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THE REV. JOHN WISWALL, M. A., LOYALIST

BY

REV. E. M. SAUNDERS, D. D.

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The Rev. A.M. Eaton  
with the compliments  
of E.H. Saunders

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE REV. JOHN  
WISWALL, M. A.

A LOYALIST CLERGYMAN IN NEW ENGLAND AND NOVA  
SCOTIA

1731-1821

BY REV. E. M. SAUNDERS, D. D.

(READ BEFORE THE NOVA SCOTIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY.)

On a marble table affixed to the walls of the Middleton  
Episcopal Church is the following inscription :

“ Sacred to the memory of the Rev. John Wiswall, A. M.,  
who was born at Boston, U. S., 3rd April, 1731, ordained by  
the Bishop of London, 1764. He left his native land in 1775  
in consequence of the revolutionary struggle, and was appointed  
rector of the parish in Wilmot in 1789, where he continued until  
his death, 2nd December, 1821. He was the first clergyman of  
any denomination who settled in this place.”

Ichabod Wiswill, or Wiswall, as the Rev. John Wiswall  
uniformly wrote it, was born in Lancashire, England, in 1636.  
When an infant he came with his father and four or five brothers  
to New England. In 1652 he entered Harvard, but on account  
of some changes which took place in the government of that  
school, he, with the rest of his class, withdrew from the  
institution, and consequently did not receive the degree of  
Bachelor of Arts. He became a Puritan preacher of some noté,  
and, as was common for clergymen in that day, took a  
prominent part in the political affairs of the American-English  
colonies.

NOTE.—The chief authorities used in the preparation of this paper were Van  
Tyne's *Loyalists of the American Revolution*, Fisher's *True History of the American  
Revolution*, the MSS of the Rev. Jacob Bailey, now in the possession of the N. S.  
Historical Society, and the MS journal of the Rev. John Wiswall. This consists of one  
large folio volume in a state of excellent preservation; it is in the custody of the  
Wiswall family, and has been drawn on largely.—E. M. S.

He preached for a time to a small colony that went from Massachusetts to Cape Fear. His calling as a clergyman was varied by his acting as a mate of a merchantman, trading from the Eastern shore to the Barbados. He, however, returned to the ministry and was ordained pastor of the church at Duxbury, Plymouth Colony. Here he married the second time, and had born to him two sons and several daughters. After the Restoration he was employed by the Plymouth Colony as one of the agents, to obtain from the Imperial Government a new charter for that colony. In this undertaking, the agents were not successful. Wiswall, therefore, petitioned the British Government to annex the colony to Rhode Island; but Cotton Mather, having the greater influence, defeated him; and it was annexed to Massachusetts. Returning from England in 1693, he resumed his pastoral labors at Duxbury, where he lived until 1695, when he departed this life.

His grandson, the Rev. John Wiswall, says of him:—  
“He was of a plethoric constitution and afflicted with the gout in his later years, which was the means of his death. His religious principles were puritanick, and his political principles were republican and independent. He was master of the learned languages, acquainted with the mathematics, and a great studier of astrology, which in that day was esteemed a fashionable science in America. Instrumental music and poetry were his chief amusement, and some of his poetical performances, that I have seen, for the life and place, are not contemptible. His memory was very tenacious. He was of a warm constitution and buried himself too much and too zealously in politics.”

Peleg, his son, the father of the Rev. John Wiswall, was born at Duxbury February 9th, 1683. He, like his father, was a student of Harvard College, and graduated from that institution in 1702. Soon after graduating he became captain of a Letter of Marque, and spent three years in the Mediterranean. After following the sea for a number of years, he became master of a grammar school in Boston, and remained in that position until his death in 1767.

Soon after his settlement in Boston, he married Elizabeth, daughter of Daniel Rogers, of Ipswich, England. Daniel was a younger brother of John Rogers, minister of that town.

Mrs. Wiswall's mother was an Appleton, and had in her veins a strain of royal blood, drawn from a member of the family of Henry VIII.

Peleg Wiswall left four children—Elizabeth, Daniel, Priscilla and John. John was born at Boston April 15th, old style, 1731. The mother died in the same city 1741. Says the Rev. John Wiswall:—"This occurred two years after Whitefield's first visit to New England, who revived the spirit of enthusiasm which has been so characteristic of the New England Independents." At that day, "enthusiasm" meant about what is now implied in the word, "fanaticism."

In 1745, the year that Louisbourg was taken by the New England forces, John Wiswall entered Harvard College, representing the third generation of Wiswalls in that institution.

The excitement in Boston caused by the plan of the merchant Pepperell to take Louisbourg, the "Dunkirk of America," stirred the hearts and inflamed the imaginations of all classes, not excepting the freshman class of Harvard, of which John Wiswall was a member. The arrival of troops from Connecticut and New Hampshire, their drilling on the Common, the preparation and departure of the fleet, created visions of adventure and military glory. Nor were these visions false. In June a swift sailing craft came up Boston Bay, bearing the intelligence that Pepperell had captured Louisbourg. Boston went into a frenzy of excitement—shouts, bonfires and clanging of church bells expressed New England's joy over a military victory that attracted the attention of the whole world.

The death of Admiral d'Anville in Halifax Harbour, the suicide of Vice-Admiral d'Estournelle, and the entire defeat of the project of the French to retake Louisbourg in 1746, capture Annapolis and Boston, gave rest to New England after a winter of deep concern and a summer of consuming anxiety.

In scenes like these, the early days of John Wiswall were spent. The dauntless spirit and unconquerable courage seen on

both sides thirty years after this in the American war of the revolution, were begotten and fostered in these days. In his second year in college, John Wiswall read of the winter march of the French from Chignecto to Gaspereaux, and the midnight massacre of the English troops at Minas. This and other stirring events, such as the capture of a French fleet and a number of rich merchantment on the coast of France in the following spring, kept student life at Harvard from monotony.

Mr. Wiswall graduated from Harvard in 1749, the year in which Halifax was founded. The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, released sailors and soldiers to swell the population of the new city; but it destroyed the chances of young Wiswall for carrying out his cherished ambition of entering the navy. The call to men of his class for this service ceased with that treaty of peace. After giving a summer to the further study of the higher mathematics in the city of Boston, he devoted himself for five years to teaching school in towns in the neighbourhood of that city. According to a custom then prevailing, to further qualify himself for the duties of life, he was inoculated with the smallpox, but escaped with his life. In the spring of 1754, in accordance with his father's advice, sustained by a strong personal desire, he began to preach the gospel.

His ministry at Falmouth, now Portland, Maine, began on the 3rd of November, 1755. The border Indian war, encouraged by the French, did not cease with the treaty of 1748. In the spring of 1756, Falmouth was attacked by the red men, and some of Mr. Wiswall's parishioners were massacred. The people were obliged to spend their nights in picketed houses for protection. Mr. Wiswall passed the first year in his pastorate in dread of the tomahawk and the scalping knife. His own experience qualified him to refer with sympathy, as he does, to the murder of some of the citizens of Dartmouth, which took place two years before the red men surprised in their sleep the inhabitants of Falmouth.

He refers to visiting Boston in the summer of 1757, where he says the regiments of Governor Shirley and Pepperell, which, with recruits from all the colonies to the number of eight thousand, were ready to invade Canada, take Quebec and Montreal as Louisbourg had been taken years before. At the time of his settlement as a Congregational minister in the town of Falmouth, the tragedy of deporting the Acadian French from this province took place. In this event, John Wiswall took a lively interest. With the removal of the Acadians, the New England States would be less exposed, in case of another war between Britain and France.

In 1759, as pastor of the Congregational church in Falmouth, he was keeping house, but was not yet married. At this time his sister, Mrs. Stevens, her daughter and son Robert came from Halifax to make him a visit, and to keep his house for a time. After a happy winter she returned in the spring, leaving with him her son Robert. He then engaged a widow Hall as housekeeper. While his domestic affairs were in charge of this estimable lady, he entertained the Rev. Jacob Bailey and his young wife, who were on their way to Pownalborough on the Kennebec River. To appreciate fully this visit of Mr. Bailey, whose wife was a sister of the Rev. Joshua Wyngate Weeks, well known at a later time in the city of Halifax, it is necessary to read the *Frontier Missionary*, by Rev. Mr. Bartlett, which gives an account of the life of this interesting clerical character. The rectory of the serious young parson of Falmouth was for once enlivened by the extraordinary social gifts and contagious humor of Jacob Bailey and his talented and sprightly wife. Mrs. Hall forgot her widow's weeds, and the young clergyman, in whom was the perfection of old-time clerical proprieties, failed not to join in the merriment created and sustained by his happy guests.

Mr. Wiswall was then on the eve of going to Brunswick to marry a daughter of Judge Minot of that town; and no doubt lighter conversation, arising from this and other events, was mixed with discourse of a more serious nature. Louis-

bourg, Quebec and Montreal had just fallen into the hands of the English. French domination in the north was now at an end; and with it Indian massacres and the horrors of border warfare. This promised rest to the colonies was never enjoyed since the coming of the *Mayflower*. About these events and the future which they promised, the two young clergymen talked, as they sat together in social intercourse.

As a Congregationalist minister Mr. Wiswell enjoyed the friendship of the Rev. Daniel Rogers, the Rev. Mr. Elliot, the Rev. Mr. Mayhew, the Rev. Mr. Condy and the Rev. Mr. Cooper. On April 30, 1759, he was ordained pastor of the Independent Church at Falmouth. In 1764 Mr. Wiswell united with the Church of England; and established an Episcopal Church at Falmouth, which he named St. Paul's. On the 8th of October of this year, there being no bishop in the colonies, he sailed for England for the purpose of being regularly ordained. On Dec. 22, he arrived in London and received deacon's orders, and in the following February was ordained priest. He returned to New England in May, 1765.

On the 17th of December, 1761, he married Mercy, daughter of Judge Minot. She was born at Fort Richmond on the 11th of July, old style, 1733. Their son Peleg was born April 8, 1763. The father writes:—

“This was a remarkable hard winter. On the 7th of April snow was three feet deep in the open fields, and so covered with ice that people walked on the surface.”

On the third of March, 1765, his son John was born. His daughter Elizabeth was born on the 28th of January, 1767. Bradstreet, his son, was born April 26, 1769. Peleg Wiswell, his father, died on the 2nd of September of the same year, aged 81. For more than forty years he had been master of the chief grammar school of Boston. He had the honor of educating a number of the principal men who took part on each side of the revolutionary struggle.

Of him his son says:—“He never joined in any party. Like the famous Atticus, he had intimate friends among all



the religious sectaries and men holding different political sentiments. As to his person, he was rather tall and stout, with large blue eyes and of a commanding but mild presence."

Mr. Wiswall says that the people of Falmouth were quiet and respectful to him as a minister of the Church of England; but as soon as the spirit of rebellion appeared in the city, the

## CORRIGENDUM.

*Read this paragraph in connection with page 6 between paragraph ending with "social intercourse" and paragraph beginning "As a Congregationalist minister."*

But another storm was gathering whose clouds were not yet in the sky, not even as large as a man's hand. How blue and beautiful were the New England heavens, after the French were subdued on the banks of the St. Lawrence! These two clergymen looked into a future, big with the promise of peace, prosperity and personal happiness. Little did they know of the terrible conflict then pending, and of the bitterness of which they were destined to have a large share. In less than ten years after this happy social intercourse, ominous signs began to appear. Year by year their threatenings became more and more unmistakable. But not until 1774 was the unrest that preceded the revolution sensibly felt at Falmouth.

training. If they whipped, men and imprisoned Quakers, and hanged Quakers and witches, it was done in the name of the Lord, and for the glory of God. "The Lower House of Assembly of Massachusetts, without the Governor's sanction,

the religious sectaries and men holding different political sentiments. As to his person, he was rather tall and stout, with large blue eyes and of a commanding but mild presence."

Mr. Wiswall says that the people of Falmouth were quiet and respectful to him as a minister of the Church of England; but as soon as the spirit of rebellion appeared in the city, the non-adherents of the English Church, and some of his own congregation began to oppose him. As there was no other Episcopal Church near Falmouth, he was alone, and was obliged to rely on his own judgment in shaping his course through the confusion of the times.

On the 10th of September, 1774, he says:—"The public disturbance of the Provinces has greatly increased; and people of every denomination discover, it is too little to say an uneasiness, a discontent bordering upon madness, on account of the late proceedings of parliament respecting America. I now tremble for the safety of the Church. The inhabitants of the town in general, and the people of the congregation in particular, have been quiet and peaceable; but now the leaven spreads fast among them."

Mr. Wiswall took the ground that, as a minister of the gospel, he should abstain from political disputes, which were daily becoming more fierce; but neutrality and discreet silence were not sufficient to protect him from the storm which rapidly increased in violence. He says:—"But things have now come to pass, that it is impossible with a clear conscience to fall in with all the humours of a discontented people; and so I am like to lose my popularity, and become obnoxious to them for doing my duty as a minister of the Church of England, and a servant of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel."

The rebellion, beginning in Massachusetts, must necessarily have its religious side. That was in keeping with Puritan training. If they whipped, fined and imprisoned Baptists, and hanged Quakers and witches, it was done in the name of the Lord, and for the glory of God. "The Lower House of Assembly of Massachusetts, without the Governor's sanction,

recommended that the several churches in the province should set apart a day of fasting and prayer on account of public affairs." The Governor and Upper House, as it seems, were in sympathy with England. A committee of the town of Falmouth applied to Mr. Wiswall to announce this day of fasting; but he refused, as it had not been authorized by the Legislature in due form. He told them that he could not cooperate in any fasts except those appointed by his Church and those recommended by lawful authority. He was further requested by the town to take a collection for the sufferers in the town of Boston. This, too, he refused to do, because, as he said, such contributions would go to support people in resisting the laws of the parliament of Great Britain. This gave great offence to the town, and to a number of the members of his own congregation, some of whom withdrew from his church. In contrast with his own course he says:—

"Many of the dissenting ministers support their own popularity by encouraging the people in the tumultuous proceedings. . . . To recommend submission to authority and obedience to the laws by a quiet and peaceable behaviour in the station in which I am placed, is what I think can, as times go, be prudently done, to check the torrent of political enthusiasm; but even silence is now censured by the people as evidence of what they call tory principles. . . . I expect to suffer, I already do suffer in my temporal interests on account of these disturbances; but better so than betray the cause I am in honour and in duty bound to support, as a servant of Christ and a minister of the Church of England."

On the 17th of April, 1775, the revolution, which Mr. Wiswall called the rebellion, broke out with great violence in Falmouth. As his father and grandfather, both intelligent men who had occupied prominent positions, had spent their lives in the colonies, the son was able to trace from its beginning the growth of resistance to British control in the colonies, until it culminated in the revolution. He knew that Rhode Island and Connecticut existed under charters which made them practically independent; that they elected their

own legislatures and governors and bore the entire expense of their maintenance; that the laws they enacted and enforced were not even sent to England for the royal sanction. Like the Transvaal and Orange Free State, they had been independent in everything, except in not possessing the power to make treaties with foreign countries.

Nor had it been different in Massachusetts from 1625 to 1685, which in that time, had been almost equally independent. Pennsylvania and Virginia had also enjoyed a large share of self-control, which, indeed, existed in all the colonies from Maine to Georgia. Out of this independence and indulgence, grew a disregard of all the laws of England, which the people might interpret as interfering with their liberties.

Mr. Wiswall knew of the open revolt in Virginia in 1676, and, when on the reception of the news that James the Second had been deposed, Massachusetts sent the government to sea, and assumed the management of her own affairs. Indeed, had not France held the country to the north, making the colonies dependent on the Army and the Navy of Great Britain for defence against the French and Indians, there is every reason to believe that the colonies would have started a revolution much earlier than they did; for, as soon as Louisbourg, Quebec and Montreal yielded to England, and the whole north came under British control, the colonists began to resist every attempt made by England to establish regulations necessary to sound and harmonious relations between the colonies and the parent state. There were at times arbitrary and unconstitutional proceedings on the part of the British Parliament; but all this could have been remedied by constitutional courses of reform; and indeed many of the wrongs were righted; but the end sought was entire independence. The customs and navigation laws were trampled under foot. A defiant spirit was exhibited on every hand. On one occasion Mr. Wiswall showed his father an inflammatory article which appeared in a Boston Gazette. After reading it, his father said, "John, you will see Boston a garrisoned town before many years," which prophecy, it is needless to say, came true.



Rhode Island and Connecticut being treated by England very much as the Transvaal and Orange Free State were by Mr. Gladstone's government, similar results followed. In the latter case, England was able to subdue a rebellion which she had nursed. In the other case she failed. Human nature is the same in the family and the state. Sons who are indulged in trampling on lawful parental authority, will sooner or later despise it, and assert the right of self-control.

Kalm, the Swedish botanist who travelled through the English American colonies in 1748, said that it was the presence of the French in America that kept the colonies bound to England; and that in thirty or fifty years they would be independent.

Living as he did in the neighbourhood of Boston, Mr. Wiswall had seen the drift and tendencies of his time. He was especially cognizant of the condition of public affairs in Massachusetts, which was called the "hotbed of sedition." He knew of the "committees of correspondence" organized by Samuel Adams, first in Massachusetts and later on over the whole country, which had for their object a systematized and determined revolt against British authority; in which was implied a total denial of English sovereignty, and a demand for the withdrawal of British power from the American Continent.

The English merchants complained that they had on their hands great quantities of tea growing mouldy in their warehouses, for which there was no demand, because the American colonies, instead of getting their tea from England and paying only nine cents a pound duty on it, while the English paid twenty-five cents, smuggled all they needed from Holland and brought bankruptcy to the people of the old country.

Having left the Puritan Church, and having cast in his lot with the Church of England, Mr. Wiswall was not conditioned to condemn England even when she met prejudice with prejudice and indiscretion with indiscretion. Nor was he prepared to condemn the parent state for requiring a tax on tea, when a financial panic had already appeared in Eng-

land, brought on in part by the disregard of navigation and customs laws by the people in the American colonies, who unlawfully gave their trade to Holland and other countries.

Mr. Wiswall was an intelligent reader of the papers. Although the English government had remitted all tax on the East India Company's tea, thereby enabling it to be shipped to the American colonies, and sold by paying the threepence a pound on it, as cheaply as they could get it by smuggling from Holland, yet the agitation went on, and the decision was that the tea should not land. This Mr. Wiswall condemned, and heroically stood by his conviction. Now he saw that it did not count for anything in Massachusetts, that for a hundred years or more, the navy and army of England had defended them from the hated French and the savage Indians. Some of the newspapers, as early as the summer of 1773, before the affair of the tea in Boston Harbor, had advocated independence. The people became inflamed to a pitch of desperation. The horror of the East India Company getting a foothold in America did duty in exciting to efforts for entire independence. The predictions of the devastations of this corporation in the East were painted blacker than are the purposes of combines in our day.

Then came the suggestion of the impecunious Samuel Adams and other revolutionists for a congress of all the states, and the establishment of an independent commonwealth. This was done with boldness and impunity, and is an evidence of the feeble and indulgent policy of the British Government up to this time.

In 1774 Mr. Wiswall witnessed the return of Governor Hutchinson to England and General Gage taking possession of Boston with four regiments, and there acting in the double capacity of Governor of Massachusetts and general of the forces. "All men are free and equal," was the watchword of the revolutionists, while at the same time they owned thousands of slaves, and in remote districts, denied Newlights, Baptists and Quakers liberty of conscience, and emphasized this denial by fines and imprisonments. Indeed, Massachu-



setts. the leading colony in the revolution, was the last state of the Union to remove from her statute book the laws which were intended to enforce religious uniformity. This was not done until 1832.

Mr. Wiswall was no idle spectator of the progress of the revolution. The desperate conduct of the revolutionists, the forcible taking away of the arms of the loyalists, tarring and feathering them, tossing them on fence rails and parading them in this condition through the towns to be jeered at by the crowds, the extemporized congress at Philadelphia in September, 1774, the fast oncoming of startling events oppressed and alarmed this gentle Christian minister. He was about one hundred miles away from Boston, the storm-centre; but even at Casco Bay the fury of the gale was felt, as puffs of wind before the outbreak of a terrible storm. "Out with him, out with him," shouted the mob as they rushed at Francis Green in a Norwich inn. They shouted and yelled at him as they chased him out of the town. His crime was that he had signed an address to Governor Hutchinson as he was about to leave for England. In the same summer of 1774, the mob drove judges from their seats and shut up the court-houses. Brigadier General Ruggles, who afterwards came to Annapolis, Nova Scotia, fought off a mob, but they painted his horse and cut off his mane and tail. Afterwards, they robbed his house of all his weapons, and poisoned his horse. They stopped judges on the highways, insulted and hissed them as they entered court. They wrecked the house of Sewell, Attorney General of Massachusetts; Oliver, President of the Council, was mobbed and compelled to resign; and an armed mob of five thousand compelled the judges and sheriffs and gentlemen of the bar of Worcester to march up and down before them, cap in hand, and read thirty times their disavowal of holding court under parliament. At Taunton, Springfield, Plymouth and Great Barrington the courts were handled in a similar way. Loyalists everywhere were driven from their homes and families; and some took refuge in the woods. One Dunbar, who had bought fat cattle from a loyal-

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ist, for that offence was put in the cavity of one of the oxen after it was dressed, and in that position, carried four miles; and made to forfeit four head of cattle and a horse. Men were gagged and bound for days at a time, pelted with stones, fastened in rooms where there was a fire with the chimney stopped on top; bullets were fired into loyalist bedrooms; money and plate were extorted to save them from violence. Their houses and ships were burnt; and they, when carted about to be the sport of jeering mobs, were compelled to pay something at every town.

At Falmouth Mr. Wiswall was on the borders of this commotion. But no part of the country could escape. Even a prudent, godly minister like Mr. Wiswall found no safety from the storm. The following is his own account of the persecutions which he and his family endured:—

“ On the 9th of May I walked with Captain Mowatt of His Majesty's ship *Cancaux*, then lying in Casco Harbor, and Dr. Baillie of the same ship across the neck, having no suspicion from the country people. At the northwest side of this neck there is a wood, at the entrance of which I saw three men with guns and bayonets fixed. One of the men turned about and beckoned. Immediately I saw several other men with guns and bayonets fixed, making up to the three men whom I first saw. Upon which I said to Captain Mowatt, I believe they are a party to arrest us. Captain Mowatt, Dr. Baillie and myself walked on towards the town. The three men then moved towards us in the path in which we were walking and presented their pieces with their bayonets fixed. Their commander bid us stand and surrender ourselves. Upon which Captain Mowatt drew his sword and demanded by whose authority they dared to stop him or us. They replied, by Captain Thompson. Captain Mowatt answered, I command His Majesty's armed vessel in the harbour. They rejoined, we are for the country and demand Captain Mowatt's sword, which he refused to give them, saying, let me see your colonel. The party now surrounding us were all armed with muskets, and some with bayonets fixed. We walked a few yards, Mowatt

keeping his sword drawn, when we were met by Captain Thompson with the main body. Thompson commanded Captain Mowatt to deliver his sword. He replied, 'Before you take my sword you shall take my life.' Then a parley began, Mowatt threatening that the town would be fired upon, unless they allowed him to proceed to the ship unmolested. Thompson replied that he would have the ship in his possession in less than two hours, observing that he had two armed vessels with one thousand men, with which he meant to attack the Caneaux; and that his intention was to put us in the front. Mowatt replied, our being there would make no difference in the resistance he would meet with from the ship, as it was the duty of the officer commanding to defend the King's ship even though Lord North and all his ministers were in front of his men. In the meantime, many of Thompson's officers were very scurrilous, damning the ministry and all the King's officers, presenting their guns at the same time, and asking leave of their colonel to fire. Thompson, seeing Mowatt calm and intrepid, seemed to pay great attention to his discourse; and, at the same time, used his influence to pacify his people, who at that point seemed to pay some attention to what he said. But one Steward coming up at that instant expressed much satisfaction in seeing us in so dangerous a situation. He complimented Thompson and his party upon their good fortune, asked if they wanted more men, if so, he would immediately send for them; and reproved Thompson in a haughty, imperious manner for suffering Mowatt to keep his sword in his hand, observing that no prisoners had a right to keep weapons. Steward's behaviour enraged the main party, who, with one Simmons at their head, ordered Mowatt to deliver up his sword. He replied, I am a King's officer; and, gentlemen, you shall take my life first. They then advised with Steward about carrying us into the country. Mowatt replied that he would not be carried away alive. Simmons continued very violent, shouting that if the sword was not instantly given up, he would despatch Captain Mowatt; and one of his men having his piece cocked, presented it within a yard of

Mowatt's breast. Upon which I put my hand on Mowatt, besought him for the Lord's sake to sheathe his sword, as it was impossible to resist so many armed men. But Mowatt refused until Thompson gave his word of honor that he should have leave to draw it again before he was touched. After sheathing his sword, he held it in his hand until he was set at liberty.

“ By this time the people of the town were informed of our situation and many of the principal inhabitants appeared upon the neck. Many more were prevented from coming to us by an advance guard. Mr. Hogg, the commanding officer on board the Caneaux, was acquainted with what had happened, upon which he wrote a letter to the selectmen, requiring them to release Mowatt upon the penalty of having the town laid in ashes. At the same time, he sent out boats and picked up people who were crossing the water, confining them to the ship. This intimidated the selectmen; and Freeman came to us with Hogg's letter, which he communicated to Mowatt, requesting that he would send word to Hogg, and prevent him from putting his threat into execution. Mowatt replied that while detained on shore he had no command of the ship; that Hogg had full power to act as he might see occasion require. By this time some armed people from Gorham town joined Thompson's party; and they consulted together how to dispose of the prisoners. The Brunswick men were for carrying us away in their boats; the Gorham people for carrying us back into the country. But finding Mowatt determined not to be carried off the neck alive, a motion was made by the principal people that we should be conducted into the town. Two of whom, Shattuck and Greenhood, offered themselves as hostages on condition we were carried to Shattuck's house, observing at the same time, that we had been without food for about five hours. It was finally agreed that we should be carried to a tavern at the upper end of the town, on condition that the cadet company should get under way and join them. Upon this many of this company came to Mowatt, desiring to know if he approved of their getting



under arms. He replied that it was his wish that all the militia of the town should take arms, which they immediately did; and joined the body that escorted us into the town; and there they continued under arms till nine at night, when we were dismissed. During our continuance in the tavern, a committee from the body under arms was chosen to determine in what manner the prisoners were to be disposed of. After an hour's debate Mr. Prebble and Mr. Freeman were accepted as our bondsmen to be forthcoming the next day. Upon which we were dismissed for the night, and were guarded to our respective homes by the cadet company. But this guard did not prevent one of the countrymen from attempting to fire upon us. I heard the gun snap and saw the flash of the pan. A wad that had been carelessly left in the gun prevented its firing; by which means I believe Mowatt's life was saved.

"Many of Thompson's party and some of his officers knew nothing of Mowatt's dismissal until he had got on board the ship. Simmons of that party told me the next day, that had he known of Captain Mowatt's release he would have lodged his lead in him, at the same time clasping his hand to his gun and saying, there was enough there to do his business.

"Upon the whole such was Captain Mowatt's conduct, that though I am naturally timid, it so inspired me with resolution to which I heretofore had been a stranger, and although I had never seen a gun fired in anger, I verily believe, that had I possessed a weapon, I would have defended myself with becoming resolution. Moreover, I verily believe we would have been murdered by the rebels, had it not been for Hogg's officer-like conduct.

"The next morning the officers sent for Captain Mowatt, who, as was his duty, refused to go from His Majesty's ship. By this time they were joined by several other companies from the country and made up a body of five hundred armed men. They possessed themselves of a large house in the centre of the town, belonging to one of my parishioners, and converted it into a barrack, turned out his family, his wife

then sick in bed they forced out of doors, and pillaged the house of almost everything that was valuable. They forced me in the afternoon to appear before them. I was strictly examined and questioned by their leaders; and it gave me pleasure that I could assure them that I had never in my sermons so much as glanced at the political disputes, though I declared that not the severest punishment, not the fear of death, should tempt me to violate the oath of allegiance and supremacy to King George, of canonical obedience to my diocesan, or, in conformity to the provincial congress, to deviate from the rules of the crown of England, or in the instructions I had received from the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, whose servant I was; and that I was resolved by God's blessing, that no temptation should prevail with me to do, or even promise anything unworthy of my ministerial character. I was then allowed to retire to my house. The next day they placed a guard at another of my parishioner's houses, and carried away all his plate. They permitted me upon my parole to walk about town unguarded; and on Saturday I made my escape on board the King's ship, having good reason to believe that they intended carrying me away with them, and confine me their prisoner in the country. Sunday I read prayers and preached on board the ship. Monday, having received a letter from my church warden, we put to sea, and the next Sunday I arrived at the place where I am (Boston), without money and without clothing, my family at more than a hundred miles distant from me, a wife and three children destitute of bread, among enemies who bear the greatest malice to the Church of England, my little flock persecuted and many of them obliged to flee from their dwellings. . . . I am stripped of everything. However, though I walk in darkness, I know that God is able to protect His Church, and though we suffer in the cause of truth, I will trust in Him who can bring light out of darkness, who clothes the lilies of the field and feeds the fowls of heaven."



This account of what occurred at Falmouth was written on May 30th, 1775, for Admiral Graves, then in command of the British ships in Boston Harbor.

On the 15th of April he wrote to the wardens, vestry and parishioners of his church as follows:—

“There are none of the misfortunes to which I am abandoned that more sensibly afflicts me than being forced from my flock in the day of distress. It shall be my continued prayer to Him who alone is able to still the madness of the people, to protect you by His good providence, to preserve you in peace and unity, to sanctify the persecution which you endure for the gospel’s sake, to your improvement in virtue and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.”

On the fifth of July, his wife and three children were able to leave Falmouth and in a vessel under convoy of a man-of-war come to Boston. He had heard nothing from his home until August, except the tidings brought by his wife. She reported that the affairs of Falmouth were in the greatest confusion, the people in general in open rebellion, the friends of the government in the greatest distress and consternation. Of the principal persons belonging to his church, some had left the town and country; some came up to Boston with his wife, and others were preparing to leave America.

He further says:—“The people of Falmouth detained all my property and my library, which was a very good one. All my household furniture and my estate they appropriated for the maintenance of their army, which they have raised to join the continental army, by which Boston was besieged. They permitted my wife to bring off only two days’ provisions for herself and children, her wearing apparel and bedding.” A few days after her arrival in Boston, greatly fatigued and exhausted in both body and mind, she and her only daughter fell sick, and, after a few days of extreme suffering, passed to their rewards, leaving Mr. Wiswall and his two young sons in an agony of bereavement, relieved, however, by the assurance that his beloved wife and little Elizabeth were in the land of rest beyond the rage of the revolutionary tempest.

At this time Mr. Wiswall pathetically wrote the following in a letter to the Society which supported him:—"I have nothing of what I possessed left to me, only two sons, whom I wish to bring over to England in the spring, where they can be properly educated."

He had been ten years in the service of the Society in Falmouth; and now the town was in ashes, his church and house also having been swept away in the conflagration.

His circumstances were now sadly changed. He was alone in Boston, stripped of all his earthly possessions, his children Robert and Bradstreet in their little graves at Falmouth, and his wife and only daughter in the tomb of the Minot family in Boston. It was in this lonely and dejected state that he saw a number of armed English ships, on board of which was a company of marines, leave Boston in October, sent by Admiral Graves, to destroy the town of Falmouth, where, as a missionary, he had spent so many happy years. At Boston, more than a hundred miles from his once happy home, he thinks of the graves of his little sons hard by the church, hallowed by years of sacred worship, and of his wife and little daughter, victims of the rebellion, in the family vault in Boston. Nor was it unreal when, in imagination, he saw the burning of his happy home and of the church, whose flames shed their lurid light upon the graves of his little sons. Admiral Graves' ships, because of the treatment of Captain Mowatt and Mr. Wiswall, and for other acts of a like character, laid Falmouth in ashes.

Added to these calamities, the city of Boston was besieged by Washington's army, which, to the mind of this clergyman, was a mob of red-handed rebels. Small wonder is it that he writes thus pathetically to the parent Society:—

"On the 18th of November the orders of Admiral Graves were executed and the town of Falmouth burned. The church did not escape the dreadful conflagration. All my real and personal estate shared the same fate. I have no prospect left me of living in New England; and indeed the sufferings and

persecutions I have endured, together with the rebellious spirit of the people, have entirely weaned my affections from my native country. The further I go from it the better."

Generalize Mr. Wiswall's experiences, and some conception can be formed of the condition of the multitudes of loyalists in the colonies, all the way from Maine to Georgia. Those were bitter days for loyal men and loyal women and for their families.

"At any other time," says Mr. Wiswall, "had I been deprived of so worthy and dear a partner and a child so amiable, I fear that the double stroke would have been too hard for me to endure; but such is the melancholy aspect of the times, so dark and distressing the prospect before us, I acquiesce in the will of Heaven, and will bless my God for taking His servants to Himself, where they enjoy the perfect rest and tranquility which are not to be enjoyed in this world. Had God, in His providence, preserved the life of my dear wife, the poor woman, on account of the death of her only daughter, would have carried a broken heart to her grave."

The father tenderly records the words of this child of nine summers when there was no hope left of her recovery. This little maiden, who had wept and suffered with her mother through that terrible summer when the family were left alone in Falmouth, said:—"I am willing to die; because I have lived an innocent life, and because the times are very troublesome and distressing, and because if I should live and grow up, I might be tempted to sin and wickedness, and then I should be unfit to die."

Mr. Wiswall wrote these touching sentences to Mrs. Hannah Minot of Brunswick, the grandmother of the little girl. He sent Dinah, his slave girl, to Mrs. Minot, with the intimation that she would never be taken away. In writing to a Mrs. Moody of Brunswick, a sister of his wife, Mr. Wiswall says:—"My dear little child discovered the fortitude of a hero and the faith of a Christian in her last moments." "Your sister," Mr. Wiswall further says, "surpassed most

of her sex in understanding, and came behind none of them in delicacy of sentiment and warmth of friendship and every virtue."

Mr. Wiswall is now in Boston, his native city, and how changed is everything around him, in every street and lane so familiar and dear to him. To wander about the city is now a heart-aching contrast with his happy boyish days. The site of the State House, Beacon Hill and the Common were white with the tents of the British soldiers. On duty as sentries, or walking the streets, redcoats were everywhere, returning contempt for the thinly veiled hatred of most of the citizens. Around the city in a half-circle was Washington's continental army; and in the harbor the British ships of war flying the British flag.

As long as the army remained in the city, and the fleet in the harbor, loyalists were numerous in Boston; but as soon as the soldiers and ships were withdrawn, thousands were transformed into redhot republicans. The English and Americans were not in natural agreement. For the two parties to come into contact was to array prejudice against prejudice. Indeed until this day, many Englishmen from the Island have little skill in adjusting themselves to their brethren, the Americanized Englishmen of this continent. But at that time, when to the matter of chronic prejudice that of disloyalty was added, the collision was direct and relentlessly sharp. There was actually no harmony. Their respective habits produced mutual astonishment. The profanity of the English horrified the American; and the duplicity and scheming of the American made the Englishman open wide his eyes and hold up his hands.

During the progress of the war, when the prospects of the rebellion were discouraging, large numbers took oaths of allegiance, to break them when in important battles the patriots were victorious. While Mr. Wiswall remained in Boston, he was made deputy chaplain of one of the regiments stationed there. He also received many tokens of kindness



from old friends. To assist him in his purpose of going to England, Admiral Graves made him chaplain, and took him in his ship, the *Preston*, which left Boston on the 29th of January, 1776, carrying the Admiral back to the old country. As the ship passed down Boston Harbour, the reflections of this good man must have been excruciatingly painful. One fact more than all others gave the keenest anguish to his heart. He was just beginning to put the Atlantic between himself and the cold remains of his dear wife in her father's tomb in Boston. Never before did she seem so precious; never before did her excellencies stand out in all their beauty and in light so clear, as when he with his two boys sailed away from her grave. He had crossed the Atlantic before, but under circumstances very different. Then he left his beloved wife and little ones behind him, hoping to return to them in a short time a regularly ordained minister of the Church of England; but now he thinks of graves and a home in ashes and his native country in red-handed rebellion. It must have been a relief to his aching heart to have written thus to his mother-in-law at Brunswick, of his much lamented wife:—"You, my dear madam, you are almost at the end of your race, and it must give you great consolation to know that you will soon arrive in that blessed country where you will enjoy the converse of my dear wife, and all our friends who have died in the Lord. As for myself, I am literally a stranger and a pilgrim in this world. The only thing I wish for here is to see my sons settled in some honest employment; then, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace."

Notwithstanding his severe troubles, he thought of his slave Dinah, who had gone to live with his wife's family at Brunswick. "Remember me to Dinah. You can assure her from me that I am determined not to sell her to anybody."

Of the excellencies of his wife, Mr. Wiswall says:—"Her person tall and genteel; her hair brown; skin clear; complexion before marriage ruddy, but pale and delicate after she began to bear children. Lively blue eyes with much fire, tempered with graceful modesty and an indescribable sweet-

ness, added lustre and delicacy to her charms. Her features were regular; she was of quick sensibility; had the nicest sense of honor; and though no slave to decorum, yet a careful observer of it. She had much wit, no ill nature; but her benevolent heart never suffered her to exercise this talent at the expense of her neighbor's reputation. I never knew a compound of so much good sense and modesty. . . . She was an excellent judge of character . . . she had read and well digested many of the best political writers; but history was her favorite amusement. I never knew a woman to read history so well. She wrote with great ease, *currente calamo*. She was a sincere Christian; her articles of faith were gathered from the Scriptures alone. . . . Her fortitude and patience, her prudent deportment, her tenderness and sensibility, were evident to the world in the days of affliction. Her passions were strong, and so was her reason by which all her gifts were made to adorn her virtue and benevolence. She loved her husband with the warmest affection; and was jealous of his honor and ever solicitous to please him. She was a most affectionate parent; but her tenderness to her children did not degenerate into weakness. She had an excellent talent to secure authority; but was beloved by her domestics. They never disputed her orders. Her slaves would cheerfully sacrifice their lives for her. How could it be otherwise, when they were so fully convinced that she lived only to promote the happiness of all around her. Stripped of everything but her wearing apparel, expelled from her home and all domestic enjoyments, banished from an aged mother and an only sister, forced into a besieged town, and then compelled to sustain life on the coarsest fare, with no prospect of a speedy change for the better, she bore all, not only with resignation, but with cheerfulness as long as she was able to support her tottering frame—a body too delicate to encounter such a storm. And when confined to her bed with a malignant disorder, even there she put on a mild and placid expression and yielded up herself and daughter to Him in whose providence she always confided."



These are the affectionate records left by Mr. Wiswall for his sons Peleg and John, that they might be blessed by a knowledge of the virtues and the noble life of one of the best of mothers. Evidences abound that the mother's influence, together with that of the father, was not lost on the sons.

The *Preston* landed them safely in England on the 27th of February, 1776. In that winter Benedict Arnold and Montgomery were repulsed before Quebec; but the report of this defeat had not reached London when the Admiral arrived. Mr. Wiswall continued to have a staunch friend in Admiral Graves. A chaplaincy on board the *Rainbow*, about to sail for America, was secured for him. This ship sailed on the 6th of May for New York; and arrived at Staten Island on the 13th of August. He says:—"I was much distressed on account of the length of the voyage, the filthy condition of the ship, and the lack of supply of water, vegetables and fresh provisions. Both John and Peleg, who were with me, were very sick on the voyage."

The ship remained at New York until the 8th of September, when she sailed for Halifax, in whose harbor she cast anchor on the 27th.

In Halifax Mr. Wiswall found great unrest and confusion. Lieutenant-Governor Francklin and Governor Legge were at swords points. The latter had been sending most dolorous accounts to the Secretary of State. He doubted the loyalty of all the inhabitants of Nova Scotia, especially those of New England origin. Lieutenant-Governor Francklin, on the other hand, assured the authorities in England that the people were loyal; but that Governor Legge was acting in an arbitrary and tyrannical manner, and alienating the people, even the better class of them. The reports of disloyal movements in Colchester and Cumberland helped to keep up a ferment of agitation. On the 17th of March General Howe had evacuated Boston; and on the 30th of the same month three men-of-war and forty-seven transports came from Boston to Halifax, bringing 1,500 loyalists and their families. This in-

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crease of population raised the cost of provisions so that the Governor-in-Council felt compelled to fix the prices by law. Mr. Wiswall, however, got board at Thomas Brown's for eight dollars a week.

In June, General Howe sailed with his forces for New York. Dr. Breynton was in charge at St. Paul's and was also chaplain of the House of Assembly; the Rev. Mr. Ellis looked after the Episcopalians in Hants and Kings counties, and the Rev. Thomas Wood those in the county of Annapolis. Rev. Mather Byles was chaplain to the army in Halifax. Among the loyalists added to the city by the arrival of General Howe were, no doubt, many of Mr. Wiswall's friends and acquaintances.

He was a great economist and valued highly every hour of his life. During his three months' stay in this city he taught a mathematical school and employed himself in the home of Thomas Brown, the luxury of whose table he contrasted in after years with the rough fare he got on shipboard. According to a letter to Mr. Brown, tantalizing visions of the savory dishes of his table floated before his mind, as he tried to make a dinner from beef, hard tack and bread and salt, of which he had not a good word to say.

On the first of February, 1777, he left Halifax on the *Liverpool* for England, where he arrived on the second of March. He was here appointed chaplain to the *Boyne*. He took his son Peleg on this ship with him. From this time the ship remained in English or Irish ports, until the 25th of May, 1778. Of the Irish people at Kinsale, where his ship lay for a time, he says:—"The lower class of people live in huts called cabins, and are exceedingly dirty, and their diet is potatoes and skimmed milk. The Irish of the superior class have a great flow of spirits and are very remarkable for their hospitality. The women are handsome and exceedingly free in conversation; but their manners are not delicate." On the 25th of May, 1778, in company with the warship *Ruby* and about 70 sail of merchant ships, the *Boyne* left England for the West Indies. On the 17th of June this fleet left Madeira.

They arrived at Barbados on the 15th of July. For the next two years Mr. Wiswall remained in the *Boyne* on the West India station. The time was spent in watching and capturing American privateers. After a time other and sterner work was found. At length France, Spain and Holland made alliance with the revolted colonies. Then the business of the fleet became more serious. With watching and being watched, chasing and fighting, life did not admit of dulness on board the *Boyne*.

The following is Mr. Wiswall's account of the two naval engagements with the French fleet—one on the 6th of July, 1779, and the other on the 17th of April, 1780. "At Careenage," says Mr. Wiswall, "having put on board the transports 3,000 troops under the command of Generals Grant, Meadows and Prescott, at noon, with the convoy, made sail to the southward to make St. Vincents. There we saw the French flag flying on the battery. At 3 p. m. the signal was given for the ships of war to withdraw from among the transports. We let out our reefs and made sail, cleared ship and mounted the men at the quarters. At ten o'clock brought to; and at ten in the morning made sail again; and at four o'clock saw a sail to leeward, making signals. At five o'clock the admiral made the signal to come under his wake, which was repeated by the other admirals. At half past five a signal was given for a general chase, whereupon we set all sail that we could crowd. Saw a French ship on our larboard bow in shore of us, crowding all sail to join her fleet, which we saw part at anchor in St. George's Bay, and part under sail, leading out of the same. The admiral made the *Suffolk*, *Vigilant* and *Monmouth* signals to join the fleet. Granada was south-east about two or three leagues. At six o'clock the signal was given for the van of our squadron to engage the enemy's rear as she came up, passing on until the whole fleet should come up. At twenty minutes past seven o'clock the Admiral gave signal for the ships chasing to the southwest to join the fleet. At which time some of the enemy's ships, which were drawn out of the bay, began to fire on our headmost ships—the *Sul-*

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*tan* and *Prince of Wales*, which fire they returned. Soon after the *Boyne*," (of which Mr. Wiswall was chaplain) "began to engage with her starboard guns, as she passed the French fleet. At eight o'clock the Admiral made the signal for every headmost ship to draw into line of battle ahead; and the other ships to strengthen them as they came up. We wore and stood after the enemy, which at this time had got under sail, their rear seemingly in confusion, their whole fleet standing to the northward with top gallant sails set, and edging away from us. Saw two of their nearest and leeward ships separate and bear away from their fleet. At this time we were within half a gunshot of the rear of the enemy; and as several of their sterns were toward us, we raked them for some little time, as did the *Prince of Wales*—spoke her and then made sail ahead of her. At four o'clock saw signals on board the Admiral to ware, and supposed it referred only to those ships who had not already wore. The *Monmouth* bore down ahead of us, and engaged some ships in the enemy's van. Soon after she appeared disabled, but continued to fire. Saw the signals for battle, closer engagement and for general chase. Continued our fire on the enemy as her ships passed us. At half past four in the evening firing ceased on both sides. The enemy had twenty-six two-decked ships and seven or eight frigates. Our fleet consisted of twenty-one ships of the line and one frigate. The *Lyon* and *Monmouth* were much disabled; the *Prince of Wales* and *Sultana* appeared to have suffered much.

"In this action the *Boyne* received a shot between wind and water. Several knees and a beam were much damaged. Her topmast and jibboom shot away, and her rigging and sails much damaged. A shot struck the mainmast, and another came into the muzzle of one of our deck guns, which cracked it about four inches and broke off part of the muzzle. We had twelve men killed and thirty wounded, seven of which dangerously."

The commanders were Rear-Admirals Rawley and Parker; Vice-Admirals Byron and Barrington.



Of the second battle, which was fought April 17th, 1780, Mr. Wiswall says:—

“ Both fleets got into very good line ahead the enemy to windward. At one o'clock our van began the action near the centre of the enemy's line, passing on to their van; and in less than an hour after the whole fleet came into action. The firing continued until about three o'clock, and then ceased on both sides, the French standing to the northward and we to the southward.

The loss on board the *Boync* was only two men killed, one on the quarter deck and the other on the forecastle. The shot that killed the man on the quarter deck passed very near my son Peleg. Thank God we had not a man wounded. The 18th was spent in repairing our shattered ship. At sunrise on the 19th, tacked and stood to the northward. On the 20th and the following day, saw the enemy's fleet, but prevailing calms prevented us bringing into action.

“ On the British side twenty sail were engaged in this battle.”

Arriving in London after four years of life in the navy, Mr. Wiswall replied to a letter which he had received while he was in the West Indies, from his friend, the Rev. Jacob Bailey, who was in Halifax when he wrote to Mr. Wiswall. As has been seen, Mr. Wiswall himself had spent three months in this city. His entrance into the capital of loyal Nova Scotia was worthy of a staunch loyalist. It was on the 27th of September, 1776, that the *Rainbow*, a cloud of white canvas, came up the harbor, having for her commander Captain George Collier. Every sailor was at his post, either on the yard arms or on the decks, some ready to take in and furl the sails; others to touch off the guns in saluting the forts. With loyal flags flying and cannon booming, Mr. Wiswall entered the city. Dr. Breynton was ready to give the chaplain of the *Rainbow* a hearty greeting, as were other distinguished citizens. Contrast this entrance into Halifax with that of his friend and correspondent, the Rev. Jacob Bailey.

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After many adventures and much persecution in Pownalborough on the Kennebec, now in the State of Maine, Mr. Bailey with his family, by the permission of the Massachusetts House of Assembly, left his home in a small coasting vessel, which he engaged to take him and his family to Halifax. After a fortnight of tedious sailing, harassed with a fear of being taken by the patriot privateers, they found themselves entering our harbor. But let Mr. Bailey give his own account of his entrance into the city and his reception by the people:—

“We expected,” says Mr. Bailey, “to be hailed after we passed George’s Island, but the people conceiving our vessel to be some coaster from Malagash, we were suffered to proceed without any inquiry. We were now on deck contemplating with infinite wonder and satisfaction the various objects around us. We were now indulging a thousand pleasant reflections as we approached near the centre of the town; and this situation reminded us that it was proper to explore some convenient place to secure a landing. We were now plainly sensible that our uncouth habits and uncommon appearance had by this time attracted the notice of multitudes who flocked toward the water to indulge their curiosity. These inquisitive strangers threw us into some confusion; and to prevent a multitude of impertinent interrogations which might naturally be expected by persons in our circumstances, I made the following public declaration standing on the quarter deck:—

“Gentlemen, we are a company of fugitives from Kennebec in New England, driven by famine and persecution to take refuge among you, and, therefore, I must entreat your candour and compassion to excuse the meanness and singularity of our dress.”

“I, at that moment, discovered among the gathering crowd Mr. Kitson, one of our Kennebec neighbors, running down the street to our assistance. He came instantly on board; and, after mutual salutation, helped us on shore. Thus just a fortnight after we left our beloved habitation, we found

ourselves landed in a strange country, destitute of money, clothing, dwelling or furniture, and wholly uncertain what countenance or protection we might receive from the governing powers. Mr. Kitson kindly offered to conduct us either to Mr. Brown's or Mr. Callahan's; and just as we quitted our vessel, Mr. Moody, formerly clerk in the King's Chapel (Boston), appeared to welcome our arrival. But as it may afford some diversion to the courteous reader, I will suspend my narration a few moments to describe the singularity of our apparel, and the order of our procession through the streets, which were surprisingly contrasted with the elegant dresses of the gentlemen and ladies we happened to meet in our lengthy ambulation.

And here I am confoundedly at a loss where to begin, whether with Captain Smith or with myself; but as he was a faithful pilot to this haven of repose, I conclude it no more than gratitude and complaisance to give him the preference. He was clothed in a long, swinging threadbare coat, and the rest of his habit displayed the venerable signatures of antiquity, both in form and in materials. His hat carried a long peak before, exactly perpendicular to the longitude of his aquiline nose. On the right hand of this sleek commander shuffled your very humble servant, having his feet adorned with a pair of shoes which sustained the marks of rebellion and independence. My legs were covered with a thick pair of blue woolen stockings, which had been so often mended and adorned with the fingers of frugality that scarce an atom of the original remained. My breeches, which concealed the shame of my nakedness, had formerly been black, but the color being worn out by age, nothing remained but a rusty gray, bespattered with lint and dedaubed with pitch. Over a coarse tow and linen shirt, manufactured in the looms of sedition, I sustained a coat and waistcoat of the same dandy grey russet; and to secrete from public inspection the numerous rents, holes and deformities which time and misfortune had wrought in these ragged and weather-beaten garments, I was

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furnished with a blue surtout, frilled at the elbows, worn at the button holes, and stained with a variety of tints, so that it might truly be styled a coat of many colours; and to render this external department of my habit still more conspicuous and worthy of observation, the waist descended below the knees, and the skirts hung dangling at my heels; and to complete the whole, a jaundiced-colored wig devoid of curls was shaded by the remnants of a rusty beaver, its monstrous brim replete with notches and furrows, and grown limpsy by the alternate afflictions of storm and sunshine, lopped over my shoulders and obscured a face meagre with famine and wrinkled with solicitude. My consort and niece came lagging behind at a little distance, the former arrayed in a ragged baize nightgown, tied round her middle with a woolen string, instead of a sash; the latter carried upon her back the tattered remnants of a hemlock-colored linsey-woolsey, and both their heads were adorned with bonnets composed of black, moth-eaten stuff, almost devoured by the teeth of time. I forgot to mention the admirable figure of their petticoats, jagged at the bottom, distinguished by a multitude of fissures, and curiously drabbed in the mud, as a heavy rain was now beginning to set in. And to close this solemn procession, Dr. Mayer and our faithful John (Macnamara) marched along in all the pride of poverty and majesty of rags and patches, which exhibited the various dyes of the rainbow. The doctor proceeded, with a yellow bushy beard, grinning all the way, while his broad, Dutch face opened at his mouth from ear to ear. The other continued his progression with a doleful solemnity of countenance, as if designed to give a kind of dignity to the wretched fragments of his apparel which floated in the wind. In this manner our procession began, and was supported until we arrived at Captain Callahan's, near half a mile from the place of our landing. This worthy gentleman, who was formerly my friend and neighbour, was at this time absent on an expedition to Penobscot. Having obtained entrance, we saw no person in the room but Polly Clensy, a young girl whom this family had transported from Kennebec.



After her surprise at our unexpected appearance had somewhat abated, she ran upstairs to inform Mrs. Callahan of our arrival; but in her precipitation forgot to mention Mrs. Callahan's godson, our little boy Charley, which made Mrs. Callahan conclude that we had by some fatal accident lost him. This filled the good woman with alarming emotion, and she hastened down with evident expressions of anxiety and tremor in her face, for it was some moments before she observed the little charmer prattling about the room. Indeed, we were so deeply affected with this happy meeting that we could hardly speak to each other; and a scene of silent confusion ensued until our various agitation began to subside.

"Mrs. Callahan quickly informed us that she had in a dream the preceding night, which occasioned her no small uneasiness. She imagined in her sleep that she was dressing before breakfast. Polly came running up to her chamber in the utmost hurry, and assured her that Mr. Bailey and family were all safely arrived from New England, except little Charley, who was missing, upon which information she descended with a heavy heart, and found all as Polly had represented—all the family present except the lovely child. She farther imagined in her dream, that in the midst of the mutual enquiries and congratulations, Master Harry Brown came and, after paying his compliments, informed us that his papa was coming immediately to give us joy. No sooner had Mrs. Callahan finished telling her dream than Master Harry came, smiling and blushing, into the room; and after bidding us welcome to Halifax acquainted me that his papa was approaching to pay me his compliments."

This singular dream related by Mrs. Callahan all came true except in the matter of Mr. Bailey's son, little Charley.

About twenty years after this, the Duke of Kent, while visiting at Annapolis, saw a fine-looking young man, whose appearance and bearing arrested his attention. He therefore became his patron, and secured for him a commission in the army; and in 1813 this young officer fell at Chippewa fighting

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the battles of his country. In spite of Mrs. Callahan's bad dream, her godson, Charles Percy Bailey, lived to distinguish himself in the defence of Canada in the war of 1812, and to lay down his life for his adopted country.

In a letter to his friend in adversity, dated at London, February 9th, 1781, Mr. Wiswall writes with a touch of humor evidently caught from Mr. Bailey:—

"Your favor which I received in the West Indies, a climate philosophically, militarily and politically hot, was like cold water to a thirsty soul. From you I received though a concise, yet very clear, and the only information I obtained of many of my friends being safe in Halifax, for whose welfare I have ever been extremely solicitous.

"I left most of you exposed to the merciless rage of rebels. My situation for three years past has been very disagreeable. Deprived of the privilege that even prisoners enjoy—that of hearing from and writing to their friends. Your letter and one from dear friend Simmons, of almost three years date, are the only favours I have received of that kind for nearly four years past; and this is the first opportunity I have had of acknowledging yours. I rejoice to hear of your escape from Pownalborough. Your situation, I am sure, must be much better at Cornwallis, and I give you joy, too, if it is true, that your old enemy, Cha C—n, was taken from a party from Penobscot. May Bowman have the same fate; and so, 'Lord, let all Thine enemies,' etc."

In a paper read by Charles E. Allen before the Lincoln County Historical Society, November 13, 1895, the subject being, "Rev. Jacob Bailey; His Character and Work," I find the following, which enables me to identify "Cha. C—n" as Charles Carleton. Mr. Allen says:—"On the 22nd of September, immediately after divine service, instead of reading the declaration of independence, Mr. Bailey said, 'Some of you perhaps expect that I should read a paper; but I cannot comply without offering the utmost violence to my conscience, and I solemnly declare in the presence of this

assembly that my refusal does not proceed from any contempt of authority; but to a sacred regard to my former engagements, and from a dread of offending that God who is infinitely superior to all earthly power."

"Finally," says Mr. Allen, "every other means proving inefficient, Cushing, Bowman, Hambleton and Carleton, the Committee, summoned him to trial at the courthouse on the 28th of October." This makes it very probable that the "Cha C——n" was Carleton, especially as Mr. Wiswall associates the name of Bowman with it.

"I have been almost five years cruising against the enemies of my country; and have had the satisfaction of capturing some Yankees, French privateers and of three times severely drubbing the French fleet, and with an inferior force; and now having returned to dear England, I have put off the harness and mean to enjoy in quiet *res angusta forte labore*, having bequeathed to my two boys my weapons, my quiver and my bow, who continue in the navy serving their country against the united force of Yankee, French, Spanish and Dutch malice. May they live to see their injured country triumph over this combined force, and to enjoy the fruits of peace purchased by the sweat of war.

"I wish that you, my dear sir, who have sown in tears, may reap in joy, and plenty of this world's blessings."

In a letter written about this time in London to Mr. Thomas Brown, of Halifax, I take the following extract:—

"How often have we, while suffering all the hardships of war, talked over the many agreeable, the pleasant and precious hours we have spent at your fireside; and while we have been eating our scant allowance of musty and worm-eaten bread and bad smelling beef, regretted the loss of Mrs. Brown's fine puddings, pies, etc., etc.—a table loaded with every luxury Halifax could afford. We have generally fared as bad, and sometimes worse, than we fared at the Boston blockade, all the time we have been in the West Indies. Peleg has gone again to that disagreeable station in the *Sybil*;

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Jack is with me at present; but belongs to a new frigate, the *Latina*, not yet launched, commanded by Sir Hyde Parker. I mean to reside here in London or in this neighborhood till the opportunity presents of returning to Falmouth; for they talk of making a new government there, and Sir William Pepperell to be Governor."

The letter written to Mr. Wiswall by Mr. Bailey was dated at Cornwallis, Nova Scotia.

On the 6th of September, after his arrival in Halifax, Mr. Bailey made, as he says, "an excursion into the country, and travelled through all the fine settlements on the Basin of Minas, Falmouth, Horton and Cornwallis. I have dined on the very spot where Charles LeBlanc formerly lived." This may have been René LeBlanc, public notary. "Two hundred families are settled in this place, and I am invited to officiate among them this winter; and believe I shall accept their offer till I can return to Kennebec in safety. They have agreed to furnish me with an house and firing; to give me a horse worth ten guineas, to be at the expense of my removal, and to allow me a weekly contribution, besides presents, which will amount to more than £70 sterling a year; if I reckon the prices at Halifax, I have been treated with uncommon kindness and respect. No consideration, however, shall ever detain me from visiting my former friends and neighbors when the tyranny of congress is overpast."

At this time Mr. Wiswall did not know that in a short time he would be Mr. Bailey's successor at Cornwallis. As his health had failed at sea, he petitioned the Lords of the Treasury for an annuity of £30 a year. Although General Gage, who had charge of the troops in Boston before they were taken over by General Howe, and Sir John Wentworth, certified to the facts in Mr. Wiswall's petition, he did not receive the annuity asked for. The S. P. G. allowed him £30 a year, and this was all the income he had. He appealed to the Marquis of Rockingham to give him the benefit of his personal influence. But here he was again disappointed. He



then, on the 8th of April, 1782, applied to the S. P. G. to give him a mission station either at Albany or Stratford.

In the meantime he removed from London to Oxford. In that classic atmosphere and surrounded with natural beauty so congenial to his refined nature, he seemed for a time to have lost the heaviness of spirit which he carried from the day when in 1775 he was compelled to take refuge on the warship *Caneau*, until he found himself in 1781 a resident of Oxford, noted for its ancient seat of learning.

"The people," says Mr. Wiswall, "are all remarkably neat in their persons; and as neat in their houses. Entirely secluded from the vicious world, here you see the simplicity of the golden age, and a hospitality very seldom found among farmers. They have plenty of every necessary and convenience of life. There seem to be no poor among them; and though you are no churchman," (he was writing to Mr. Willard) "I am sure you will be pleased when I assure you that there is not a dissenter from the established church in the whole parish. This convinces me that the people are so happy in their circumstances that they wish for no change. I live in a house once a monastery. The family consists of my landlord, an apothecary, mayor of the town, aged 60, his wife, a married servant, aged 42, and a boy of 17 years of age. Now while I am writing the house is so still that I can hear the buzz of a fly at a distance of a hundred yards. As it is a fine day, my window is open, and my chamber perfumed with the odor of the flower garden; and full in view are twenty vessels on their way to the Baltic, and yet there are fewer to-day in sight than have been since I came to this place.

"I have everything in the house that I could wish—beer, bread and wine of our own manufacture, besides excellent rum and lemons—a plentiful table of fish and flesh and every kind of vegetable. Without exception, I never enjoyed myself better than in this place. There is nothing I would wish for but I have. In short, to me it is a paradise. I am all

enthusiasm while I dwell upon the subject. I would wish with the poet:—

‘ Here in sweet contentment would I live,  
Here unlamented, let me die,  
Steal from the world and not a stone,  
Tell where I lie.’

“ But you will ask me if Oxford be so vastly agreeable, why do no strangers reside there? I will tell you, my dear sir. Set aside gamesters, sportsmen and those who estimate life in the number of hours they spend in assemblies and rioting, in scandal, dress and show, and very few you can find who can dwell in this place, fit only for the virtuous and persons of a philosophic turn. It is a hell to the sportsman who is very covetous of his game, which here is in vast plenty, but nobody can disturb it. Here, too, are no assemblies, riots, drums, etc., and so pure and chaste are the manners of the people that a vicious man or she that is given to pleasure would be more miserable than the damned, though God has here lavished all the innocent delights of Eden. It is a spot that will suit you and Mrs. Willard to a T.”

Having followed Mr. Wiswall from his quiet home in Falmouth to Boston, England and the West Indies, we can imagine the tortures of mind he endured in these six years. In Boston he dwelt in the midst of wickedness and alarm. In the navy it was no better. The profanity and drunkenness of the sailors in that day were shocking. From all this he has escaped, and at Oxford, for a time, seems to have been a deputy curate, which work was to his taste and reminded him of former days. The rural quietness, picturesque beauty of the landscapes, and the pious habits of the people in contrast with his previous six years’ experience made it seem to him a paradise.

The following is an account of some of the hardships endured by Mr. Wiswall in the navy. On the third of September, 1780, he says:—“ Last night a gale of wind came on

<sup>1</sup> It may surprise some of us to learn that this bit of slang “ To a T,” is quite so old.

from the northwest, which increased until three o'clock to-day, when it blew so hard and raised so great a sea that we were obliged to put away before it under bare poles. A sea broke into our ward-room, stove in the stern and quarter-galleys and tore everything in the ward-room to pieces. Soon after another sea pooped us, tore away the stern galley and upper quarter galley—carried away the stern and everything in the great cabin, as far forward as the mainmast. Several persons in the great cabin were much hurt—one officer had his thigh broken and another his knee-pan split. Such was the weight of water that it broke the ship's back, and she lay with her stern under water. We immediately set our fore-topsail, and threw overboard all the quarter deck guns and two on the fore-castle, also two from the ward room, after which, as it pleased God, she righted. We sounded our well-room and found four feet of water in the hold. Got all the pumps to work, set our mainsail, and spread a sail over our stern, to secure us from the weather. Being weakhanded, with much labour we pumped the ship dry; and the sea, somewhat subsiding, we made good weather of it; but it was three days before the storm ceased; all of which time our chain pumps were going constantly day and night.

“I was remarkably preserved from death. Being by the force of the sea washed under the pantry, and there so jammed that I could not disengage myself; and while I lay in that condition the sea washed over me several times, and broke the furniture of the ward room; and every wash of the sea beating against me. But I escaped with but comparatively little hurt. I will praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.

“All this time we were in the West Indies, our ship's company were remarkably healthy until we went into Careenage. There, being overworked, some employed in wooding and watering, some in hauling guns to the top of Vegia—a very steep and high hill—and the remainder employed for more than a week in pumping the *Cornwall*; and having had bad provisions, and worse water and rum, they soon began

to fall down with fever and fluxes, so that by the twentieth of July there were 130 on the sick list. In Careenage we buried six of our men. On going to sea, we hoped the change of climate would have restored our sick; but to our disappointment the infection spread so fast that the surgeon's list was never less than 70 or 80; beside as many ailing who would not put themselves into the list, we sailed so short of complement. More than that number were incapable of doing any duty. We had 43 French and 7 American prisoners to take care of. We had also a number of invalids and nine land officers, whose servants were crowded upon us a few hours before we sailed from St. Kitts. There was also another gentleman. They brought no stock with them, so our small sea-stores supplied us with very scanty meals, having nothing to send to the sick. For two weeks before arrival at Plymouth we had only ship's provisions to eat, and ship's grog to drink. Having had all our tables, chairs, mugs, platters, etc., etc., broken and washed overboard, we were obliged to sit and eat off the deck; and wait for one another for a dirty tin pot to drink out of, for a knife and fork. Our lack was so great, always one at a time, and two, three and four pumps going. It is no wonder that our ship's company were reduced to mere shadows, and it is rather surprising that we buried only 38 men on the voyage. Had not Providence favored us with a short passage, it is to be feared that we would not have had enough men well to have brought the ship into port."

It does not appear exactly how long Mr. Wiswall remained at Oxford. He got an appointment by the S. P. G. as missionary to Cornwallis, where he arrived on the 24th of August, 1783. Though Cornwallis was for a time made his home, yet his mission extended from the eastern part of the township as far west as Middleton, taking in the whole country—a field 40 miles long and 12 broad. As he began work in the semi-wilderness, the flavor of Oxford luxury must have lingered in his memory, as did Mrs. Brown's puddings and pies when he was attacking on shipboard a meal of hardtack and nauseous salt beef. But the Rev. John Wiswall was the



man who could take a cheerful leave of luxuries and submit in an uncomplaining spirit to adversity. In such a spirit he began life anew in Nova Scotia. The rebellion had been crowned with victory. All hope had vanished of returning to New England as a British colony. Howe had temporized, passing away his time with cards and dances with Mrs. Loring, called by the soldiers the Sultana. The ruse of a cannonade by Washington all along the line of the army besieging Boston gave the revolutionists a chance which they embraced to mount their cannon on Dorchester Heights; by which Washington became able to dictate terms to General Howe. They were that he should withdraw his ships from Boston Harbour, his soldiers from the city, and leave behind him his munitions of war and large stores of provisions. It is no matter of wonder that the health of Howe was drunk in Washington's camp. Burgoyne's surrender was not the final calamity. At last General Cornwallis made a trap for himself at Yorktown, and Washington sprang it. The chances of subduing the revolt were now past. All Europe and the thirteen colonies proved too much for England. She woke up to the nature of her blunderings too late. Nothing but entire independence was acceptable to the colonies. This was bitter to all loyalists, and to none less than to Rev. John Wiswall.

On his mission field Mr. Wiswall says:—"There are not less than 700 families." He does not mean that they are all Episcopalians. As a matter of fact, but a small minority were of that faith. He said:—"It will take me some time to inform myself by general inspection of their opinions, manners and circumstances in life, and the state of religion among them. And sorry I am," he continues, "to acquaint the Society that there is not one regular teacher in this part of the country. At Horton there is an Anabaptist meeting-house, and an illiterate shoemaker supplies the place of a pastor."

<sup>1</sup> It is satisfactory to know that after a long time, some United States historians have begun to do justice to the records of the revolution. Mr. Sydney George Fisher whose work is now fresh from the press, merits commendation for his courage in this matter.

In a very literal sense these statements are correct; but to see them in their true light, other facts should be admitted and taken into account.

A glance at the history of that part of Mr. Wiswall's field where he lived when he made this report to the S. P. G. will bring into clearer light the state of that community when he settled in it.

In 1760 people from New England began to take possession of the lands vacated by the expelled Acadians. Samuel Beckwith, Caleb Huntington, Isaac Bigelow, John Newcomb, Hezekiah Cogswell and Elkanah Morton, junior, on behalf of the Congregational Church in Cornwallis, memorialized the pastors and Christian brethren of the several dissenting churches in Boston and towns adjacent. The following is the memorial:—

“Whereas, God in His providence, who orders the bounds of the habitation of His people, after previously removing our enemies, planted us in this infant colony in the year 1760; and after continuing five years destitute of a minister of the gospel, by application to the South Association in Hartford County, in the colony of Connecticut, we obtained one—the Rev. Benajah Phelps, who came to us ordained to the work of the ministry; and well recommended by the said association, who after one year continuance with us on probation, took the pastoral charge of us to our general satisfaction. At that time we were in circumstances to afford him a comfortable maintenance, being a time of prosperity with us. But in the two years past we have taken a different turn. The produce of our village being much cut short, which occasioned so great a scarcity among us, that we had not last spring sufficient grain in town to sow our lands. Our straits would necessarily have increased to extremity through our inability to purchase seed, had not God inclined the hearts of some of our fatherlike friends in Halifax to relieve us by securing seed for us at a neighboring town, the produce of which has well answered our expectations. Yet notwithstand-

ing the plenty that has been produced this year among us; and our members which consist of 133 families, not ten of which are of the established church; and between eight and nine hundred souls. Our lands are good and fertile. What by means of the late distressing scarcity, and the present extraordinary expenses on our dykes, building a meeting-house, etc., together with our necessary expense for clothing, before we could put ourselves in a way to make any proficiency in manufacturing our woollen, hath involved us so far in debt to our traders, that but very few of us have any produce by which we can relieve our minister under his present needy circumstances. Without relief from some quarter our said minister cannot continue much longer with us. After a separation from the Society and communion of our Christian friends in New England, and five continued years without any privileges of gospel administration, according to our profession notwithstanding our many endeavors in that time to have them established among us; and the expense of settling a minister, building a meeting-house, etc., we say if, after all this, we should be left destitute of Gospel ministration by neglecting to petition the aid of such of our Christian brethren as are able to afford us relief in so critical a junction as this, we should be both wanting to ourselves and posterity, and the cause of religion among us; and be reduced to a worse condition than at our first settling. For as there is now a church building in the town, and a church minister provided free of any expense to all proselytes—the Rev. Mr. Eaglestone from Ireland, who first appeared here as a Presbyterian, hath been home for, and last spring returned with orders; and several of the more loose and unstable of our people have already gone over to them. And the door is open for many more; and if we now part with our minister who seems willing to tarry with us on very moderate terms, we, as a consequence, in a few years shall all be churchmen or nothing. In point of religion, as it seems, we shall be in no condition to re-settle a minister. And if our circumstances claim any interest in your pity and prayers, we trust you will not be

forgetful of us; nor refuse to contribute to our relief, if you judge the nature and circumstances require it.

“It is recommended that any donations for the relief of our pastor be paid into the hands of the Rev. Andrew Elliot of Boston, and by him remitted to Malachy Salter of Halifax, by whom your liberality will be brought safe to hand. Your compliance will be gratefully acknowledged by your memorialists and the interests of religion be greatly served.”

This memorial was sent in on the 8th of November, 1769. It apparently called forth an enquiry from all the Congregational churches in New England, as to the support which Congregational churches received in Nova Scotia. A reply was sent back in about two months—January 18th, 1770, by Benjamin Gerrish and Malachy Salter. There were then in the province six Congregational ministers. It was stated that the salary of Mr. Phelps was by agreement, £80 per annum; but he had reported that his people had not been able to make good their contract; and were, of course, very much in arrears. Mr. Phelps had purchased a farm, built a house on it, and was much embarrassed. This town was one of the most thriving settlements in the province.

Mr. Eaglestone was probably the Episcopal minister who was afterwards settled at Amherst, at the time of the revolution; and was captured by some of the revolutionists, and carried to Boston.

It may be further noted that the Congregationalists had built a meeting-house. This was located a little north of what is now known as Hamilton's Corner, on the right of the road leading to Canning. To accommodate the people better, it was finally abandoned, and two houses were built to take its place—one at Canning, and the other where the Baptist meeting-house stands in Upper Canard. The English Church stood where its successor now stands, on Church Street. There was also a Presbyterian house which was on the west end of Church Street, where the road branches off to Canard. This has been given up. The Presbyterian Church now stands a little west of the Baptist Church.



In response to this memorial, some relief was sent to all the Congregational ministers in the Province. Mr. Phelps received his share. It was thirteen years after this, when Mr. Wiswall arrived in Cornwallis to begin his labors. During all this time the S. P. G. had on the ground one of its missionaries. With some intermissions, Congregational clergymen also had held pastorates on the same field.

At the time Mr. Wiswall began work in Cornwallis the Rev. James Murdoch, a Presbyterian minister, was stationed at Horton. He claimed the glebe lands offered to the first minister who settled among the people; but his right to these lands was disputed by Mr. Wiswall who took the ground that the law meant the first Episcopal minister. By appealing to the law, Mr. Wiswall secured the Horton Glebe. Mr. Murdoch was drowned in the Musquodoboit River in 1799. The Hon. W. J. Stairs, not many years ago, had a suitable monument put over his grave. The Rev. Aaron Bancroft, father of the historian, had left Cornwallis a little before Mr. Wiswall arrived. At that time many of the members of the Congregational church had been immersed, and the way was thereby being prepared for the Baptist church, which later on came into existence.

The Anabaptist minister at Horton, called by Mr. Wiswall "an ignorant shoemaker," was the Rev. Nicholas Pierson. We are indebted to Mr. Wiswall for the knowledge of Pierson's calling. His scattered flock extended from Newport to Nictaux, a distance of more than fifty miles. Paul made tents and Nicholas made and mended shoes. His church was the only Baptist church in the province at that time. He had been ordained by the assistance of the Newlight Congregational minister—Henry Alline, in 1778—five years before the arrival of Mr. Wiswall.

In 1776, Henry Alline started out from Falmouth as an evangelist of the Whitefield type. From that time until the arrival of Mr. Wiswall, he had preached in all the western counties of Nova Scotia, in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

On the 15th July, 1778, he formed a church at Cornwallis in the house Simon Fitch, near Jawbone Corner, now more commonly known as Hamilton's Corner. This church finally absorbed the old Congregational church. From 1771 to 1783, Mr. Alline had spent a part of his time in Cornwallis. When Mr. Wiswall wrote his first letter from Cornwallis to the S. P. G., Mr. Alline was preaching at Liverpool, Port Medway and other places in that part of the country. He was a burning and a shining light. Here is a record made by him at that time in Liverpool:—

“I came to Liverpool where I found the people vastly engaged in religion, and pressing into the kingdom; and almost all their discourse was about the wretched state of man and the glorious recovery of Jesus Christ. And many rejoiced as it were in a new world; and I would hear exhortations after every sermon, inviting others to taste and see that the Lord was gracious.”

Twenty-three days after Mr. Wiswall wrote his first report, Mr. Alline had arrived in Halifax, where he preached.

“When I came to the city,” said Mr. Alline, “I preached in different parts of the town; and have reason to believe that there were two or three souls that received the Lord Jesus Christ. But the people in general are almost as dark and as vile as in Sodom.”

This was immediately after the close of the Revolutionary war. Army morals were added to the morals of the city and country, previous to the war, which were indeed of a low type; but the additions made to the population after the war, made corruption more corrupt. Mr. Wiswall never met Mr. Alline, who died of consumption the following winter in Northampton, New Hampshire.

In the west end of his mission field, as Mr. Wiswall says, and as it is stated on his memorial tablet, there was no other settled minister of any name. But the Rev. T. H. Chipman, a Newlight preacher, who lived a few miles from Bridgetown,

came at times to Nictaux and conducted religious services, and the Rev. Nicholas Pierson of Horton, did the same.

In 1780, William Black, the pioneer of the Methodists of these Provinces, began his work as an evangelist. He had preached in both Wilmot and Cornwallis. It seems necessary that the above statements should be made in order to understand more fully Mr. Wiswall's report that from Cornwallis to Wilmot there was no settled minister of any name.

As has been stated, the Rev. Jacob Bailey was Mr. Wiswall's immediate predecessor in Cornwallis. He arrived on the field on the 20th October, 1779. A little over four years after this, Mr. Wiswall followed him. A detachment of soldiers had been stationed at Cornwallis as soon as the two hundred people from Connecticut had landed there in 1760. When Mr. Bailey began his ministry on that field, there were about twenty families of church people; and he said, there were few to sympathize with him in his loyalty to the King. The statement in the memorial of the Congregationalists to New England for help in supporting their ministry, that a few of their members had united with the Church of England accounts for the lack of sympathy of some of Mr. Bailey's people with his loyalty. The Rev. Aaron Bancroft arrived in Cornwallis in December, 1780, but, as Mr. Wiswall says, there was no stationed minister on the ground when he arrived, he must have returned to New England before that date. Mr. Bailey removed from Cornwallis in August, 1782, about a year before the arrival of Mr. Wiswall. While in Cornwallis, to increase his limited income, he taught a small school.

In response to the request of a few families in that part of Horton where Wolfville is now located, Mr. Wiswall preached to them once a month. He says:—

"The Baptists, who have a large house of worship there, have granted me the use of their pulpit." He did not therefore, find the "ignorant shoemaker" and his church ungenerous neighbors. This maker and repairer of the Horton peo-

ple's shoes, set a good example in those far-off days, which has not been fully imitated, no, not even in our own times. Fishermen and men of the lapstone have sometimes been in advance of the sentiments of their times.

Mr. Wiswall says further:—"I have a very crowded audience when I preach at Horton of persons of all denominations. I am in hopes that their prejudices against our church service will gradually wear off." In that matter his hopes were doomed to disappointment. The descendants of the Puritans did not take kindly to ritual. The Episcopal church in Cornwallis was not finished inside when Mr. Wiswall arrived. He says:—"Building the parsonage here, and finishing the church is a very heavy burden on my parishoners, which prevents their contributing to my support. I receive neither pay from the people of Horton, nor any profit from the church lands there."

1784, he visited Digby, which was settled by loyalists. He reports that there were more than four hundred new houses; but no minister of any denomination. He preached to a crowded audience.

On arriving in Cornwallis, Mr. Wiswall found a very kind and liberal friend in Colonel Burbidge, ~~grandfather~~ to Judge Burbidge of Ottawa. The report of his benevolence brought this reply from Mr. Morice, the secretary of the S. P. G.:—"The zeal and liberality of Colonel Burbidge cannot be sufficiently commended, and the Society in testimony of their esteem for him have elected him one of their members."

This suggests the reverses of fortune which sometimes overtake the children of noble and prosperous parents. I found in 1858 a ~~man~~ of Colonel Burbidge, then an aged man, blind and poor, supported by the town of Cornwallis. It was then the regulation in caring for the paupers of the township to allot them to persons who would take them for the smallest amount. It was a kind of auction in which the purchases went to the lowest instead of the highest bidders. The lot of Mr. Burbidge had fallen to Mr. Best, whose farm was on

STAND  
revised



the slopes of the South Mountain. Here I met him. He was a member of their family; and was kindly treated. He was tall and of commanding presence. No person could be in his company without being impressed with his culture and aristocratic bearing. It was evident that he had enjoyed the advantages of superior culture. Poverty and blindness had not broken his spirit. His bearing and conversation marked him as a gentleman. In no way by word or act did he intimate that he was a dependant; neither was there indication of rebellion at his lot. I was much touched by this experience. In conversing with him, I felt that his character raised him above his calamities.

The people had engaged to pay Mr. Wiswall £80 a year; but seemed unable to fulfil their engagement.

Mr. Wiswall was notably frank and truthful in his reports. When he first arrived on the field and saw how cordially he was received by the people, he hoped that many, attracted by the services of the church, would unite with it. But he was not aware then of the depth and strength of their attachment to their own faith. Two years after he began his work, he made the following report to the Society:—"Though there is little prospect of converting dissenters here to the church, who in general are greatly attached to the religion of their forefathers, yet this will lessen their prejudices, and give them a favorable opinion of us, as they have been taught to think that churchmen have religion but little at heart; that an exemplary behaviour will do more than preaching or disputing, toward reconciling them to our worship."

Mr. Wiswall had been referring to the work of the Society's school-master, Mr. Fox, whom he represented as very industrious in his school, exemplary in his conduct and giving general satisfaction.

Sufficient credit has not been heretofore given to the work of the S. P. G. in this province—work not only by their missionaries, but also by their school-masters and catechists. Take the region of the country over which Mr. Wiswall tra-

velled as an example. At Cornwallis, connected with the church there is a school-house. At Aylesford, Wilmot and Handley Mountain, school-masters and catechists were found. At these points, in their unostentatious way, they were engaged in diffusing the light and life of religion as well as in giving intellectual training to the people. Later on they established Sabbath Schools, into which were gathered the children of all denominations; and, in addition to the secular knowledge imparted, they gave instruction in the Bible. A little anecdote comes down from these early days. At Aylesford, there lived a German, who was a blacksmith and somewhat of a genius in all kinds of mechanism. After school, the children enjoyed stepping into his shop to see the coals glowing on the forge and the sparks flying from the anvil. When the blacksmith was pressed with work, his wife Lydia, would blow the bellows for him. They were great favorites in the community; and were familiarly known as Uncle Billy and Aunt Lydia. "Who made man?" said the catechist to his class one day. In that class was a bright little girl, who had come to the conclusion that everything that had been made, had been made by the popular blacksmith; and so, anticipating all other answers to the question, she cried out with all assurance, "Uncle Billy,—and Aunt Lydia blowed the bellows."

The few Loyalists who settled in Horton after a little more than a year's residence in that place, removed to Parrsboro. While resident in Wolfville they invited Mr. Wiswall to preach for them. He preached as has been stated, in the Baptist meeting-house to large audiences; and was encouraged to believe that the people would soon become reconciled to the church service, and enable him to found a church in that place. After the Loyalists left for Parrsboro, Mr. Wiswall went on a certain Sabbath to Horton to hold a service; but found the meeting pre-occupied by a lay preacher of the Baptist faith. He therefore held his service in a private house. On going again, no one came to his meeting.

He, however, left word that he was willing to preach for them whenever they should notify him that his services were needed. But he was never notified, and so his labors at Horton were discontinued. All this was frankly and fully reported to the S. P. G. The blighting of his hopes in respect to Horton was not all the trouble that came upon him. The congregation in Cornwallis began to diminish, and the belief got abroad that it was on account of his inefficiency. Colonel Burbidge made complaints to the secretary of the S. P. G. of the failure of Mr. Wiswall to meet the demands of the mission. This brought about strained relations between the missionary, a Mr. Best and Colonel Burbidge. It is not probable that the fault was with Mr. Wiswall. The decrease in the attendance at church was due to other causes. The Presbyterians of Cornwallis had secured the services of Rev. Mr. Graham, a minister from Scotland. The Newlight Congregationalists ordained the Rev. John Payzant as pastor of that church for Horton and Cornwallis. This took place at Horton on the 3rd of January, 1786. Mr. Payzant was a brother-in-law of Henry Alline. He was one of the family which, in 1756, had been carried from Mahone Bay to Quebec by the Indians. While in that city he had the advantage of attending a Jesuit school.

He began his pastoral work at the time Colonel Burbidge wrote the S. P. G. about Mr. Wiswall. The Baptists at Horton also held services regularly at Cornwallis.

In the light of these facts, it is easy to see how Mr. Wiswall failed to keep up the large audiences which greeted him on his first arrival.

He knew quite well the character of the conservatism of New England Puritans. He and his ancestors had belonged to that faith; but he hope that those who had exchanged their native land for homes in the Nova Scotia wilderness, would be less inflexible, and ready to unite with the Church of England. But he learned that men carry their essential characteristics from one land to another. These were bitter experi-

ences for a man who had suffered so much already in his eventful life. But he took it all patiently, as became a Christian minister. His correspondence with the Society evoked a similar spirit from that body. The Christian flavor of their letters to Mr. Wiswall would be worthy of the best of Christian sympathy in the present day. Mr. Wiswall was faithful in preaching the gospel, and in rebuking the ungodly. Profanity, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking and rioting are vices which, according to the testimony of all the local ministers of the Gospel, characterized society.

The various trials in the midst of which Mr. Wiswall found himself, led him to a more thorough study of the people. He fell back upon his knowledge of the Puritans of New England. They had left the old country one hundred and fifty years before this, that they might enjoy religious liberty in the homes they might make for themselves in the wilderness of America. But the fixedness of their characters, and their settled opposition to the Church of England, had lost nothing in their descendants. He, at least, made up his judgment that to expect them to become devout churchmen, was about as reasonable as to look for the spotted leopard to turn milk white, or the negro to appear in the fair skin of a flaxen-haired Anglo Saxon. The trials of this period of his life unsettled for once his grave, prosaic style of writing. His humour at last appeared. Faced by his apparent failure in Cornwallis for which he was sure he was not to blame, as was Job that he had committed no sins, he shows by his similes the impossibility of changing the Puritans of Horton and Cornwallis into churchmen:—

“ I am of the opinion that it is impossible that the church should ever flourish in Cornwallis. For I would sooner prevail on His Holiness at Rome to throw aside his mitre for a red cloak and a white wig, and bid a last farewell to the luxuries of the Vatican—to solicit the Bostonians to elect him deacon of the old South meeting-house, and chant the edifying version of the Psalms to the tune of ‘ Hush my dear, lie



still and slumber,' than I could prevail on a whig Oliverian, a friend to the American Congress and Boston town meetings, to become a good churchman."

This is despair for Horton and Cornwallis. While Mr. Wiswall was driven to this conclusion in respect to the Church of England, the ignorant shoemaker had his revivals, baptisms and crowded meetings at Horton. The Rev. John Payzant, on the same ground, was carried on a tide of religious awakening; and Mr. Graham was in Church Street with a good following of Presbyterians, augmented by additions from the Puritan community.

In his disgust because of the stubbornness of the people toward Episcopacy, Mr. Wiswall, on the principle that misery likes company, tells the Society that the Presbyterians were driving Mr. Graham from among them. This, it is probable, accounts for his early exchange of the Cornwallis for the Stewiacke Valley. Mr. Murdoch also, he informed the S. P. G., had been dismissed from his congregation.

The Rev. William Black had received recruits to his staff of missionaries from the United States, and they were ranging over the country. Among them, a man of great zeal and activity, the Rev. Freeborn Garretson. He was one of the missionaries of this denomination who at that time travelled through Horton, Cornwallis and Annapolis. He reported that he found the Christians in this part of the country mostly preachers. The Newlight ministers were accustomed, after finishing their sermons, to call upon the brethren "to witness to the truth." This gave the people practice in public speaking. But at most of their meetings there was no minister present. Then the services were carried on by both men and women, who prayed and exhorted. The Methodists and Baptists adopted the same custom. In the Presbyterian service there was the solemn psalm-singing, and the long sermons, the people with their open Bibles followed the reading of the Scriptures, and turning to the quotations made by the preacher. Mr. Wiswall was not able to stem the tide.

But there was a streak of light for Mr. Wiswall in this dark sky. A large number of Loyalists had settled in Aylesford and Wilmot. He had been invited to preach for them stately. The forty miles distance had not proved insurmountable. He fully reported his services in that part of the country to the Society. So zealous was he in his work that in March, after a severe winter which made it impossible for him to travel to Wilmot, when the snow was so deep that he could not go with his horse, he went on foot all the way from Cornwallis to Handley Mountain—a distance of forty-five miles. This was zeal equal to that of the Newlight preacher, Henry Aline, who had walked over the same ground.

In January, 1784, Peleg, his son, went to Halifax, and Mr. Wiswall, taking Harry Mowatt, son of Captain Mowatt, who was arrested with him at Casco Bay, went to board in Mrs. Hutchinson's house.

In a letter written by the Rev. Jacob Bailey on the 2nd of March, 1784, to the Rev. Samuel Parker of Boston, Mr. Bailey says:—

“I am just returned from a journey to Cornwallis, undertaken to marry our brother Wiswall, late of Falmouth, to one Mrs. Hutchinson, a worthy woman from New York, who has been visited during the late dissensions with a singular and affecting train of calamities.”

To a correspondent, Captain Gallop at Windsor, Nova Scotia, Mr. Bailey makes this further statement:—

“You have, I presume, heard a rumor of my ramble to Cornwallis to unite Brother Wiswall in the holy bonds of matrimony to a rib of his own choice.”

To Mr. Thomas Brown of Halifax, Mr. Bailey gives another word:—

“I have lately travelled to Cornwallis and officiated at the wedding of our friend, Mr. Wiswall, who is certainly an original genius and a very honest man.”

Mr. Wiswall, at the time of his second marriage, was fifty-three years old. For nine years since his bereavement

at Boston, he had been tossed about on sea and land. Time, however, had healed the wounds of his heart; and he now commences life anew.

He and his wife had much experience in common. She was from New York. Adventure and vicissitudes had been the lot of both. Before the time arrived for him to move to Wilmot, he became reconciled to Mr. Belcher, Colonel Burbridge, Mr. Pesy, and others who were estranged from him. All was kindness and good-will before he resigned his Cornwallis mission for the one at Aylesford and Wilmot.

*Annapolis Royal, July 28th, 1784.*

*To the REV. EDWARD BASS, at Newburyport.*

DEAR SIR,—When your agreeable and welcome letter was delivered into my hands, our brother Wiswall was present himself, his wife and her youngest daughter being on a visit to our habitation.

This observation will naturally conduct me to answer your queries respecting that sensible and original genius and his connections. His salary from England is only one hundred pounds sterling, for the Society allows the missionaries here the exact amount they formerly had in New England; but then he has a parsonage worth one hundred and twenty dollars a year and a decent house, with fuel.

His wife, about forty-eight years of age, is a refugee from Carolina. Her fortune has been somewhat singular and very distressing since the commencement of the late revolutions.

Her husband was drowned, one son was kicked to death by a horse, a second lost his life by shipwreck, and another was hanged by rebels, as he was attempting to visit his parents. She has remaining one son and two daughters, and still possesses about 2,000 pounds, the gleanings of a very ample estate—her daughters have a thousand pounds lately left them by a Grandfather in England. She appears a very clever woman, is sociable and so prudent in the management of family affairs, that we may with propriety apply to her

what was heretofore said of Mrs. Weeks—"She has abundance of saving knowledge."

Mr. Wiswall has two sons, both lieutenants in the navy, the eldest Peleg is at Halifax, and the other, John, has just arrived from Europe. He was much pleased with hearing from you, etc., etc.

(Signed) JACOB BAILEY.

On the 13th of July after his marriage, his son John returned from London. Tan, his slave; John, his son, and John Outhit, a young Loyalist, went to Wilmot and built a hut on the land that had been granted to Mr. Wiswall, as the first minister who settled in Wilmot. He had five hundred acres. Joining this lot to the west were six hundred acres, granted to the Church of England, and west of that again 400 acres for the support of church schools. These lands began at the Annapolis River, where Wilmot station now is, and lay to the north. A little north of the old post road on a rising ground, the two Johns and Tan, the negro, erected their log cabin. Opposite these lots of land on the south side of the river, Colonel Samuel Vetch Bayard, then or very soon after, began life. West of him on the same side of the river, Colonel Eager was making for himself a home in the wilderness. A little further west was Alden Bass. His father came to Nova Scotia in 1761, and settled at Round Hill, about five miles east of Annapolis town. His brother John also, after graduating from Harvard College in 1761, settled at Annapolis. They were brothers of Dr. Edward Bass of Newburyport, who became first bishop of Massachusetts. They were descendants of John Alden and his wife, Priscilla Mullins, of the *Mayflower*, whose marriage has been immortalized by Longfellow's *Courtship of Miles Standish*.

In the same neighbourhood and further south was Nathaniel Parker, a war veteran, who had fought at Louisbourg and Quebec. He had been on these lands for some

I assume that Mrs. Wiswall was originally from the South, then went to New York, then to Cornwallis.

E. M. S.



time. Six years before this, he and his wife had gone to Horton on horseback to be baptized by Rev. Nicholas Pierson, Mr. Wiswall's "ignorant shoemaker." Henry Alline, who preached his ordination sermon said his gifts were limited, and the people took him hoping he would improve. Nathaniel Parker, who was known as Major Parker, has a numerous offspring, among them about a half score of Baptist ministers and one or two Methodist preachers.

On the north side of the river, still further west, was Oldham Gates, who gave the name of Gates' Ferry to a crossing which was near where Middleton bridge now stands. North and east was John Baker, another Louisbourg and Quebec veteran. On the southern slope of the North Mountain a clearing had been commenced in the wood of stout trees. This was the work of Brigadier-General Ruggles. Among his laborers were Benjamin Fales and George Stronach, the former from New England and the latter from Glasgow, Scotland. They were both geniuses in their way.

George Stronach when at home, received a sum of money from his father on condition that he would cease to worry his stepmother. He took the money and made a solemn promise to his father that she would never be troubled by him again. The better to keep his promise, he immediately went to Glasgow, took passage on a ship for Halifax, where he met Benjamin Fales, whose brother Richard had been educated at Harvard and was noted as a man of ready wit. His uncle was clerk of the court at Taunton, Mass. Once the uncle, in company, asked Richard to make a jest that would turn the laugh on him. He at once responded:—

"The children of Israel asked for meat,  
And Jehovah sent them quails,  
The court of Taunton wanted a clerk,  
And the devil sent them Fales."

A small stream in Lower Aylesford, flowing from the south into the Annapolis River, took its name from the Fales family. A section of the North Mountain honored the Stronach family by taking its name.

Eales and Stronach agreed to work three years for General Ruggles, and at the end of that time, each to receive from him 100 or more acres of land. John Outhit, who, with Tan the slave and John Wiswall, built the log hut, settled on the mountain east of Baker. He was the father of the late Dr. Outhit of Aylesford. Signs of his grandsons can be seen over Barrington Street grocery stores. Other military families started in Wilmot, but, tired of the wilderness life, left to find good fortune in other places, among them Captain Berkeley.

John Garret and Henry Vanbuskirk were of Dutch descent from New York, the latter lived near the Aylesford church, and was "squire" of that district. He meted out justice and sold the contents of a variety store and Jamaica rum in abundance to the people of all the surrounding country. Other families, more or less prominent, could be mentioned.

At the time Mr. Wiswall removed to Wilmot, the Loyalists had begun to make houses for themselves in that township, not only in the Valley but on the mountains. Looking to the south from the car window as the train going west, pulls into Wilmot station, the traveller may see green meadows, covered with heavy timber when John Wiswall and Tan built their log house.

After having served in the navy for about four years, John Wiswall, the son, settled down to hard work as a pioneer in a stubborn wilderness. Until this day, his descendants have toiled on the same grounds. A beautiful white cottage, standing in a grove of ornamental trees is the fourth house in succession from the hut where Tan and John dwelt, and hard by is the grave of the poor slave Tan.

On a certain Sunday, Tan, becoming lonesome crossed the river to have a chat with a man of his own color, the slave of Colonel Eagar, whom he found suffering from an attack of measles. Tan took the disease and it proved fatal. Dinah, another slave, according to Mr. Wiswall's promise, was never sold. Her last days were spent with the Minot family in Brunswick, not far from Casco Bay.

In 1786, John Outhit built himself a house on the slope of the North Mountain, east of General Ruggles' place, and had a road opened to it. Early in the spring of 1787, Wiswall's log hut was succeeded by a pretentious building on the high bank of the brook that flows from the north into the Annapolis River. This stream abounded with trout; and many a fresh fry of them did visitors eat under the hospitable roof of the Wiswalls.

Bishop Inglis took up a large block of land about two miles west of the Aylesford Church. At first he had there a summer residence; but in 1795 he left Halifax and resided there permanently. His home, located on a swell in the Aylesford plains, was a modest one. Among the fruit which the Bishop introduced was a pippin, which the people called the bishop pippin—a beautiful, richly flavored apple, which is now called the "belle fleur."

General Ruggles' house, which was on the southern slope of the North Mountain, was two stories high, commanded a fine view of the valley east and west; and to boyish eyes looked grand and stately. Colonel Bayard, Colonel Eagar, and a few others erected houses which were of fair size, comfortable and convenient. Mr. Wiswall gives a description of the dwellings of the people in general. He says:—

"This part of the Province is thinly settled by persons of all descriptions, in general extremely poor and scattered over the country in all directions. They chiefly live in huts, little if any, superior to the cabins in Ireland; and can scarcely be said to have even the necessaries of life. They have for so long a time been habituated to what may be called a savage life, that it is extremely difficult to bring them off from it to a civilized state. Yet I can perceive some alteration for the better since my residence among them; and I am not without hopes that more regard will be paid to the Lord's Day and public worship in future."

The resignation of the Cornwallis mission took place in June, 1789. In October of the same year, Mr. Wiswall re-

moved to Wilmot. The character of the roads can be learned by reading an account in the *Frontier Missionary*, of Rev. Jacob Bailey's removal from Cornwallis to Annapolis, a few years before this.

Bishop Inglis, whose diocese included all British North America at the time of Mr. Wiswall's resignation and removal to Wilmot, was on a visit to Canada. When Halifax was founded, there was no bishop in America. The Lieutenant-Governor, therefore, was commissioned to receive resignations and make appointments to the several ecclesiastical offices. Mr. Wiswall received a mandate from the Governor to resign at Cornwallis, and begin work at Aylesford and Wilmot. When the Bishop returned, he was indignant to find that the King's representative had interfered with his rights and authority. The matter was, however, composed, and harmony restored.

It has been stated that the only surviving children of the Rev. John Wiswall were his sons Peleg and John, who spent several years in the navy. When twenty-nine years old, Peleg married Seraph Cutler of Annapolis. His second wife was Mary Nichols. She had one child, who married Charles Budd, M. P. P. of Digby. Mr. Budd had no child.

Peleg Wiswall studied law and was distinguished in his profession in Digby County. After a successful career at the bar, he was appointed to the bench. He was known as fair and upright in the discharge of the high duties of his office.

In Mr. Calnek's History of Annapolis County, edited by Judge Savary, it is said:—"Our archives abound with articles from his pen, addressed to various individuals connected with the administration of public affairs, and embrace a wide range of topics"; and that the late John McGregor, a barrister of Halifax, related the following bit of his own experience:—When a boy he called on Mr. Wiswall to consult him about entering upon a course of legal study, and was somewhat abashed with Mr. Wiswall's singular presence, peculiar dress of a past generation, and quick and terrible



motions, as well as speech. The following dialogue took place:—

“ Well, my man, so you would like to be a lawyer?”

“ Yes, sir, I think I should like to be one.”

“ Where’s your gun, my boy?”

“ I have no gun; don’t know whether I’d like gunning.”

“ No gun. Well, you keep a boat then—like boating?”

“ I do not own a boat, sir. Don’t know how to use one.”

“ You wear a watch or keep a dog?” (snappishly).

“ I am too poor to wear a watch, and I have no dog.”

“ You’ll do, lad, if you persevere in the course you have begun. The law is a jealous mistress, and cannot be won except by the greatest individual devotion. To gain her, you must sacrifice everything that diverts your attention from her. Remember this, my lad, and I will ensure you success; and you may rely on any assistance in my power to aid you.”

The Rev. John Wiswall praised the people on Handley Mountain. They built a log house, 20 by 22 feet on the ground floor for a school-house and a place of worship. Mr. William Cropley was engaged by the S. P. G. as school-teacher and catechist. He conducted worship on the Sabbath day; and, as Mr. Wiswall said, was a suffering Loyalist. He labored on the Mountain for about twenty years. Mr. Wiswall appealed, and not in vain, to the Society for religious books and tracts for the people on his field. The Mountain got a large share of them. This laborious minister of the gospel, and his staff of school-masters and catechists, did much for the pioneers of Aylesford and Wilmot in those early days. He worked on patiently, and at first, had large congregations. He was kindly received into the families and was encouraged to believe that, as his usefulness increased, a large number of the people would be induced to unite with the Church of England; but disappointment in this field as in Cornwallis was in store for him. As the century came to a close, the Rev. William Black sent into the field a number of zealous evangelists, some of whom appeared on the ground occupied by

Mr. Wiswall. In addition to these zealous Methodist ministers, there came upon the ground a number of Baptist preachers, who, impelled by a belief that God had called them to preach the Gospel, had left the school-house and the farm to go abroad and evangelize the country. They too were full of religious zeal, and set before the people the character of their lives, and the way of escape through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

The people had been prepared for these fervid evangelists. Take for instance the section of the country, known as Handley Mountain, settled mostly by disbanded soldiers. Mr. Wiswall and Mr. Cropley followed them into this wilderness, the latter living among them, and boarding from house to house, having, as Mr. Wiswall says, "for his bed a heap of straw in one corner of the cabins"; and at times lived on potatoes and fish. The children of these new settlers were taught to read and write; and regular public worship was maintained in the settlement. Bibles, tracts, and good books were put into their hands. As it was on this mountain, so it was in the valley. It is true that the church schools and public worship were not convenient for all the early settlers, some of whom were scattered at great distances over a large extent of country, in some cases only two or three families in a place; but the schools and public worship maintained in the Valley and on parts of the North Mountain, together with the visits of Mr. Wiswall to all the families, could not fail to exert a restraining influence on the people.

Deep down in the hearts of most of them was a strong conservatism, holding them fast to the faith of the New England fathers; and a prejudice, although much softened, yet uneradicated, against the Church of England. The appearing of the evangelists evoked the latent and traditional antipathies and preferences of the people.

Here, let this honest missionary of the S. P. G. inform us in respect to the impression made on his mind by the evangelists, called by him "strolling preachers." To contrast

his final convictions with his first impressions let extracts from his reports here be called into service. He says:—

“I am persuaded, that, as the dissenting interest is much less considerable in Wilmot than in any other town in the Province, in a few years, provided care is taken to serve the church regularly after it is built, there will be scarce a dissenter from the established church.”

Referring to the people on Handley Mountain, Mr. Wiswall in after years says:—

“Such is the ingratitude of the people that now they have bettered their circumstances, they reject Mr. Cropley as school-master, though most of the youth are indebted to him for all the learning they have, because he adheres to the rules of the church.”

Again:—“The country swarms with Anabaptist and Methodist preachers, which are much encouraged in my neighborhood by a person whose property, education and rank in the world, one would suppose should have induced him to have exerted his interest in the support of the church by law established.”

This was no doubt, Colonel Samuel Vetch Bayard, who had united with the Methodists and whose grandson, Doctor Bayard, an octogenarian, is still in practice in the city of St. John. The colonel has left to the Dominion a number of worthy descendants. He had been living up to this time a life of noted carelessness. But under the influence of Baptist and Methodist preaching, he was reformed, and for the remainder of his life was an example of devout piety to the people of all classes. In 1829, he visited the New England States. There he came in contact with the Lyman-Beecher temperance movement. On his return he persuaded the Rev. I. E. Bill, then a young Baptist minister at Nictaux, to hold a public temperance meeting. He and Mr. Bill were the only speakers. A society was formed and twelve persons united with it. This was the first temperance society formed in the

Province, except perhaps one formed at Beaver River, Yarmouth County.

In referring to the scattered state of the settlements, Mr. Wiswall further says:—"This is a great advantage to the strolling, fanatical teachers to prejudice the minds of the universally illiterate Anabaptists, if I may call them so, from this solitary dwelling, against the established government. These, chiefly Anabaptist and Methodist preachers, come to us from the American States, and pass a few months with us, seldom more than a year or two, and then return with the cash in their pockets which they extort from their deluded hearers; and a fresh supply arrive from the same quarter. The majority who have taken it into their heads to attend my church this summer, may the next, should the whim take them, crowd to hear a strolling Methodist or Anabaptist in the fields or in a barn. Few are the real churchmen in my parish."

In 1797, Mr. Wiswall reports thus:—"During the summer season I had a pretty numerous congregation; at other times a small one—a small one whenever a Newlight or Methodist preacher made his appearance; of whatever sect he calls himself, he is sure to have a numerous assembly, the people here being fond of new things. I am sorry for it; but must state matters as they are."

He reported at this time that about four-fifths of the people were Baptists and Methodists.

The Rev. Jacob Bailey, at Annapolis, made stronger charges against the evangelists than Mr. Wiswall. He says:—"A succession of itinerant preachers from the States and elsewhere create great confusion among the lower people; and are an unconceivable injury to a new country. They attract multitudes almost any day in the week to hear their desultory and absurd vociferations. . . . Their dependence is in certain violent emotions; and they discourage industry, charity, and every social virtue, affirming that the most abandoned sinners are nearer the Kingdom of Heaven



than people of sober, honest, religious deportment; for such they allege are in danger of depending on their own righteousness."

In enumerating the sects, Mr. Bailey says:—"They are divided into Deists, Socinians, Methodists, Whitefieldites, Lutherans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, Seceders, Congregationalists, Anabaptists, Quakers, and Anythingarians. A number of illiterate drunken teachers are daily following each other in regular succession like waves of the Atlantic, the last of which always eclipses the glory of his predecessors."

Much allowance must be made when reading Mr. Bailey's reports. His humour and light-heartedness carried him beyond accuracy of statement.

Bishop Inglis had serious apprehensions in regard to the work and purpose of the evangelists of that day. He said:—"By a recent illumination the Congregationalists have adopted the Anabaptist scheme, by which their number has been much increased and their zeal inflamed. They have been more particularly troublesome about Granville, Wilmot and Aylesford. Both Methodist and Newlight teachers have in their struggle for independence, excited among the people a furious frenzy. The Methodists, for several weeks before and after Easter, hold services four times a Sunday in Annapolis, and had a lecture every evening, which frequently continued till three o'clock in the morning. During these exercises, ignorant men and women, and even children under twelve years of age, were employed to pray and exhort, calling aloud, 'Lord Jesus, come down and shake these dry bones.' Groanings, screamings, roarings, tumblings, and faintings immediately ensue with a falling down and a rolling upon the floor of both sexes together."

He further states:—"A rage for dipping or total immersion prevails all over the western counties of the Province; and is frequently performed in a very indelicate manner before vast collections of people. Several hundreds have already been baptized. . . . People come together to these meet-

ings from a distance of seventy miles, leaving their families in destitute circumstances, and their plantations exposed to ruin. All order and decorum are despised by them. Fierce dissensions prevail among the most intimate; family government is dissolved; children are neglected and become disobedient. Their political principles are equally dangerous with their religion. It is believed that the conductors of these people are engaged in a general plan of total revolution in religion and civic government, and it is certain fact that, 'The Rights of Man,' 'The Age of Reason,' and 'Volney and the Ruin of Empires,' a false representation of the French revolution, with scandalous invectives against the crowned heads of Europe, against British administration in particular, have been secretly handed about among the professed Newlights."

It is quite true that a few of the Newlight Congregationalists went to great extremes in religious belief and practice. Immorality and scandalous public performances followed. But the number who were deluded in this way was but a small part of the population. Both Methodists and Baptists withstood and denounced the immoral teaching and disgraceful conduct of these people.

It is probable that the Bishop heard of the sayings and doings of the "New Dispensationers," as they were called; and, in his reports inadvertently generalized where his representations should have been confined to a number of people comparatively small.

The above extracts give the people of this day an inside view of the times in which Mr. Wiswall did his work in Cornwallis, Aylesford and Wilmot. It is not necessary to state, that in view of the experiences of Bishop Charles Inglis in the revolutionary struggle, he would have had grave apprehensions that another revolution on a small scale was brewing in Nova Scotia. There were, however, no real grounds for his fears. The account of the public, religious services had naturally been much exaggerated in passing from one to

another. There were, doubtless, many extravagances, but not as great as represented by the missionaries of the S. P. G. and the Bishop.

William Black, Freeborn Garretson and other Methodist ministers; the Chipmans, Hardings, Mannings and Dimocks, and other Baptist ministers referred to, became the fathers of their respective denominations; and now all intelligent citizens are glad to admit that they were largely instrumental in reforming the lives and reducing to religious order the pioneers, especially of the western part of Nova Scotia and of many parts of New Brunswick.

The Baptist and Methodist ministers reported their labors at this time. They supplement and modify those made by the missionaries of the S. P. G.

They reported that a great reformation had taken place among the people in Horton, Cornwallis, Annapolis, Digby and Yarmouth and other western counties. At Horton, the Rev. T. H. Harding baptized more than a hundred converts. The Rev. Edward Manning was in the midst of a reformation in Cornwallis. Rev. T. H. Chipman was engaged in the same work in Aylesford, Wilmot and Annapolis. The Rev. Enoch Towner was baptizing large numbers in Digby; and the Rev. Harris Harding was similarly engaged in Yarmouth. Great revivals and numerous class-meetings were reported by the Methodist preachers.

To gain an unprejudiced opinion, the reports of all should be read and impartially considered. But this much is certain, the country is under a lasting debt of gratitude to such missionaries as the Rev. John Wiswall; and among them all there was not one more industrious and honest than he.

These religious phenomena, in the middle of which Mr. Wiswall found himself, became the occasion of a thorough examination of the principles on which his mission was conducted. He gave the secretary of the S. P. G. the benefit of his judgment in this matter.

He says to the secretary:—"You will pardon me for giving you a few of my private thoughts with reference to the perpetuity of the Church of England in this province, and the embarrassed circumstances of many of the society's missionaries. Churches are built largely of money voted by the legislature; and missionaries are appointed by societies in Great Britain, strangers to the manners, sentiments and peculiarities of the original planters of this province. The people give themselves no concern about the comfortable support of their parish minister, they liberally contribute of their substance to the strollers above mentioned. About the first fifty years of my life I resided in New England. I remember when churches there were very few, and the congregations very thin. But I lived to see churches fast multiplying and Episcopalians rapidly increasing, though opposed by the prevailing religion of the country, and discouraged by the government. Many causes contributed to the spread of Episcopacy in New England. Grammar schools were supported in every township, and the townships were compact; consequently everyone had the opportunity of giving their children a good education, and some in every parish had likewise a college education. All New England people were fond of reading; and the winter evenings of the farmers were chiefly devoted to perusing works of divinity, especially controversial publications. There is but one grammar school in Nova Scotia and that in Halifax; nor is it a free school, consequently the people in this province have no taste for reading of any sort. In New England, candidates for Holy Orders, previous to their embarking for England, read prayers and sermons to some congregation vacant of a minister, and resided for some time among them, that each party might have the opportunity of knowing each other. If his public performances were acceptable to the people they first voted him a salary, and then petitioned the society to appoint him their missionary with a salary; and this petition was backed by a number of the most respectable of the Episcopal clergy, accompanied with a recommendation to the society



and the Bishop of London. On his return from England, they considered him as the minister of their own choice. Harmony prevailed, and it very rarely happened that any cause but death separated an Episcopal minister from the church he was first inducted into. You are very sensible that matters are carried on in quite a different manner here; and let me whisper in your ear that there are artful people among us who possess the minds of the credulous and suspicious, that some secret political ends, unfavorable to their ideas of freedom, are understandingly carried on by those who are in the church interest."

Take what Mr. Wiswall here says about the suspicions of the people in regard to the political ends sought to be accomplished by the missionaries who were appointed by the S. P. G., and what Bishop Inglis says about the political institutions of dissenters, and it would appear that the two parties were mutually apprehensive of sinister designs. But time has proved that there were no good grounds for this mutual distrust. All were seeking the good of the people, and the welfare of the country.

The industry and courage of Mr. Wiswall did not fail him, even in his advanced age. When he was 81 years old he wrote the secretary of the S. P. G. as follows:—"For more than twelve months I have been in a very ill state of health, and it is but a few months since I have recovered from a violent and dangerous fever, which has so shattered my constitution that considering my advanced age, there is little if any probability of recovering my former health. I am for the most part confined to the house, and can venture abroad only on very soft weather. I have been enabled to attend my church, which is six miles from my house, but a few Sundays this season, and now the bad weather approaches (it was October) I expect to be wholly confined, and my small congregation will meet at my house; as it is impossible, considering my infirmities, for me to perform divine services at the church the coming season. . . . I wish I could give as good an account of the prosperity of the church as of the

glebe. But alas, I fear that the interest of Episcopacy has been on the decline for several years; some of the causes I communicated to you in my confidential letter of November 9, 1805."

Mr. Wiswall did not pass to his eternal rest until nine years after he wrote this letter. He was ninety years old when he died.

Young ministers, none of whom had his learning or experience, had come to Aylesford and Wilmot. Revivals were sweeping over the valley and mountains. The Methodists were organizing classes and churches; and the Baptists, according to their peculiar views, were baptizing their converts and forming them into churches; but this veteran missionary whose career had been rough, varied and eventful, in the evening of his life, with his prospects blighted and his hopes disappointed, was obliged to report that his diminished congregation could be accommodated in his dwelling-house, while the dissenting ministers were followed by ever increasing numbers of people. For over thirty years he had given his life to this new country—to Cornwallis, Aylesford and Wilmot. The result, as it appeared to him, was both disappointing and discouraging. But a broader view, which may be hoped was at last taken by the good man, would have assured him that his life work had been largely fruitful. He gave nearly forty years of ministerial work to Nova Scotia. He sowed and others reaped; but the sowers and the reapers ultimately rejoiced together. But his life that was poured in such unstinted measure into this new country, enriched it in many ways. The money given him by the S. P. G. to improve the glebe, was so used as to give the people useful lessons in agriculture. His farming and gardening on his own lands were in advance of the state of farming around him. The keen New Englanders, in working their lands, and in planting and grafting their fruit trees, were not slow to follow his example. The culture and intellectual life of the people were bettered by his presence and teaching. The school masters and catechists, under his supervision, exerted

an influence in stimulating thought, in acquiring knowledge and in teaching the precepts of the gospel which never fails to influence the lives of successive generations of any country. "Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap." The Rev. John Wiswall sowed bountifully of the best seed in his laborious life, and there will be continuous harvesting until earthly sowing and earthly reaping have been completed.

In addition to the good he directly accomplished through his personal influence, he left two sons who were worthy of a father and mother of such moral and religious wealth. Reference has already been made to his son Peleg, who is remembered in Digby County as a lawyer and judge, upright and high-minded. John was for many years a farmer and magistrate in Wilmot. He inherited his father's estate. In 1796 he married Hesdeliah, a daughter of Ebenezer Cutler, of Annapolis. His children were James, Charles, John, Mercy, Miriam, Seraph and Elizabeth.

Elizabeth married the Rev. Edwin Gilpin, father of the Very Reverend Dean Gilpin, D. D.—the Dr. Thomas Arnold of Halifax. Dr. Gilpin is honoured by his ancestors, and is an honor to them. He perpetuates the excellencies of both families.

The earliest recorded date in the Gilpin family history (apart from legends) is in the year (1206) twelve hundred and six, when in the reign of King John, the Baron of Kendal gave the manor of Kentmere to Richard de Gylpyn in 1206. Since that date we have the names of succeeding members of the family in regular order, until the present time, 1903.

The manor of Kentmere was in possession of the family till the tenth generation, when the possessors, loyal to Charles the First, were dispossessed in the time of Cromwell.

Among those born at Kentmere was Bernard Gilpin, well known as the "Apostle of the North." He was born in 1517, the year that Luther nailed his thesis to the door of Wittenburg Palace Church.

His life has been written by the Rev. C. S. Collingwood, and a sketch of the same life by Lightfoot, Lord Bishop of Durham, in his work, "Leaders of the Northern Church."

Bernard Gilpin was at once time rector of Houghton-Le-Spring for twenty-five years, and even to this day there is a special service annually in commemoration of his labours among the "People of the North."

He was wont to say that whatever happened was "all for the best." Queen Mary sent for him to be tried for heresy. On his way his horse fell and broke his rider's leg. The guard asked if that accident were "all for the best," and received for answer, "I am sure that it is." He could not be moved for some time. Meanwhile Queen Mary died and thus the "Apostle of the North" was saved from the probable burning at the stake.

He was not married, and the descent is through his brother.

There have been several migrations of the family to America. The first was with William Penn to Pennsylvania in 1696 or 1698. Their descendants are now to be found in Ontario, Canada, and in Baltimore and in Philadelphia, U. S. A.

There was also a migration of some of the family at an early date to Jamaica, B. W. I., where their descendants are still to be found; also another migration to America during the 19th century. There was also a later migration to America of John Bernard Gilpin, who came to America in 1783. During the revolt he chose to remain a British subject and was appointed agent for prisoners. In 1803 he received the appointment of British Consul for Rhode Island and Connecticut. When the consular office was removed from Newport, R. I., he retired to Annapolis Royal, where he was resident in 1850 in the happy enjoyment of his health and faculties at 96 years of age.

Of his numerous family two sons passed through King's



College, Windsor—Edwin and Alfred. They both entered the ministry in Nova Scotia.

Edwin was rector of Aylesford, succeeding the Rev. John Inglis, afterward Bishop of Nova Scotia, and was thence transferred to Annapolis Royal in 1831, in succession to the Rev. Dr. Milledge. Edwin Gilpin married Elizabeth, daughter of John Wiswall, Esq., October 29th, 1917. This John Wiswall was a son of the Rev. John Wiswall—a loyalist who came from Falmouth (now Portland in the U. S. A.), and was stationed in Cornwallis, N. S., and subsequently at Wilmot, Annapolis County.

The Rev. Edwin Gilpin was ordained priest by Dr. Robert Stanser, sometime Bishop of Nova Scotia. During his incumbency of Aylesford he had for a while Wilmot also under his care. Of that care he was relieved by the appointment of his brother Alfred, who had been ordained in Quebec, and who, after serving in several parishes, died in Southsea, England.

Edwin Gilpin served in Annapolis for 28 years—much respected and beloved by all who came within his influence. Among his brethren in the church he was often spoken of as the “Christian philosopher.” He died in 1860, and was buried in the Gilpin plot of ground at the head of the trench, forming the last approach of General Nicholson, October 1710, to the French fort at Port Royal, which then surrendered and has since been a British possession. The Rev. Edwin Gilpin had two sons. One died in early youth. The other is now Dean of Nova Scotia.

In the “Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography,” there is a brief sketch of the Very Reverend Dean Gilpin, from which I extract the following:—

Born, June 10th, 1821. King’s College, Windsor, B. A., 1847; King’s College, Windsor, M. A., 1850; King’s College, Windsor, B. D., 1853; King’s College, Windsor, D. D., 1863; Master of Halifax Grammar School, 1848; Master of Halifax High School, 1877; Principal Halifax Academy; Canon of St. Luke’s, 1864; Archdeacon of Nova Scotia, 1874; Dean of Nova Scotia, 1889; resigned Halifax Academy, 1889.

James Wiswall was born in 1807, and died in 1878. He married Minetta Wheelock, daughter of Abel Wheelock, of a pre-loyalist family. Seraph married Benjamin Smith of St. John, N. B., a wealthy banker and broker. She had three children—Dr. Peleg W. Smith, Sheriff of Digby; Benjamin Smith, barrister, of Kentville, and Eliza, who married Alexander McNab.

James had a number of children, four names of whom appear on the voters' list of 1896—Charles J., Abel M., Edwin G., and John. They are still on the old homestead.

Mercy, Miriam, Charles and John did not marry. They lived on the homestead and were industrious and highly respected. John and Charles managed the farm, and their two sisters, Mercy and Miriam, conducted a boarding school for young ladies—the first one taught in the county.

In due time, through their example, other schools were started. The first one was superintended by Miss Mary Ann Bill, daughter of the Rev. I. E. Bill. This one began in 1845 and was located at Nictaux. It continued until 1851. Others in time followed—one at Middleton, established by Mr. Charles Chesley. His principal was Miss Susan Hopkins, a graduate of Mount Holyoke. Mr. Fitch perpetuated the Annapolis County boarding schools by establishing one at Clarence, which, like the others, proved very useful. The higher culture and education among the women of Annapolis County can be traced, in a large measure, to the schools taught by the Misses Wiswall on the old homestead, founded by their grandfather when in a wilderness state, but left to them by him a home of beauty on the banks of the Annapolis River.

The memory of the Rev. John Wiswall, missionary of the S. P. G., is fragrant and honoured. He and his descendants have done much in moulding that part of Annapolis County where their lives thus far have been spent.