

## Rev. John Chipman Morse, D. D.

BY E. M. SAUNDERS, D. D.

John Chipman Morse is the son of John Martin Morse and Jane Chipman, who was the eldest daughter of the Rev. Thomas Handy Chipman. This Rev. Thomas Handy Chipman was a son of Handy Chipman, one of the puritans who came to Coruwallis in 1760 to take up the lands left by the expelled French. Thomas Handy was a Henry Aline convert and preacher. Subsequently he became a Baptist and spent his life as a Baptist Minister, chiefly in Annapolis County.

John Chipman Morse was born March 23, 1819, two miles above Bridgetown, on the Annapolis side of the river. When fifteen years old he went to Upper Aylesford with his brother, Heustis Morse, to learn the carpenter's trade. He was engaged for six years in this business.

Upper Aylesford is that section of the Annapolis Valley beginning just west of Caribou Bog and extending half way to Kingston Station. At this time, 1835, it was not as thickly settled as it is now. West of the Bog were Samuel Parker, Colonel Crane, Alexander Patterson, James Harris, Elias Graves, a Mr. Banks and a Mr. McGee, a Mr. Palmer and Henry Van Buskirk. On the South Mountain were a few new settlers in their log houses—William and Daniel Parker and a Mr. Cogswell.

This section of country had been as early as 1783 provided with religious services by the Episcopalians. Largely through the benevolence of Mr. Morden, hence Morden road, connected with the commissariat at Halifax, a church was built. Rev. John Wiswell, who had settled at Wilmot, helped much in erecting this church. The government of the day made a grant to aid in erecting it. At the time Mr. Morse went there to learn his trade, Rev. Mr. Owen was rector. He was a pious young Englishman who gave his whole heart to the work of the ministry. The church was crowded with hearers. He had a very large Sunday School, attended not by young people only but by old people as well. Among those who lived in this part of the country were some who held to the Methodist and Baptist faith. They had moved there from Wilmot.

Finally the Methodists began to build a chapel. Of course the Baptists followed. So soon as the Methodist chapel was finished a series of religious meetings was commenced. The Rev. Mr. Sleep was the minister. Very soon a deep interest was awakened among the people.

The social recreations of the young people were of a boisterous character. Chopping down the forest, piling the burnt land logs, ploughing, mowing and husking corn were carried on largely by what was called "frolics." This made grand days and gay evenings. Knittings, quiltings and parings were the social occasions for the gentler sex. Drinking was common, but drunkards scarce. The people were self-reliant, honest and good-natured. To civic culture they made no pretensions. Theoretically they were believers in the Bible. A few of them had professed religion and belonged either to the Episcopal, Methodist or Baptist church. All, however, attended Episcopal worship.

When the revival commenced the Episcopal church was nearly forsaken. Among the young men awakened was John Chipman Morse. He was powerfully convicted of his sins. Many young people went forward to what was then called the penitent bench. John C. Morse was induced to take his place among them. The Rev. Mr. Sleep, Phineas Jacques and others were fervent in prayer and earnest in labors. Peace and rejoicing came to others, but none to Morse. To every enquiry—"Do you feel better?" there came the decided, "No."

Night after night he attended these services, but his troubled soul found no peace. By night and by day darkness and condemnation were like a crushing incubus on his soul. He was told that he must pray and have more faith. So he continued his supplications with eager earnestness, bordering on desperation; but all to no purpose. The darkness grew darker, and the burden more crushing.

He visited a friend, George West, and told him of the state of his soul. West regarded it as a good omen. He rejoiced over it. He met a Mr. Abner Woodworth at Mr. West's. He related his troubles to this stern Presbyterian Covenanter. For his satisfaction Mr. Woodworth said to him, "Young man, remember that God is under no obligation to save you." Then I must give up all and beg, said Morse to himself. Light began to dawn. His soul began to grow calm. In the meantime Mr. West had caught his hat and was running from house to house warning sinners and shouting glory to God. In Morse's conviction he saw evidences of a pending revival.

The Methodist church began to get too small for the congregations. People came from Lower Aylesford—Edward Woodbury, Zebina Roach, Mandly Goucher,

Sydney Welton. Others came from the Berwick region.

Edmund Morton, who kept the inn, had always been kind to the ministers who travelled east and west in those days. When they wished to preach his bar-room was always at their disposal. Many an eloquent sermon reverberated among the bottles and glasses of Morton's bar-room.

In that day ministers and bar-keepers were more intimate than they are in these days. While Christians have become more and more friendly, and denominations have been drawn closer and closer together, rum-sellers and ministers have been drawing apart, until now there seems to be between them a state of chronic alienation. It was not so in olden times.

This Morton house in after years, in good old coach days, was known as the Sheffield house. Well, the Baptist house of worship was not yet completed, so Mr. Morton opened his bar-room for a kind of overflow meeting. It was there J. C. Morse came into the light—there the burden of his guilt rolled away. When he arose in this meeting he began to give a statement of the condition of his mind. He had not proceeded far when a change came over his mind. Spiritual light came into his soul and filled him with rapture. The change was instantaneous. His salvation through Christ was an assured fact. The looks of the people changed. To him their faces shone like the faces of angels. So radiant and beautiful was the face of one woman that her image is still distinct in his mind. The night, dark and drear, was suddenly changed to a calm, cloudless day. "Suns rose in the east, the west, the north and the south." The spiritual realm was all aflame with God's glory. It seemed that glory poured through a golden pipe from the throne of God into his soul till his whole nature was suffused with the divine effulgence. The great doctrines of divine sovereignty, foreordination, election, effectual calling and final perseverance stood out grandly in the foreground of his faith. He adored God for elective mercy. His right to arrest and save sinners or to allow them to go on in their ways of wickedness was now borne in upon his spirit, giving him joy unspeakable and full of glory.

He returned to the Methodist services to tell them what God had done for his soul. There he declared his belief that God was under no obligation to save the sinner, that God had elected His own, and that he had given them to His Son as the reward of His condescension, sufferings and death. In God's foreknowledge and predestination he rejoiced with great joy. The utterance of these sentiments was regarded by the Methodist brethren as obstructive to the work of grace then in progress. They told Mr. Morse they believed that they would be hurtful to enquirers. So the young convert was requested to discontinue his addresses, but was told that he might pray as often as he felt inclined to do so. Guileless, meek and tractable, the young convert complied with this request. But in spite of himself, his theology came out in his prayers. As naturally as a bird sings he uttered the puritan doctrines he had been taught from his youth. His grandfathers, Chipman and Morse, inherited these doctrines and taught them with all boldness. They were wrought into his whole nature. When spiritual life and illumination came they stood forth in great splendor, like the stars in a brilliant night. Believing them he had called on God for salvation. At the same time he hated them and fought against them, sometimes almost to defying God, sometimes almost blasphemously. But before peace came he accepted them. He submitted to God—he surrendered his whole being to his Maker, assured that no injustice would be done him, believing that mercy would be extended to him. Doctrines which, in his unrenewed state, were mere intellectual conceptions, now became grand facts bathed in the glory of his spiritual illumination. To extoll and rejoice in them both in his addresses and in his prayers was as natural to him as to breathe.

The Methodist brethren quietly told him that his prayers were no improvement on his addresses, and they therefore must request him to pray no more audibly in their assembly. This was all done very kindly and was received in the same spirit. Young Morse spoke no more and prayed no more in the Methodist church. He confined himself to the bar-room and the private houses where the Baptists continued to hold their meetings.

If the editor will give me room in future numbers of his papers I will finish this sketch so interesting to myself.

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### Choice and Use of Sabbath School Literature.

My subject naturally divides itself into three heads *i. e.*, What to choose, How to choose and How to use Sabbath School literature.

The world is full of books, they have been accumulating through the ages, and the Sabbath School being as it is the training school for the church, and literature having so much to do with the moulding of character, the what to choose becomes very important and a line should be distinctly drawn between what are fit for Sabbath School books and what are not.

It might be well to have three departments in each library, one for the primary, one for the intermediate and one for the advanced. For the primary classes let us have story books founded on fact and Bible biographies. Let the books be largely illustrated, pictures always take with children and introduce the printed matter through the eye, the nearest avenue to the heart. I said let the books be founded on fact. At least let them be true to nature that is to say, let the word pictures, not be over-drawn. In literature as well as in everything else the word of God settles the matter, "Let your yes be yes

and your nay nay" applies to our books as well as to our words.

For the intermediate let us choose from the standard religious authors. As a few examples, take Francis Ridley, Havergal, Spurgeon, Meyer, Drummond, Moody. Be sure to have Moody's recently printed pamphlet books. Get the old standard books as Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, The Holy War, Baxters Call to the Unconverted, etc. Talmage's cheaper books may, also, have a place, and you may make a very careful selection of religious novels.

For the advanced department we should have a few books—the very best—teaching our own peculiar tenets, the reason why we are Baptist, also books on moral reform as temperance; also plenty of books on missions, I repeat it plenty of books on missions, not only on our own missionary enterprise, but on the progress of the gospel the world over in the past and the present.

For all departments we should have a good assortment of biographies. "There is an inspiration that comes to us in the contemplation of illustrious examples. It is greatly to be lamented that so little of this class of literature finds its way into our libraries.

As we are aiming to train our youth in Christian development, let us give them books for mental culture rather than such as will please the fancy and tickle the imagination. As to Lesson Helps, for good reasons it may be well to use the Helps published by the Baptist Publication Society for our Baptist Sabbath Schools. One is they teach the whole truth as we believe it. They do not come to a verse on baptism or on final perseverance and go round, or mystify it, for the sake of pleasing all classes and getting a general sale. If we as teachers go outside the Baptist lines for aids, let us try Peloubet's Notes, if for nothing else for his splendid illustrations. Use Helps in preparing the lesson at home, never bring them to the Sabbath School.

#### HOW TO CHOOSE.

The what to choose makes a part of the how to choose. For several reasons it is often well for each school to choose its own books, rather than buy a whole library, it seems better to make such selections as meet the wants of our own particular school. It offers a chance for a greater variety. It offers a chance to know what you are buying. A good book may be added from time to time as the committee may find such. A good plan is to choose a committee, a good large one, with the minister as chairman, write a card to several schools for the titles of their best books, not parts of libraries. Choose any that you know are good, say to the Secretary Treasurer of the Baptist Book Room, now make your selection besides those sent for, of the very best you have, and send us three or four times the quantity wanted. When the books are at hand let the committee meet and select. Do not be afraid to spend time. It is not necessary to read the whole of a book. Take the index and turn to paragraphs and read, even the index itself will give a good idea of the book. A brother, a Captain at Fort Lorne, selected from the writers books by looking for titles of the Deity. After a time he said, "I guess these books will do, here is Redeemer and in another place I see Saviour, and here is my Refuge and Strength, yes these will do." Some one may give us a more excellent way. One need say no more as to How to Choose, Our third head is How to Use Sabbath School Literature. In the first place then when you have a library of good books keep them. Do not swap them, do not sell them. A good book may be read many times to profit, even as our Bibles are re-read to profit. The primary class will soon be the Intermediate and the Intermediate the advanced. There will also be youth to take the place of the primary.

It seems to me I hear someone saying, "Who will you get to read your solid literature? The majority are infatuated with light novel reading. Many are mere mental imbeciles, instead of being literary giants just from the trashy books read. The deacons and the minister and the staid old Christians may read them. How will you get the rest to read them?" That is the hard question. Another said to me, "My boy has gone to the city, I am afraid he will get into bad company, I want you to pray for him." What about the bad company he had before he went away, madame, what about the detective stories and the love tales and the murder stories, etc. Bad books I assure you are as bad as bad men and women in leading a youth to ruin.

Many of our professed Christians need a new conversion ere they will compare with the converted Ephesians, ere they will bring their books of curious arts, or rather of fascinating lies, to a general bonfire. If the question of how to get our youth, yes, and our older Christians, too, to read solid, edifying books and papers is a hard one, a greater effort must be made to counteract the evil. Father's and mothers get your boys and girls to read to you books that you choose; talk about what is read;

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2. But the und quite at fault. I brate a day. Se compare Thayer idiomatic and p day" or "one is third day is now and accurately tr

3. If Jesus left evening, how can with instructing disciples came b Matt. 28, 13.

Bro. Cosman s His death, but on loving. This re John 19, 31ff. Th the bones 24 hour order to prevent t Sabbath day, Jo That haste should close upon them, pretation should

2. On his own a hours, but only t and three nights,

3. The difficult, interpretation of force the scripture