

FOR THE CITY GAZETTE.

MR. DURANT.

If you conceive the following piece of history will, at this juncture, be either amusing or instructive to your readers, it is very much at your service, A SUBSCRIBER.

Extract from "Gregory's History of the Christian Church."

It was observed that, in a very early period of the reformation, certain of the disciples of Luther, and particularly one of the name of Muncer, adopted opinions, in some instances apparently replete with enthusiasm, and on some occasions proceeded to the disturbance of the public tranquillity. From these violent reformers proceeded the formidable sect of the Anabaptists. They first made their appearance in the provinces of Upper Germany, where the severity of the magistrates kept them under control. But in the Netherlands and Westphalia, where the tendency of their opinions was more unknown, and guarded against with less care, they obtained admittance into several towns, and spread the contagion of their principles. The most remarkable of their religious tenets related to the sacrament of baptism, which, as they contended, ought to be administered only to persons grown up to years of understanding, and should be performed not by sprinkling them with water, but by dipping them in it: for this reason they condemned the baptism of infants; and rebaptizing all whom they admitted into their society, the sect came to be distinguished by the name of anabaptists. To this peculiar notion concerning baptism, which has the appearance of being founded on the practice of the church in the apostolic age, and contains nothing inconsistent with the peace and order of human society, they added other principles of a most enthusiastic as well as dangerous nature. They maintained that, among Christians who had the precepts of the gospel to direct, and the spirit of God to guide them, the office of magistracy was not only unnecessary, but an unlawful encroachment on their spiritual liberty; that the distinctions occasioned by birth, or rank, or wealth, being contrary to the spirit of the gospel which considers all men as equal, should be entirely abolished; that all Christians, throwing their possessions into one common stock, should live together in that state of equality which becomes members of the same family; that as neither the laws of nature, nor the precepts of the New Testament, had imposed any restraints upon men with regard to the number of wives which they might marry, they should use that liberty which God himself had granted to the patriarchs.

Such opinions, propagated and maintained with enthusiastic zeal and boldness, were not long without producing the violent effects natural to them. Two Anabaptist prophets, John Matthias, a baker of Haarlem, and John Boccold, or Beukels, a journeyman taylor of Leyden, possessed with the rage of making profecies, fixed their residence at Munster, an imperial city of Westphalia, of the first rank, under the sovereignty of its bishop, but governed by its own senate and consuls. As neither of these fanatics wanted the talents requisite in desperate enterprises, great resolution, the appearance of sanctity, bold pretensions to inspiration, and a confident and plausible manner of discoursing, they soon gained many converts. Among these were Rothman, who had first preached the protestant doctrine in Munster, and Knipperdoling, a citizen of good birth and considerable eminence. Emboldened by the countenance of such disciples, they openly taught their opinions; and not satisfied with that liberty, they made several attempts, though without success, to become masters of the town, in order to get their tenets established by public authority. At last, having secretly called in their associates from the neighbouring country, they suddenly took possession of the arsenal and senate-house in the night, and running through the streets with drawn swords, and horrible howlings, cried out alternately, "Repent, and be baptized," and "Depart, ye ungodly." The senators, the canons, the nobility, together with the more sober citizens, whether Baptists or Protestants, terrified at their threats and outcries, fled in confusion, and left the city under the dominion of a fanatic multitude, consisting chiefly of strangers. Nothing now remained to overawe or controul them, they set about modelling the government according to their own wild ideas; and though at first they shewed so much reverence for the ancient constitution, as to elect senators of their own sect, and to appoint Knipperdoling and another profecy consuls, this was nothing more than form; for all their proceedings were directed by Matthias, who, in the style, and with the authority of a prophet, uttered his commands, which it was instant death to disobey. Having begun with encouraging the multitude to pillage the churches, and deface their ornaments, he enjoined them to destroy all books except the Bible, as useless or impious; he ordered the estates of such as fled to be confiscated, and sold to the inhabitants of the adjacent country; he commanded every man to bring forth his gold, silver, and other precious effects, and to lay them at his feet: the wealth amassed by these means, he deposited in a public treasury, and named deacons to dispense it for the common use of all. The members of this commonwealth being thus brought to a perfect equality, he commanded all of them to eat at tables prepared in public, and even prescribed the dishes which were to be served up each day. Having finished his plan of reformation, his next care was to provide for the defence of the city; and he took measures for that purpose with a prudence

which betrayed nothing of fanaticism. He collected large magazines of every kind; he repaired and extended the fortifications, obliging every person without distinction to work in his turn; he formed such as were capable of bearing arms into regular bodies, and endeavored to add the stability of discipline to the impetuosity of enthusiasm. He sent emissaries to the Anabaptists in the Low Countries, inviting them to assemble at Munster, which he dignified with the name of Mount-Sion, that they might set out to reduce all the nations of the earth under their dominion. He himself was unwearied in attending to every thing necessary for the security or increase of the sect; animating his disciples by his own example to decline no labour, as well as to submit to every hardship; and their enthusiastic passions being kept from subsiding by a perpetual succession of exhortations, revelations, and prophecies, they seemed ready to undertake or suffer any thing in maintenance of their opinions.

While they were thus employed, the bishop of Munster, having assembled a considerable army, advanced to besiege the town. On his approach, Matthias sallied out at the head of some chosen troops, attacked one quarter of his camp, forced it, and after great slaughter returned to the city loaded with glory and with spoil. Intoxicated with this success, he appeared next day brandishing a spear, and declared, that, in imitation of Gideon, he would go forth with a handful of men, and smite the host of the ungodly. Thirty persons whom he named, followed him without hesitation in this wild enterprise, and, rushing on the enemy with a frantic courage, were cut off to a man. The death of their prophet occasioned at first, great consternation among his disciples; but Boccold, by the same gift, and pretensions which had gained Matthias credit, soon revived their spirits and hopes to such a degree, that he succeeded the deceased prophet in the same absolute direction of all their affairs. As he did not possess that enterprising courage which distinguished his predecessor, he satisfied himself with carrying on a defensive war; and without attempting to annoy the enemy by sallies, he waited for the succours he expected from the Low Countries, the arrival of which was often foretold and promised by their prophets. But though less daring in action than Matthias, he was a wilder enthusiast, and of more unbounded ambition. Soon after the death of his predecessor, having, by obscure visions and prophecies, prepared the multitude for some extraordinary event, he stripped himself naked, and marching through the streets, proclaimed with a loud voice, "That the kingdom of Sion was at hand; that whatever was highest on earth should be brought low, and whatever was lowest should be exalted." In order to fulfil this, he commanded the churches, as the most lofty buildings in the city, to be levelled with the ground; he degraded the senators chosen by Matthias, and depriving Knipperdoling of the consularship, the highest office in the commonwealth, appointed him to execute the lowest and most infamous, that of common hangman, to which strange transition the other agreed, not only without murmuring, but with the utmost joy; and such was the despotic rigour of Boccold's administration, that he was called almost every day to perform some duty or other of his wretched function. In place of the deposed senators, he named twelve judges, according to the number of tribes in Israel, to preside in all affairs; retaining to himself the same authority, which Moses anciently possessed as legislator of that people.

Not satisfied, however, with power or titles which were not supreme, a prophet, whom he had gained and tutored, having called the multitude together, declared it to be the will of God, that John Boccold should be king of Sion, and sit on the throne of David. John, kneeling down, accepted of the Heavenly call, which he solemnly protested had been revealed likewise to himself, and was immediately acknowledged as monarch by the deluded multitude. From that moment he assumed all the state and pomp of royalty. He wore a crown of gold, and was clad in the richest and most sumptuous garments. A Bible was carried on his one hand, and a naked sword on the other. A great body of guards accompanied him when he appeared in public. He coined money stamped with his own image, and appointed the great officers of his household and kingdom, among whom Knipperdoling was nominated governor of the city, as a reward for his former submission.

Having now attained the height of power, Boccold began to discover passions, which he had hitherto restrained, or indulged only in secret. As the excesses of enthusiasm have been observed in every age to lead to sensual gratifications, the same constitution that is susceptible of the former being remarkably prone to the latter, he instructed the prophets and teachers to harangue the people for several days, concerning the lawfulness and even necessity of taking more wives than one, which they asserted to be one of the privileges granted by God to the Saints. When their ears were once accustomed to this licentious doctrine, and their passions inflamed with the prospect of such unbounded indulgence, he himself set them an example of using what he called their Christian liberty, by marrying at once three wives, among whom the widow of Matthias, a woman of singular beauty, was one. As he was allured by beauty, or the love of variety he gradually added to the number of his wives, until they amounted to four.

*Styled the "Prince Bishop" being as was frequent among the petty States of Germany, of the Roman Faith, the temporal Sovereign, as well as Ecclesiastical Ruler.

teen, though the widow of Matthias was the only one dignified with the title of queen, or who shared with him the splendor and ornaments of royalty. After the example of their prophet, the multitude gave themselves up to the most licentious and uncontrolled gratification of their desires. No man remained satisfied with a single wife. Not to use their Christian liberty, was deemed a crime. Persons were appointed to search the houses for young women grown up to maturity, whom they instantly compelled to marry. Together with polygamy, freedom of divorce, its inseparable attendant, was introduced, and became a new source of corruption. Every excess was committed, of which the passions of men are capable, when restrained neither by the authority of laws nor the sense of decency; and by a monstrous and almost incredible conjunction, voluptuousness was engrafted on religion, and dissolute riot accompanied the austerities of fanatical devotion.

(To be continued.)

HALIFAX, NOV. 19.

Another singular Capture. The sloop Mary, thence for Castine, with a valuable cargo of Dry Goods, has been captured.

The above account has been received from two gentlemen, one from St. John the other from Castine, but they do not state at what time, or where she was captured, nor by whom. We understand she is insured in this town, to the amount of Twenty Three Thousand Pounds! It has been said, we cannot vouch for the authenticity of the report, that the principal part of the Goods belonged to a Mr. Smith an English American!—Acad. Rec.

CONTRACT.

SUCH Persons as are desirous to Contract for Lathing and Plastering, as also for laying the Floors and finishing the Pews and Galleries, &c. of the Presbyterian Church, will please call on the subscriber, who will give them every information respecting the work to be done, and will receive their sealed proposals until Thursday the 15th inst. at 12 o'clock, noon.

JAMES GRIGOR.

St. John, December 5th, 1814.

COMMISSARIAT OFFICE,

Saint John, New-Brunswick,
12th Novr. 1814.

CASH

WANTED for BILLS of EXCHANGE, drawn on the Right Honorable the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, at Thirty Days Sight.—Tenders for Sums (not less than one hundred pounds Sterling) will be received at this Office.

DOUBLOONS weighing 17 dwts. 8 gr. will be received in payment at £ 3 : 17 : 6 each.

R. EDWARDS,
Assistant Commissary-General.

Sugar and Rum,

NOW LANDING FROM THE BRIG HIRAM, FROM BARBADOS. SEVENTY-TWO Hogsheds of MUSCOVADO SUGAR, and 53 Puncheons of RUM, For Sale on reasonable terms, by EDMOND & BEDELL. 26th October, 1814. 6i

JAMAICA SPIRITS.

100 Puncheons of high proof JAMAICA SPIRITS, and Six Hogsheds of SUGAR, now landing from the brig ANN, from Kingston, (Jam.) and for sale by the subscriber, very low for Cash, at his Store, Lower-Cove. CRAVEN CALVERLEY. St. John, 16th Nov. 1814.

JUST LANDING,

From on board the Brig Margaret, Donald M'Alley, Master, from Demarara. HIGH proof Demarara RUM, SUGAR, MOLASSES and COFFEE, which will be sold on reasonable terms by DANIEL & FRANCIS LEAVITT. St. John, 12th Novr. 1814. 6w

FOR SALE,

A Public Auction, on the first day of February next, if not previously disposed of at private sale, a valuable BUILDING LOT, adjoining north of Mrs. Bedell's, in Germain Street, nearly opposite the Methodist Chapel, being 50 feet front on said Street, and 40 feet back. For terms apply to HULDAH BUTLER. St. John, 5th Dec. 1814.

NOTICE.

THE Subscriber forbids any Person or Persons from opening his boom at his place or taking any Timber out without his leave. I also forbid any Person or Persons to credit or transact business of any kind with John Crafts, on my account or that I am concerned with. RICHARD LEE. Miramichi, 6th July, 1814.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THOSE Persons who stand indebted to the Firm of HENRY CHUBB & Co. are requested to call and settle their respective balances;—and those to whom the said Firm is indebted, will please render their Accounts for adjustment. St. John, Dec. 3, 1814.

NOTICE.

ALL Persons having any just Demands against the Estate of the late Honorable WILLIAM HAZEN, Esq. deceased, are desired to render them forthwith; and all Persons indebted to the said Estate, are required to make immediate payment to EDWIN HAZEN, } Administrators. WARD CHIPMAN, Jun. } St. John, 9th April, 1814.

ALL Persons are also strictly cautioned against TRESPASSING on the Lands belonging to the said Estate, as any one so doing, will be prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the Law.

TO LET,

Good Furnished Lodgings for Gentlemen—Also, Boarding.

A Commodious House having been built for the above purpose, good accommodations can be had for the same.

Likewise, Stabling for Horses.—Inquire of

SAMUEL H. M'KEE.

Saint John, 17th October, 1814.

POST-OFFICE, ST. JOHN, NOV. 12.

A LIST OF LETTERS

Remaining in this Office uncalled for—unless these Letters are taken out soon, they will be sent to the General Post Office, as dead Letters.

ALEXANDER, J.; Anfordsent, Wm. Adams, James; Adams, Rachel; Addison, Mrs.; Allen, Thomas; Brown, John; Dickson, Edward; Eagles, Mrs.; Fowler, Mr.; Fryer, Ellen; Flaherty, Mrs.; Garden, Wm. Capt.; Grant, Sarah B.; Goddard, Joseph; Glaire, Mrs.; Gray, Joshua; Gardner, Samuel; Herd, James; Bandy, James; Maleom, John; Hovey, Moses; Haight, Susanna; Jones, Samuel; Kerkman, James; Kennedy, Elizabeth; Kennedy, Ann; M'Intosh, Alexander; Mager, Joseph; Morrell, John; Nailer, J.; Oldie, Abigail; Obrian, James; Obtenice, John; Phillips, David; Pears, Henry; Ray, Jas.; Reid, Jas.; Seaton, Washington; Sinton, David; Shaw, Duncan; Trueman, Henry; Turner, Barton; Tauton, Michael; Trip, Raymond; Thomas, Thomas; Wilkins, Nancy; Wilson, Jeffy; Wilson, Robert; Yeamans, John.

During the Winter Months, the Mails for Great-Britain, and Nova-Scotia will be closed every TUESDAY, at sun set.

N. B. No letters will be forwarded to Great-Britain unless the inland postage to Halifax is paid—No letters will be received or delivered after dark. WM. CAMPBELL.

NOTICE.

IN consequence of the decease of the late BRADFORD GILBERT, Esq. the Copartnership of BRADFORD GILBERT and SON, and BRADFORD & THOMAS GILBERT is this day dissolved—All persons having any demands against said Firms, or against the Estate of the late BRADFORD GILBERT, Esq. deceased, are requested to present them, duly attested, for Payment; and all those indebted to said Firms and Estate, are requested to make immediate payment to ANN GILBERT, Administratrix. H. GILBERT, } Administrators. THOMAS H. GILBERT, } St. John, Feb. 1, 1814.

A ROOM

TO LET until the 1st May next. Enquire at this Office.

MONDAY, 7th Nov. 1814.

THE CITY GAZETTE,

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