

ELDER DONALD CRAWFORD.

(Concluded.)

From 1850 till the close of 1855 I spent in Nova Scotia, except one winter in St. John and occasional visits to P. E. Island. During this time I visited the churches often in Kings, Queens, Hants, and Pictou counties, preaching and baptizing in all of these places, as well as in other places where there were no churches. The brethren were friendly, and generally anxious to have more preachers in the field. This was especially true of the Milton brethren.

In the winter of 1852 Stephen Steele, senior, an aged Free Baptist preacher, came to Cornwallis on his way to his home in Digby county. None of our brethren had ever preached in Digby, and at his earnest request I accompanied him to Digby Neck. I found the people as kind as he said they were, and the school house was soon filled from night to night with attentive hearers. The young people seemed thoughtful, and anxious to hear, and their parents were pleased and wished that their preacher, who lived twelve miles distant, would come to enjoy and help on the meetings. At length he came, but, to their surprise, he opposed. Parties were formed and disputes were continuous and inflexible. It would be a pleasure to throw a veil over many of the proceedings of those days in the hope that not a few have since viewed matters in a different light. As the opposition strengthened friends seemed to multiply, and the reports spread to different places, brought many invitations to preach without fail in their localities. As fast as a meeting house was closed other places would be opened, and there soon seemed work for a number of evangelists in Digby county. In the spring of '52 an Episcopal gentleman offered me his horse and saddle to go to Woodville to preach, on the simple condition that I would take good care of him. I met our present brother, Stephen Steele, son of the afore-named preacher. While describing to him the gospel as we understood it, Mr. Waggoner, his neighbor, was present and listened very attentively. When I rose to go out he followed and modestly asked if I would preach on the morrow just as I had talked in the house, saying: "I have two sons and two daughters grown up and they are anxious to be saved, but can't see how, and I think if they and their mother heard that discourse they would become Christians." I promised to do so. They were present at the meeting, and on my third visit the five were baptized, and, so far as known to me, have since continued faithful to the Lord. Mr. Waggoner was baptized himself a few months after. Mr. Steele was baptized on my second visit, three weeks from the first. About the close of that year the number baptized was eleven. They then began to worship as a church, and, I think, have done so ever since.

There were a few baptized in different parts of the county before I left; but there was no other church formed. At Westport I baptized none, although quite a number were my warmest friends. Among these were several members of the Baptist church, and numbers who had joined no church. They built a commodious meeting house to be free for the preaching of the gospel, and called it "The Bethel." In 1850 the church at Milton sent Bro. George Garraty to Westport, where he remained, laboring publicly and from house to house until quite a number were baptized. These, with those who had been baptized, he organized into a church which has met in the Bethel ever since.

For the last thirty years I have attended a few annuals at Westport, and was made glad in meeting persons whom I had in years gone by baptized, as well as those who had since come into the church. Some of the latter I did not recognize and have been asked as follows: "Don't you remember when you were at my father's and the

meeting house was closed against you, and you preached in a warehouse or some other place?" Adding: "I was young then, but learned for the first time how I could come to Christ and be saved."

Digby was over 100 miles from any of our churches, and I often visited these churches when laboring in Digby. It was truly refreshing to feel that I was not alone, but had the warm sympathy and prayer of many who loved our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

In the summer of 1853 I travelled over much of Nova Scotia, and had over thirty additions. I spent a few weeks at Shubenacadie; fifteen were baptized, among them my nearest and dearest earthly friend. From that time the brethren there met regularly for Christian worship.

By invitation of the church I spent the winter of 1855 in St. John, where a number were added to the church. In the spring I went to different points in Maine and New Brunswick, spent the summer in Nova Scotia; and with great difficulty, owing to the extremely stormy autumn, crossed with horse and wagon in a small sailing vessel to P. E. Island on the first of December. The following winter was spent mostly at New Glasgow, Tryon, and Summerside. Over thirty were baptized at New Glasgow in the spring, and at the request of these kind brethren and friends I decided to make this my future home.

In June I crossed to Nova Scotia and spent the summer among the churches and at preaching stations. In September I was married by Elder John McDonald to Harriet Melvinna, third daughter of Joshua Wallace. A few weeks after we crossed to this Island, where we have lived for thirty-five years. Of this part of my life space will not allow me to say much. I have been laboring in different parts of the Island, but mostly at New Glasgow, Summerside, Tryon and Tignish, and in regions around. Although I am not fully satisfied with what has been accomplished, I thank God that He has constantly followed me with gracious tokens of his approval and my imperfect labors with his blessings.

The church at Summerside was organized in 1858, and although it has suffered much from constant emigration it still holds forth the word of life. In 1866-7, over fifty were baptized, among them H. T. Morrison, A. Linkletter, A. McLean, and Neil McLeod, who are now active preachers of the gospel. In other parts of the Island I have labored with some success, and have rejoiced to see the labors of others blessed in increasing the churches on the Island, from which faithful and successful preachers have gone out to bless the world with the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

My anxiety to speak to as many as possible on the way of coming to Christ for pardon led me to publish "CONVERSATIONS ON CHRISTIAN RELIGION," which appeared in the *Christian Banner* in 1857 and came out in pamphlet form in 1858. In it I spoke of the Son of God making man free from the love of sin by faith, from the practice of sin by repentance, and from the state of sin by baptism, much the same as our brethren had usually done, except in describing repentance. In this I took different ground. I do not say that none of our brethren had given the same, but I do say that I never saw before or since in any of their writings published before 1857 the following view of repentance, viz.: "A heart-felt determination to turn from sin to God." While others regarded repentance as Godly sorrow our brethren treated it as reformation. In the pamphlet I contended neither Godly sorrow nor reformation is repentance, but that it lies between the two. That it is a purpose of heart to turn to God. I referred to its use in the New Testament as illustration and proof, e. g.: When persons pierced to the heart with Godly sorrow

asked Peter, What shall we do? he told them to repent. If he meant by that to be sorry not one of them obeyed him, for they gladly received his word. If he meant to reform their lives and be baptized in the name of Christ they did not obey, for they did not wait to reform. But if he told them to determine with all their heart to turn to God and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ they there and then made that determination and were baptized. (Acts ii:37, 38, 39.)

The church at Ephesus were commanded to do three things. 1st, Remember from whence thou art fallen, 2nd, and repent; 3rd, and do the first works. (Rev. ii:5.) By the first they would have Godly sorrow, by the second they would have repentance, and by the third they would have reformation. They were not to repent by doing the first works, but to repent and do them.

It is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance, and it was not until His infinite love shone forth from the death of His dear Son that God commands all men everywhere to repent. A man may plead inability to reform or to feel sorrow for his sin, but no sane man can say, I cannot determine to do right. A man must determine to do right when God commands him, and God will give him strength to carry it out, or to reform.

This makes the course plain before anxious enquirers who should feel that they can resolve to do the will of God, and that under the invitations of Christ in the gospel they are resolving either to accept of Christ's salvation and turn unto God, or are resolving to continue in sin, and reject Christ at least for the present, and that this will come up for settlement in the day of judgment.

In 1863 when H. T. Anderson was preparing his translation of the New Testament some of it came out in the *American Christian Review*. For repentance he gave "amendment of life." In the *Review* I showed reasons against this rendering, and contended for repentance as being the best word to be retained. After this, both in the *Review* and his book he always used *repent* and *repentance*.

Just about this time J. W. McGarvey advocated the same view of repentance I had given, which is the first of the kind I had seen in the writings of the brotherhood. I am happy to say that now it is the general view with our brethren.

In 1859 the late Rev. John Davis wrote a letter to the *Christian Messenger* against my pamphlet under the caption, "Campbell on Prince Edward Island." The editor was not satisfied, especially with the caption, and invited a reply in his columns. Several letters passed between us. I felt pleased with the opportunity of examining these matters before the readers until I thought enough was said, and I stopped.

In the winter of 1868 a young Wesleyan preacher gave a lecture in Summerside against immersion. I was then 100 miles from the place, but on my next visit I was told that a lecture on the other side had been promised, and was now expected. So the drill-shed was secured, and I addressed a very large and orderly audience. The address was printed, a thousand copies struck off, and in a short time its sale covered expenses. The address drew forth a number of lectures from different men without my noticing any of them, except Rev. Isaac Murray, considered the Pedo-baptist champion of the Island, who had often lectured and written against me without a word of reply from me. Thinking it time he should be noticed, I obtained the use of the *Summerside Progress*, and invited him to say in it all he had to say against me. He accepted, and from week to week the letters between us ran on for eight months, and were discontinued by the editor removing to the United States. These letters, at the request of Benjamin Franklin, were republished in the *American Christian Review* a year after.