

## From Halifax.

Reporter received a copy of "The True Witness," a little church paper published by Rev. H. A. Giffin, of Weymouth, Nova Scotia. The following are the subjects of what seem to me very good articles: "Sanctification and Money," "Adherence and Assurance," "Zeal without Knowledge," "The Cure for Worry," "Tests," and "The Connection Broken."

In this little paper the brother says he has withdrawn from the Baptists, and for these reasons: 1st. "Little room for liberty to preach a full salvation in the denomination we are leaving"; 2nd. "The increasing worldliness of the Baptist church"; 3rd. "The unsanctified methods of church work," and 4th. "The persistent rejection of the truths of the deeper life in Christ."

After reading the contents of this little paper Reporter was led to bark back.

## FIRST CASE OF HARKING BACK.

About thirty years ago, the Rev. Silas Tertius Rand, a regular Baptist minister, had some exercises, recalled by the reading of Bro. Giffin's paper. He was then in the prime of life, sincere, honest and courageous. He saw truth by the light of a bright intellectual lamp. His spiritual vision was full and clear. He looked for the mind of the Spirit in the Bible through the media of the Hebrew, the German, the French, the Latin, the Greek, and of course his mother tongue. In spirit he was fervent; in life, humble and devout. The fire of the poet glowed in his soul; and, as for music in which to express sacred poetry, he was a choir of no ordinary power in himself. Before audiences large and small, whether in the school-house or the spacious church building, he was eloquent, and when his soul was on fire with his theme he was an orator of wonderful power. He had been heard in most of the churches and in many of the school-houses in the three Provinces. Wherever heard there was joy, and whatever other minister might be forgotten, no one forgot Silas Tertius Rand. The sick in their own homes all over this country had been cheered by his conversations, his prayers, and by the melody of his rich voice, rolling out in secret harmony the comforts of the gospel. He knew more of our fathers and mothers than any other minister in the denomination—the sanctified and unsanctified members, and the degrees of sanctification to which many had attained, and to which many had failed to attain. He had had the means of knowing all this far before any of his brethren. He was a great man, a learned man, a saintly man, and a minister of the Word of great power. With all this ability, with all these advantages, he was led through prolonged reflection, much prayer and careful reading of the Word of God to feel and believe, honestly feel and honestly believe, that the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces had drifted so far from apostolic religion that it was his bounden duty to leave them at whatever cost.

His convictions always found courage for their execution. He did leave the Baptists. He published his withdrawal in The Christian Messenger. The denomination was in this way told that their highly-esteemed brother—Silas Tertius Rand—had come to the conclusion that the churches of the body "were God-dishonoring shams," and that their brother had reached this conclusion "on his knees." Deacon Salden, then editor, now with his brother in glory, in an editorial paragraph, commented thus on the attitude in which his dear brother had come to this conclusion: "A Christian can be mistaken on his knees as well as on his feet." He might have added that no possible attitude is proof against mistakes—not the right side, the left side, the face, the back, or on the head. To err is human; and no bodily position is sure defense against it. Brother Rand left the Baptists.

## SECOND HARKING BACK.

Coincident with Brother Rand's experience there came into our prayer meeting in the Granville Street church a young man, a stranger, and his wife. How full of light the brother was. How he talked about the vital matters of personal religion. This is just what we want, was the joyful speech of my soul. If that devotional spirit now in this brother shall by holy contagion go through the church, why Zion will travail and sons and daughters will be born. I knew not his beliefs. I saw and felt his spirit and was satisfied. He belonged to the army and had been brought up in another church. His experience had been like that of Brother Rand's. His church was a worldly organization and its ministers were man-made. He visited the meetings for devotion among all denominations in the city. Then he and his wife withdrew from all of them, and condemned them all in a mass as worldly organizations, served by man-made ministers. How sad I was. I had an assurance that by him we would have a brighter and warmer devotional fire in the Granville Street church and in other churches. Ah me! I feel sad now in the memory of it. Silas Tertius Rand soon found this brother and a few others like him. He was not long in becoming one of them. They had got back into apostolic times. They had the pure religion of those far-away days. Now Brother Rand had rest.

But the enemy did not give them up. Years passed away. Disputes came in among them. They were broken up into sections, each one, of course, the true

church. By and by the question was: Did Christ suffer in his human nature alone, or in both the human and the divine natures? Here was another division. Which side will you take, Brother Rand, was the question? Up to this point he had been silent. He replied neither side. I do not know. Then he was excommunicated. Now his heart aches, he was away from home. He reviewed the whole matter. The convictions got on his knees, were now not when he was on his knees alone, but when on his feet, extremely human prejudices, having in them the elements of truth; but used by the enemy to get him outside of the great ecclesiastical family in which he had held high fellowship with the Mannings, the Crandalls, the Dimocks, the Chipmans, the Crawleys, the Cramps, and thousands of others, true and good. Now he is lonely and clothed in the rags of his own notions. What must he do? Go back, of course. He had courage for that, too. He was a courageous Christian. He went back. The Hantsport church heard his confession. Hands went up and hearts went out to receive him back,—not to that church alone, but to the whole denomination. The pastor, Brother McLean, gave him the right hand of fellowship. The old fire was now glowing and warm. The old communion was sweet and full. How much he enjoyed it. How much we all enjoyed it. I remember the last occasion. It was at the Convention at Fredericton. His flesh was wasted, but his mind was active and his heart full and warm. How he discoursed in Deacon Randolph's parlor, having for his hearers Mr. Randolph, Judge Allen, Dr. T. H. Rand and others who hung on his lips. A few weeks after that he fell asleep in Jesus.

## THE THIRD HARKING BACK.

He was a good young man that,—well let us say—Jones. He was engaged in Christian work. He rose one night in the Granville Street prayer meeting and told us that he had lately had a second spiritual birth. He was now sanctified. How his red cheeks glowed, how his bright eyes flamed as he told us this. What sincerity, what heroic conscientiousness were in his words, in his tones, in his looks. O, how he pitied the pastor, Deacons Parker, Payzant, Robinson, Selden, and the whole church, we were loving so much. If we could only bow our heads and hearts as he had done, what light we would have, what liberty, what strength, what visions of the deep and precious truths of personal religion. All this was implied in what the dear brother told us. We all felt that we were in a religious state far too low, and that there was much above us to enjoy, and were glad that the dear young brother had gone up and had his feet on hill-tops that were away in the purple distance from us. Well, this harking must come to an end. The last I heard of this dear brother was that he is a clergyman in the Episcopal church, and was deeply exercised about uniting with the Unitarians. Ah me! I had other harkings but those are as many as your square inches can contain.

## MUSINGS.

O, Paul, I said, thou founder and father of the churches (I don't mean to say that I prayed to Paul; I simply mused) what would you say to these dear brethren if you were now in Nova Scotia? Swift to this enquiry came back the reply, look in my letters written to the old churches. I there expressed the mind of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit never changes. Look in my letters and there you will find what advice I would give Brothers Rand, Jones and Giffin. Paul, I exclaimed, I am glad of this suggestion. These dear brethren will not take advice of their brethren. They know more than we do, and will not hear us.

I at once got the ancient letters and ran over them to see what brother Paul's advice is in such cases. After a glance over these epistles, Paul enquired, What did you find in them touching Brother Giffin's case, and the cases called up by harking back? Why, I replied, you told the church in that wicked city of Corinth that their contentions should cease; that they should not dispute about their preachers; that the man guilty of incest was to be cast out; that the feasting and excessive drinking at the Lord's table must cease. You told the churches in Galatia that they were foolish for having begun in the Spirit to try to be perfect in the flesh; you told the church at Ephesus that the members were to stop their lying and stealing; that filthy communications should not proceed from the mouths of saints; that the churches should cease from strife and envyings and divisions.

Paul, I cannot find that you told the pastors at Corinth, at Ephesus or in the churches of Galatia to leave the churches! No, said the apostle, that is what the adversary wants them to do. He says come out from among them. Their methods are worldly; you cannot preach to them a full salvation. Their churches are no place for you. Get around you a few who believe with you. You are better than they are. Be firm, be courageous. Show the world a reformed church.

Paul, what object has the adversary in this advice? First to get up a discussion, hot and earnest, so as to keep the truth from the hearts of the Christian people—not to let them come together and call down a revival in which they shall be refreshed and souls saved—to narrow by this course the influence of the brother so that he shall do as little good as possible. Paul says he knew the devil's devices. I do not know him as Paul did, but I am sure he is a cunning schemer.

Paul, is it possible that this is what the adversary intended when he led the saintly and the dear young brethren Jones and Rand to leave the Baptists. Why yes, says the good apostle. Don't you see it. He wanted to narrow their influence. He got dear Brother Rand into the Plymouth Brethren half bushel, when he should have remained in the wide vineyard among his brethren where he would have had access to the thousands instead of the two and the three.

Brother Giffin look out for the half bushel! Keep out of it!

REPORTER.

## The Man Whom God Will Use.

D. G. MACDONALD.

I have been with Christ in the school of affliction for the past nine weeks, prostrated from a severe attack of acute sciatia. (This is a new experience for me for God has graciously blessed me with the best of health hitherto). As the light of the first Sabbath morning of this new century shines upon me, my mind moves with rapidity. Every place that I have been permitted to visit with the gospel message seems to pass in one great panorama before me, stirring up recollections both sad and joyful; and in my soul burns a wish that I could make my voice heard once more in these places, but with greater earnestness than before, telling the story of abundant grace for the children of God, and complete salvation for lost sinners. But this wish must remain for the present, if not forever, ungratified, and I must content myself with the prayer that upon the dear brethren laboring on these fields, and upon all God's servants may come, with the dawn of this new period of enlarged opportunity and responsibility, a double portion of the Spirit of the Living God, giving them, in conscious enjoyment, the experience promised in Acts 1:8; For whenever the power promised in Acts 1:8 is received the results mentioned in Acts 4:33 are sure to follow. Oh! that a holy unquenchable ambition would seize every worker in God's great vineyard to be filled with this power and to see these results.

This much-to-be-desired power is within the reach of all if we are willing to meet the conditions. The atonement of our Blessed Lord has not only put away our sins and thus reconciled us to God as saved sinners, but also filled the treasury of Grace and thus provided for all our needs as chosen workers. He paid the price for all this and placed it within our reach. The price asked of us, in order to be placed in full possession of it, is the absolute surrender of ourselves to Him and the joyful receiving of Himself to us. The life that is thus given over to Christ becomes a Christ-possessed life, and the Christ-possessed life is endowed with every quality necessary to the highest efficiency and success in the sphere of his activity in God's great plan.

One of the hopeful signs of the time is the wide-spread spirit of desire and expectancy that obtains in many quarters regarding a revival of pure and undefiled religion in our churches with the dawn of this century of marvels in every other phase of life. The crystallization of this longing expectancy into joyful experience must depend largely, under God, upon the pulpit, and the influence of the pulpit as a factor in bringing about this state of revival must be determined by the living preacher's vital contact with the Living Christ.

May I be permitted here to mention a few of the qualities of heart and life most needed in the preacher whom God will use most in producing and perpetuating the revival so much needed and desired, and the one and only way, in my humble opinion, to obtain these essential qualities.

I shall not here speak of the preparation afforded by the schools, for I take it for granted that all whom God calls into this Divine-human business will avail themselves of all possible advantages for making the very best of all the powers with which He has endowed them for this heavenly partnership.

1. The preacher that God will use most must have a consuming passion for souls, a longing, burning, insatiable desire for the salvation of perishing sinners. He must have some conception of the awful doom awaiting the ungodly, and with a passion born out of love for their souls and for Him who poured out His own Soul into death to make their salvation possible he must tell the message of life. This is something other than and above the preparation of the class-room. Though a man may have the learning of the University—the eloquence of the Forum, and the energy of the Gymnasium if he had not this passion for souls, his preaching will be as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. Do we want to possess this quality, so essential to our highest success let us abandon ourselves to Him who was its embodiment in the days of His earthly ministry—in whom it shone so clearly as He wept over doomed Jerusalem?

"Did Christ o'er sinners weep,  
And shall our cheeks be dry?"

He who possessed Christ in His fullness feels the impulse and reveals the power of this passion for souls, and his ministry cannot fail to tell on his congregations. There must be this blessed reciprocity of mutual self-surrender between us and our Lord. As He gave Himself up for us and to us so we must give ourselves up for Him and to Him. "He that hath the Son hath life," but he whom the Son hath hath life more abundantly." Being thus given over to Christ, in my preaching, as in all my conduct it is no more I but Christ in me—seeing with my eyes, feeling with my heart and speaking with my voice.

2. He whom God will use will be simple in the proclamation of his message. This is important. But little influence is produced by that which is not understood. I fear to take too much for granted as to the intelligence of the average congregation in relation to spiritual truth. This is an age of intelligence I know, but is not a very

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