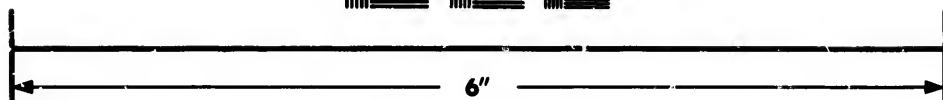
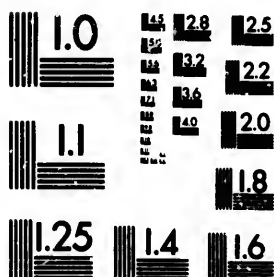


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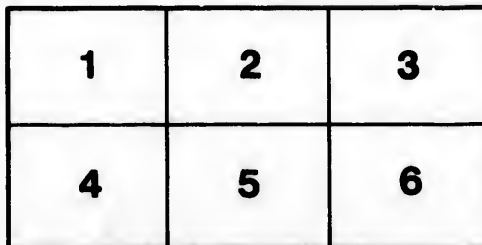
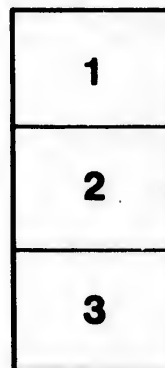
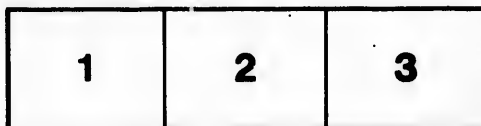
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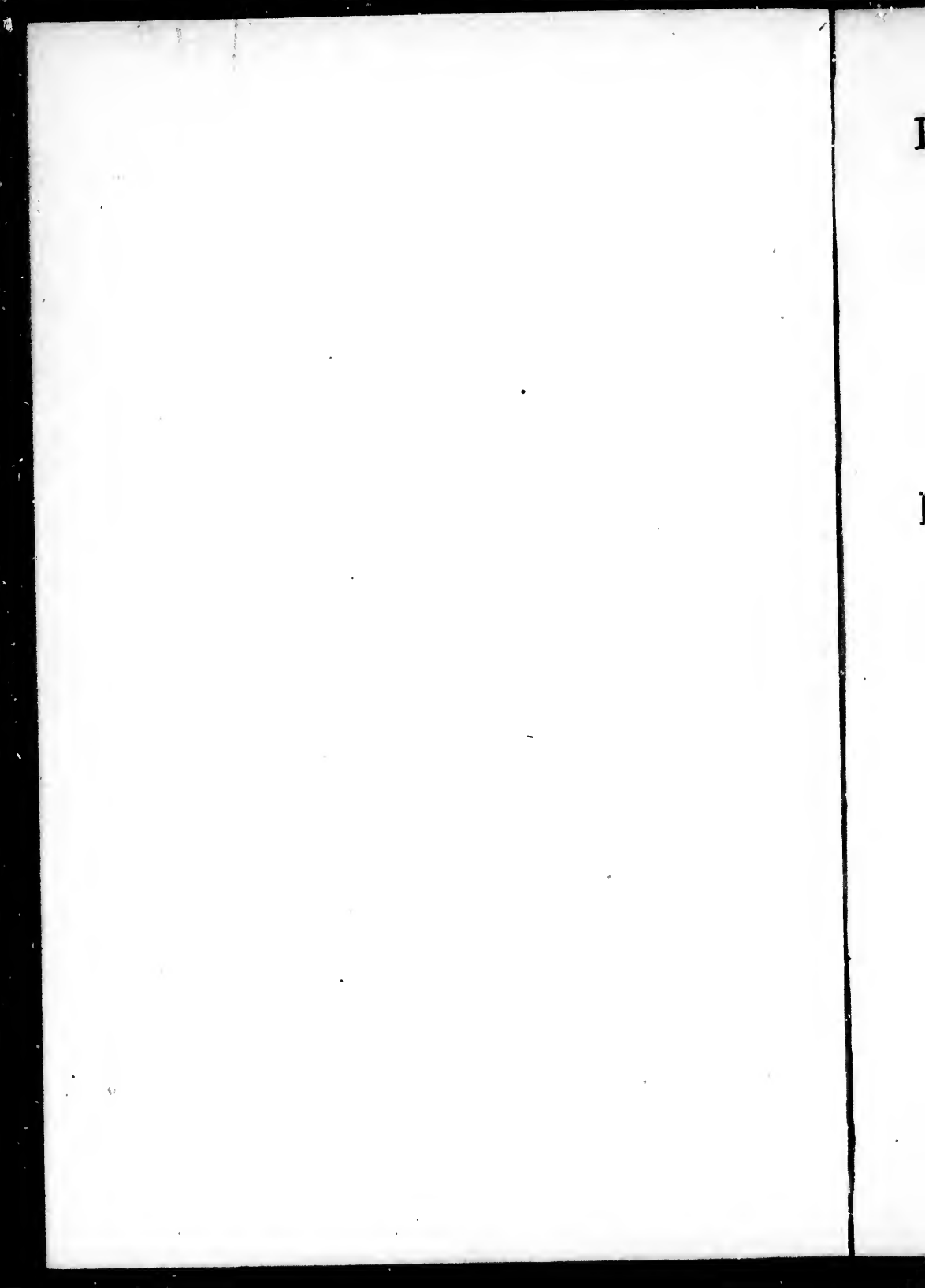
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THE
BAPTISTS OF SAINT JOHN, N. B.

TWO SERMONS

ON THE

RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH

IN

SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK.

PREACHED IN GERMAIN AND BRUSSELS STREET CHURCHES,

BY REV. I. E. BILL,

AND PUBLISHED AT THE SPECIAL REQUEST OF THESE TWO CHURCHES.

SAINT JOHN, N. B.

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SERMON I.

"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."—Ps. cxxvi. 8.

The seventy years' captivity of God's ancient people was a sad commentary on their backslidings of heart and life, and of the fearful guilt which they contracted by such a course of sin and shame. They sinned against light and goodness, and Jehovah gave them into the hands of their enemies to eat the fruit of their doings, until they should repent and turn once more to Himself. But the emancipation of these people from Babylonish captivity, and their restoration to their former privileges, exhibited most clearly the gracious forbearance and unchanging love of their covenant God and Father. They cried to him in their distress, and he stretched forth his arm mighty to save. In full view of this wondrous deliverance, this beautifully touching Psalm was composed: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream." It seemed too good to be true. "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them." God had accomplished this gracious deliverance for his chosen, and He must have the glory. "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." How appropriate the language of our text to the occasion which called it forth; and my brethren, it is no less appropriate for us to employ, as a theme of remark, when called upon to consider the dealings of God with his chosen ones in this City.

On the present occasion I propose to give you a brief sketch of the rise and progress of the Baptist Church of Saint John; and in so doing, I hope to be able to show that the words of my text are emphatically applicable to us, and that, as Baptist christians, we may truthfully say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

The original inhabitants of Saint John belonged mostly to the Episcopal National Church. Dissent was scarcely known; and when it first made its appearance, it was frowned upon by ministers and people as a heresy of the most dangerous character. Episcopacy was the dominant faith, and it laboured hard in the early settlement of this country so to engraft itself upon all the departments of social and civil society as to give it a sort of national pre-eminence—to make it in fact the religion as by law established. No persons were considered eligible to offices of *military, legal, political, educational, or religious distinction*, unless members of the dominant church. All marriages and funeral rites must be administered by clergymen of the *true Apostolic succession*. So far did this idea prevail that a godly Baptist minister, by the name of Innis, was incarcerated in prison for some twelve months

or more, for yielding to the earnest solicitations of a loving young couple, who had been converted to God through his ministry, to make them one in holy wedlock.

All offices of trust, of every sort, from the Chief Justice upon the bench, down to the most insignificant one in a country village, must be filled by those who recognized and abetted this Episcopal supremacy. As far down as the founding of King's College, Fredericton, in 1829, it was deemed necessary to apply such tests as should thoroughly protect it from the poisonous influence of dissent, and secure its educational immunities for all time to come, in *fee simple* to the Episcopal church. We refer to this state of things, not for the purpose of calling up any unpleasant feelings, but simply as matters of history, to show the obstacles which our fathers had to surmount in proclaiming and extending what they conceived to be the gospel of the blessed Lord Jesus.

When Edward Manning first visited New Brunswick, in the early part of the present century, he was called before a magistrate to give an account of himself for daring to preach Jesus and the resurrection. No man at that time was allowed to assume the office of a religious teacher, or to perform any of the functions of ministerial life, unless regularly licensed by the Lieutenant Governor of the Province to do so. But Edward Manning had his credentials from above—he was licensed by the court of heaven; and invested with such high authority, he was not disposed to attach any special importance to the opinions or decrees of men. Like his brethren of the Apostolic age, he preferred to "obey God rather than man." With a heart yearning for the souls of men, he crossed over from Nova Scotia and went up the River St. John, proclaiming, as with a trumpet's blast, repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He was in the prime and vigor of his manhood, and filled with the treasures of the Spirit's power, wherever he opened his lips to declare the gospel message, souls were aroused from the slumber of sin to call upon God for mercy. The result was an extensive revival of religion up and down the St. John River, and its tributaries. On one occasion, above Fredericton, where many were awakened to a sense of their sin and danger, and where others were fired with the spirit of persecution, the judge of the place was called upon to issue a warrant, and take this dangerous preacher in charge: but he replied, I would like to hear the man for myself. Accordingly he came to a meeting, and remained outside by the door; Mr. Manning was not aware of his presence, but it so happened that he took for his text, "Behold the Judge standeth at the door." The Judge was deeply impressed with the sermon, and retired saying, "None shall lay violent hands upon the young man," and expressed the wish that there were many more such preachers in the land.

It was after one of these evangelistic excursions up the river, that Mr. Manning came to St. John. From the best information at our command, we are led to conclude that his first visit to the city must have been as early as 1805—the very year I was born. There was no Baptist place of worship or Baptist family in the

city at that time. But Mr. Manning had been directed by some friend in the country to call upon Mr. George Harding, son of Capt. William Harding. The youthful minister did so, and was most kindly received. Mr. Harding lived at the lower end of Germain Street. He kindly invited Mr. Manning to preach in his house. His father, Captain Harding, who lived in Dock Street at the time, told him his house was at his service. Captain Lovett, a Mrs. Harper, Mr. A. Magee, and a coloured sister by the name of Amy Nickson, all opened their houses for the preaching of God's word by the stranger. The work of revival immediately commenced. Many began to enquire what they should do to be saved? Mr. Manning pointed them to the Lamb of God as the only remedy. Several professed conversion; two of Capt. William Harding's daughters and his son, Geo. Harding, were amongst the number. The latter was the first person baptized or *immersed* in the city of St. John.

After Mr. Manning, came Joseph Crandal, in the power and spirit of the gospel. His ministry was instrumental in accomplishing much good. Captain William Harding, his wife, two daughters, Mr. Stenning and others, were baptized by him. These early baptisms occasioned much excitement among the people. They flocked in large numbers to witness them; some went to pray and others to mock and blaspheme; but they led to prayerful examination of the word of God, and where this was the case, the result generally was a conversion to Baptist sentiments.

In the absence of a stated ministry, the young converts met in each other's houses for mutual exhortation and prayer. These meetings were attended with a rich blessing; "They were of one heart and of one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel;" and as a legitimate result, the word of God grew and multiplied greatly in the city.

In 1808 the small band of believers were greatly strengthened by the removal from Kingston to St. John of Mr. Thomas Pettingill, who had been converted ~~by~~ the labors of Elder Innis, a pious and devoted Baptist minister, to whom reference has already been made in this discourse. Mr. Pettingill was filled with religious fervor, and with an earnest desire to bring sinners to Christ. His house was at once consecrated to the worship and service of God, and his heart and his purse open to support the infant cause. When Baptist ministers came to the city they were gladly received as the servants of the Most High, and all possible efforts were made to make their visits pleasant and profitable; but in the absence of ministers, they did not fail to maintain regularly on the Lord's day, and on week evenings, the worship of Almighty God.

In addition to the visits of the ministerial pioneers from Nova Scotia, ministers were sent to New Brunswick under the auspices of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society. Elders Isaac Case, Hale, and Daniel Merrill, all in turn, spent considerable time in Nova Scotia, and in New Brunswick, as Missionaries from the Massachusetts Society. They were eminently useful in preaching the gospel, administering its ordinances, and in confirming the in-

fant churches in the doctrines and practice of New Testament christianity. They each in turn visited this city, and rendered valuable service to the cause of the Master.

In 1810, seven brethren and five sisters, twelve in all, were, by their own request, organized (if I am correctly informed) by Elder Merrill, as the First Baptist Church of St. John. Mr. Pettingill being highly esteemed for his deep-toned piety and sincere devotion to the cause of God, was chosen Deacon, and N. Garrison, (father of our worthy Deacon Geo. A. Garrison), was chosen Clerk of the infant church.

This Mr. Merrill, of whom we speak, has an interesting history. Before he became a Baptist, he was the esteemed pastor of a large Congregational Church in Sedgwick, Maine. He became troubled in his conscience on the subject of *believers' baptism*. He examined the Scriptures, read Pedo-Baptist books, and adopted various methods to banish his doubts regarding the validity of Infant Baptism; but all this was unavailing. His perplexities increased, but he could not endure the thought of renouncing the faith of his fathers, and of becoming a *despised Baptist*. In his trouble he prayed earnestly "Lord make me anything but a Baptist," but the truth pressed his conscience until he cried in deep anguish of spirit before the mercy seat, "Lord make me anything thou wouldest have me to be, even if it be a Baptist!" As might be expected, soon he felt constrained by God's word to embrace with his whole heart the doctrine of believers' baptism, as maintained by us. He accordingly preached seven sermons to his church, giving his reasons for this change in his religious opinions, and putting forth such a chain of Scriptural argument as produced a powerful impression upon his people. The result was that Mr. Merrill, his wife, and other members of his church, numbering in all sixty-six, were buried in baptism, May 13th, 1805, by Dr. Baldwin, of Boston; nineteen more were baptized the day following, and the whole were formed into a Baptist church, and Mr. Merrill was ordained their pastor. The members of this Congregational church continued to repair to the water until about one hundred and twenty of them were baptized. The sermons preached by Merrill, on the subject of baptism, passed through several editions, and were extensively useful. It seemed a fortunate circumstance that one so eminently qualified to instruct, should, in the providence of God, be chosen to counsel the young converts of Saint John, and to form them into a christian church after the model furnished by the New Testament.

The members of this new organization had to endure all sorts of reproach and persecution. They were called, in derision, *fanatics*, *newlights*, *dippers*, *enthusiasts*, &c., but they endured all patiently for the truth's sake, and rendered blessing for cursing, and good for evil. These persecutions tended to bind them together with increasing affection, and to excite within them a spirit of constant watchfulness and unceasing prayer. Edward and James Manning, Joseph Crandal, Joseph Dimock, Theodore Harding, and others, continued to make occasional visits to the city. Their ministerial

labors were highly encouraging, and were greatly blessed in the edification of the youthful church and in the conversion of sinners to God. But the church remained without a stated pastor until 1813 or 1814, at which time a converted Frenchman, by the name of Reice, came to the city. He preached the gospel with unusual power, and was chosen by the church to become its pastor. He accepted the office, and engaged in the work committed to his care with commendable zeal and energy. Sinners were converted, and the church edified and enlarged.

The conversion of Mr. Reice to the faith of the New Testament is worthy of special note. He was a Frenchman by birth, and during the war between England and France, he was a midshipman in the French service. His ship was taken by the English, and sent as a prize to Halifax, N. S. Here the young midshipman was especially noticed by the Duke of Kent, who was residing at Halifax at that time. At the close of the war, Mr. Reice took a tour through the country as far west as Yarmouth. A great revival was in progress in that town, and meetings were being held day and night. All this was exceedingly strange to the Frenchman. He had been educated in the Roman Catholic faith, in his own country, but had never seen or read the Bible. He regarded what was going on in Yarmouth as mere religious frenzy, and for the purpose of deriding these religious meetings he resolved to have a ball in a house just opposite to the place where they were held. He had attended some of the revival meetings, and had become disturbed in conscience, but he thought by rushing into the excitement of worldly amusement to stifle his convictions, and to relieve his mind of all gloomy apprehensions. The night of the ball came, and Reice opened the festivities in person; but in the midst of this scene of mirth, his convictions returned with redoubled force, and he fell prostrate upon the floor. It was a moment of intense soul agony, and he cried aloud for mercy. The house of dancing, to the amazement and consternation of all present, suddenly became the house of prayer. The result was the conversion of his soul to Christ, his subsequent baptism and connection with the Baptist church. He very soon went forth preaching the faith that he once sought to destroy. He visited different places in Nova Scotia, and was universally received by the Christians of the day as a messenger sent from God. He was bold, earnest and faithful, and always ready to defend what he conceived to be the truth, no matter who opposed. His willingness and ability to defend his sentiments were frequently put to the test during his residence in St. John. One occasion is worthy of special remark. He was challenged to meet a Methodist minister, by the name of Knowlan, in public debate, on the subject of baptism. He accepted the challenge. The controversy took place in what was then known as the Coffee House, at the corner of Prince Wm. and King Streets. The Mayor of the city was called to the chair. His antagonist appeared with a large pile of books to aid him;—the little Frenchman came to the contest with the Bible alone in his hand. On seeing the number of books brought to confute

him, Mr. Reice remarked to his opponent, "You, sir, have come with your coat of mail, Goliah like, to defy the armies of the living God; I have come, like David, with the sling and the stone only, and with these I promise, in the name of the Lord, to slay you before I leave." Mr. Reice claimed that the New Testament alone was to be the standard in this discussion; his opponent objected, but the chairman decided that the contest ought to proceed upon this principle. This being conceded, Mr. Reice found no difficulty in conducting his argument to a triumphant issue. "The people were astonished at his doctrine, for his word was with power." After a long discussion in the presence of the assembled crowd, the chairman decided that Mr. Reice had the best of the argument, and his antagonist retired in confusion. This controversy led to inquiry, and to the furtherance of Baptist sentiments.

During the pastorate of Mr. Reice, a place of worship which had been first occupied by the Episcopal church, and afterwards by the Methodists, was procured by the Baptists. He continued to preach the Gospel in this house some two years. Many professed conversion, and the church was so much enlarged that it was deemed advisable to erect a new house for the better accommodation of the increasing congregation.

In the prosecution of this purpose a subscription was opened, bearing date October the 14th, 1815. Four persons contributed £50 each, viz., Thomas Pettingill, John M. Wilmot, Thomas Harding and William Stenning. Nathan Garrison gave £25—Jonah Dyer, £20; Benjamin Gale, £15; Andrew S. Green, £10; Joshua Lane, £10; Jeremiah Drake, £10; Henry Blakslee, £15; Samuel Chadburn, £10; William Harding, £20; Henry Holmes, £10. Others gave from five pounds down to one, according to their circumstances. On the strength of this subscription the site was purchased and preparation made for building. The work proceeded, but the house was not completed and opened for public worship until 1819. Mr. Stenning, aided by his brother-in-law, Mr. Thomas Harding, ~~supervised~~ ^{superintended} the erection of the house, and strange to say, ~~his funeral sermon~~ ^{was the first sermon} preached in it. When he came to this country from England, he was a member of the Episcopal church, but here he experienced a change of heart and became a Baptist. His death was a serious loss to the little church, but for him it was a glorious triumph. On the morning of the day before his death he rose from his bed, went to the door, and looked round upon his possessions as if to say *farewell*. He returned to his bed, closed his eyes, and appeared to be struggling with death. He seemed perfectly insensible to everything in the world for several hours, when suddenly he arose as if in perfect health, and praised his Redeemer in strains of unutterable joy. He told them to send for his father's family, "for this night," said he, "I shall see my Saviour as he is in heaven, and join the holy apostles in praising him, who hath given me the victory." All present were deeply affected. His physician said he never witnessed the like before. These rapturous and triumphant joys continued for some eight or ten hours, when he quietly

laid down upon his bed, closed his eyes, and peacefully resigned his soul to God who gave it. His was a glorious victory over the king of terrors. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

As we have said, the new house was not opened for public service until 1818. About this time Rev. Thomas Griffen, and Mr. D. Nutter, and S. Lockey arrived, from England. Mr. Griffen was encouraged to come by Mr. Stenning. He was chosen by the church to the pastorate; but after laboring acceptably and usefully for two years, he was commissioned by the church to visit the United States, for the purpose of raising money to liquidate a troublesome debt upon the chapel, and while absent he felt it to be his duty to embrace an opening which offered in Philadelphia. The church here gave him up reluctantly, but he felt that the claims of a rising family called him to a more remunerative field.

On the retirement of Mr. Griffen, Deacons Pettingill and Drake, with the assistance of other brethren, maintained regularly the religious services of the house of God, and took care that the order and discipline of the church were not wholly neglected. Edward and James Manning, Theodore Harding, Thomas Ansley, Joseph Dimock, Joseph Crandal and others made occasional visits to the city, and were exceedingly useful in promoting the good cause; but the church remained without a stated pastor until 1821, when Elder Richard Scott arrived from England. Soon after his arrival he was chosen pastor. The church numbered at that time 65 members. After labouring for some time without any signal success, he went on a collecting tour to the United States to raise money to liquidate the chapel debt. His success in this connection was such as to partially relieve the church from financial embarrassment. His collections amounted to \$1061.

On Elder Scott's retirement, a young man by the name of Densmore, who had just been converted in a lumber camp up the river St. John, came to the city filled with the spirit of the Gospel. He was on his way to his home in the States, intending to devote his future life to the sacred ministry. By the request of the church he remained for some time preaching the Gospel publicly, and from house to house, with earnestness and power. The church was greatly revived and edified.

For some time the church was left without a stated ministry, but received visits from Elders J. Crandal, R. Davis, C. M. James, (recently from Wales), D. Harris, D. Dunbar and T. Ansley. The ministrations of these brethren greatly comforted and confirmed the church, and added a few to its numbers.

In July 1st the Baptist Association was held in the city. It was a season of deep religious interest. After this associational gathering, Elders D. Harris and Miller protracted their visit, and were made the means of a gracious revival, and converts pressed into the kingdom of God. Some who had been expelled were led to the foot of the cross for pardon, and were restored to the fellowship of the church. Elder Miller was subsequently chosen pastor, and continued in this connection for about two years. During his pastorate some eighty persons, by baptism and letter,

were added to the church. He was highly esteemed in love for his works sake, and much good was done.

In 1826, Elder Miller was induced to accept a call to a Baptist church in Maine, and he was succeeded in the pastorate of Germain Street, by Elder Charles Tupper, then of Amherst, N. S. His ministry was highly acceptable, but city life not agreeing with the health of either himself or Mrs. Tupper, and from other considerations, he resigned his position, and returned to Amherst.

On his retirement a young man by the name of Enoch Freeman, a student of Waterville College, visited the church, and preached to general acceptance. By the urgent request of the church he renewed his visit during his vacation in Waterville, June 1827.

Mr. Freeman's leave of absence from College having expired, he returned, and Elder Joseph Crandal in the following March became the pastor *pro tem* for one year. God blessed his ministry.

In 1828, the Association again held its anniversary with the Germain street church. The late Frederick Miles was present, related his Christian experience, was accepted and baptized by Rev. Charles Tupper. Mr. Miles was educated in King's College, Windsor, Nova Scotia, for the ministry of the Episcopal church, but while pursuing his studies a revival of religion took place in the College. E. A. Crawley and John Pryor were his fellow students; they experienced religion, and through the counsels and prayers of Mr. Crawley, young Miles was brought to the knowledge of the truth. Having felt that his sins were pardoned, his enquiry was, "Lord what wouldst thou have me to do?" He was led to a prayerful examination of the word of God, and the result was a conscientious adoption of Baptist sentiments. It is a singular fact that a large proportion of those who were converted at that time in King's College subsequently became Baptists, and several of them Baptist ministers. In addition to Mr. Miles we have Mr. Pryor, who was also designed for a preacher in the Episcopal church, and Mr. Crawley, who was designed for the law, and for a time gave himself to its duties, but was ultimately constrained by love to his Redeemer to devote himself to the work of the ministry. These esteemed brethren having given themselves to the cause of God in connection with the Baptist denomination of these Provinces, took a prominent part in founding and sustaining our Institutions of learning at Wolfville and Fredericton, which have rendered such important service to our ministers and churches, and to the country at large.

This fact seems all the more remarkable when we remember that King's College, Windsor, like King's College, Fredericton, was so guarded by Episcopal tests in its original constitution as to debar Baptists from enjoying its advantages. How impressive the fact, therefore, that within the very walls of the College, whose doors were thus barred and bolted against dissenters, so called, the students should be converted not only to the Saviour, but to these very principles of Gospel truth which the founders of the Institution were so anxious to crush and destroy. How truthful the language of God by the prophet Isaiah. "For my thoughts are

not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah lv. 8-9.

After the baptism of Mr. Miles, the church proved his ministerial gifts and qualifications, and being satisfied, called him to the pastorate. He was ordained Sept. 1828, by Elders Joseph Crandal, William Elder, and Gilbert Spurr. He immediately entered upon the responsible duties of his office, a revival of religion followed, and numbers were added to the church under his instrumentality. The first believer baptized by Elder Miles was our highly esteemed brother Robert Sears, who has been so useful in diffusing religious knowledge through the world. In 1829, Elder Miles had leave of absence for a time to make a visit to the States. During his absence, the ministry of Elders Joseph Crandal and Robert Davis was very useful to the church. A number were baptized, and a season of refreshing was enjoyed.

In the autumn of 1830, Bro. Miles resigned his pastorate, for the purpose of completing a course of Theological study in the Institution at Newton, Mass. On his leaving, Elder Samuel Bancroft was called to supply the pulpit, which he did, for some time, with much acceptance. Several converts were added during his short pastorate.

In September, 1831, Rev. J. G. Naylor, of England, visited the city on his way to the United States. In the absence of a pastor, he was invited to occupy the pulpit. Being a man of more than ordinary talent, his preaching was highly approved, and he was soon called to the pastorate. This offer he declined, but agreed to remain for a few months. During his stay in the city, Rev. Mr. Burns, then minister of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, of this city, published an elaborate work against the Baptists, and in defence of Infant Baptism. To this work Mr. Naylor replied, in a pamphlet, which was written with considerable ability, and which he published to the world. Both writers evinced more intellectual cleverness than religious power, and we are not aware that any special advantage resulted from the contest. The church was not harmonious in retaining his services, and he left for the United States.

After Mr. Naylor's retirement, Rev. Thomas Curtis, also from England, visited the city. He was a man of great intellectual power, and his sermons were exceedingly rich in evangelical truth. He was a profound student of the Bible, and had distinguished himself by his Biblical attainments in his own country. By a large number of the church his ministrations were highly appreciated, but a dissatisfaction arose in the minds of others, and he left for the United States. In 1845, we formed his acquaintance in Charleston, South Carolina, where he was pastor of a Baptist Church, and where he was highly esteemed as a gentleman of high mental attainments and consistent religious character.

The church again being left without a pastor, instructed their Clerk, Mr. James Holman, who was going to England on business,

to apply to Rev. Mr. Lester, an eminent Baptist minister of Liverpool, for advice in regard to the choice of a suitable young man as their future minister. He responded to the wishes of the church, and selected our lamented Brother J. D. Casewell. Mr. Casewell was induced to accept the proposition, and before leaving, was ordained by Mr. Lester. He arrived in St. John, June 1835. His credentials and ministerial qualifications were all highly satisfactory to the church, and he was inducted forthwith into the pastoral office. Many rejoiced and thanked God that he had heard their prayers, and sent them a pastor after His own heart. His eminent pulpit talents, combined with a kind and generous heart, gave great promise of future success. He continued for between two and three years, and some success attended his arduous labors, but difficulties arose in the church of a most perplexing character; his health gave way, and in October, 1837, he left for his native land.

Such, in brief, are some of the most important incidents associated with the rise and progress of Baptist sentiments in this city. Can we fail to recognize the hand that has guided and sustained us as a people thus far? Surely with grateful hearts should we make the language of the text our own, and exclaim, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." And let all the people say AMEN.

SERMON II.

"The hand of the Lord hath wrought this."—Job xii. 9.

In tracing the progress of Zion in any of her sections or combinations, it is well for us to acknowledge her entire dependence upon Divine agency. If rightly instructed, we shall be prepared at every stage of christian advancement to say, in the language of holy David, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and Thy truth's sake." "Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." "Paul plants, Apollos waters, God giveth the increase." In no one district of the great spiritual domain has this primary truth been more distinctly unfolded than in the rise and progress of the Baptist cause in this city. When we contemplate how ministers have been raised up for this field, the success which has attended their labors, and the various modes by which the work of grace has gone forward, we have to confess, "The hand of the Lord hath wrought this."

In my former discourse, you will remember that I brought the history of the Baptist Church in Saint John down to the time when Mr. Casewell first returned to England in 1836. After his return, Elder Samuel Bancroft was again invited to the pastorate of the Germain Street church for a time, and was affectionately esteemed for his sterling piety and sincere devotion to the cause of the Redeemer.

In 1838, Rev. Samuel Robinson, then pastor of the St. George Baptist Church, commenced his ministerial visits to St. John. Some eight years before this Mr. Robinson, by a very marked providence, had become connected with the New Brunswick Baptists. He was born in the North of Ireland, and was educated in the doctrines of the Presbyterian faith. He experienced religion in early life, and when quite a youth, commenced preaching in his own country as a Presbyterian. He emigrated first to the United States, and after a time came to this Province, settled in the County of Charlotte, and engaged in preaching the gospel to the people of that place. In the year 1830, Elder Thomas Ansley visited that district, found out Mr. Robinson, and was instrumental in directing him to an investigation of believers' baptism, as taught in the New Testament. This examination resulted in impressing his mind with the idea, that there is no valid authority in the Scriptures for infant baptism, and that christian baptism is *immersion* in the name of the sacred Trinity, upon a profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

Mr. Ansley's visit to St. George took place under peculiarly impressive circumstances. He was then pastor of the Baptist church at Bridgetown, N. S. In the early part of his ministry he had visited Charlotte County, and had been instrumental in producing a very powerful revival of religion. Long years had passed, and a great declension in spiritual things pervaded the place; but there were a few who cherished a pleasing remembrance of this revival visit of Mr. Ansley, and who were anxious to hear his voice once more proclaiming the word and testimony of Jesus Christ. Accordingly they wrote him a letter of invitation to make them a visit. The good man received it as a message sent from God. His wife was very unwilling that he should go: but the more he prayed for divine direction, the deeper the impression that he had work to do in the County of Charlotte. Full of this idea, he came over and lifted up his voice, trumpet-toned, and a widespread religious inquiry immediately followed.

The man of God felt that he had a special message to Mr. Robinson. He accordingly sought him out and deli-

vered it. The saintly appearance of the Evangelist, the solemnity of his address, and the fervency of his prayers, made a deep impression upon the mind of his young Presbyterian brother. By the suggestion of a friend, it was arranged for Mr. Ansley to preach in the neighborhood. Mr. Robinson attended, and as the service proceeded, the preaching, so simple, so unctious, inspired the latter with strange and powerful emotions. He had never heard the like before; he felt his heart drawn towards the venerable preacher with a strong religious affection, and ere he was aware, the mantle of the old Elijah had fallen upon the young Elisha. Still he had no idea of becoming a Baptist. Mr. Ansley took leave of him and his family, not expecting to see them again, and had proceeded many miles on his journey homeward, when he felt himself arrested by the Spirit of God, and constrained to return and deliver a solemn charge to Mr. Robinson regarding his future course. As soon as he entered his house he told him that his God had sent him back to tell him that he was to embrace Baptist sentiments, and take charge of that vast district of country as a Baptist preacher, and that when he had examined thoroughly the word of God on the subject, and had made up his mind, to send for him and he would come over and baptize him. Having delivered his message, he again took his leave and left for home. All this appeared strange to Mr. Robinson, but it took such hold of his conscience that he was led prayerfully to examine the New Testament as he had never done before, in reference to his duty regarding this matter; and the result you all know. He sought in vain to find a plea for infant sprinkling in the inspired directory, and was constrained, contrary to all his previous training and present wishes, to confess that the study of the New Testament had made him a Baptist. In due time he wrote for Mr. Ansley to come over and baptize him. The old servant of God received the letter with a joyful heart, and hastened to fulfil his promise. When he arrived at St. George, Mr. Robinson, not quite willing to meet the reproach to which his change of sentiments and his public baptism would expose him, was half inclined to receive the ordinance in a retired place; but to this suggestion the apostolic Ansley would not listen for a moment. The more public the more favorable to instruct the people. To him scoffs, reproaches, and persecutions were of small moment. His motto was, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ." Accordingly the baptism of the Presbyterian preacher, converted to the Baptist faith, was appointed to take place at St. David's, a most central position.

The baptismal day arrived, and crowds flocked from all sections of the country, and the venerable administrator came to the discharge of his duty invested with the majesty of the Spirit's power. He was in the reformation tide, and his words went home to the hearts of the people with irresistible impressiveness. The administrator, the candidate, saints, sinners, friends, foes, all, all felt "Surely God is in this place."

It was during these evangelistic excursions through the County of Charlotte that Mr. Ansley sought out our esteemed Bro. A. D. Thomson, and placed his stamp upon him as a minister of the Lord Jesus. The youthful Thomson felt that it was the call of God to his soul, and he, too, must hasten with the gospel message, and proclaim it to a lost world.

Having accomplished this great work, Mr. Ansley's course on earth was done. He took ill, and was at once impressed with the idea that the time of his departure was at hand. He was far away from the wife of his youth, from his sons and his daughters, and from his church that dearly loved him, and that he loved in return with all the strength of ministerial affection; but, his God was with him. It was an awfully solemn moment. Those who looked to him as their spiritual father, Messrs. Robinson, Thomson, and many others, gathered about him, and from that chamber of death the man of God, feeling that he was upon the threshold of eternity, addressed to them words of warning, and messages of love and grace, which made impressions as enduring as the attributes of heaven or the anthems of the redeemed.

It was through such a process as this that our brethren Robinson and Thomson were prepared for the great work assigned to them in the County of Charlotte, and that the former was ultimately qualified to engage heart and soul in building up the Baptist cause in the City of St. John. Intellectual culture is a most valuable handmaid to the workings of the Spirit in the soul of man, but we have to confess that no amount of secular education could possibly have supplied the place of this emphatically religious and ministerial training acquired, under the unctious administrations of the now glorified Ansley.

After the death of this revered Father, Mr. Robinson continued his labors as a Baptist minister in the County of Charlotte with distinguished success for some seven or eight years. The seed sown sprang up in all directions, and an abundant harvest was gathered in. As before remarked, in 1838 he commenced his visits to the City of Saint John, and he came in the "fulness of the blessing of the gospel

of Christ." The church in Germain Street had for some time been in a cold, divided and scattered state; but a change for the better was soon apparent, and the ministry of our brother was so acceptable, that in a short time it was found necessary to enlarge the accommodations by an addition of fifteen feet to the Chapel. This met the demand for sittings, and gave an opportunity to provide a Baptistery.

Soon after Mr. Robinson came, the restoration of several members who had been separated from the church by reason of differences which had arisen, took place, with the distinct understanding that a second church should be formed. These brethren, therefore, who had been thus restored, received their dismissal, and by the advice of an ecclesiastical council, duly summoned, were formed into what was called the 2nd Baptist Church of Saint John. They proceeded and built a chapel, called different pastors, and for a time enjoyed prosperity, but owing to a combination of adverse causes the movement did not permanently succeed.

September, 1838, the Germain Street church opened a correspondence with Elder Robinson and his church at St. George, on the subject of his permanent removal to Saint John. As might be expected, his people were unwilling to part with their pastor, but he accepted the call provisionally, and spent a large portion of 1838 and 1839 in the City, laboring with untiring energy and enlarged success. This he continued to do until, by the earnest solicitations of the people, combined with the blessing of God upon his ministry, he was convinced that it was his duty to accept the permanent pastorate of the church.

In January, 1840, a series of religious services were commenced by brethren C. Tupper and Robinson, which were attended with a signal blessing. Elder Tupper continued to labor in conjunction with Elder Robinson during the winter, and on April 19th, 1840, baptized, with others, Abraham Hunt, now, and for many years past, the esteemed and successful pastor of the 1st Baptist church, Cornwallis.

When Mr. Robinson decided to remove his family to the city, it became necessary to provide a residence for him. Accordingly, the church resolved to convert the small room on Germain Street, then used as a vestry, into a parsonage, and a committee was appointed to carry the plan into effect. Bro. S. Hersey took the principal charge of this arrangement, advanced the necessary means, had the building completed at the time appointed, and ready for the reception of the pastor, for which he received the cordial thanks of the church.

On the 9th of July, 1840, the house built by the 2nd Church was dedicated to the worship of God, and Elder David Harris was elected their pastor.

In 1841, a revival commenced in the Sabbath School of the Germain Street Church. A number of the school professed conversion and were baptized. The good work extended to the congregation, and several young men and maidens professed a new born faith.

On the 16th of May, 1841, the Carleton Branch was formed into a separate Church.

During this year the vestry under the Germain Street Chapel was completed, and dedicated by appropriate services to the worship of God.

In 1842, Elder Theodore Harding arrived in the city to take pastoral charge of the 2nd Baptist Church. He and the pastor of Germain Street co-operated heartily together in promoting the good cause. They extended their labors to Carleton and Portland, with marked success. On the 21st of March the two pastors commenced a series of special meetings, with reference to the whole field of labor. Elder Harding preached from the passage, "O Lord, revive thy work!" The house was filled to overflowing, and so deep was the impression, that many of the congregation were bathed in tears. The meetings went forward at the different stations with deepening interest, and a general awakening took place. Many professed conversion, and requested baptism. On the 25th of March (which happened to be Good Friday), baptism was appointed at Indian Town; the day was beautiful for the season, and an immense congregation assembled to witness the administration. The people requested Father Harding to preach a sermon in the open air; he consented, and addressed the assembled multitude from the passage, "The spirit and the bride say come," &c. It was one of his most eloquent and powerful efforts; the people were filled and overpowered with the solemnities of the truth as it came fresh and warm from the lips of the venerable preacher, and hundreds of faces were suffused in tears. It was a day of mighty power. The sermon being ended, the candidates were conducted to the water side, and Elder Robinson immersed them (twenty in all), in obedience to the divine command. As in primitive days, the Holy Spirit descended upon the people, and the newly baptized went on their way rejoicing in the blessedness of redeeming love. That Good Friday can never be forgotten.

This good work spread its redeeming influences over Portland, Indiantown, and Carleton, as well as over the City proper; and, through the missionary labors of Elder

James Walkor, extended to Musquash, Grand Bay, and Red Head. A church was formed at Musquash consisting of some twenty members, and at Grand Bay twelve or fourteen persons were baptized by Elder Walker, and received into the Germain Street Church. There were weekly accessions by baptism for months in succession, and a rich harvest of souls was gathered into the spiritual garner. 1842 was indeed a year of refreshing from the Divine presence, and many were added to the church of such as shall be saved.

The commercial crisis of 1843 produced much financial embarrassment, and occasioned many removals on the part of church members; but the labors of the pastor were incessant, and the spirit of revival was enjoyed in some measure, though not to the same extent as in the past year.

The mercantile depression continued and was severely felt by the church through 1844; but the good work of God advanced in despite of all depressing influences, and some fifteen were baptized by the pastor during the year. The pastor was aided in his ministerial exertions by Bro. John Francis, whose zeal and earnestness in the cause produced a deep impression upon many hearts.

The church licensed that year three of their members to preach the gospel, viz.: John Mills, educated in the Episcopal church, James Trimble, trained in the Presbyterian faith, and J. W. Hartt, of Baptist origin.

The year 1845 was attended with no very signal manifestations of the Spirit's power, but the church increased in religious vigor by the maintainance of a healthful discipline, and by unremitting efforts to promote the work of the Redeemer.

The year 1846 was regarded as one of singular barrenness to the church. Only one was added by baptism during the year, and the friends of Zion had to mourn over a general declension in spiritual things. On the 4th of April of this year, Deacon Jeremiah Drake departed this life in the 81st year of his age. Soon after the organization of the church, Mr. Drake was appointed Deacon. He was highly respected for his integrity of character and truly Christian deportment. In the infancy of the church he watched over its welfare with the intensity of a father's love, and by his exhortations, prayers and godly example contributed largely to its growth and stability. His general intercourse with men was conducted on the strictest principles of verity and uprightness, and as such made the impression upon saint and sinner that he was a God-fearing man. He was greatly beloved by the church in life, and, when he died

devout men followed him to his burial, feeling that a *good man* had fallen in Israel.

This year the Association again held its anniversary in connection with the Germain Street church. On the Sabbath an interesting meeting was held in the open air in the neighbourhood of the present Bethel, then a most depraved section of the city. A crowd of people assembled, and Rev. G. F. Miles and others proclaimed to the people the messages of redeeming love. The word of truth was applied by the Spirit's influence, and one very wicked man, the conductor of a playhouse, was convicted, and constrained to cry aloud for mercy. He subsequently professed conversion, and his place of awful wickedness became the house of prayer. Several were converted, and the worship of God permanently established in that section of the city.

In 1847, the cause was greatly revived, and twenty were added by baptism and fifteen by letter. A social meeting had been in progress for some time in a private room in Brussels street, attended by the pastor and other brethren. This year the church commenced the erection of the present Brussels street church. The present Bethel was also completed and opened for the worship of God, on December 12th. The dedication services were conducted by Rev. E. D. Very, pastor of Portland church, aided by Rev. S. Robinson, pastor of Germain Street, and brother S. Todd and E. H. Duval. It was designed to be a free house open for the sailor, and for all of every class, who might be induced to come to hear the message of life.

It is worthy of note that the Bethel was erected on the very ground where a house once stood, occupied by a coloured sister belonging to the church, and for many years consecrated as a place of religious worship. Ministers, deacons and private Christians were accustomed for many years to assemble there weekly for devotional exercises, and continued to do so until this good sister was called to her rest above. How appropriate that the Bethel should be reared on this consecrated spot.

On the 14th of December of this year, Deacon Thomas Pettingill was called to his rest above. On the 17th his remains were taken into the chapel, where his voice had so often been heard in exhortation and prayer, and where appropriate service was conducted; after which he was followed to his final resting place, by mourning relatives and a numerous procession, wishing to pay this last tribute of respect to one greatly beloved and respected in life, and in death sincerely lamented. For thirty-seven years he had filled the office of Deacon of the Germain

Street church. He in fact was one of its principal founders, and had stood firmly at his post not only when the sun of prosperity shone, but when clouds and darkness encompassed the infant cause. When Zion progressed he rejoiced; when she retrograded he sorrowed. The church regarded him as its spiritual father and guide, and to his unblemished reputation, his uncompromising integrity, his full hearted benevolence, and unceasing devotion, may be attributed largely under God the success which attended the Baptist cause in this city. The words applied to Barnabas may be appropriately applied to Father Pettingill. "He was a good man; and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and much people was added unto the Lord."

1848 was distinguished by the outpouring of the Spirit's converting power. The gracious work commenced in the Sabbath School, under the superintendence of Bro. G. A. Garrison, in the month of March. On the 19th of March eight young persons, all teachers in the Sabbath School, presented themselves for baptism, were joyfully received by the church, and on the following Sabbath were baptized by the pastor, and inducted into the church. It was a day of special gladness and thanksgiving to pastor and people. The good work proceeded, and thirty-three in all were added by baptism during that year and sixteen by letter; twenty-five of the baptized belonged to the Sabbath School.

This year was signalized also by the completion and opening of the Brussels Street Baptist chapel. It was solemnly dedicated to the service of God on Lord's day, October 1st, 1848. The venerated Joseph Crandal was expected to preach the morning sermon, but something interfered with his attendance, and the service was therefore conducted by Elder Robinson. At 3 o'clock, P. M., Father T. S. Harding preached the Dedication sermon, from 2nd Chronicles vi. 18, "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: how much less this house which I have built." A very large attendance, and the sermon was one of peculiar appropriateness and power. The venerable preacher contrasted the present with the past; forty-six years had passed since he first visited the city. At that period there was no Baptist chapel in St. John, and no suitable place open for Baptist preaching, "but," said Mr. Harding, "in contrasting that state of things with our present position we cannot but exclaim, 'and what hath God wrought?'" The doings of this day were recorded in heaven, and Jehovah was in the midst of his people to show that he approved of the sacrifices which they had made,

amid the embarrassments arising from years of commercial depression, to build a house to His name.

The church not being in circumstances to settle a pastor in the new house, they made temporary arrangements to obtain assistance from the ministers of Portland and Carleton churches.

The letter of the Germain Street church to the Association bearing date August 31st, 1849, refers to the time when Father Pettingill opened a prayer meeting in the city in 1808, with only three praying brethren to assist him, and says, "Since that period eight Baptist places of worship have been erected within the city of St. John and its environs, through the agency of the church which grew out of these feeble beginnings." The most of these places were supplied at the time with the faithful preaching of God's word.

The records of the church for the last ten years up to that date, showed an addition by baptism and letter of some six hundred. But the diminutions occasioned by death, dismissals, removals, and exclusions, left the church at that time with a membership of four hundred and forty.

On the opening of the Brussels Street house, a Sabbath School was established in its commodious vestry, and placed under the superintendence of Bro. N. S. DeMill.

There was also at this time a Ladies' City Mission in healthful operation, conducted by the sisters of the church. It had been in existence for some ten months prior to this date, and had in its employ as City Missionary, for the term of one year, Rev. D. W. C. Dimock. This mission was attended with most beneficial results; but difficulties came in, and the Society became defunct. The additions this year were only five by baptism and eight by letter.

September 1st, 1849, the Western Association opened its anniversary in Brussels Street chapel. The introductory sermon was preached on Monday morning, from 1st Corinthians iii. 21-22-23, by Rev. Charles Spurden. The session was one of deep interest.

About this time, Rev. J. D. Casewell arrived in the city from England. He was cordially greeted by his old friends, and to them he seemed providentially sent to assist the pastor, Elder Robinson, in supplying the two chapels. He was accordingly invited to perform this service until the May following, at the rate of \$400 per annum. This invitation Bro. Casewell accepted.

On the 2nd of December Bro. James DeMill, now Professor DeMill, of Acadia College, having been joyfully received as a candidate for the ordinance at a previous

conference, was baptized by the pastor, and inducted into the church.

The plan of associate pastoral labor not working very satisfactorily, an important meeting was held by the church, at which a proposition was made, which had been prepared at a previous meeting in committee, to effect an amicable separation, and to organize a new church in Brussels Street.

The plan provided that the old name of the first Baptist church should be dropped, and that the two churches should take the name respectively of Germain Street and Brussels Street. The Brussels Street Church when organized should take the new house, and the Bethel with their incumbrances, and Germain Street Church should retain the church building, and parsonage with their incumbrances. To this was added the very important provision that Elder Robinson should be invited to assume the pastoral care of the new church. This proposition was fully discussed before a public meeting of the church, and was adopted by a majority of fifty-seven, against a minority of seventeen. At a subsequent meeting the details of separation were agreed upon, and the decision was carried into effect. It was understood that the members should be at perfect liberty to remain with the old church or have their letters to join the new, as they might choose.

On the evening of the same day the church in Germain Street, being left without pastor or deacons, assembled and made choice of Rev. J. D. Casewell for their pastor, and Brethren G. A. Garrison, Edward S. Barteau, Dr. Simon Fitch, and Manual Francis, as deacons. Elder Casewell and the deacons elect, acceded to the wishes of the church, and took their places accordingly. At the same meeting, Bro. S. Hersey was appointed Treasurer, and Bro. G. A. Garrison was requested to continue his Clerkship. Between this period of separation and the meeting of the Western Association in the following September, 158 members in all took their letters and joined Brussels Street church. Seven were dismissed to unite with other churches, and two died, leaving the church with a membership of only 167 all told. This number was reduced by some twenty-seven members, who were not in full fellowship, so that the real number was 140. Thus while the Germain Street church had been remarkably successful in adding to her numerical strength by conversions and baptisms, and in sending out her sons and her daughters to plant flourishing interests in Carleton, Portland, and in Brussels Street, she was now left like the generous parent, who so divides his property as to settle his sons respectably, but

who in the issue finds that he has retained but a small share for himself.

Elder Casewell had many warm admirers, and it was hoped that his splendid pulpit qualities would soon gather around him a large congregation. Hence, notwithstanding discouraging circumstances, the brethren and sisters took hold with a united determination to exert themselves to the utmost to build up the cause. Old debts were liquidated, and arrangements made for the support of the pastor. The burthen of support fell pretty heavily upon a few, and considerable embarrassment was felt, but by united and persevering effort the expenses were regularly met, and indications were favorable.

The additions for 1850, as reported to the Association, were nine by baptism, and three by letter.

In the month of March, 1851, revival indications were manifest, especially among the young. Special services were held by the pastor and brethren; and several professed conversion, and were added to the church by baptism.

An attempt was made to revise the books of the church, and this revision resulted in the following report to the Association in September, 1851.

Added by baptism during the Associational year 20, by letter 2,	
restored 1, added in all.....	23
Removed,.....	48
Dismissed,.....	47
Excluded,.....	17
Died,.....	5
	117
In all,.....	117
Leaving the total number.....	187

During this year the health of Elder Casewell again became impaired, and to such an extent as at times quite disqualified him for the duties of the pulpit. The church esteemed and loved him, and were unwilling to part with him, but the interests of the cause seemed to call for a separation. This was intimated to the pastor, and resulted in his resignation. At the same time he took his letter of dismission.

Our Brother Casewell spent some time in travelling in the United States, where his ministrations were well received. He finally accepted an invitation to the pastoral care of the church in Fredericton, where he labored for some time with much acceptance. Ultimately, however, his health failed, and it became necessary for him to retire from the responsibilities and excitement of ministerial and pastoral relationship.

The truth is, Mr. Casewell's mind was so constructed that he was constantly soaring into the higher regions of thought, and luxuriating in the lofty and the sublime. These intellectual excursions, guided somewhat by a highly cultivated imagination, occasionally were quite too much for his powers of physical and mental endurance, and body and mind became prostrate. But when perfectly himself, his prayers were beautifully simple and touching, and his sermons rich in evangelical thought and feeling. His spirit was perfectly free from all guile, and his heart was the home of the purest affection; he would *harm no one, but do good to all.*

Conscious that retirement from all mental effort was indispensable, he resolved to return to England, and took passage in a ship commanded at the time by Captain Soley. While on his way and nearing the English coast, he was seized with one of his paroxysms of mental derangement, and in an unguarded moment, passed to the spirit world. A cloud brooded over that fatal spot, but my firm belief is that his soul rose up from that watery bed freed from the clogs of a deranged mortality, and made meet to enter upon the immunities and glories of celestial blessedness.

I feel that I have thus ventured to touch upon a matter of extreme delicacy, but as we are dealing with a history in which our lamented brother comes out as one of the prominent actors, justice to departed worth seems to demand that we should give a distinct expression regarding our own sentiment and feeling in respect to his case.

And just here our historic sketch must, for the present, close. As we have thus briefly reviewed the past, I think you will all agree with me in appropriating the language of my text to this case, "The hand of the Lord hath done this." The remaining section of the history includes my own life and labors as pastor of the Germain Street church, and to the dealings of the Lord with us for the last eleven years. We shall not go specifically into this subject at present; but at some future day, and in other hands, it may be found to comprise a chapter not wholly devoid of interest. As the history of the Baptist Church in this City is rich in incident, so is it rich in suggestion and inference. But upon these we cannot at present dwell. May the Gracious Being, who has thus far guided our fathers safely through the conflict with the forces of evil, bring us off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through the blood of the Lamb. AMEN.

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