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fast the form of sound words."-2d Timothy, i. 13.

JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 1863

THE BAPTISTS OF ST. JOHN, N. B.

SERMONS, ON THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, PREACHED IN GERMAIN AND BRUSSELS STREET CHURCHES, BY REV. 1. E. BILL, AND

The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."-I's. cxxvi. 3. The seventy years' captivity of God's ancient people was resad commentary on their backslidings of heart and life, and of the fearful guilt which they contracted by such a course of sin and shame. They simed against light and goodness, and Jehovah gave them into the hands of their enemies to eat the fruit of their doings, until they should repent and turn once more to Himself. But the emancipation of these people from Babylonish captivity, and their restoration to their former privileges, exhibited most clearly the gracious forbearance and unchanging love of their covenant God and Father. They cried to him in their distress, and he stretched forth his arm mighty to save. In full view of this won-drous deliverance, this beautifully touching Psalm was composed: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream." It seemed too good to be true. "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them." God had accomplished this gracious deliverance for his chosen, and He must have the glory. "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." How appropriate the language of our text to the occasion which called it forth; and my brethren it is no less appropriate for us to employ, as a theme of remark, when called upon to consider the dealings of God with his chosen ones in this City. I introduced said

On the present occasion I propose to give you a brief sketch of the rise and progress of the Baptist Church of Saint John; and in so doing, I hope to be able to show that the words of my text are emphatically applicable to us, and that, as Baptist christians, we may truthfully say. "The Lord hath done great things for us,

The original inhabitants of Saint John belonged mostly to the Episcopal National Church. Dissent was scarcely known; and when it first made its appearance, it was frowned upon by ministers and people as a heresy of the most dangerous character. Episcopacy was the dominant faith, and it laboured hard in the early settlement of this country so to engraft itself upon all the departments of social and civil society as to give it a sort of national pre-eminence—to make it in fact the religion as by law established. No persons were considered eligible to offices of military, tegal, political, educational, or religious distinction, unless members of the dominant church. All marriages and funeral rites must be administered by clergymen of the true Apostolic succession. So far did this idea prevail that a godly Baptist minister, by the name of Innis, was incarcerated in prison for some twelve months or more, for yielding to the earnest solicitations of a loving young couple, who had been converted to God through his ministry, to

make them one in holy wedlock.

All offices of trust, of every sort, from the Chief Justice upon the bench, down to the most insignificant one in a country village, must be filled by those who recognized and abetted this Episcopal supremacy. As far down as the founding of King's College, Fresent, and secure its educational immunities for all time to come, in fee simple to the Episcopal church. We refer to this state of things, not for the purpose of calling up any unpleasant feelings, but simply as matters of history to show the obstacles which our fathers had to surmount in proclaiming and extending what they conceived to be the gospel of the blessed Lord Jesus.

When Edward Manning first visited New Brunswick, in the early part of the present continue has not stilled before

early part of the present century, he was called before a magistrate to give an account of himself for daring to preach Jesus and the resurrection. No man at that time was allowed to assume the office of a religious teacher, or to perform any of the functions of ministerial life, unless regularly licensed by the Lieutenant Governor of the Province to do so. But Edward Manning had his credentials from above—he was licensed by the court of heaven; and invested with such high authority, he was not disposed to attach any special importance to the opinion or decrees of men. Like his brethren of the Apostolic age, he preferred to "obey God rather than man." With a heart yearning for the souls of men, he crossed over from Nova Scotia and went up the River St. John, proclaiming, as with a trumpet's blast, repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He was in the prime and vigor of his manhood, and filled with the treasures of the Spirit's power, wherever he opened his lips to declare the gospel message, souls were aroused from the slumber of sin to call upon God for mercy. The result was an extensive revival of religion up and down the St. John River, and its tributaries. On one occasion, above Fredericton, where many were awakened to a sense of their sin and danger, and where others were fired with the spirit of persecution, the judge of the place above he was licensed by the court of heaven; and invested with were awakened to a sense of their sin and danger, and where others were fired with the spirit of persecution, the judge of the place was called upon to issue a warrant, and take this dangerous preacher in charge: but he replied, I would like to hear the man for my self. Accordingly he came to a meeting, and remained outside by the door; Mr. Manning was not aware of his presence, but it so happened that he took for his text, "Behold the Judge standeth at the door." The judge was deeply impressed with the sermon, and retired saying, "None shall lay violent hands upon the young man," and expressed the wish that there were many more such

It was after one of these evangelistic excursions up the river, that Mr. Manning came to St. John. From the best information at our command, we are led to conclude that his first visit to the at our command, we are led to conclude that his first visit to the city must have been as early as 1805—the very year I was born. There was no Baptist place of worship or Baptist family in the city at that time. But Mr. Manning had been directed by some friend in the country to call upon Mr. George Harding, son of Capt. William Harding. The youthful minister did so, and was most kindly received. Mr. Harding lived at the lower end of Germain Street. He kindly invited Mr. Manning to preach in his Germain Street. He kindly invited Mr. Manning to preach in his house. His father, Captain Harding, who lived in Dock Street at the time, told him his house was at his service. Captain Lovett, a Mrs. Harper, Mr. A. Magee, and a coloured sister by the name of Amy Nickson, all opened their houses for the preaching of God's word by the stranger. The work of revival immediately commenced. Many began to enquire what they should do to be saved? Mr. Manning pointed them to the Lamb of God as the only remedy. Several professed conversion; two of Capt. William Harding's daughters and his son, Geo. Harding, were amongst the number. The latter was the first person baptized or immersed in the city of St. John.

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christianity. They each in turn visited this city, and rendered valuable service to the cause of the Master. In 1810, seven brethren and five sisters, twelve in all, were, by their own request, organized (if I am correctly informed) by Elder Merrill, as the First Baptist Church of St. John. Mr. Pettingill being highly esteemed for his deep-toned piety and sincere devotion to the cause of God, was chosen Deacon, and N. Garrison, (father of our worthy Deacon Geo. A. Garrison), was chosen Clerk

This Mr. Merrill, of whom we speak, has an interesting history. Before he became a Baptist, he was the esteemed pastor of a large Congregational Church in Sedgwick, Maine. He became troubled in his conscience on the subject of believers' baptism. He examined the Scriptures, read Pedo Baptist books, and adopted various methods to banish his doubts regarding the validity of Infant Baptism; but all this was unavailing. His perplexities increased, but he fathers, and of becoming a despised Baptist. In his trouble fathers, and of becoming a despised Baptist. In his trouble to prayed carnestly "Lord make me anything but a Baptist," but the truth pressed his conscience until he cried in deep anguish of spirit before the mercy seat, "Lord make me anything thou wouldest have to be, even if it be a Baptist." As might be expected, soon he felt constrained by God's word to embrace with his whole heart the doctrine of believers' baptism, as maintained by us. He accordingly preached seven sermons to his church, giving his reasons for this change in his religious opinions, and putting forth such a barrassment." His collections amounted to \$1061. of the infant church. for this change in his religious opinions, and putting forth such a chain of Scriptural argument as produced a powerful impression upon his people. The result was that Mr. Merrill, his wife, and other members of his church, numbering in all sixty-six, were buried in baptism, May 13th, 1805, by Dr. Baldwin, of Boston; nineteen more were baptized the day following, and the whole his future life to the sacred ministry. By the request of the were formed into a Baptist church, and Mr. Merrill was ordained church he remained for some time preaching the Gospel publicly, their pastor. The members of this Congregational church conti- and from house to house, with earnestness and power. The church nued to repair to the water until about one hundred and twenty of them were baptized. The sermons preached by Merrill, on the subject of baptism, passed through several editions, and were extensively useful. It seemed a fortunate circumstance that one so

The members of this new organization had to endure all sorts of eproach and persecution. They were called, in derision, fanatics, newlights, dippers, enthusiasts, &c., but they endured all patiently for the truth's sake, and rendered blessing for cursing, and good for evil. These persecutions tended to bind them together with increasing affection, and to excite within them a spirit of constant watchfulness and unceasing prayer. Edward and James Manning, Joseph Crandal, Joseph Dimock, Theodore Harding, and others, continued to make occasional visits to the city. Their ministerial labors were highly encouraging, and were greatly blessed in the edification of the youthful church and in the conversion of sinners to God. But the church remained without a stated pastor until 1813 or 1814, at which time a converted Frenchman, by the name of Reice, came to the city. He preached the gospel with unusual power, and was chosen by the church to become its pastor. He accepted the office, and engaged in the work committed to his care with commendable zeal and energy. Sinners were converted at the church and preached to general acceptance. By the urgent request of the church he to general acceptance. By the urgent request of the church he to general acceptance.

eminently qualified to instruct, should, in the providence of God,

be chosen to counsel the young converts of Saint John, and to form

them into a christian church after the model furnished by the New

is worthy of special note. He was a Frenchman by birth, and during the war between England and France, he was a midshipman in the French service. His ship was taken by the English, and sent as a prize to Halifax, N. S. Here the young midshipman was especially noticed by the Duke of Kent, who was residing at Halifax at that time. At the close of the war, Mr. Reice took a tour through the country as far west as Yarmouth. A great revival was in progress in that town, and meetings were being held revival was in progress in that town, and meetings were being held day and night. All this was exceedingly strange to the Brenchman. He had been educated in the Roman Catholic faith, in his own country, but had never seen or read the Bible. He regarded what was going on in Yarmouth as mere religious frenzy, and for the purpose of deriding these religious meetings he resolved to have a ball in a house just opposite to the place where they were held. He had attended some of the revival meetings, and had behalf the revival meetings are the come disturbed in conscience, but he thought by rushing into the excitement of worldly amusement to stifle his convictions, and to excitemant of worldly amusement to stifle his convictions, and to relieve his mind of all gloomy apprehensions. The night of the ball came, and Reice opened the festivities in person; but in the ball came, and Reice opened the festivities in person; but in the ball came, and Reice opened the festivities in person; but in the ball came, and Reice opened the festivities in person; but in the ball came, and Reice opened the festivities in person; but in the ball came, and Reice opened the festivities in person; but in the ball came, and Reice opened the festivities in person; but in the Baptist ministers. In addition to Mr. Miles we have Mr. Pryor, who was also designed for a preacher in the Episcopal church, and Mr. Crawley, who was designed for the law, and for a time of intense soul agony, and he cried aloud for mercy. Thus the house of dancing, to the amazement and confusion of all present, suddenly became the house of prayer. The result was the conversion of his soul to Christ, his subsequent baptism and connection with the Baptist church. He very soon went forth preaching the faith that he once sought to destroy. He visited different places in Nova Scotia, and was universally received by the christians of the day as a messenger sent from God. He was bold, earnest and faithful, and always ready to defend what he conceived to be the truth, no matter who opposed. His willingness and ability to defend his sentiments were frequently put to the test during his residence in St. John. One occasion is worthy of special remark. He was challenged to meet a Methodist minister, by the name of Knowlan, in public debate, on the subject of baptism. the name of Knowlan, in public debate, on the subject of baptism. He accepted the challenge. The controversy took place in what was then known as the Coffee House, at the corner of Prince Wm. and King Streets. The Mayor of the city was called to the chair. His antagonist appeared with a large pile of books to aid him;—the little Frenchman came to the contest with the Bible alone in his hand. On seeing the number of books brought to confute him, Mr. Reice remarked to his opponent, "You, sir, have come with your coat of mail, Goliah like, to defy the armies of the living God; I have come, like David, with the sling and the stone

After the living and the stone of the living God; I have come, like David, with the sling and the stone of the living God; I have come, like David, with the sling and the stone of the living God; I have come, like David, with the sling and the stone of the living God; I have come, like David, with the sling and the stone of the living God; I have come, like David, with the sling and the stone of the living God; I have come, like David, with the sling and the stone of the living God; I have come, like David, with the sling and the stone of the living God; I have come of the living only, and with these I promise, in the name of the Lord, to slay you before I leave." Mr. Reice claimed that the New Testament alone was to be the standard in this discussion; his opponent objected, but the chairman decided that the contest ought to proceed upon this principle. This being conceded, Mr. Reice found no difficulty in conducting his argument to a triumphant issue. "The people were astonished at his doctrine, for his word was with

During the pastorate of Mr. Reice, a place of worship which had been first occupied by the Episcopal church, and afterwards by the Methodists, was procured by the Baptists. He continued to preach the Gospel in this house some two years. Many professed conversion, and the church was so much enlarged that it was deemed advisable to erect a new house for the better accommodation of

Harding and William Stenning Nathan Garrison gave £25— Jonah Dyer, £20; Benjamin Gale, £15; Andrew S. Green; £10; Joshua Lane, £10; Jeremiah Drake, £10; Henry Blakslee, £15; Samuel Chadburn, £10; William Harding, £20; Henry Holmes, Samuel Chadburn, £10; William Harding, £20; Henry Holmes, £10. Others gave from five pounds down to one, according to their circumstances. On the strength of this subscription the site was purchased and preparation made for building. The work proceeded, but the house was not completed and opened for public worship until 1818. Mr. Stenning, aided by his brother-in-law, Mr. Thomas Harding, superintended the erection of the house, and strange to say, his funeral sermon was the first sermon preached in it. When he came to this country from England, he was a member of the Episcopal church, but here he experienced a change of heart and became a Baptist. His death was a serious loss to the little church, but for him it was a glorious triumph.

On the morning of the day before his death he rose from his bed,
went to the door, and looked round upon his possessions as if to himself by his Biblical attainments in his own country. By a

As we have said, the new house was not opened for public service until 1818. About this time Rev. Thomas Griffen, and Mr. D. Nutter, and S. Lockey arrived from England. Mr. Griffen was encouraged to come by Mr. Stenning. He was chosen by the church to the pasterate; but after laboring acceptably and usefully for two years, he was commissioned by the church to visit the United States, for the purpose of raising money to liquidate a troublesome debt upon the chapel, and while absent he felt it to be his duty to embrace an opening which offered in Philadelphia. The church here gave him up reluctantly, but he felt that the claims of a rising family called him to a more remunerative field.

barrassment. His collections amounted to \$1061.

On Elder Scott's retirement, a young man by the name of Densmore, who had just been converted in a lumber camp up the river St. John, came to the city filled with the spirit of the Gospel. He was on his way to his home in the States, intending to devote was greatly revived and edified.

For some time the church was left without a stated ministry, but received visits from Elders J. Crandal, R. Davis, C. M. James, (recently from Wales), D. Harris, D. Dunbar and T. Ansley. The ministrations of these brethren greatly comforted and confirmed the church, and added a few to its numbers.

In July 1st the Baptist Association was held in the city. It was a season of deep religious interest. After this associational gathering. Elders D. Harris and Miller protracted their visit, and were made the means of a gracious revival, and converts pressed into the kingdom of God. Some who had been expelled were led to the foot of the cross for pardon, and were restored to the fellowship of the church. Elder Miller was subsequently chosen paster, and continued in this connection for about two years. During his pastorate some eighty persons, by baptism and letter, were added to the church. He was highly esteemed in love for his works sake, and much good was done.

In 1826, Elder Miller was induced to accept a call to a Baptist church in Maine, and he was succeeded in the pastorate of Germain Street, by Elder Charles Tupper, then of Amherst, N. S. His ministry was highly acceptable, but city life not agreeing with the health of either himself or Mrs. Tupper, and from other consider-

Mr. Freeman's leave of absence from College having expired, he returned, and Elder Joseph Crandal in the following March be-

came the pastor pro tem for one year. God blessed his ministry. In 1828 the Association again held its anniversary with the Germain St. church. The late Frederick Miles was present, related Germain St. church. The late Frederick Miles was present, related his Christian experience, was accepted and baptized by Rev. Charles Tupper. Mr. Miles was educated in King's College, Windsor, Nova Scotia, for the ministry of the Episcopal church, but while pursuing his studies a revival of religion took place in the College. E. A. Crawley and John Pryor were his fellow students, they experienced religion, and through the counsels and prayers of Mr. Crawley, young Miles was brought to the knowledge of the truth. Having felt that his sins were pardoned, his enquiry was, "Lord what wouldst them have me to do?" He was led to a prayerful what wouldst thou have me to do?" He was led to a prayerful examination of the word of God, and the result was a conscien tions adoption of Baptist sentiments. It is a singular fact that a large proportion of those, who were converted at that time in King's College subsequently became Baptists, and several of them Baptist ministers. In addition to Mr. Miles we have Mr. Pryor,

doors were thus barred and bolted against dissenters, so called, the very principles of Gospel truth which the founders of the Institution were so anxious to crush and destroy. How truthful the language of God by the prophet Isaiah. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord: For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts," Isaiah

After the baptism of Mr. Miles, the church proved his ministerial gifts and qualifications, and being satisfied, called him to the pastorate. He was ordained Sept. 1828, by Elders Joseph Crandal, William Elder, and Gilbert Spurr. He immediately entered upon the responsible duties of his office, a revival of religion followed, and numbers were added to the church under his instrumentality. The first believer baptized by Elder Miles was our highly esteemed brother Robert Sears, who has been so useful in power." After a long discussion in the presence of the assembled crowd, the chairman decided that Mr. Reice had the best of the argument, and his antagonist retired in confusion. This controversy led to inquiry, and to the furtherance of Baptist sentiments.

tized, and a season of refreshing was enjoyed.

In the autumn of 1830, Bro. Miles resigned his pastorate, for the purpose of completing a course of Theological study in the Institution at Newton, Mass. On his leaving, Elder Samuel Bancroft was called to supply the pulpit, which he did, for some time, with much acceptance. Several converts were added during his

In September, 1831, Rev. J. G. Naylor, of England, visited the he was invited to occupy the pulpit. Being a man of more than he was invited to occupy the pulpit. Being a man of more than ordinary talent, his preaching was highly approved, and he was soon called to the pastorate. This offer he declined, but agreed to remain for a few months. During his stay in the city, Rev. Mr. Burns, then minister of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, of this city, published an elaborate work against the Baptists, and in defence of Infant Baptism. To this work Mr. Naylor replied, in a pamphlet, which was written with considerable ability, and which the published to the world. Both writers evinced more intellectual belowers and we are not aware that any discourse than religious power and we are not aware that any cleverness than religious power, and we are not aware that any special advantage resulted from the contest. The church was not harmonious in retaining his services, and he left for the United

SAINT JOHN, N. B.

REV. I. E. BILL. Editor and Proprietor Address all & Communications and Business

Letters to the Editor, Box 194 St. John, N. B.

Che Christian Bisitar goracco Is emphatically a Newspaper for the Family.

It furnishes its readers with the latest intelligence, and Religious and Seculars, applicables

ordained by Mr. Lester. He arrived in St. John June 1835. His credentials and ministerial qualifications were all highly satisfactory to the church, and he was inducted forthwith into the pastoral office. Many rejoiced and thanked God that he had heard their prayers, and sent them a pastor after His own heart. His eminent pulpit talents, combined with a kind and generous heart, gave great promise of future success. He continued for between two and three years, and some success attended his arduous labors, but difficulties arose in the church of a most perplexing character, his health gave way, and in October, 1837.

he left for his native land.

Such, in brief, are some of the most important incidents associated with the rise and progress of Baptist sentiments in this city. Can we tail to recognize the hand that has guided and sustained us as a people thus far? Surely with grateful hearts should we make the language of the text our own, and exclaim, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are gladito And let all the people say AMEN.

BEWARE OF BAD BOOKS. Islaiding

About thirty-five years ago, says an exchange, the writer formed an acquaintance with a young man of fine education and commanding talents, and we soon became bosom friends. One morning, after school at a street corner, he handed me a book, which he said he could loan me for only one quarter of an hour. We stood at that corner for a few moments, while I looked at the obscene pictures and read a few pages in that polluting volume. I handed it back to him, and never saw it again; but the poison took effect; "the sin left its mark." I cannot erase the effect of the impure thoughts which, in that quarter of an hour, that vile book lodged in my heart, and which, may God forgive me, I harbored there. I can and do pray against the sin, and trust by God's grace, yet to conquer it ; but it is a thorn in my flesh, and still causes me great bitterness and anguish.

Young men, as the lovers of your souls, I tell you in all sincerity, there is nothing I would not villingly give to have the veil of oblivion cast over the scenes and the sentiments of that corrupt volume, which still haunt me like foul spectres during my hours of private devotion, in the sanctuary, and at the communion table. O, what sad work did that quarter of an hour make upon a soul, which nothing but the blood of Christ can wash away. Young men, beware of bad books, and beware, also, of evil companions. . sede rudo

Hedley Vicars says-" I speak from heartfelt experience; I would give worlds, if I had them, to undo what I have done. O that I had the last two years allotted to me to live over again; O that my past actions could be obliterated from my recollection!"

And J. B. Gough most affectionately remarks-What you learn from bad habits and in bad society you can never forget; and it will be a lasting pang to you. I would give my right hand to night if I could forget that which I have learned n evil society-if I could tear from my mind the hings which I have seen and heard. You can not, I believe, take away the effect of a single impure thought that has been lodged or harbored in your heart. You may pray against it, and, by God's grace, you may conquer it; but it wil through life cause you bitterness and anguish." My early friend, after well-nigh accomplishing

my ruin, became a dissolute man, imbibed infide entiments, and, at last, as I greatly fear, died by his own hand. "Let him that thinketh h Standeth take heed lest he fall." I'w notion doug

THE BLACKSMITHS WIFE. LIN Mrs. D was one of God's chosen ones, bu

for years was oppressed with grief and anxiety for her unbelieving husband. She labored ear nestly to bring him to a sense of his danger of perishing eternally without an interest in the salvation purchased by Christ; she solicited the prayers of her pastor and the officers of the church; she wrestled in prayer with God through anxious weeks, months, and years. Still she be-lieved that He who had promised to hear the cry of his children, would not leave her always

At length God visited that church with a wonderful display of his grace. Meetings were thronged with anxious souls eager for the bread of life;" and Mrs. D----- hoped the time had come for God to appear in her behalf. Suit to Living far from church, she one morning begged her husband to leave his work and take her

ged her husband to leave his work and take her to church. He seemed greatly exasperated, and giving her a harsh reply, went to his shop.

Her heart sank within her. She went and told Jesus. Rolling her burden on God, she begged he would glorify his own name in the result. She trusted not in vain. After an hour or more he came in, and with the greatest mildness, told her if she wished they would go to church. She saw the hand of God; and so great was her joy, that she could scarcely refrain from singing and giving thanks audibly, on her way to the sanc-The services were nearly through when the

arrived, but a prayer-meeting was appointed in the church for the evening, while the anxious were invited to the house of the pastor. Mr proposed their staying until evening. On going to the parsonage, he was met by the pastor's wife, who told him one room was for those who had found Christ, while other apartments were for the impenitent; and asked which room he would go into. With deep self-abasement he be thankful. to we will and to be

that night over repenting sinners. None could help exclaiming with the faithful and now rejoic ing wife, "Behold, what hath God wrought." What an encouragement for the believing wife