

**Presbyterian Missions Sixty years ago,**

[From the "Christian Instructor."]

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE LATE REV.  
M. DRIPPS.

CORNWALLIS, NOV. 16th, 1798.

A small circumstance sometimes leads to important events. In consequence of falling in with a Captain Caldwell, with whom I sailed from New York to Halifax last season, I have undertaken and nearly finished a journey of above 700 miles; visiting a number of small settlements; and preaching generally twice, sometimes thrice a week, in most of the places which I visited. I was received with joy and treated with respect; and though I have just reason to complain with the prophet, "Who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed," I have at the same time good reason to believe that my labours have not been altogether in vain.—Almost all the places which I have visited are destitute of the ordinances of the gospel, and in some of them, though settled for thirteen or fourteen years, there had never been a Protestant minister before my arrival. The settlements are generally small, and not able to support a minister, though they seem earnestly desirous to enjoy the gospel. Some of them appear to be unavoidably fixed by Providence in their present situation, and understand by experience the import of that Scripture, "Not a famine of bread, nor of water, but a famine of the word of God." Two well informed and sober missionaries might, I think, have sufficient employment, and in all probability have much success among them. A strong constitution, and a knowledge of the French language, would be necessary qualifications in those who would choose to minister in the places to which I allude. Among the greater part much ignorance of Christianity prevails, though I found a few well informed persons in almost all the settlements where I preached.

Captain Caldwell, whom I mentioned above is from the Bay of Chaleur in Lower Canada, where there are a few Protestants from the North of Ireland, from Scotland, and from the States of America; they live by fishing. The Captain informed me of their destitute situation with respect to religious instruction, and wished me to go with him to the Bay. I could not then comply with his request, but promised to use my influence so far as it would go, to procure them a supply of sermon. Accordingly, after his arrival, he informed his friends and acquaintances of our conversations and my proposal. They met, drew up a petition, and sent it round to the Presbytery of Truro last summer. At my own desire I was sent out by the Presbytery, left Truro on the 24th of July, and on my way preached at Poictou and Tatamagouche in Nova Scotia, and at four different settlements in the Island of St. Johns: arrived in the Bay of Chaleur on

the 26th of August. I remained there, visiting and preaching in different settlements till the 11th of October. On my way to Nova Scotia I came to Miramichi river, in the Province of New Brunswick. I travelled up the river in canoes upwards of 100 miles; preached in six different places; walked sixteen miles through woods to a branch of St John river, where is a small settlement of Scottish people, mostly disbanded from the 42nd Regiment at the conclusion of the American War. I was much entreated to remain a few days and preach with them; accordingly I preached on a Wednesday, Friday, and Sabbath, and came off for Fredericton. From that I came down to St. Johns river, eighty miles in a canoe; from St. Johns I crossed the Bay of Fundy to Digby and Annapolis, and on the 4th of November arrived at Mr. Graham's, Cornwallis, with whom I expect to lodge till I get a little recruited from the fatigue of my journey.

Most of the places which I have mentioned you will find in late maps of North America. The Bay of Chaleur is about 120 miles long, about thirty miles wide at the entrance, about half way up, twenty miles broad, and at last ends in a large river called Restigouche, where is a small settlement of Protestants whom I also visited. The mountains on each side of the river are extremely high: on the 29th of September there was a fall of snow, and the mountains were clothed in white; but since that time the weather has been remarkably pleasant; now it begins to grow cold.

On the Canada side of the Bay are three Roman Chapels, on New Brunswick side two. The Catholics are mostly of French extraction. For want of instruction, some of the Protestants have been drawn over, and embraced the Roman religion. I doubt not but an industrious Protestant missionary might be the means of preventing many, especially of the young from embracing the Roman religion, and of inducing others to embrace the Protestant. The inhabitants of New Carlisle and Restigouche, the two principal English settlements there, have drawn up a subscription of nearly £100 a year for the support of a minister; they have drawn up a petition to the Presbytery of Truro, wishing them to send to Scotland for a minister. The petition I have now with me, and shall present it to the Presbytery when they meet.

MATTHEW DRIPPS.

**Conversion to Protestantism in France.**

The *Siecle* describes the conversion to Protestantism of a considerable number of the inhabitants of the Vienne, and praises the conduct observed by the Protestant clergymen in this circumstance. It says: "Some few years ago there was not a Protestant in Neuville, the chief town of the

department of the Vienne. In 1849 several inhabitants asked permission of the mayor to invite a Protestant clergyman to expound to them his doctrine—not that they were Protestants, but that they might decide on their future conduct. The mayor, like a prudent man, advised them to reflect well on their request; he did not wish to refuse them the practice of a right, but he, at the same time, wished to avoid the reproach of having advised them to act with rash haste. The advice of the mayor was followed; two years were passed in reflection, and in 1851 a deputation waited on the Protestant clergymen of Poitiers, and invited him to visit their town and expound to them the principles of the Protestant faith. The invitation was accepted, and the Clergyman accompanied by a colleague, held two conferences at Neuville, at which from 500 to 600 persons were present. After the second conference the ministers, far from seeking to impose their faith on the inhabitants, declared that they would not again return to the town without a formal invitation. A written appeal to them was speedily covered with signatures, and at the third sitting a formal Protestant service was performed. Nearly 200 persons had freely embraced the reformed faith. We call the attention of our readers to the character of this Protestant propaganda, which we should be happy to see imitated in every religious propaganda. The clergymen of Poitiers did not impose their doctrines on the population at the risk of disturbing public order or of troubling the peace of families. Their dignified and measured language did not certainly carry away the population to the extent that might have been effected by a passionate appeal, but it produced serious and intelligent conversions. The Protestant clergymen did not menace those who remained in the Catholic Church with Divine anger or with the flames of Hell; and by their conduct they have proved their tolerance, and have respected the belief of their brethren. We would that all propagandas were carried on in this calm and powerful attitude, which becomes all those who believe themselves to be marching in the way of truth. May their good example not be lost!"

**Christianity in India.**

"If I were asked what advantage would accrue to the people of India should they all become Christians, I need only refer to the difference between a native and an European Government. There can be no doubt that the Government of the East India Company is capable of many great improvements; but, faulty as it may be, it is as much superior to a candle. The Government, aided by the various Christian communities, has introduced into India improvements of a most extensive and beneficial character; and if we were entirely driven out of India to-morrow, the good effects of our rule would be felt for