger.

Extracts from the Letters read at the Central Baptist Association.

Dartmouth Church writes:—"We regret that we have not to record the conversion of souls as the fruit of the faithful ministrations of God's word. Yet we hope it has not been in vain. The seed sown may yet produce an abundant harvest. We have been trying hard to liquidate a small debt that is on our meeting house, but have not yet succeeded in raising the amount."

Rev. A. F. Porter labors with this church under the direction of the Home Missionary Board.

Church at Newport East, writes:—"God has been very gracious to us as a church notwithstanding our apathy and indifference, and in connexion with our sister church we have enjoyed a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Some precious souls have been brought from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God; and some have been enabled to leave the commandments of men, and obey the commandments of the Lord Jesus. Number baptized eight."

Rev. J. BANCROFT, Pastor.

Church at Lunenburg, writes:—"We desire again to record the goodness and mercy of God that in the midst of all our unfaithfulness, his love and faithfulness has been great to us. There has not been any great manifestation of God's power grace among us. Yet we desire to be thankful that he has not forgotten us, but that the influence of his Holy Spirit has been felt, and we have been encouraged and strengthened by seeing a few souls converted and added to the church during the year. At Mahone Bay our meetings have been well attended and very interesting; the additions by baptism have been all in that section of the church. The people listen attentively to the preaching of the gospel, much good seed has been sown, there is a spirit of enquiry among the people, and we hope ere long to see a large harvest of souls gathered into the branch of the church at Mahone Bay. In other sections we have to deplore too much of the Laodicean spirit, too much apathy and neglect of duty. May God revive us. Number baptized seven."

Rev. A. SHIELDS, Pastor.

The Church at Upper Aylesford, writes:—"We have great cause for gratitude and praise to our Heavenly Father for his faithful loving-kindness manifested toward us. The week of prayer was observed by us, and the Lord was with us, and helped his people to pray. The church was quickened and revived, and the Spirit of the Lord was manifest in awakening the careless and prayerless to a consciousness of their guilt and danger. Though there were no additions to the church, yet we trust the efforts put forth may be like bread cast upon the water that may be seen after many days."

Rev. J. L. READ, Pastor.

The 2nd Cornwallis Church, writes:—"Though we can record no special manifestation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during the past year, yet we see such tokens of God's love as do evince to us that he has not forsaken his heritage. In one branch of this church, at Black Rock, the cause has been revived and a number been added to the church. Since we last addressed you, death has removed from us a worthy veteran of the cross, The Rev. W.