

# The Christian Visitor.

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

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"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 X.

### County of Yarmouth.

In preceding chapters there have been intimations of the fact, that the Fathers had to contend with no small amount of hostility from those who were strangers to those spiritual exercises of soul which usually accompany conversion. The motives of the preachers were maligned—their sayings and doings misrepresented—and they were subjected to every species of calumny and detraction. None of the Fathers, perhaps, were more bitterly assailed by the opposition to which we refer, than was Father Harding. There are many stories still extant in Yarmouth, illustrative of the spirit of his traducers; but as they may be regarded by some of our readers, at least, as somewhat too traditional to be now placed upon historical record, we will here quote a long paragraph from a *painted* publication, which was sent forth to the world by the calumniators of the Fathers, fifty-eight years ago.

It is taken from an abstract of the proceedings of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in 1800:—

"The Bishop of Nova Scotia, and all the Missionaries of the Province, agree in their representations of the prevalence of the enthusiastic and dangerous spirit among a sect in that Province, called New Lights, whose religion seems to be a strange jumble of New England Independence and Bohemianism. Formerly they were Pseudo-Baptists, but, by a recent illumination, they have adopted the Ana-Baptist scheme; by which their number has been much increased and their zeal inflamed. They have been more particularly troublesome in the parts about Annapolis, Granville, Wilmot, and Aylesford. Both Methodist and New Light teachers have, in their struggles for pre-eminence, excited among the people a pious frenzy. The former for several weeks before and after Easter, held their meetings four times on Sundays, at Annapolis and had a lecture every evening, which frequently continued till three in the morning. During these exercises, ignorant men and women, and even children under twelve years of age, were employed to pray and exhort; calling aloud, Lord Jesus, come down and shake these dry bones. Groanings, screamings, roarings, and faintings, immediately ensue, with a falling down, and rolling upon the floor, both sexes together. The New Lights, however, far exceed the Methodists, both in the extravagance of their conduct, and in the absurdity of their sentiments; for, to the aforementioned instances, they add dreams, visions, revelations, prophecies, and trances. A rage for dipping, or total immersion, prevails over all the western counties of the Province, and is frequently performed in a very indelicate manner, before vast collections of people. Several hundreds have been already re-baptized, and this plunging they deem to be absolutely necessary to the conversion of a sinner. On the Saturday preceding these solemnities, the teacher is seated above the congregation with a number of select Brethren on lower benches, appointed to assist him. Before this tribunal the people are brought forward, (often by compulsion), to relate their experiences, and if they consent to be dipped they are commonly pronounced to be converted. People come together to these meetings from the distance of seventy miles, leaving their families often in distressed circumstances, and their plantations exposed to ruin. All order and decorum are despised by them.—Fierce dissensions prevail among the most intimate; family government is dissolved; children are neglected, and become disobedient; and, notwithstanding the many wonderful conversions proclaimed abroad, there are very few instances to be found of any real reformation. It is true that they differ in their opinions, and what they disown when closely pressed, in one company, they boldly assert in another. They are, however, rigid Predestinationaries; hold that all mankind were present, and actually sinned; with our primitive parents. After conversion they are not answerable for any sins which they commit, since it is the flesh, and not the spirit, which they consent over to damnation. Many of them deny the resurrection, a future judgment, heaven and hell, though the Elect are to be happy, and the Reprobates miserable after death. Their discipline is democratic. The right of ordination, dismission, &c., lies entirely with the Brethren. Their teachers chiefly consist of very ignorant mechanics and common labourers, who are too lazy to work. Their political principles are equally dangerous with their religious. It is believed that the conductors of these people are engaged in the General Plan of a total Revolution in Religion and Civil Government. And it is a certain fact, that 'The Rights of Man,' 'The Age of Reason,' 'Volney on the Ruin of Empires,' 'A False Representation of the French Revolution,' with scandalous invectives against all the Crowned Heads in Europe, and against the British Administration in particular, have been secretly handed about by professed New Lights. This has occasioned the Bishop of Nova Scotia and the Missionaries a

great deal of uneasiness and trouble, but they have exerted themselves to the utmost to keep their respective congregations free from the contagion."

We have given the above extract, just as we find it, without altering its erroneous orthography, misapplied capitals, and clumsy punctuation. The official Report from which it is taken, was printed in London fifty-eight years ago; and no doubt it was written in Nova Scotia by a Right Reverend Prelate. We charitably hope that the Fathers were not thereby willfully misrepresented and defamed. It is likely that the Prelate wrote what he was told respecting the Baptists, and gave publicity to slanders which he believed to be true. In fact, the malignant charges contained in the foregoing quotation, were, at the time, in the mouths of the ungodly in every part of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

While Father Harding was thus assailed, he continued to labour with great success, as the letters in the last chapter amply testify. The twenty years next succeeding the thrilling events therein described, were years of religious prosperity in the County of Yarmouth. For, although there was no general revival extending over the whole of the numerous settlements that were under the pastoral care of Father Harding, yet scarcely a twelvemonth passed away, in which there were not encouraging accessions to the Church. He laboured indefatigably in the gospel, constantly going from place to place in his extensive circuit, with the message of God's mercy to sinners in his mouth; and while hostility to his doctrines and preaching, was a source of discouragement, almost continuous tokens of divine approbation impelled him onward in the pathway of usefulness, despite of the opposition that was arrayed against him and his people. Meanwhile, prejudices were gradually giving way—many, who had formerly opposed the gospel which he preached, laid the weapons of their warfare against the truth at the foot of the Cross—and some of the previously most hardened in heart, became the happy recipients of grace, were baptized, and united with the Church. His access to the community in which he lived, became less difficult, and all creeds and classes, by degrees, were constrained to admit that he was a sincere and devoted servant of Christ.

During the whole twenty years to which we have referred, perhaps there was scarcely ever a time when there were not indications of a revival spirit in some of the numerous settlements of the County. Springs in the desert were almost perpetually gushing up to refresh the people, and gladden the heart of the preacher. If a cloud of spiritual declension overshadowed some localities in which Father Harding laboured, in others, a work of saving mercy among the people, was apparent. Thus lights and shadows chequered the sphere of his evangelic activities. At the period of which we are speaking, however, the Church in Yarmouth was upon the open communion plan; for though no new members were received without baptism (immersion), a number who were members prior to 1807, and who had been merely sprinkled, still retained their membership; and unbaptized believers of other denominations, were invited to the Lord's supper. Thus, there was a barrier between Father Harding and his clerical brethren, with whom he had laboured in happy concert during the earlier years of his ministry. The circumstance, of course, was to him a source of unpleasant reflection. He felt, though one in spirit with his youthful cotemporaries, that there was a chilling line of demarcation between him and them. On one occasion, during this period, the Rev. Thomas Handley Chipman visited Yarmouth. It was a season of mercy with the church. These two servants of Christ were united in the pulpit and in the baptismal waters during the fore part of a joyful Sabbath day; but in the afternoon, when the Church met to "break bread," Father Chipman stood, declining to commune. The Baptist Association meanwhile had adopted the principle of close communionism.

Father Harding long yearned, no doubt, to overlook the impediment which separated him from a closer external connexion with his brethren in the Association; but a considerable number of the brethren in his own church were inveterately opposed to close communionism. The thoughts of separating from these brethren, to whom he was ardently attached, filled him with distress. Through his instrumentality they had been led to avingly embrace the cross—he had welcomed them into the church—and the idea of withdrawing from them was painful in the extreme. His peculiar position at this period was a source of perplexity.—When his brethren annually met in Association, he longed to unite with them, and assist in carrying out the evangelic objects for the promotion of which they were denominationally organized. His struggles, in which conflicting attachments and a sense of scriptural injunction were strangely blended, were very protracted; and it was not till towards the close of 1827 that the Church in Yarmouth fully adopted the practices of the Baptists in these Provinces.

The elder of the Oude Princes in England died on Thursday night. He was brother to the King, and General of the Oude nation force.

## Debate on the College Question Resumed.

While the Bill to suspend the grant to King's College was under discussion, and Mr. Tilley's Bill to amend the King's College Endowment Act was also under consideration, Mr. McClellan said that he had listened attentively to many of the speeches made on this subject, but while nearly all had indulged in invective against the usefulness of this institution, he did not conceive that it required so much eloquence, on the part of Hon. members, to prove to this committee and the people of this country that King's College was not useful, or that the funds now expended for the support of that institution were grossly misapplied. The enormous drain which this College had made on the public funds without any commensurate benefits, was an outrage on the people, and he (McC) was only surprised that the Government and Legislature had so long tolerated this evil; it was gratifying now to be enabled to think that some decisive action will be taken before the end of the present session, either by destroying or improving, as every hon. member appears to acknowledge the necessity for a change of some kind. There is not, after all, much difference of opinion in this Assembly about this who's matter, for all excepting one or two, say they are not willing to deprive the Province of a University, free from Sectarian or Denominational influences; and even if this Bill of Mr. Connel's pass, its advocates do not propose a longer interim than two years at most, before an entirely new and improved institution shall be created with the same object and from the same funds. Taking these premises, he (Mr. McC) conceived that it would be for the Educational and general interests of the people, to repeal the College Endowment Act, only in connection with a proper Amendment Bill, substantially like this which has been prepared by Judge Wilmot, and now submitted by the Provincial Secretary. If hon. members were sincere in the expression of their desire to found one general University for the Province, he thought it better to legislate in this direction at once, rather than pass a bill, the result of which on past occasions, has only been a perpetuation of the evil. But even if the Bill should now pass into law, and the Collegiate operations be suspended, without other immediate legislation he feared that evils would ensue of greater magnitude than were generally realized. The past efforts for improvement had all been confined within a narrow circle, and no charges had even been made which were calculated to remove entirely its Ecclesiastical aspects. The prejudice against it on this account, as well as the inefficiency of one or more of the professors were evidently the principal reasons for the past failure of the College. He (Mr. McC) would ask why these difficulties could not as well be met now as a year hence? The government or the Legislature or both combined, (for all appear to be mainly agreed) ought to possess firmness and ability enough to grapple with these matters at once.—It was perhaps unfortunate that, an attempt was made to found a College so early in the History of this Province, but it was a noble endowment, and given with the best of motives,—and it would indeed be surprising, if after thirty years, the representatives of the people, solemnly resolve that, the facilities for obtaining a Collegiate Education, are no longer required in the Province, while Nova Scotia had four or five Colleges, Canada an equal number, and the United States upwards of 120 institutions of this kind. He was glad to hear Hon. Members on both sides, speak in favour of providing for a general Provincial university,—free from Sectarian Government, and open to every denomination. But would this object be effected by the Bill before us? On the other hand, will not the result be that each denomination, will try to have its own College. The Wesleyans, the Baptists, the Presbyterians, all have an equal claim with the Episcopalians. Other denominations will insist upon their own rights. The Roman Catholics will also call upon the Legislature for a College endowment, under the control of this Priesthood, and we have the experience of the past to prove that they will not rest without their full share. Many of the denominational Colleges might be very useful in their way. But the resources of the Country are not prepared to support so many, while it would look like the commencement on a large scale of a system of separate Schools, which he detested. The College Buildings, the lands, the library, telescope and all other apparatus and appliances, cannot be made available for other purposes by this Bill, so that all this prosperity, would probably continue under the control of the Church of England, and the benefits therefrom continue exclusively local, and confined to Fredericton. Much has been said about Gaths and Vandals, but he Mr. McClellan did not think these expressions applicable to any Hon. member, as the motives of all were probably good, but if this Bill passes into law and the results follow which might be feared, then it will, with some truth be said:—

"A second danger, learning, tho' o'er-ran,  
The Vandals' English what the Gaths began."  
But he hoped no such result would follow.—He preferred the Amendment, providing for a new College under a new name,—free from control of the church, and, if necessary, located in St. John or in some other place; but if the Amendment does not pass, he would vote for the bill, as the next best course, as

he was determined something really effective should be done, before conclusion of this Session. The Common Schools should be improved, and Grammar Schools used as a second step to the obtaining of a liberal education. The Academies and Seminaries would be very useful for each denomination, particularly in the study of Divinity, but one general University, supported by the money of all, and open to all, to finish their education, and receive their diplomas not controlled by any particular church, must be considered also desirable in this Province. He was sorry to find so many young men leaving their native Province to complete their education in the United States and elsewhere,—but if his ideas could be carried out, and such an institution established, hon. members instead of denouncing the College, would be trying to advocate its interests,—and if these as well as the ministers of each religious denomination, could be found interested in the welfare and popularity of the University, useful results would assuredly follow in the advancement of education, and all the attendant blessings.

Mr. Lewis said he was favourable to the Bill under consideration, he felt that the people of this country were no longer willing to submit to this large expenditure of their money. It had been stated and not contradicted that there had been drawn from the Provincial Chest annually the sum of £2200 for the period of 29 years for the support of this institution;—during all that time only 80 students had graduated; it was also well known that it had from eight to ten acres of land, and yet with all these advantages it had done comparatively nothing. The reasons, in his opinion, were that the people of this country had no confidence in it. He found that persons having sons to educate either set them to Great Britain or the United States. Those who were favourable to the Amendment moved by the Hon. Provincial Secretary wished to legislate at once for a new College. This he believed would not have the desired effect and he would vote for withholding the grant and appropriate the money for the purposes of education in some other way.

## THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL.

### A SAILOR'S STORY OF HIS CONVERSION.

At one of the recent prayer-meetings in this city, a sailor rose and narrated to the congregation the circumstances of his conversion. He was a young man, a native of England, with an intelligent face and an impressive manner of speech; and his remarks were received with great attention. He said:—

"I am a stranger here, and such a scene as this is one that until very recently, would have been altogether new to me. Nine weeks ago I was converted, and since then have become in some degree familiar with prayer-meetings and church services, though before that I knew very little of either. I have been a very wicked man. For one so young, I have gone into almost incredible dissipation, and have committed almost every known sin. I can hardly imagine a person to have a greater record of wickedness than I. I am the youngest of a large family of children. My father is dead, but my mother is living. She is an old woman, now more than 75 years of age. She is a devoted Christian, and has always tried to bring up her children to be like her, and some of them have followed her example. Several of my brothers and sisters are earnest and sincere Christians, who with her, have offences at home prayed for my salvation. But I could never endure a single thought of religion. Whenever the subject was mentioned to me, I immediately repelled it, and repelled it often with a horrid oath. The thought that the members of the family prayed for me always made me angry. I was warned against my dissipation, but went more into it the more I was warned. I grew more and more wicked every day, out of spite, and I tried to be a great sinner. At last I determined to leave home. I wanted to get away from the influence of a praying mother. I wanted to be free from all restraints, so that I might indulge myself in whatever I chose, to my own satisfaction. My mother implored me not to go. I told her I was going to sea, and would go. Her eyes filled with tears, and she could say nothing more. With whatever sins I had, I had some love for my mother, and I gave way before her tears. She asked me to promise her that I would never go to sea until I could first obtain her consent. I consented, and remained awhile at home. A young man who was my companion in dissipation, left England and came to this country, and after he had been here a short time returned in the same ship. He told me that I could enjoy myself grandly if I would go away from home as he had done, and that there was all manner of pleasure in New-York. I again determined to go to sea in company with him. My mother, seeing that I was bent on going, could not bear the thought that I should leave without her consent, and so she gave it. Accordingly made preparations to ship at Liverpool. Just before I started, which was about the first of last December, my mother gave me a sealed letter and a small Bible to put in my trunk, and told me not to open the letter until the 21st of December. That was her birthday, when she would be 75 years old. So gave me her blessing, which I shrank from receiving, and I went off. As soon as I got clear of home I felt at liberty. I said to myself, 'Now there will be no one to pray

for me, and I sha'n't be annoyed with Bibles and texts.' I left home without any sadness, but rather with a kind of wicked pleasure; and when I got on board ship, I soon forgot all about mother, and brothers, and sisters. After we had set sail, and were well on with the voyage, a storm arose that was very violent. Just about this time I was taken very sick—not with sea-sickness, but a dangerous fever. I lay in my bunk, tossing about with the ship, as wretched and miserable as a man could be. The doctor told me that I was at the point of death, and that if I had any preparation to make for eternity I had better make it, for I had not long to live. This he repeated also in the cabin among the passengers, one of whom, an aged man, came to see me. I remember his face; it was all kindness; but I hated the sight of him. He came with a book in his hand, and said to me: 'Young man, you are almost gone: I have come to read to you something out of the Word of God.' I looked up at him a moment, and said in a rage: 'Hand me the book; and when he offered it to me I took it and put it to my lips, and made a solemn oath that I would have nothing to do with God or with religion. I told him that if he read to me I would not listen, and bid him with an oath to leave me alone. He then went away, and I lay stark alone in my bunk. It seemed to me that I was at that moment more miserable than I had ever been before in all my life; I do not refer to my bodily sickness, but to my distress of mind. It was evening, and there was no light near me, but all was as dark as midnight. Suddenly the thought came over my mind that it was the 21st of December, and I remembered my mother's letter. I could not rise and get it, for I was not able, and my first impulse was to call one of my messmates to get it for me. But I remembered that it was between the lids of my Bible. I was ashamed to let any one know that I wanted the Bible; and I did not want that, but my mother's letter. I lay for some time, and at last determined to call some one. One of my messmates came at the call, I asked him to get a lantern, and to go to my trunk and get a Bible with a letter in it. 'Ah,' said he, with a sneer, 'Now you're sick, you begin to be a coward; what do you want with that book?' 'I don't want that book, but the letter in it,' I replied. In a few minutes he brought a lantern, opened my trunk, and handed me the Bible and letter. He then left the lantern on my bunk and went away. I sat up a little in the bed, and opened the sealed package. The very first words that I caught brought tears to my eyes. They were my mother's words—'My dear Tom.' I read the letter carefully from beginning to end. It was a mother's prayer for the conversion of her son. I had been miserable before, but these words made me more wretched than ever. I then began for the first time to feel remorse for my sinfulness, and to have a fear and dread of judgment. I turned about in my bunk in agony which I cannot describe. I had been told that I could not live, and now I was afraid to die. What could I do? I began to pray! This was what I had always had a horror of before, but I was forced to come to it at last. I prayed to God to let me get well again, and made a solemn promise to Him, on my bed, that if he would only raise me up I would reform my life. The burden of my sins almost crushed me. Even if I had not been sick, it seemed as if I should have died of these. I continued to pray, and when it was expected that I would die I was still alive, and I was kept alive, and instead of growing worse I grew better. The doctor told me then that I had had a narrow escape, and that I had been lying at death's door. As I got better, I got more and more comfort. The light gradually dawned in upon my dark soul, and its darkness was dispelled. At last, one day there came a sudden joy—a sweet peace that wraped me like sunshine. My heart was happy, and while I was wondering what it was, the mercy of Christ was made known to me. I felt the conscience that my sins were pardoned. I began to be stirred with a new life. Whereas before I hated my home, now my heart yearned toward it. My mother—oh I wanted to see her, and to put my arms around her neck. I wanted to tell her that I had read her letter, and what I had found in it. And my brothers and sisters I had no more desire to be separated from them, but with my whole soul I longed to see them, and tell them that I had found the Saviour. My joy continued, and I told my shipmates of it. Some of them laughed at me, but I didn't care for that; I knew in whom I believed. At last we came into port; it was on a Saturday morning. On the next morning I found the Mariner's Church, and, my kind friends, I have been here ever since. I am happy to be here, and can only thank God that He has led me to himself, and has led me to go home and see my aged mother. She is very near the grave, and I want to throw myself upon her neck before she dies, and thank her and thank God for her prayer for a wayward son!"

## ANOTHER INCIDENT IN THE CASE OF "AWFUL" GARDNER.

A short time ago "Awful" Gardner got into a row with some persons in Hoboken, upon which he committed an assault and battery, for which offence he was arrested and held to bail. In order to secure the friend who went security from any possible loss on his account, he placed in his hands some money and several orders, amounting in all to what was deemed sufficient to meet

all demands. With this his friend was authorized to effect a settlement of the matter, but failing to collect the amount of the orders, and the cash providing insufficient, the case went to trial, which resulted in a fine and costs, amounting to \$155. In the mean time, Gardner had gone to East Port Chester, Conn., on a visit to his brother. A requisition was procured from the Governor of New-Jersey upon the Governor of Connecticut for the surrender of Gardner, with which several officers were dispatched, well armed, to conduct "Awful" over to New-Jersey. On finding their customer they informed him of their errand, but in attempting to put the ruffles upon him, he assured them that he was no longer "Awful" Gardner; that he had become a reformed man, and should offer no resistance to their authority. He then proceeded with the officers to the railroad depot to take the first train to the city, accompanied by his wife. In the mean time, Howell Gardner, Orville's brother, went to the Methodist Church, where the Rev. Mr. Gilbert was holding service, and informed him of what had transpired; whereupon the reverend gentleman committed the charge of the remaining services to some of his friends, and left for the depot, where Gardner was still in the custody of the officers, awaiting the arrival of the train. After ascertaining that \$155 would satisfy their demands and secure his liberty, Mr. Gilbert immediately obtained the amount, and accomplished the desired object. The following day "Awful" accompanied his benefactor to the city and obtained \$100, which he had in the hands of a friend, and paid that amount back toward the \$155; and all the representations made by Gardner in relation to the affair were then found to be correct. The general impression in Port Chester is, that "Awful" Gardner will stick to his new text, or, in other words, will remain steadfast to his present profession of reformation.

## REMARK—"AWFUL" GARDNER'S BROTHERS.

A correspondent informs us that four brothers of "Awful" Gardner have been recently converted in Newark, N. J. Gardner's conversion seems to have made a deep impression upon the community generally, which will no doubt be still further deepened if he will stay reformed and not relapse into his old pursuits.

The same correspondent states that 600 persons in all have been converted in the Franklin-street Methodist Church in that city.

Another correspondent writes from the same place: "In the First Baptist Church, Newark, under the pastoral care of the Rev. H. C. Fish, a deep and quiet work of grace has been in progress for three months past, which still continues with unabated interest. One hundred and twenty-nine persons have been baptized, and now between twenty and thirty more awaiting baptism. Most of the converts are persons of mature age—many of them heads of families, and not previously connected in any way with the congregation. The sufficiency of the church in many important respects, has been nearly doubled. Meetings for conference and prayer are held every evening."

## THE REVIVAL IN BOSTON.

On Thursday three meetings were held in different rooms in the Old South Chapel at the same time; one of these was for the benefit of young men. The regular meeting was conducted by Dea. Farnsworth. A gentleman who had been spending some time in Portland, Me., stated that the revival in that city was increasing, and that the various meetings were full to overflowing.

Intelligence of the conversion of "Awful" Gardner was read from the TRIBUNE. The Rev. Mr. Groat, missionary from South Africa, was present, and in addressing the meeting he alluded with deep feeling to the country where he had been laboring for many years, 6,000 miles across the Atlantic, and hoped those who were preaching the Gospel there would not be forgotten. He read a request which had been sent over from Africa, that prayer might be offered in behalf of that continent.

A gentleman from Newburyport stated that in that city there had been more than 200 converts in a single church, while in others there had been 20, 40, 50, 60 and upward. The number of conversions among young men was mentioned as having occurred since the meeting of the day before.

The business men's prayer-meeting, held at noon, was conducted by Jacob Sleeper, and the rooms of the building were crowded, and many were obliged to leave for want of accommodations. Among those who spoke were several clerks, who testified to having recently experienced religion. The "Boston Traveler" says "one thousand business men gathered for prayer at midday is a sight which has never been seen in Boston before."

## THE MEETING AT THE NORTH DUTCH CHURCH.

The noon-day prayer meeting held at the "Old North Dutch Church" on Monday was as well attended as usual. This meeting, more properly speaking three meetings, as the congregation is divided into three parts, assembling in different parts of the building. At a quarter before 12 o'clock, the main room, on the second floor, was nearly filled, and before the time of beginning, many persons were turning away from the house, unable to get in at any of the meetings. The audience consisted chiefly of men, although about a hundred ladies were present.

(Continued on last page.)