

# The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWS PAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

REV. I. E. BILL,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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## BAPTIST HISTORY OF THESE LOWER PROVINCES.

### CHAPTER XIV.

#### County of Yarmouth.

In the midst of the wonderful manifestation of God's saving power, which was described in the last Chapter, Mr. Cunningham, overcome by physical debility, deemed it prudent to withdraw from the scene, and return to his Church and family in Lower Canada. The day immediately prior to his departure homeward, was the Sabbath; but he was too much exhausted—too feeble—to avail himself of the privileges of the public sanctuary. Instead of standing up in the pulpit, and in the deep persuasive tones of evangelical earnestness, preaching the gospel of reconciliation, he lay stretched upon a sofa, and under the enervating influence of a distressing attack of asthma, was literally panting for breath. During his mission, he had been hospitably entertained by Joseph Shaw, Esquire, the High Sheriff of the County; and now, on the eve of his departure, the room which he occupied was crowded by persons, who came to sympathize with him in his sufferings, or to bid him farewell ere he should turn his back upon Yarmouth. Around him stood throngs of weeping young converts, who regarded him as their spiritual father, and who were "exceedingly sorrowful" because he was about to leave them—Many a tear was shed, and many a silent prayer went up to God in behalf of His servant, who lay prostrate and debilitated by over-exertion in the mighty work in which he had been so successfully engaged for several weeks.

Next day, the disease under which he was labouring, was somewhat abated; and though still feeble, he started for home. In his journey thither, the Rev. John Chase was his sympathetic and affectionate travelling companion. And the second night after leaving Yarmouth, he reached his own dwelling; and there, in a state of great physical exhaustion, sought a bed of repose. He had been absent about eleven weeks; and perhaps few ministers had ever been instrumental in accomplishing a larger amount of good in so short a period.

Mr. Cunningham left in the morning; and on the same evening, the Rev. Charles Randall, of Weymouth, arrived in Yarmouth, to assist the Pastors of the Church in their arduous labours. Brother Perez E. Murray, too, was there; and the whitened field before these servants of Christ afforded ample scope for the exercise of all their zeal and united activity. The nightly meetings were still crowded—still owned of God in the salvation of souls—and still scenes of deliverance were exhibited, which no doubt were sources of holy joy to the angels in Heaven. Sabbath after Sabbath the rite of Christian Baptism continued to be administered, till no less than one hundred and ninety-three were added to the Church.

During the following year, (1851) causes of disagreement arose in the Church, and threatened the disconnection of a considerable portion of the body. Meanwhile, Mr. Burton seemed intent upon seeking another field of ministerial labour; and accordingly tendered his resignation. To many, who, during twenty years had been profiting by his ministry, and who felt strongly united to him by personal and religious attachments, the idea of his leaving Yarmouth was a most painful and trying consideration. The tie between pastor and people is of too holy a nature to be lightly severed; and the thought of giving up the labours of Mr. Burton by a majority of the Church, was a melancholy reflection.

His resignation, however, tended to heal differences, and unite brethren who had been partially estranged from each other; and all the Church, with apparently one voice, implored him to withdraw his resignation, and consent to remain. In compliance with these entreaties, he was prevailed upon to resume his labours, among a loving people with whom he had spent so many happy years in the midst of religious prosperity.

At this time, Father Harding was ninety years of age, and the Church consisted of more than seven hundred members. Under these circumstances, it was felt that more pastoral labour was needed than Mr. Burton could well perform. A fellow-labourer, then, became a desideratum. After considerable inquiry and preliminary correspondence, the Rev. John Davis, in September, 1852, became the assistant of the pre-existing pastors of the Church.

Notwithstanding all the measures which had been taken to retain him, Mr. Burton was still resolved to leave Yarmouth; and on the 2nd of April 1853, he was dismissed from the Church, and removed to the City of St. John. A powerful sense of duty made him impelled him to take such a decisive step. For twenty-two and a half years he had preached the Gospel in that interesting region. There, too, the prime and vigour of his days—he may say his best days—had been spent. There many ties of attachment, personal, social, and religious—had been

formed; there many of his children had been born, and there the beloved wife of his youth had been buried. To leave a locality, which must have been endeared to him by so many tender and sacred associations, required no small amount of self-sacrificing determination, especially as he knew that many in the Church felt that his removal was causing a vacancy in the religious community which could not be easily filled.

Mr. D. vis, meanwhile, entered upon the duties of his ministry in Yarmouth, and his qualifications for the pulpit were highly appreciated by the congregations that were in the habit of addressing and receiving the removal of Mr. Burton was less felt than it otherwise might have been.

In the Spring of 1853, the First Yarmouth Church was divided into three bands, two additional Churches being organized, which were composed of members dismissed from the parent Church. One was located at Chagoggin, and called the West Yarmouth Church;—the other at Chebogue, called the South Yarmouth Church. This ecclesiastical arrangement greatly narrowed the sphere of Mr. Davis's pastoral labours, which the necessity were almost exclusively confined to the town. During his pastorate, there were a few additions by baptism; but, upon the whole, it was a period of trial and discouragement: for many turned aside from the pathway of practical godliness, and rendered their exclusion unavoidable. In the previous revival, there had been a high degree of excitement; and a reaction, owing to causes that need not now be stated, suddenly taking place, was productive of the most deplorable results.

Mr. Davis was a rigid disciplinarian; and when he failed to reclaim those who had wandered far from "the fold of God," he deemed it to be the duty of the Church to expel them from its fellowship. Although Father Harding, sinking as he was under the weight of years, still continued to occupy the pulpit, and, with streaming eyes, to talk of the love of Jesus, it was painfully apparent that his work on earth was almost done.—His brethren and his family treated him to "rest from his labours;" but in vain.—While he had sufficient strength left to climb into his carriage, he would drive from his home and visit his "dear people," as he ever affectionately called them; and on the Sabbath, he would totter up the long aisle of the meeting house, and clamber up the pulpit steps, with the desire in his heart as fervent as ever, to speak of the abounding of God's grace to sinners. What though age had impaired his bodily vigour, it threw no cloud over the vision of his faith. Earthly prospects, in this shadowy twilight of his mortal existence, may have been shrouded in gloom; but as the darkness deepened, the hopes and promises of the Gospel, like stars shining out of an evening sky, grew brighter and brighter. Though earth was dark, there was light in Heaven. Though his physical organization was rapidly giving way, and tending downward to the dust, his thoughts, his hopes, his aspirations, were all on High. The purchased inheritance—the prepared mansion—the white robes—and the palms of victory were bright in his view. As he gazed on these promised glories in the exercise of faith, he may have listened, half expecting to catch the sound of the perpetual alleluia—the everlasting song—of the redeemed in Heaven.

His dissolution, however, was at hand; and he was prostrate on a dying bed. Day by day, his pulse beat more feebly—his vital energy more less active—and his friends wept as they looked upon him in his closing hours of mortal life. At length the summons came—the silver cord was loosened—he ceased to breathe, and his spirit was with God. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" and well might a wicked prophet desire to "die the death of the righteous." His Life had made a deep impression on the surrounding community, and so did his Death. They were both practically illustrative of the truths he had taught for many years. The former was significant of holiness—the latter, of triumph.

This event occurred on the 7th of March, 1854. He was the last of the Fathers in Nova Scotia. Of all his youthful cotemporaries in the ministry, none remained, except Father Joseph Crandall, in New Brunswick, who remained a little longer—the last link of the chain which connected a by-gone generation with the present. The whole Protestant portion of the County of Yarmouth was deeply affected, as the tidings of his death were rapidly circulated. While the pious wept, the impenitent were solemnized,—for all knew that a righteous man had been taken from the earth. He was personally known to all, and all had listened to the evangelical admonitions which fell from his lips. Renowned in some isolated locality, or newly tenanted was the habitation in the large township of Yarmouth, which he had not entered to pray and talk of a Saviour's love. No wonder, then, that multitudes were mourners at his burial. All sectarian and denominational distinctions were forgotten, as they assembled to consign the remains of the venerated "Preacher of Righteousness" to the narrow house appointed to all living. It was not an exclusive funeral.—That he was a Baptist was lost sight of for the time being. The Ministers and people of all religious denominations were there to take a part in the funeral rites, either as mourners, or clerical servants of Christ.—Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Free Will, and Free Christian Baptists were all there, represented by the ministers of their respective Churches, each of whom took a part in the solemn services of the day. It a Calvinistic Baptist preached the sermon, his Episcopal brother in the ministry read a suitable portion of Scripture, and all the clergymen present, either in prayer, or in reading a hymn, or in addressing the dense congregation performed a part in the obsequies of the departed.—In all this, there was no ostentatious display of temporary respect, got up expressly for the funeral, and with full-hearted sincerity, expressed their esteem for the saint, and their high appreciation of the Christian minister. More than sixty years before he had come to Yarmouth, to tell its inhabitants the story of Calvary; but he was hated, persecuted, and his message despised for a time. Years, however, passed away, and God had greatly blessed his labours.—He dies, with all the aspects of religious prosperity around him, respected and mourned by a whole township. Verily, God exalteth the horn of the righteous.

Waiting for the Holy Spirit. We were not seated in the parlor, before a servant entered, and said, a lady in the hall wished to see me. I immediately stepped into the hall, and a very genteel lady, about forty years of age, addressed me, with evident agitation:— "I beg your pardon for troubling you to-night, sir, but I cannot help it. I have longed to see you ever since you preached here in August. I have often felt that I would give anything to see you, for even five minutes."

"I am very glad to see you, Madam; but I suspect you have taken all this trouble in vain."

"Why, sir, cannot you talk with me one minute? cannot you answer me one question?" said she, her eyes overflowing with tears.

"Certainly, certainly, Madam; I can talk with you as long as you please to favor me with your company, and will answer any questions you choose to ask, as well as I can; but I suspect you need an aid which I cannot give you."

"Sir, I want only one thing of you. I want you to tell me how I shall procure the Holy Spirit. I have wanted to ask you this question for months. If you will only tell me, I will not intrude myself upon you any longer."

(Entirely overcome with her emotions, she wept like a child.)

"Intrude! my dear lady. This is no intrusion. I am glad to see you. I thank you, with all my heart, for coming to me. I beg you to do me the justice to believe in, and feel yourself perfectly at ease. Ask me anything, or tell me anything you will, with entire freedom. I will not abuse your confidence."

She stood before me, trembling and weeping, as if her heart would break. And as she aimed to repress her emotions, and removed her handkerchief from her eyes, the light of the hall lamp shone full upon her face, and I was surprised at the deep solemnity and determination, which appeared in one of the most intelligent and beautiful countenances that I ever beheld.

Her intelligence and the elegance of her language surprised me. She was in middle life, a married woman, having a husband still living, and two small children. Her husband was not a pious man; and her thoughts about her own salvation had led her to think much of his, and the duty she owed to her children. Her first serious impressions arose from the thought, that, not being a member of the church, she could not dedicate her children to God in the ordinance of baptism; and this led her to think, that in her usefulness she could not fitly train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

"O! sir," said she; (the tears streaming from her eyes, and her sensations almost choking utterance.) "I would give all the world to be a Christian! I know I am a sinner, an ungodly sinner! I have a vile and wicked heart. I have sinned all my life! I wonder God has spared me so long."

"But He has spared you, madam, when you did not deserve it. And what has He spared you for, but that you should repent of it, and flee to Christ for pardon?"

"I would repent if I could. I want to be a Christian. But my hard, wicked heart is stronger than I! For years I have read my Bible, and struggled and prayed; and it has done me no good! I am afraid I shall be cast off forever! God has not given me his Spirit!"

"I, too, am afraid you will be cast off forever! Probably your danger is greater than you think! But there is mercy in Christ for the chief of sinners. His blood cleanseth from all unrighteousness."

"I know it, sir; I know all that, from my Bible. I have read it a thousand times. But I cannot come to Christ without the Holy Spirit."

"Madam, the text is plain. 'If ye being will, know how to give good gifts to your

children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to you?'

"But I am not one of his children, sir."

"The text does not say, 'to his children,' but 'to them that ask him.' Ask and ye shall receive."

"O! I have prayed—I do pray."

"Allow me to ask you, madam, how long you have been in this state of mind?"

"About three years. I was first brought to think of my salvation, soon after the birth of my first child; when my duty to my family led me to feel the need of religion. I could not have it baptized, for I was not a member of the church; and what troubled me more, I could not do my duty to it, for I was not a child of God."

"And have you been accustomed, for so long a time, to read your Bible carefully?"

"O! I have read it all, again and again! I read it daily. I have prayed and wept over this subject for long years! and have waited for the Holy Spirit to renew my heart."

"And have you been waiting for the Holy Spirit for three years, in this state of mind?"

"Indeed, sir, I have."

"Then, for three years you have been waiting for what God gave you three years ago. It was the Holy Spirit, which first led you to feel you were a sinner and needed Christ. The Holy Spirit has been striving with you all along, and you did not know it. He led you to the Bible. He led you to prayer. He sent you here to-night. He strives with you now, to lead you to Christ for forgiveness and peace."

"Do you think so?" said she with astonishment.

"I know so, said I. 'God has been better to you, than you have thought. He has done what you have never given him credit for. He has called, and you have refused. He has invited, and you have held back. The Holy Spirit has never left you. I wonder that he has not; but you have another call to-night. And now, madam, accept his invitation; repent; take Christ as your Saviour. Go home and give your heart to God, just as it is. You cannot make it better. The Holy Spirit is with you. Do not resist him any longer. You have stayed away from Christ, because you supposed you must. You wanted the Holy Spirit first; and thought you must not come to Christ till your heart was better. The dispensation of the Spirit is in his hands. Go to the fountain. The Bible nowhere tells you to wait for the Holy Spirit; but, fleeing to Christ, to depend on his aid now."

"Pardon me, sir; I must ask you again, if you really think the Holy Spirit is striving with me?"

"Yes, my dear friend, I know he is. He has been for years. He offers you his aid. He calls you to Christ now. Go to Christ. Repent to-night. Accept, and rest on Christ now. The Holy Ghost saith, 'To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart.'"

"And is that all you have to say to me about the Holy Spirit?"

"Yes, that is all. The Holy Spirit this moment strives with you. God is willing to save you. Nothing but your own unbelief and impenitence can ruin you."

"Has the Spirit been striving with me? and I did not know it?" (said she in the manner of meditation, the tears streaming from her eyes.) She left me and returned to her home.

## Alone with the Dying

It would be difficult to find in the whole range of fiction a more affecting incident than is contained in the following extract of a letter written by a British seaman to his wife. It was his first service as a soldier, he having been sent on shore with a boat's crew of marines to silence a fort and take some guns;

"We dispersed at a few hundred yards distance from the beach to keep the coast clear while the boat's crew made prizes of the guns. The enemy had advantage of the wood, and also knowing the country well, and a troop of them showed in advance. We were ordered to fire. I took aim and fired on my man about sixty yards. He fell like a stone. At the same time a broadside from the—went among the trees, and the enemy disappeared, we could scarcely tell how. I felt as though I must go up to him to see whether he was dead or alive. He lay quite still, and I was more afraid of him, lying so, than when he stood facing me a few minutes before. It is a strange feeling to come over you all at once that you have killed a man. He had unbuttoned his jacket, and was pressing his hand over the front of his chest, where the wound was. He breathed hard, and the blood poured from the wound, and also from his mouth, every breath he took. His face was white as death, and his eyes looked so big and bright as he turned them and stared at me. I shall never forget it. He was a fine young fellow, not more than five and twenty. I went down on my knees beside him, and my breast felt so full as though my own heart would burst. He had a real English face, and did not look like an enemy. What I felt I never can tell; but if my life could have saved his, I believe I should have given it. I laid his head on my knee, and he grasped hold of my hand, tried to speak, but his voice was gone. I could not tell a word he said, and every time he went to speak the blood poured out so I knew it would soon be over. I am not ashamed to say that I was worse than he, for he never shed a tear, and I couldn't help it. His eyes were closed when a gun was fired from the—order us aboard, and that aroused him. He pointed to the beach, where the boat was just pushing off with the guns which we had taken, and where our marines were waiting to man the second boat, and then he pointed to the wood where the enemy was concealed. Poor fellow! he little thought how I should love him to die, and no one near him, when he had something like a convulsion for a moment, and then his face rolled over, and without a sigh he was gone. I trust the Almighty has received his soul. I laid his head gently down on the grass and left him. It seemed so strange when I looked at him for the last time. I somehow thought of everything I had heard about the Turks and the Russians and the rest of them, but all that seemed so far off and the dead man so near."

The True Origin of the Baptists of America. We invite the reader's attention to the article on our first page from Duncan's History of the Baptists, which may be considered as a supplement to the one of last week from the same work. We think it entirely reliable. Dr. Duncan has had as good opportunities and as ample resources for eliciting the real facts in the history of Roger Williams and his connection with the first Baptist Church at Providence, as any man of his age, and we know that he has both the scholarship and the industry requisite for the solution of knotty questions in that history. While we do not agree with him in his views of John's baptism, we think he has given the churches one of the best, if not the best Baptist histories that has yet been published.

These two successive articles are in conflict with the views of the Rev. J. P. Tustin, of Charleston, S. C., as published in the Southern Baptist of the 29th December last, and Copied by the Southern Christian Advocate, a Methodist Paper, in the same city.—Dr. Duncan arrives at the following, and as we think, incontrovertible conclusions! That the Baptists of this country did not derive their baptism from Roger Williams—that the American Baptist churches are not offshoots from a church planted by him—that the baptism administered by Williams was not perpetuated—that the society of Williams—for it was not a church—soon fell to pieces—that after it had been broken up, an organization was formed with Chad Brown, Wickenden and Dexter at its head, the latter of whom, if not the two former, had been baptized in England—that the records of the Providence Church, by which some have essayed to make it the oldest Baptist Church in America, was not reliable, and that no mention was made of any organization at Providence till 1652—that the Baptist church at Newport is probably the oldest Baptist church in America, and that John Clark, her Pastor, had probably become a Baptist in England—that though all the baptisms of the Providence church could be shown to have been invalid, it would not follow that all American baptisms must have been necessarily invalid or irregular—that the Providence church could have had no connection with one hundredth part of Baptists of America—and that Jno. Clark was the first to establish a regular Baptist organization. In tracing the true origin of the American Baptists, Brother Duncan quotes from Rev. J.

P. Tustin's Dedication Sermon, not dreaming at the time, doubtless that the latter would change his position on this question.—Christian Index.

## Miscellaneous Paragraphs.

The military authorities of Maine are talking of having a grand encampment of all the uniformed companies in the State, to take place in Portland some time during the visit of the Leviathan.

At the usual estimate, since the first of January, 1857, more than 31,500,000 of the world's population have gone down to the grave.

The famously bombarded city of Sebastopol is being rapidly rebuilt. The amount of powder used by the Russians while the city was besieged, was estimated at 30,240,000 pounds.

AN OLD LADY.—Mrs. Sally Eaton, of North Reading, died in that town on the 1st inst., at the advanced aged of 102 years, 4 months, and 20 days. She left 5 children, the oldest of whom is 75 years of age, and the youngest 58. She also leaves 22 grand-children, a large number of great grand-children, and 9 of the fifth generation.

About 1,500 cattle were drowned on the upper Sacramento, California, by the heavy rain about the 18th of February.

NEWS FROM SALT LAKE CITY.—The Mormons are making preparations for the spring campaign, and are in no way disposed to submit to the United States.

The Steamship Persia sailed from New York last Wednesday, with 198 passengers and \$7,000 in specie.

A bill has been introduced into Congress for the election of Post Masters by the people.

MINISTERIAL POPULARITY.—A Southern Methodist minister, detailing his experience on a "certain" circuit, counted twenty-six children that were named after him, and added that during the year he received, as compensation for his labour, thirteen dollars.

The London papers are quarreling as to whether the Princess Royal did weep or did not, when she was married.

If truth be once deserted, unity and peace will not last long.

Two women escaped from the N. H. State Prison on Thursday night last by picking the locks of their cells, climbing out of a window into the prison yard, and out over the wall of the yard by means of two short ladders spliced by them together. It is said that the first had before escaped three times, and the second twice.—Verily such a prison must be a terror to evil doers.

A fine coat may cover a fool, but never conceals one.

We must never think our work for God done, till our life is done.

There are in New York city nearly forty thousand women who sew for a living. About 13,000 of these are skirt-makers, 11,000 milliners and vest-makers, 4,400 cloak and mantilla-makers, 3,000 dress-makers and milliners, besides those employed in other branches of needlework.

It is stated that Dr. Kane's great work, "Arctic Explorations," is now being read by more than 500,000 persons, learned and unlearned.

It is said that for the first time on record snow fell in Egypt this year.

Seek for friendship among the pure and good, if you would occupy an exalted position.

It is folly to expect girls to be happy without marriage.

New York City, it is said, has nearly five hundred miles of paved streets.

In Stafford County, Virginia, stands one of the largest churches in the country, whose courts were often trodden by Washington, a magnificent but roofless ruin.

Some idea of the growth of Texas may be formed from the fact that during the last five years no less than 6,650,000 acres, or more than 10,000 square miles of the public domain, have been appropriated, by patent and otherwise. And "still there is room."

The Richmond Inquirer announces that the transfer of Mount Vernon to the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association is now a fixed fact. The evidence of this will be laid before the public as soon as certain necessary legal preliminaries can be arranged.

LIBERTY AT LAST.—Rev. Wm. A. Smith baptized in Stonington, during the month past, a colored disciple, aged nearly or quite one hundred years. She had been a slave to four different masters in the State of New York, while the monster slavery was suffered to live there. But now she is rejoicing in the liberty of the children of God.

Ignorance and deceit are two of the worst qualities to combat. It is easier to dispute with a statesman than a blockhead.

Philadelphia consumes 6,000 gallons of milk a day.

There are one hundred and twenty-two breweries in California, employed almost entirely for the making of lager beer.