

# 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.

County of Yarmouth.

The following thrilling letters, taken from the "Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine," written by three of the Fathers more than fifty years ago, will give our readers a vivid understanding of the character, extent and genuineness of the revival, to which we alluded in the last Chapter.

Yarmouth, Dec. 5th, 1806.

I have been in this town and Argyle, five weeks, and such glorious times I never saw before. Multitudes are turned to God. I cannot with pen and ink, nor could I, were I present, describe the one half that God has done. It is about three months since the work began in Yarmouth. (The eternal heavens seem to be bowed, and God has come down by way of divine influence, in such a way as I never before was witness to.)

Brother Harding is the minister of this place. God is with him of a truth. He stands clear in the doctrine of the glorious gospel of Christ, and in the order and discipline of God's kingdom. Can you believe it, my brother, my soul has been ravished, and my lips broke forth in praise to see the great Redeemer riding forth in glorious triumph. I can't but hope God has owned his witness, to encourage the heart, and strengthen the hands of dear Brother Harding, whom I love in the Lord. Since the work began, there have been about one hundred and fifty souls brought to own Jesus as their rightful Lord and sovereign King. But a number of these had previously been born again before, but had received no satisfactory evidence until now. There was a Church here before upon the open communion plan. They have now entirely given it up, and settled upon the Baptist, or rather gospel plan.

There was in the old church about forty members, three of whom, from time to time, have been baptized, and now belong to the new church. Since the work began, before I came to this place, brother Harding baptized seven persons. Since I came, brother Harding and myself, on one Sabbath, baptized eighteen. The Sabbath after that, one, we baptized forty; and next Lord's day, we expect a large number more to be added to this blessed ordinance. The first day there was a fall of snow, and the day was so comfortable; but the Lord comforted our souls. The young converts were so happy they could hardly wait until their turn came. We have had no such meetings, and sure I never saw such meetings before. In the evening, the last Sabbath, we began at ten in the morning, and continued until eight in the evening, to hear persons relate the dealings of God, with their souls; and then a great number were prevented for the want of time. Some of them have been great enemies to the truth and cause of God, and never went to meeting until God converted their souls; at which, with holy delight, they have run immediately to the scriptures, and then to the house of God, and there declared what God had done for their souls. Some would inform the enemies of religion that they could not say that this or that preacher or person had influenced or turned them; for God had done his work for them. A great many of the subjects of this work have been young people and children. Seldom a meeting but some are brought to embrace the offers of life; some times five, six and seven at a meeting. There are meetings in some part of the town almost every day. You would be delighted to hear the young converts with glowing hearts and flowing tears, inviting sinners to Jesus.

Monday morning, Dec. 8th yesterday, brother Harding and myself baptized twenty-two persons more. And there are a considerable number now waiting, that have been approved of by the church. The work is still spreading. At Argyle, twenty miles from this, there has been a glorious work the summer past. There is a village between this place and Argyle, called the Tackett River, where are about twenty families. God has visited them. Brother Harding baptized two there; and since I have baptized two more. There is an Assemblies, who is a real Christian, and one of the best men in the world. God has blessed him with a handsome property, and a heart to devote it to his service, beyond any man I ever saw. His wife is of the same spirit. Two of their children, I believe, sealed into the day of redemption. I have not written half what I wanted to; but cannot add. The Magazines have been blessed to many in these parts. Brother Harding will write to you with great esteem, as ever, your affectionate friend, THOMAS HANLEY GUYMAN.

Yarmouth, Jan. 30th 1807.

My dear Brother, I have the honor to receive your kind letter of the 15th inst. and am glad to hear that you are well. I am a partaker with you in the blessed spirit of the gospel, and engaged in the same glorious cause of the Redeemer. The great Head of the church is pleased to indulge in the pleasure of inviting lost sinners to come to the fountain of the blood of the slaughtered Lamb of God, for the salvation of their souls. We have heard with pleasure of the progress of the Redeemer's Kingdom in many parts of the world, by means of your Magazines. Perusing these accounts, has awakened in my soul sensations which I cannot express, which induce me to address you with this freedom, and which I trust you will pardon, when you shall hear of the work of God in these parts. I was formerly settled over a Baptist church in the township of Digby, in the county of Annapolis, where God was pleased to bless my poor labours to that people. Here I lived some years, and improved my gifts, travelling about but seldom, as my circumstances in life would permit. And having my heart much knit to that people in the bonds of the gospel, I have found severe trials at the thoughts of leaving them, to preach to those who were destitute in other places.

On the next day, I administered the ordinance of baptism to six of them, before a large and serious assembly. From this time, the work of God began to make his appearance. Several were pricked to the heart. Our meetings were crowded, and awed with the presence of the Holy One of Israel. His truths, like barbed arrows, penetrated the souls of many, and exerted a cry—What shall I do to be saved?

About this time, brother Theodore Harding, on his way from the States, visited and preached three times among us, to the approbation of all, and I trust, to the good of many. The Lord's arm was gloriously revealed. For some weeks there was scarcely a day in which some one, or more did not profess a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus, to their souls conversion. In the part of the township where I live, there is a family, who have not shared apparently in the glorious work to which I have alluded. Brother Chipman visited and preached with us four Sabbaths, soon after Brother Harding left us. He rejoiced greatly to see what the Lord was doing, and our bowels were much refreshed in Christ by his preaching and labours of love. Our church was formerly upon the open communion plan, consisting of Congregationalists and Baptists; but since the happy revival of religion, having satisfaction from the word and testimony of God, they have entirely adopted and settled upon the Baptist system of faith and practice; and it is wonderful to see how God has owned and blessed his sacred ordinance to the conviction of sinners, and comforting of saints.

Frequently have we seen the power of God visibly displayed on such baptismal occasions, though the fall and winter thus far advanced. Brother Chipman assisted in administering the ordinance to a considerable number while he was here; and the Sabbath after he left us, I baptized a number more; and have continued so to do every Sabbath since. Neither the inclemency of the weather, which sometimes proved very unfavorable, nor the idleness of some persons, prevented their following the Lord, or obeying his righteous commands; so that since the first of October, (last) one hundred and forty persons have been enabled to obey the Lord in that institution, and with the greatest propriety and regard to the house of God, and the glory of Heaven. The last Sabbath we began at ten in the morning, and continued until eight in the evening, to hear persons relate the dealings of God, with their souls; and then a great number were prevented for the want of time. Some of them have been great enemies to the truth and cause of God, and never went to meeting until God converted their souls; at which, with holy delight, they have run immediately to the scriptures, and then to the house of God, and there declared what God had done for their souls. Some would inform the enemies of religion that they could not say that this or that preacher or person had influenced or turned them; for God had done his work for them. A great many of the subjects of this work have been young people and children. Seldom a meeting but some are brought to embrace the offers of life; some times five, six and seven at a meeting. There are meetings in some part of the town almost every day. You would be delighted to hear the young converts with glowing hearts and flowing tears, inviting sinners to Jesus.

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At Argyle and Barrington, two townships next eastward from this, God has also been pleased to revive his gracious work of late. In the former, through the means of brother Towner, a faithful, godly Baptist minister, whose labours God has been pleased to crown with abundant success, while he is settled pastor. I can ascertain the exact numbers; but I believe upwards of seventy have been baptized there within a few months past. A number, I have recently heard, are brought to a saving knowledge of Christ at Barrington, where they have no settled minister; but the particulars I have not yet learned.

Please to excuse the freedom and brevity of the from a stranger; and when you can find leisure, favour me with a line. I am, Sir, yours, very affectionately, THOMAS HANLEY GUYMAN.

On the 16th of July last, I sat out on a journey to Argyle, where I arrived on Saturday the 18th, late in the evening. The people not having notice of my coming, and the next morning being very rainy, but few attended meeting. I was requested to stay another Sabbath, which I did; and also preached several times in the course of the week. Religion was at a very low ebb among the few professors, who belonged to a church, formerly established by a Mr. Frost, of the *New Light* persuasion. After his death, the church was re-established and increased, under the ministrations of other preachers, whose labours had been blessed to the salvation of many souls; they still holding the baptism of believers an essential to fellowship in the church of Christ. Oh, that all Christ's ministers would endeavor to impress on the minds of the people the necessity of obedience to his high commands. The broken and scattered state of this church was great; all discipline was done away. Nevertheless, there were a few mourning souls that would not be comforted, because God's heritage lay waste.

Here I preached the next Lord's day, and preached from Colossians 1:16, and in the afternoon, from chap. 1:8, and the Lord was pleased to bless the opportunity. The set time was now come to raise his people from the dead. The work began in the following manner: A young woman, who had been awakened the winter before, by hearing some young people sing and discourse upon her happiness of religion, in the township of Digby, the impression of which had never left her, till this Sabbath evening, when she felt peace and joy in the gospel. Her feelings led her to exhort her young companions to visit to the Lord. Truly we may say, he is a God working like himself; for the arrows of the Almighty struck fast in the hearts of the King's enemies, and many were brought to the scepter of King Jesus, and proclaim salvation in his blessed name. Oh, he is a wonder-working God; may I ever be at his feet, and crown him Lord of all. Here I saw the Lord had begun his work, and hence could not find it my duty to leave the place.

The young professors manifested a desire to obey their Lord's commands, and be buried with him in baptism. It was my sincere desire they should; but there being no church for them to covenant with, as most of the old professors (as I observed before) could not see the expediency of baptism, I was at a loss how to proceed; but resolved to follow the Lord's command to teach and to baptize. Accordingly a conference meeting was appointed to hear their experiences, when nine came forward, two old professors, and seven young converts, and were baptized the fourth Lord's day after my first arrival at this place. The Lord owned his blessed ordinance to the conviction of a number, and it was made a precious season to many. After this, the work spread with great power, and people assembled from all parts of the town, and some from the adjoining town. I thought it proper to send for brother Harris Harding, as he was much more acquainted with the old professors than I was, particularly, as he had formerly labored among them, and as many had professed under his ministry. Our meeting was in order to see if we could settle a church; but it proved to no purpose, at this time. However, ten came forward and were baptized. We both went in the water together, to show that we agreed in heart and practice. The glory of the Lord seemed to overshadow the place, and move upon the baptismal waters. But it still looked dark as to settling a church; for the most of the old professors stood as before. I now thought it proper to form those that had been baptized into some order; and for that purpose offered them a covenant, which they cheerfully signed; but God was working out of our sight in the minds of those old professors; for, in a few days from this time, there were twenty-two came forward to baptism. And oh, this was a wonderful day indeed! Here I have seen a mother, son and wife, and grand-daughter, all following their Lord into the water. Here were one man of seventy years of age, and a little boy of only ten. Now was the desire of my soul accomplished in this thing, in that the Lord had united the old and young professors into one body. They requested that they might commemorate the death of their Redeemer; and accordingly, I administered the Lord's supper to them, and it was indeed a blessed season to many; for they were stayed with signs and comforts, as with apples of Sodom, and comforted with apples of life.

What shall I endeavor to the Lord for this benefit? Now, by the blessing of the clouds of mercy, to be divided before a reform. Baptism was administered five Lord's days successively, until seventy-eight joined the church. After staying here thirteen Sabbaths, I was under the necessity of returning to my people. I tarried there four weeks, and then returned to this place again. This was the last of November. I found the Lord was still at work, though not so powerfully as when I left them. Several acknowledged a work of grace to have been wrought in their hearts during my absence; but the cloud seemed to return again; for there being a number of men who follow the sets, on returning home to winter, seeing such an alteration in the place, they were struck with deep solemnity. Many were wounded to their hearts, and made to groan under the weight of their sins. There were not many of them who came out openly to profess religion until the past month, when a young man who had been under great distress all winter, found comfort; and after preaching, could not refrain from ascribing glory to God, for his unexpected deliverance. The divines were very sensibly filled the place, many giving glory to their Redeemer, and many deeply wounded with a sense of their sins.

The last Sabbath in March, twenty came forward and were baptized. My letter has swelled under my pen, but I must conclude with adding that one hundred and twenty have been baptized. There were five baptisms in the winter season. Twenty-four have told their experiences, who are not yet baptized, and a number of others under hopeful impressions. The work is still going on in this place, and spreading rapidly in different parts of this Province.

I am, Sir, Your unworthy brother in Christ, THOMAS HANLEY GUYMAN.

The foregoing letters, despite of grammatical inaccuracies, clumsiness of style, and glaring literary defects, will be read with interest, because they are characteristic of the evangelical spirit of the men who penned them, and of the power of God exhibited in our early revivals. Father Harding says he thinks "upwards of two hundred persons," within a few weeks, had been joyfully converted at the date of his letter in the Township of Yarmouth; and Father Towner numbers the converts in Argyle at 144. These letters were written in the midst of this season of mercy, and many others subsequently professed faith, who attributed their conversion to the extraordinary outpouring of God's spirit at that notable period. In future revivals, too, many years after in some cases persons came forward to unite with the churches in Yarmouth and Argyle, who dated their first experience of spiritual life to the work of God in 1806-7. Moreover, be it remembered that fifty years ago, the population of these Townships could scarcely have been one-eighth of the present number of inhabitants; and consequently, the gracious work of which we are speaking, must have affected a very large portion of the people.

For the Christian Visitor.

## Ordination of Bro. J. Harvey.

At the request of the Baptist Church in Springfield, County of York, a number of brethren assembled with them from adjacent churches of the same faith and order, to deliberate upon the propriety of setting Brother Harvey apart to the work of the ministry. The following brethren composed the Council, viz: Elders W. Harris, T. W. Saunders, H. P. Guilford, J. H. Tupper, G. R. Campbell, and Thos. Todd, Brother Benjamin Hughs, Licentiate, Deacons J. C. Watson, Z. Ely, and D. Currie, brethren D. Bow, James Dickinson, and J. Sloat. The Council having been duly organized, the candidate passed through the requisite examination, it was therefore voted that he be ordained the following day, at 11 o'clock, A. M. Preaching in the evening by the writer. On Wednesday a very large congregation met in the new chapel recently erected by the people of Springfield, when the following services were held, viz: Reading the Scriptures by brother Benjamin Hughs. Prayer offered by G. R. Campbell. Ordination sermon by W. Harris, from 1st Timothy, 4th chap. and 16th verse—"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them, for in doing so thou shalt both save thyself and those that hear thee." The following is a brief outline of this excellent discourse:

- First.—Take heed to thyself.
1. To thy character as a Christian Minister.
  2. To thy word or promise.
  3. To thy thoughts.
  4. To thy temper.
  5. Not to tattle, nor give heed to old wives fables.

- Secondly.—And to the doctrine.
1. Of the Trinity.
  2. Of the divinity of Christ.
  3. Of his state by nature.
  4. Of the advent of Christ as a Redeemer.
  5. Of the efficacy of Christ's atonement.
  6. Of the doctrine of the new birth.
  7. Of practical godliness.
  8. Be careful not to take a more tickling of the flesh for the work of the Spirit of God on the heart.
  9. Be faithful to warn sinners.
  10. Keep up regular church discipline.

Thirdly.—The blessedness of such a course. Save thyself and them that hear thee. Here the speaker for want of time had to close his very appropriate sermon.

Questions asked by H. P. Guilford. Ordaining Prayer by Thos. Todd. Hand of fellowship by J. H. Tupper. Charge to Candidate, by T. W. Saunders. Charge to the Church by H. P. Guilford.

Closing Prayer and Benediction by the Candidate. Thus closing a very interesting and harmonious ordination. Brother J. H. Tupper preached in the evening. Springfield is a very fine settlement, and the past ten months have been a season of unparalleled religious progression with them. Then there was no church of Christ in that place, nor meeting house, neither had they any stated ministry. Now they have an interesting church, a comfortable chapel, and a promising minister. Brother Harvey's labours have been very much blessed there.—May the Divine blessing follow his effort in that locality, as well as elsewhere, were the desires of our hearts on leaving that place.

THOMAS TODD, Clerk of Council.

Woodstock, 9th March, 1858. P. S.—Recently I have baptized fifteen, four in Hodgdon, Maine, and eleven in Jacksontown. Seventeen in all have joined the churches. May the Lord still continue his good work.

Yours, T. T.

## The Religious Awakening.

Origin and Progress of the Work.—The Daily Prayer Meetings.

The following deeply interesting account of the progress of the great revival now in progress in the neighbouring Republic is extracted from a recent issue of the *New York Tribune*. We rejoice to see this secular paper diffusing widely over this extended continent religious intelligence of this sort. We feel that nothing that we can write or publish is of so much importance to our churches and to our country at this time as this glorious news, and therefore we open our columns freely to give it room. It will be seen that the account is continued on our last page. God grant that the gracious influence of the Spirit may be poured forth in equal fulness upon the people of these Provinces, and that tens of thousands may experience their saving power.

It can hardly have escaped general observation that there is now being manifested in this city, an unusual and earnest attention to religion. A remarkably earnest state of feeling on this subject has been developing itself for some time past among all classes of the community here—from the highest to the lowest—including those out of the church as well as those in it. Nor has this quickened interest in religious meetings, been in any wise confined or peculiar to this city; for it extends in an equal and, in many instances, to a still greater degree, to all parts of the country. The exchange newspapers, both religious and secular, that come to us from all quarters, speak of an unwonted revival of religious feeling in this vicinity, and in the country far and near around them. In fact, a sudden fervor seems to have seized the public mind. Everywhere men are crowding to religious meetings, and the spirit with which the crowds are impressed, and which incites them to so general an attention to religion and religious services, seems to be animating the whole land. The revival spreads almost like contagion. It is everywhere expected, like an epidemic. A meeting is organized in one place, and in a day or two afterward another is sure to follow in the nearest neighborhood. One church breaks out into a revival, and in a few weeks the next in the village, or the town, or the city, follows the example, until the whole district is awakened and aroused. In some instances the enthusiasm seems to have spread from place to place with the rapidity of a fire on a prairie. It is believed, for instance, that as many as a hundred prayer-meetings have been established in different cities and towns throughout the country, from the single example of the noon-day meeting held in this city in the "Old North Dutch Church." Not all of these meetings are held at the same time of day, or even daily, yet they have been called into existence from the fact that this was called into existence before them.

A similar religious feeling has not been known in this city for twenty five years. About twenty-five years ago a revival of great power, which excited the sympathy and cooperation of great numbers of persons, both church members and others, occurred in New York, though its extent and results were far less remarkable than those which have been already witnessed in the present instance. Public religious meetings were then held in unusual places, and at unusual hours, and were throngingly attended, but we believe that a midday prayer-meeting, held in the center of the business circles of the city, and sustained largely by the most prominent business men, is a novelty that was not then known. In fact, if the idea of such a meeting had been proposed six months ago, with any probability that it would soon be attended to such an extent as to require three rooms for the divided and overflowing audience, it would have been regarded as hardly less than preposterous.

And it is a precisely similar feeling to that which is exhibited at these and other religious meetings in this city, that is now spreading throughout the country.

Similar accounts are received largely from the West, and in some instances from the South. Multiplied religious meetings are everywhere held in the churches, and a wide-spread and a wider-spread interest exists. This feeling, and the efforts which are put forth to retain and increase it, are not exclusive or peculiar to any single Christian denomination, but seemed to be shared equally by all. And there is one characteristic of the revival which deserves to be specially mentioned. The early revivals in the West, particularly those in uncultured settlements, were marked with a degree of unnatural, and even of supernatural excitement which has become traditional; yet in the present religious awakening, extending, as it does, widely throughout the West, we hear of no such boisterous gatherings as were known in the early days of the pioneer camp-meeting preachers; but, on the contrary, the meetings are described as being characterized, if not with a more genuine spirit, yet with a higher moral tone and a more unexceptionable decorum. There seems to be no instances of such hysterical and remarkable manifestations of the Divine Spirit (or at least what were at the time thought to be such) as were known by the term "jerks." In all the revival intelligences which have been seen—and for the last few months it has largely occupied the religious newspapers, and to no small extent some of the secular—there has been but one solitary instance of this sort to remind one of the olden times and the camp grounds of the frontier. This occurred in Tennessee, in a "religion of zealous" known as "Hard-Shell Baptists," who were reported as having experienced convulsions, and other violent shocks to the physical and nervous system, while assembled in an excited and over-stimulated religious meeting. On the contrary, the present revival, as it is manifested both at the East and West, is marked with great sobriety, and a commendable freedom under excess. It gives evidence of a well-regulated enthusiasm rather than a wild excitement, and as such has better promise of better salutary effects than any previous revival that has ever passed over the country.

OF THE CAUSES TO WHICH THESE UNUSUAL AND MEMORABLE EFFECTS MAY BE TRACED, it is hardly necessary to say that they will be everywhere recognized as providential and divine. It may be stated that the immediate occasion is very widely believed to have been the recent severity of the times, by which men were forced into an acknowledgment of their dependence on Divine Providence, and their minds made ripe and susceptible to the operation of spiritual influence and the reception of religious truths. If such a cause is adequate to such a result, it is, perhaps, not surprising that this city, whose part of the general burden during the commercial troubles was greater than that of any other in the country, should afford a marked instance of awakened interest in religion.

## THE NUMBER OF CONVERSIONS.

It is of course impossible to give accurately, or even to estimate approximately the actual number of conversions which may be set down as the results of such a work. All such results are expressed, to some minds, somewhat impulsively by mere figures. The actual increase of religion in a community is not to be measured by statistics. But to give a partial idea of the remarkable effects which have thus far been produced, it may be mentioned that more than a thousand conversions have been reported in the correspondence of a single religious newspaper, for a single week. A journal of the religious press in this city recently stated that it had counted seven thousand in two weeks; and this was merely the number which happened to be given among the "religious items" of only a portion of the general newspaper press during that time. It is not unlikely that there have actually occurred, in a single week, all parts of the country taken together, as many as fifty thousand conversions. This statement, surprising as it may seem, is amply borne out by the facts.

## A CONVENTION ON REVIVALS.

Just before the close of the year a Convention, consisting chiefly of ministers and members of Presbyterian Churches, was held in Pittsburgh, Pa., and continued in session for three days, for the purpose of considering the necessity of a general revival of religion throughout the country, the hindrances, the

(Continued on last page.)