

a Christian charity in which that law should have no recognition. It was certainly not their belief that the law was any less divine, any less binding, any less permanent, than they had hitherto thought it." Paul, by his keen perception, is the man who first sees the true inwardness of the gospel inclusiveness; all men are equally sharers of the Divine promises, and what is vastly more, all are equally freed from Jewish observances.

A QUESTION OF OUR OWN.

A question not dealt with by the professor intrudes itself just here: Did not the Gentile and Jewish converts together partake of the Lord's Supper? And would not that operate to break up the caste-feelings of the Jewish Christians? If they together ate and drank the emblems, would not that finally lead to their eating any meal in common? This suggests itself to us as one of the underlying ideas of the "communion," as instituted by our Lord, and must have had its influence in breaking down the exclusiveness of the Jewish Christians.

In other numbers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR we shall take the opportunity afforded by the appearance of this work—accredited as it is by the dominant school of modern theology, and forming one of the volumes of the International Theological Library—to examine the position and report to our readers the results of our survey. Amherst, N. S., February, 1898.

Rev. Shubael Dimock.

A sketch of his life by his grandson, Rev. Joseph Dimock; republished by request from the Baptist Missionary Magazine of September, 1836.

Shubael Dimock was born in the State of Connecticut, then a British province, about the year 1708. He was of the Standing Order, or Congregationalist, and obtained hope in the Saviour when young. He was brought up by his grandaunt, who was a deaconess of a Congregational church, and was, therefore, taught all the rites and principles of that denomination, and after he experienced the power of religion, he united with the church and observed all its forms. He resided in Mansfield, Windham County.

Mr. Dimock was united in marriage to a Miss Hovey, by whom he had two sons and one daughter, after which she died. He was subsequently married to a Miss Marsh of the same province, by whom, I think, he had eight children, two of whom died young. Death again snatched his consort from his embraces; she died in Nova Scotia. Some time after, he was again married to a Mrs. Marsters, a widow, by whom he had one son. He died May 24th, 1781. He was of small stature, quick in his motions, and very persevering in the small circle in which he moved.

But that which most distinguished him was his decidedly religious principles. He took a warm interest in what is called the Separate revival in New England, in the time of the great religious excitement in that country, and was much opposed by the ruling party. He prayed and exhorted in their Separate meeting, but was taxed to pay to ministers whom he never heard, and whom he could not conscientiously support. I am not sufficiently acquainted with all the grounds of dispute between the Standing Order and the Separatists, to specify them. I know one controverted point with them was respecting qualifications for the ministry. The Standing Order contended that a man of moral habits, good acquirements, or thorough education, without the renewing of the Holy Spirit, might be a successful minister of Christ; the other maintained that God called his friends to that work, and not his enemies; that education, though good in its place, could not make a minister of Jesus Christ.

This was warmly disputed in a public debate by Rev. Mr. Salter, and Rev. Mr. Hovey. After Mr. S. had, in an elaborate speech, endeavored to prove from Scripture, especially the case of Judas, that the special grace of God was not necessary to entitle a man to membership in a church, or to a ministerial office, Mr. H. replied: "Mr. S. has placed a chair in the church of Christ for Judas, and now, if he wishes to sit in it, he is welcome to do so; but for my part I do not wish for such a seat myself, therefore cannot conscientiously encourage others to fill so fearful a situation." He said he was of the opinion of Mr. Whitfield, "That a faithful ministry is among the greatest blessings the Almighty has been pleased to bestow on his people, but an unconverted ministry is one of the greatest curses to which a people are doomed."

But, as Mr. Dimock would not pay his rates, they were sued for, except when his wife would pay them, to save any valuable article from the officer. He and many others were frequently sent to jail, or whipped for their contumacy in preaching Christ, or encouraging separate meetings. I recollect to have heard him relate a circumstance concerning a person, perhaps himself, who had held a meeting in Mansfield, and in the time of worship an officer came with a warrant to take the leader of the meeting to Windham jail. When service closed, he read his warrant, and asked him if he would go to Windham with him. He said he had no call to go to Windham that he knew of, but said, if the officer had any duty to do, he must attend to it—that he should not resist him. The constable obtained help, and set the prisoner on a

horse which had been provided for that purpose. The officer then asked him if he would guide the horse. He told him he would guide him to his own house if he would allow him, but that he had nothing to do in that kingdom, and therefore could not, in conscience, guide the horse one step in compliance with that warrant, which was persecuting the cause and people of God. The officer then got on the horse behind the prisoner, and guided the horse to Windham. While proceeding on their journey the prisoner availed himself of the opportunity of addressing the officer so closely on the subject of religion, that it was thought, for the time being, the officer was as much a prisoner as the real one, and that he felt as desirous to be released. I do not recollect how long he was kept in prison.

But the Ruling Party was so intolerant, and Mr. Dimock, with many others, so harassed by fines, imprisonments, whippings, &c, that they thought as they were persecuted in one place they would flee to another, and soon after removed to Nova Scotia.

He here found a place in which, notwithstanding the hardships of settling a new country, he could, in a spiritual point, sit under his own vine.

This removal took place in the autumn of 1859. When he came to Newport, N. S., a few pious persons gathered round him to hear him preach, and sustain the cause of religion, and witness to the truth. Here he continued during the life of his second wife; after his third marriage he removed to Falmouth, where he found a few pious persons, but religion was in a very low state. After some time he removed his family back to Newport, where his eldest son lived. He continued preaching in Newport to a small congregation of people in private houses.

About this time two brothers by the name of Sutton, Baptist ministers, visited those parts alternately, or together. The Lord was pleased to bless their ministry to a number of souls, which greatly strengthened the people of God, and inspired with holy vigor the ardent soul of this messenger of peace.

Shortly after the last visit of the Suttons Mr. Henry Alline, of Falmouth, was converted, and was powerfully exercised about preaching. He soon after began to preach, which increased the zeal of professors of religion in a good degree.

Mr. D. did not agree with all the peculiarities of Mr. Alline's creed, yet he looked upon him as an eminent instrument in the hands of the Almighty to call sinners to repentance. After this, a number of Christians of different ages were formed into a church, called the Church of Falmouth and Newport, consisting of Congregationalists and Baptists. The church met once a month for communion. Mr. D. and his son Daniel generally attended the monthly meetings, summer and winter. He was so opposed to the scriptural ordinance of Believer's Baptism by immersion, that when his son Daniel was exercised on the subject, and desired to be baptized, he would not consent to it. Daniel, therefore, deferred it until he was twenty-four or twenty-five years old, at which time he freely consented. Subsequently, when nearly seventy years old, he was baptized himself, by his son, who had been previously ordained as a Baptist minister.

When Mr. D. was first exercised on the subject, he tenaciously clung to the arguments which are resorted to by Paedobaptists. When he was driven from Scripture, he flew to reason, and would frequently draw conclusions and premises like these: "That God was a God of mercy, and would not require immersion in such a cold country;" "That so many of the martyrs that sealed the truth with their blood could not be mistaken;" and "Would the Lord own, support, and grant them his presence, in error," and also, "That he had enjoyed comfort in offering up his eldest daughter by baptism." [sprinkling.] The circumstance made such an impression on his mind, that it was his most powerful argument to combat, and the last one he gave up. But the Lord discovered to him that it was his leaving the usurious standard of Truth, and trusting to very fluctuating and dangerous criterions. He saw now that God had been pleased to commune with his people over many imperfections, and many wrongs, and that God has never given up his prerogative, nor made his conduct towards his people a rule for us to walk by, but has given us the Scriptures, by which to walk. He now said, "If God was pleased to make it the duty of his people to offer their children up by faith and prayer, and if he was pleased to own the faith he gave, and to pass by my superstition, I see no reason why I should make an ordinance where God has made none." He could no longer live in disobedience to so plain a command. He was baptized by his son in the River Kennetock. He preached a good while in connection with his son, one preaching in the morning, and the other in the afternoon. Put at last his age and infirmities disqualified him.

When he became too feeble to leave his own house, he had meetings appointed there. He often used to address the congregation, sitting in his arm-chair, so warmly and affectionately, that they would be melted down to tears. His addresses were generally made of solemn appeals from the word of God to the conscience; of the turpitude of sin,—the unreasonableness of neglecting religion,—the shortness of time,—the vast concerns of eternity,—the sweetness and sure support of religion to the believer.

Sometime in the autumn of 1780, it was evident that he was fast hastening, by a hectic cough, and decay, to his dissolution, and looked forward to it with the utmost composure.

About this time he began to keep a diary, which continued till within a short time of his death. But this, with all the rest of his papers, was destroyed when his son Daniel's house was burned, soon after the death of the subject of this memoir. Some passages, still fresh in memory, are as follows:—

—This day I have been calling to mind some passages of my life, and have great cause for humility,

repentance, and self-abhorrence, and great reason for thankfulness for many deliverances, but above all, for deliverance from sin and temptation—for God's love and a Saviour's blood—for the consolations of the Holy Spirit, and hopes of eternal glory. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, for his goodness, and for all his wonderful works to the children of men; and for his superabounding grace to me and mine. What was I, or all my father's house, that the Lord should deal thus graciously with me? How does it behove me to shake myself from the earth, and all the things of time, and live only to God, what time I remain here! I find the pins of this earthly tabernacle are loosening—the clay walls are crumbling and falling down. Oh that my heart may be much on the 'house not made with hands!' Had a sweet and refreshing season in secret, and in family prayer."

At another time he writes:

"This morning awoke in a gloomy state of mind. Could fix my mind on no subject for meditation; my mind did not seem to be led into the Scriptures—my cough troublesome—tried to bring death and judgment near—to examine myself concerning my hope—had no doubt of my personal acceptance with God, but Oh! how stupid and barren is my heart! The family sang a hymn, and read a chapter in the Bible. I engaged in prayer—felt some intercourse with heaven. 'How long shall I sojourn in Meshek, and dwell in the tents of Kedar?' I would say with Job, 'I would not live always, I have no continuing city here, the day is past and gone.' 'Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon!' 'Why should the bride appear like one who turns aside to paths unknown?'"

Another day he writes:

"Today I feel confidence in the promises of God. 'The foundation of God stands sure; the Lord knoweth them that are his. With him I trust my cause.'"

Nearly at the close of his diary he writes thus: "This morning I awoke about the dawn of day; my meditations of divine things were sweet. 'Before I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amnidadab.' The harmony of the divine attributes in the economy of redemption, so overcame my soul—so captivated my mind, that wonder, love, praise and joy, overwhelmed me. I knew my time was short, and I hoped very short. My enraptured soul could say with more assurance than ever, 'My beloved is mine, and I am his.' He was the gift of the Father for me, and to me; he hath given himself to redeem me from the curse; and the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, hath revealed him in his mediatorial office. O what love! what wisdom! power and sweetness! 'And he is mine!' yes, he is mine! Could I call all the world, all kingdoms, honor, wealth, power, pleasure, my possessions,—oh how contemptible!"

"I'd part with all the joys of sense,

To gaze upon thy throne;

Pleasures spring thence, forever mine,

Unspeaking, unknown."

"My cough, raising blood, and shortness of breath, are pleasant omens to me of my departure being at hand. Yet I feel willing to wait my heavenly Father's time."

These are specimens of what his diary contained for two or three months previous to his death. But toward the close of life, he seemed wholly detached from the world, and his conversation in heaven.

On the afternoon before his death, all his children and their partners, except his son Shubael, were providentially at his house, to see him; and about two o'clock, as he was sitting in his chair, conversing in his usual strain, he paused for a moment, and then said very calmly, "I do not wish you to be alarmed, but I believe I am dying. I feel a strange alteration in me." His son Daniel felt his pulse, and said that he did not know that he was just dying, but that there was a great change in his pulse.

With the greatest calmness and composure he now gave his dying counsel to his wife, and all his family;—told Shubael's wife to say to him, "You will see your father no more in this world. Tell him from his dying father, to prepare to meet me at the bar of God; tell him this is a delusive, ensnaring world; that its smiles are dangerous; that 'one thing is needful,'—a portion in Christ; tell him it was that supported me in life, and now makes death easy and pleasant to me. I leave him and all my family with the Lord. May they seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near."

He said he might be mistaken as to his immediate dissolution,—that he was quite relieved from that deathly feeling which he felt awhile before, but the tranquil state of his mind was not changed. His countenance and words spoke the serenity and inward peace of his mind. His strength of voice, and wonted vigor of body and mind, were so restored by night, that it was thought he might continue some time. His children went home—he walked to his bed, and his family went to rest, except a step-daughter, who sat by his bed-side. He appeared to sleep sweetly, till he breathed no more; and the family and friends were called before morning to see his breathless corpse, and, in their contemplations, to follow his departed spirit to those mansions prepared for the righteous, and in which for years he had desired to be.

A sermon was preached on the occasion of his death by the Rev. Nicholas Parsons, a Baptist minister in Horton.

Mr. Dimock's preaching talents were small, but he had a particular gift in prayer and exhortation. The holy freedom with which he poured out his soul at the feet of the Saviour, was such a tide of holy breathing, as often drew all who engaged with him into the same heavenly stream. I now make use of the language of others, though I often felt the power of his exhortations and prayers, condemning me for sinfulness, and causing me to fear that I should never obtain that religion which I believed him to possess. I recollect to have heard the Rev. Henry Alline once say to my father, "Come, Bro. Dimock, let us go and spend the evening with Father D. I want to hear him pray. I often think, I never heard any person pray who looks so directly into heaven, and leads others with him as he does. I sometimes have felt so small, I never wanted to think of myself or hear myself again. I expect we shall not hear him much more on these shores of time, for he will soon get home. Yet I may get there before him, but if I do, I think it must be very soon."

He died May 24, 1781, aged seventy-three years. He left four sons, six daughters, and a widow. All but three of his children had families. O that their latter end may be like his!