

## NOVA SCOTIA IN OLDEN TIME.

In the year 1802 the Rev. Alex Dick came out from Scotland and was ordained over the congregation of Douglas on the 21st June 1803. Shortly after his arrival in Nova Scotia he wrote back to a friend in Leith, Scotland, some of his impressions of places visited on the passage out. Extracts from the letter were published in the Christian Magazine 1803. They are worthy of publication and will serve to keep up a lively remembrance of the honoured pioneers of Presbyterianism in the Maritime Provinces.

"I landed at the Bay of Bulls, New Foundland, after a passage of 5 weeks from Greenock and was obliged to look out for another vessel as the one in which I had embarked was bound for Miramichi instead of Pictou. But as there is little communication between the Bay and Halifax, I was obliged to take a vessel for Sydney C. B. and from thence to Halifax.

During my stay in New Foundland I made it my business to inquire about the state of religion and found it in a very languishing condition. There is only one society in all this Province that deserves to be called religious. About 40 or 50 of the members reside in St. John's. I had the satisfaction to get acquainted with one of the principal supports of this little congregation and if I may judge of the whole from this specimen I must think well of them. I found him well informed, sound in the great doctrines of our holy religion and pious and regular in his conversation. He was particularly well acquainted with the Armenian controversy and held the doctrines of that system in great abhorrence. The members of this society have frequent meetings for prayer and conference beside their stated and ordinary meeting for public worship upon the Lord's Day. They have lately received a minister from England of Lady Huntington's Methodists. He is a man of considerable literature and is a plain evangelical preacher endeavouring to assist the hearts of his audience while himself is the example in sobriety faith and purity.

But the great body of the inhabitants in this place are far from acting in any measure corresponding to those of this society. There are a good number who call themselves members of the Church of England but most part are Irish Roman

Catholics or rather heathens. The little remnant at St. John's is like a dew from the Lord of hosts, but there is not any appearance of religion at the Bay of Bulls nor do the inhabitants there make any pretensions to it.

There it was my misfortune to spend a whole Sabbath, and what was more distressing to me to spend it in silence. I proposed to preach but was dissuaded from making the attempt. There is a curate of the church of England in the Bay and being informed that he seldom or never read the service. I remonstrated with him about his conduct. He told me that there was no place appointed for public worship and that where he had sometimes engaged in the duties of his office there were few who would give themselves the trouble to attend him.

How firmly is the kingdom of Satan established in the hearts of men and how numerous and powerful are the supports of his kingdom in many places of the world and especially in the Bay. How affecting to see betwixt two or three hundred poor sinners amusing themselves in different kind of sports upon the Lord's Day and no one to speak to them anything about Christ and his salvation. However rude or insolent this people might be I certainly did wrong in not attempting to preach the gospel of Christ among them.

Monday morning about 3 o'clock we got underweigh and in 6 days arrived at Sydney. The town of Sydney stands about nine miles up the eastern branch of the Bay of Sydney. There is a Church of England chapel and accurate. There are a considerable number of Baptists and other denominations in this place but little appearance of true religion among any of them.

Upon Wednesday I preached in the western arm of the Bay. The audience here was numerous, exceedingly attentive and many of them appeared to be a good deal affected. As the people in this part of the country are altogether destitute of public ordinances I was the more particular in making enquiry with respect to the religious exercises of their families. Some few of them I was happy to find kept up the worship of God in their homes and took particular pains in the instruction of their children. They were exceedingly desirous that I should have stayed among them. They have 500 acres of land allowed for a minister and are willing to do everything in their power to make his situation comfortable. The settlement is but in its infancy and the people in general poor, but why should they perish for ever. If any