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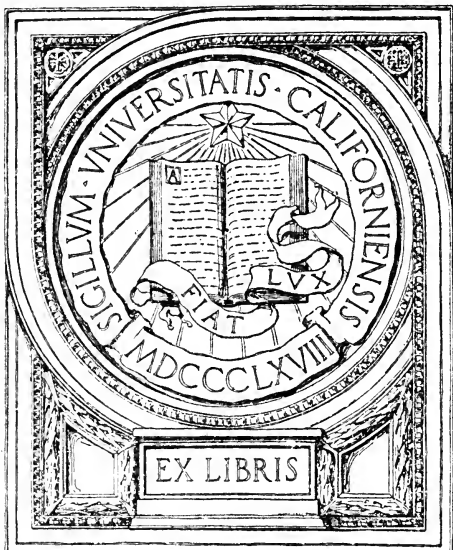


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SKETCH  
OF THE  
REV. DAVID BACON.

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*David Buon*



SKETCH

OF THE

REV. DAVID BACON.

BY

REV. LEONARD BACON, D. D.

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REPRINT FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL QUARTERLY, 1876.

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UNIV OF  
CALIFORNIA

BOSTON:  
CONGREGATIONAL PUBLISHING SOCIETY.  
1876.

F99  
3314

PRINTED BY  
ALFRED MUDGE & SON,  
34 SCHOOL STREET, BOSTON.

TO VNU  
AMERICAN

# DAVID BACON.

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IN the North Cemetery at Hartford, Conn, a simple headstone bears this inscription : —

To the memory of  
THE REV. DAVID BACON,  
A HUMBLE MISSIONARY OF THE CROSS,  
who, having passed through  
many scenes of suffering  
in his efforts to extend  
THE REDEEMER'S KINGDOM,  
entered into his rest  
AUGUST 27th, A. D. 1817,  
IN THE 46th YEAR OF HIS AGE.

Few and far advanced in life are those who can have any personal memory of a man who rested from his labors almost sixty years ago. The name inscribed on that marble is not found in Sprague's "Annals of the American Pulpit," nor was it ever the theme of biography in a religious magazine; yet in various places, and especially in one town and church of northern Ohio, a tradition of the name, and of what the man was who bore it, lives, and is beginning to be invested with mythical associations. I have hoped that, in my old age, I might find time to write out my recollections of him, with what I have learned about him from authentic sources, so that my children, and theirs after them, may share in the benefit of his example, as well as in God's answer to his prayers. But my

old age has, thus far, brought me so little leisure that perhaps that work of filial piety and of paternal forethought would never have been begun, and certainly nothing of it would have been given to the public, had not the editor of the *Congregational Quarterly* invited me to make this beginning.

The records of the First Church in Woodstock, Conn., show, in the fair handwriting of Abiel Leonard, then pastor of that church, that on the 9th of August, 1764, "Joseph Bacon of Stoughton, Mass., and Abigail Holmes, of Woodstock," were married. Stoughton was originally a part of Dedham; and Michael Bacon, of whom Joseph is known to have been a descendant, was among the planters of that town, his name appearing on the records there as early as 1640. By what ordering of the Divine Providence it was that Joseph Bacon, of Stoughton, found a wife sixty miles away, at Woodstock, I do not know; for, though there had been Bacons in Woodstock ever since the first settlers came from what was once Roxbury, but is now Boston Highlands, our Joseph was not of their kindred. Not to encumber these pages with particulars of family history, uninteresting to the public and unnecessary to the completeness of my story, I may say that the earliest years of Joseph and Abigail's married life were passed in Stoughton or Dedham; that their second child, the eldest son, born there, was named Leonard, in affectionate remembrance of the Woodstock pastor; and that after a few years they dwelt for a while at Woodstock, where their third son (the fifth of their children) was born in 1771, and was baptized on the 15th of September by the name of DAVID.

When I was a little child living at home, I heard, of course, many incidents of my father's early life; but having neglected to correct and confirm my imperfect memory of them while there were survivors to whom I could appeal, I dare not now attempt to tell the story of how he was brought up, and of the various influences and experiences under which his character was formed. His mother died when he had not yet completed his eighth year; but the reverent and most loving remembrance of her among her children assures me that from her they inherited much that was better than riches, and that,

though she left them early, her faithful care and love had wrought effectually for their spiritual welfare. Of her six children who lived to maturity, every one, I believe, made profession of a personal faith and hope in Christ ; and of those whom I knew, others besides the subject of this memoir were eminently characterized by the old Puritan godliness.

Joseph Bacon, the father of those children, and of other sons and daughters, the offspring of a later marriage, was of the same type. He seems to have been ingenious and enterprising, but never in any high degree successful. I remember the story (told by his eldest son) that at one time, when the War of Independence had made the importation of foreign goods impracticable, he invented and undertook a method of printing (in imitation of calico) the home-made linen of which every farmer's house had its store. His process was like that by which I have seen paper-hangings printed without machinery. With his own hands he cut the figures on blocks of wood, and printed the white linen with such colors as he could obtain from native dye-stuffs like the yellow blossoms of the golden-rod. After several emigrations to places in Massachusetts, — Amherst, Sterling, and Holden, — he removed with all the family save Leonard and David to the northern part of Vermont, where he died at Cambridge in January, 1803. "Blessed be God," wrote one of his sons to another, on receiving the intelligence of that event, "we have reason to believe that our dear father has been conveyed by angels from this vale of tears to the mansions of glory. I join with you in praying that we may imitate him in his simple and unaffected piety towards God and in his benevolence to man, by which he was distinguished from most, if not all, among whom he lived, and by which he shone as a light in the world."

David Bacon had all his father's mechanical ingenuity and dexterity. I have no means of knowing how early he left his home, or from whom he received the instruction which prepared him for teaching a school. His first serious enterprise for himself seems to have been a short-lived partnership with his stepmother's son by her former husband, in the manufacture and sale of spinning-wheels at Troy, N. Y., when Troy had just begun to be. I remember having heard him

speak of being under the ministry of Dr. Jonas Coe, the first pastor of the Presbyterian Church in that place. About that time (probably after the failure of his business enterprise) he found employment for a season as a teacher somewhere in Washington County, N. Y. For all that portion of his life there is no sort of record, therefore I cannot tell when or where it was that he began to be conscious of peace with God through Jesus Christ ; but well do I remember that, in one of his long and earnest talks with me about my own salvation, while I was a boy of less than thirteen years, he told me something of his early religious experience, — how sweetly, after long anxiety and fear, the sense of God's love came to him with the submission of himself to God's will, and how, in the silence and solitude of night, he could not refrain from repeating the psalm, —

“Sweet is the work, my God, my King,”

singing it in a murmur (though he was never musical) to the old tune of Bridgewater. Mere poetry had for him, I think, no great fascination ; but devotional poetry, that of our best psalms and hymns, was often an inspiration to him. The psalm,

“Early, my God, without delay,”

sung in public worship, would sometimes fill his eyes with tears. That grand lyric,

“Father, how wide thy glories shine,”

was a delight to him. Nor can I ever read

“The deluge, at the Almighty's call,”

without seeming to catch an echo of his voice reading it in the family, full two thirds of a century ago.

In my childhood I received from him an impression concerning the “Life of David Brainerd,” as if it were not very far below the level of the canonical Scriptures. His reading of that book must have been connected in some way with his own experience of conversion. Probably its influence on his theory of Christian experience was not, in every respect, the best that could be ; but from the beginning of his own new life his soul was fired by the example of Brainerd's self-conse-

cration and self-sacrifice. He felt that to labor, like Brainerd, in the service of the gospel among the most benighted of his fellow-men, was the highest vocation to which he could aspire. He determined that, if it were possible, he would be a missionary to the Indians. But how could he realize such an aspiration? He was already too old to think of college and of entering the ministry through that gate; nor was there, as yet, any missionary institution to send him forth into the wilderness.

From his sojourn in the State of New York he returned to Connecticut, and in 1799, perhaps earlier, he was at Mansfield, where his eldest brother had established himself as a physician. He taught a school, I believe, and was at the same time learning, under the instruction of Rev. John Sherman, who was then the young and zealous pastor there, and under whose ministry (though he afterwards lapsed from the communion of the Connecticut churches) that parish, so long taught and guarded by Dr. Richard Salter, had its share in the religious awakening which marks the transition from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth. The records of the Mansfield church show that David Bacon was one of its members, and that he was received by dismissal from some other church not named.

At that time the "Associated Pastors" of Connecticut were just completing their organization as a missionary society. Their earliest efforts for evangelization beyond the limits of the State were made in some of the local or district "associations," one of the pastors going on horseback with his saddlebags to perform a few weeks of itinerant labor in "the new settlements" of Vermont, his pulpit, meanwhile, being supplied by his associated brethren. After two or three years of such effort, the work was undertaken on a somewhat larger scale by the "General Association," representing all the "Associated Pastors" in the State. Emigration from Connecticut was beginning to spread over the great West, which is now known as Central and Northern New York, and each "new settlement" in the wilderness needed for a while, till it should have its own church and pastor, the frequent visits of a missionary. The desultory labors of such pastors as could be spared, each

for a brief "mission," were inadequate to a work which was becoming so wide and so distant. Competent ministers, with no pastoral charge at home, must be sent forth to itinerate in the new settlements, and must be sustained by the liberality of good people in old Connecticut. In 1798 the General Association constituted itself "The Missionary Society of Connecticut," and in that character was incorporated by the legislature four years later. The old relations between the churches and the State had not been entirely dissolved, and therefore, to provide a revenue for the Missionary Society, the governor was authorized to issue a "brief," year by year, calling for a contribution on the first Sabbath in May from each Congregational parish in the State.<sup>1</sup>

It would have been strange if the Associated Pastors of Connecticut, when they constituted their Missionary Society, had made no reference to the Indians. The work begun in the seventeenth century by Eliot, Pierson, and the Mayhews had been continued by the Brainerds (David and John), by Jonathan Edwards for a time, and by John Sergeant and others; but from the beginning it had been sustained largely by contributions from England and Scotland. One consequence of the Revolution by which these English colonies had become an independent nation was that the Indian tribes, within the limits conceded to the United States, being no longer related in any way to the British Empire, the work of spreading the gospel among them was not only to be performed as before by American missionaries, but was also to be sustained thenceforth by American contributions. The Missionary Society of Connecticut, therefore, proposed to care for the heathen tribes of the wilderness as well as for those adventurers into the wilderness who were in danger of becoming heathen. It was in June, 1798, that the Constitution of the Society was adopted at Hebron, with the express announcement, "The object of the

<sup>1</sup> The "brief" or proclamation from the governor enabled the minister to call for a contribution without asking leave from the church or the society. It carried no coercion with it. Where the minister had no sympathy with the cause or was afraid of possible opposition among his people, the brief would pass without notice. As the usage is now not only obsolete but almost forgotten, the writer may add that it did not cease till after the commencement of his pastorate. The last proclamation of that sort was issued by Gov. Wolcott in 1826.



Society is to christianize the heathen in North America, and to support and promote Christian knowledge in the new settlements within the United States." Whether, at that time, the subject of this memoir had already been in communication with any of the pastors who formed the Society and defined its object, I do not know; but I find him very soon afterward preparing himself for a mission to the Indians.

As the founding of the Missionary Society at London, in 1793, had been followed by the establishment of an "Evangelical Magazine," which, being conducted in the interest of evangelical Calvinism, became a medium of communication between the Missionary Society and its supporters, so the "Connecticut Evangelical Magazine" came into being, not as an official organ, but rather as an auxiliary institution, co-operating with the Missionary Society of Connecticut, though not in any way controlled by it.<sup>1</sup> Its first issue, bearing date July, 1800, contained an official announcement from the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut "relative to a mission among the Indians." They had determined at a late meeting "that a discreet man, animated by the love of God and souls, of a good common education, who can be obtained for a moderate compensation, be sought for to travel among the Indian tribes south and west of Lake Erie, to explore their situation, and learn their feelings with respect to Christianity, and, so far as he has opportunity, to teach them its doctrines and duties." They had also determined "that said missionary, with the advice of the Rev. Mr. Sergeant of New Stockbridge, obtain from among his Indians a pious guide and interpreter to accompany him in his travels." So far had the plan been matured that "a system of instructions" for the missionary, and a "message" or "*talk*," five columns in length, introducing the missionary "to the Indian tribes bordering on Lake Erie," and explaining the views and hopes

<sup>1</sup> The Trustees of the Missionary Society were "six civilians and six clergymen." Five of the six clergymen were also among the fifteen editors of the Magazine. The word "civilian," I think, was not used as exactly synonymous with "layman," but rather as implying civil office, or some eminence in civil as distinguished from ecclesiastical affairs. Through a long series of years, the six civilians in the Board of Trustees were always designated as "Honorable," being members of the Council or "Upper House."

of the good people who were sending him on so benevolent an errand, were published in connection with the official announcement. The name of the "discreet man, animated by the love of God and souls, and of a good common education," who would require only "a moderate compensation," was not given at that time to the public; but evidently the Trustees were already in communication with him.

While these good men, the Trustees and others, had been deliberating about an Indian Mission, and contriving to make it inexpensive to the contributors, the future missionary had been preparing himself for the work. Probably his study of theology was not very extensive, but it was according to the fashion of those times when there were no theological seminaries. His principal teacher was the Rev. Levi Hart, of Preston; but he seems to have studied also with Rev. Samuel Nott, of Franklin, and with Rev. Zebulon Ely, of Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> The late Dr. Ezra Stiles Ely, of Philadelphia, writing to me in 1849, said incidentally, "I have a fresh remembrance of your father, in his black deer-skin breeches, when he studied theology with my father in my chamber."

Lebanon had a special attraction for the missionary student of theology. The first number of the "Evangelical Magazine," which has been mentioned as announcing the plan of a mission to the Indians, contained also "A Letter from a Young Woman to her Pastor, giving some Account of the Exercises of her Mind," and subscribed, "Your inexperienced ELIZA." A manuscript copy of that letter, worn and yellow, in I know not whose handwriting, is in my possession. It is identical with the printed copy, save in the name subscribed, which is "Your inexperienced ALICE." The "pastor" was pastor of the church in Lebanon, and the letter, dated March 1, 1800, was written by Alice Parks, a young parishioner of his, who, on the twenty-seventh of the following month, was received, with others, to the communion of that church. "Alice," as I heard

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hart's study, like that of Dr. Backus in Somers, was one of the Divinity Schools which Connecticut had in those days. Dr. Nott's son, Samuel Nott, Jr., was one of the first company of missionaries sent to India some twelve years later by the American Board of Commissioners. Mr. Ely was pastor in Lebanon from the time when the humble edifice which, when Jonathan Trumbull was a merchant, had been his place of business, was the "war office" for Connecticut. Messrs. Hart and Ely were among the editors of the "Evangelical Magazine."

Mr. Ely call her twenty years afterward, was a favorite with him ; and so long as she lived, she retained among the treasured relics of her girlhood some of her pastor's letters to her written about that time, and now valued by her children's children not only as testimonies of his esteem for her, but also as evidence that the diligent pastor was availing himself of her religious influence among her youthful friends. To him, the letter, written at his request to describe the mental conflicts through which she had passed, and which had ended in a consciousness of peace with God through Christ, seemed an exceptionally valuable record of Christian experience. Copies of it appear to have been made for some of his friends ; and either the original or the copy now in my possession came into the hands of Mr. Bacon. He had never seen the writer, but he could say to her, " I have in some measure become acquainted with you by means of our worthy and honored friend, the Rev. Mr. Ely," and with that reference he introduced himself to her in a simply fraternal letter of counsel to a beginner in the Christian life. The correspondence led to personal acquaintance, and the acquaintance had become mutual affection and engagement before that " Letter from a Young Woman to her Pastor" had been sent to the printer by some officious friend.<sup>1</sup>

The second issue of the Magazine, only two or three weeks after the first,<sup>2</sup> gave no additional information about the

<sup>1</sup> Alice Parks, who became the wife of the Rev. David Bacon, was a daughter of Elijah Parks and his wife, Anna Beaumont. She was born at Bethlehem, Conn., February, 1783. At the death of her father, when she was only seven years of age, she was taken by her grandfather, William Beaumont, to his home in Lebanon, and by him and his wife, Sarah Everett, she was brought up as their child. The little girl became the darling of the aged pair, whose own children (of whom four sons were soldiers of the Revolution) had gone forth from beneath their roof, one son only remaining in Lebanon, and building his house near theirs, that he might help them in their declining years. " Alice " seems to have been a favorite, not only with the good pastor, but with all who knew her. Dr. Ezra Stiles Ely, in the letter above quoted, records his " lively recollection " (forty-nine years later) of the day when, as he said, " Your mother, Alice, stood beside me, and we together professed faith in Christ, in the old, large frame meeting-house in Lebanon." The Beaumont farm was three miles distant from the meeting-house ; but every Sabbath morning the old couple mounted their horses and rode to church, the granddaughter riding on a pillion behind the grandfather.

<sup>2</sup> " The present number was delayed to give opportunity for the return of subscription bills, but in future a fresh number ' will be ready for delivery the first Monday in every month." — *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* i, 40.

Indian Mission. The third number, issued on the first Monday in September, made another announcement:—

“On Friday, the 8th of August, Mr. David Bacon left Hartford with a view of visiting the Indian tribes bordering on Lake Erie, according to a resolve of the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, noticed in our magazine for July. Previous to his departure he was examined by the Committee of Missions, who, highly approving of him as qualified for such a mission, unanimously appointed him to that service, and by prayer commended him to the Divine blessing. It is expected that he will obtain a guide and interpreter at New Stockbridge, or somewhere in that neighborhood, and then proceed on to the southwest part of Lake Erie, and visit the Indian tribes in that quarter. It is presumed he will have the prayers of all good people for a blessing on his labors.”

A letter dated Aug. 7, from the missionary to his brother at Mansfield, gives some additional details:—

“I fell in company with two gentlemen, who brought me comfortably to Hartford by about five o'clock, free from expenses. I travelled but about two miles afoot.

“I passed my examination yesterday.<sup>1</sup> The result of the Committee, in their own words, was as follows: ‘The Committee, having examined him with respect to his knowledge of the doctrines of Christianity and his experimental acquaintance with the truth, were fully satisfied with his answers, and highly approved of him as qualified for a missionary to the Indians. Whereupon, Voted that the said, &c. ‘be appointed a missionary to the Indians in the vicinity of Sandusky Bay, or to some of the tribes

<sup>1</sup> That was a second examination. From the records of the Committee it appears that Mr. Bacon’s formal introduction to them was on the 27th of June, at which time they “examined him as to his doctrinal and experimental acquaintance with the truth, and were fully satisfied with his answers.” Learning that he was embarrassed in his worldly circumstances, they kindly undertook to mediate between him and his creditors, but assumed no responsibility for his debts. Those debts could not have been very large, as it was evidently expected that he would be able to pay them out of the salary of “one hundred and ten cents a day.” In explanation of the letter above, I copy the following from a rough draught preserved in the archives of the Society:—

“HARTFORD, July 23, 1800.

“*Sir*,—There was yesterday a meeting of the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut; at which meeting much was said respecting the proposed mission to the Indians; in consequence of which the Committee of Missions are to meet on the 6th of August at 10 o'clock, at Mr. Strong’s; at which time and place the Committee earnestly wish you to attend. Tho’ you are not absolutely appointed by the Board to go as a missionary, yet if without inconvenience to yourself you can come prepared to go immediately on to the westward, you are advised to do it.

“Yours with esteem, A. FLINT, *Secretary*.

“MR. DAVID BACON.”

south and west of Lake Erie, for a term not exceeding six months, to be computed from the time of his leaving Hartford.' My wages are one hundred and ten cents per day. They have left it to my discretion to choose and agree with an interpreter, only I must not overgo a certain sum, which is nearly double what I expect to give. They have paid me one hundred dollars in money, and one hundred in negotiable orders on the Secretary. . . . The writings are all completed, and I expect to set out to-morrow. I have received a small Bible, which cost 12s. 9d. [\$2.12½], with some other small articles, as a present from the Society. Mr. Flint is very kind, and Mr. Strong and his family are all attention, to try to find out and help me to everything that I shall be likely to want.

"By the desire of Dr. Trumbull and Mr. Strong, a few Christian friends met here and spent the last evening in fervent prayer for my preservation and success. A few hymns were sung, which were adapted to the occasion. As soon as the friends were collected, Mr. Strong undertook to represent to them the importance of the work I had undertaken, and the trials and dangers to which I should be exposed; but before he got through his voice faltered, and then in broken accents he requested that they might all heartily join in commending their dear brother to the blessing and protection of Almighty God. Dr. Trumbull made the first prayer. . . . They were all in tears, and expressed the tenderest affection and concern for me, and the most ardent desires for the salvation of the heathen. But I was as insensible as steel, — could neither feel for myself nor for others, . . . but hope I shall ere long reap the happy fruits of their prayers, and praise God for the health of his countenance."

A postscript, written the next morning, says: —

"Mr. Strong had determined to send his son with the carriage to help me on seven miles, but just as I got this letter sealed he came running upstairs and told me that Providence had sent Mr. Morgan with an empty carriage to take me on to Canaan, forty miles on my road. He is the minister of that place. I expect to set out with him in a few minutes."

It will be observed that the outfit of the missionary for this expedition was of the simplest kind. Afoot and alone he was to make his way towards the wilderness, with no luggage more than he could carry on his person, thankfully accepting any offer of a seat for a few miles in some passing vehicle. Such was the equipment with which the good people of Connecticut, seventy-five years ago, sent forth their first missionary to the heathen.

The earliest intelligence from him was published in the Magazine for November. It was a letter dated "Buffalo Creek, Sept. 4, 1800." What was then known only as Buffalo

Creek is now the site of the great city of Buffalo. A letter written from that point at that date is in some respects more interesting to us at this day than it could be then to the readers of the "Evangelical Magazine." The missionary says :—

"I have not been unwell since I left Hartford but two or three days, and even then I was able to walk several miles in a day. I was much fatigued at first, but can now travel twenty-five miles in a day with ease. I found opportunities to ride, in the whole about one hundred and fifty miles. Both the friends and enemies of religion have conducted towards me as though they were commissioned to help me.

"When I arrived at Canandarqua [Canandaigua] I visited Capt. Chapin, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and requested of him a speech of introduction to the Seneca chiefs at Buffalo Creek, in order that I might get a speech from them to the Western tribes. He treated me in a very friendly manner, approved of the proposal, furnished me with a string of wampum, a lengthy and suitable letter to the chiefs, and another to his brother, a worthy merchant in this place. I arrived here last Monday [Sept. 1], found Capt. Chapin's brother, the principal sachem, and Capt. Johnson, the interpreter. The business was soon introduced. The old sachem approved the proposal, appeared very friendly, and said that he would notify the chiefs to meet me the next day at ten o'clock. Six of them met at the time appointed, and Capt. Johnson with them. The business was soon explained to them. They heard with attention, made a few pertinent observations, and told me they expected to grant my request, but that it was customary with them to defer the matter until the second day, that they might have an opportunity to consult among themselves. They then shook hands with me, very affectionately wished me the blessing of the Great Spirit, and retired to their council-house. The next day, when they met as they had proposed, their great orator, in the midst of a large concourse of Indians, delivered a speech to me, and another for me to write down to their Western brethren. They also gave me a very curious string of wampum to go with their speech.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If I may confide in my recollection of a stage-coach conversation, many years ago, with a stranger (the Rev. J. N. Granger, I believe, afterwards pastor of the First Church in Providence), that "great orator" was Red-Jacket, celebrated in Halleck's poem :—

"Thou wert monarch born ; tradition's pages  
Tell not the planting of thy parent tree."

One point in the speech was to the effect that the Senecas would gladly receive a missionary if they should discover that their white neighbors were made better by his preaching.

My informant told me that among papers left by his father, who had held some official relation to those Indians, he had found an account of the interview between them and my father.

"I am now four hundred miles from Hartford, in sight of Lake Erie, just at the outlet, and within twenty-four miles of the Falls of Niagara. Capt. Johnson, who is well acquainted with the Indians, says there is no probability of my finding an interpreter until I get to Detroit, if I should go all the way round by land. I am now waiting for a passage to Detroit. They tell me that the nearest way that I can go by land is not short of four hundred miles, and by water it is but two hundred and fifty. There are several sail of vessels in this harbor, on board of one of which I am expecting to embark as soon as the wind is favorable.

"I have had nothing to trouble me since I left home but a hard and ungrateful heart. . . . I do not recollect that I have had the least desire to turn back, but have felt as though I was going home."

The next communication from the missionary to his employers was written from "Harson's Island in the River St. Clair, Sept. 29, 1800." He had sailed from "Buffalo Creek" on the fourth day after the date of the preceding letter, and by a speedy voyage had arrived at Detroit on the 11th of September, thirty-four days after leaving Hartford. He had been hospitably welcomed to the house of Major Hunt, commanding officer at the fort at Detroit; and Gen. Uriah Tracy, of Litchfield, who was there as Indian Commissioner for the United States, had been equally kind to him. From Mr. Schieffelin, an Indian agent, from Judge Askin, who had been formerly a trader at Michilimakinac (now known as Mackinaw), and from "Mr. Benjamin Huntington, a merchant who was formerly from Norwich," he had received information and advice, with some encouraging offers of aid, which had convinced him that it was "expedient to relinquish the idea of going to the south of Detroit, as was expected, and to sail to the river St. Clair, if not to Mackinac." But if he was to be governed by the letter of his commission, he must go "to the south and west of Lake Erie, and had no liberty to go to the north." What ought he to do? The letter proceeds:—

"I applied to Gen. Tracy for advice. He honored my judgment with respect to the business, and said that he thought it was a pity that there had not been added another clause to my directions, which would have left the matter a little more to my discretion; but said, as circumstances were, he knew not what advice to give. However, being confident that the spread of the gospel was the great object which the Trustees had in view, I was sure that it could not be their intention to prohibit my going to the place which the providence of God should so clearly point out. I there-

fore concluded that the only way to deserve or secure their approbation was to act discretionary till I received further orders.<sup>1</sup> And the General told me that if I wished to visit Mackinac, I should be welcome to a passage with him, going and coming. I accordingly went on board with him Saturday the 13th. . . . I had not yet determined how far to go. I felt unwilling to stop here on the river St. Clair, on account of the Indians being so much scattered, and I doubted the propriety of venturing so far as Mackinac, without orders from the committee. But as I could not hear from them, I had no way to do but to commit my ways to the Lord, and to rely on his promise for direction. But on the third day after we sailed, as we lay wind-bound in Lake St. Clair, and at a time when I was pleading with God in secret to resolve my doubts and to send me where infinite wisdom saw best, the young man who had been recommended to me for an interpreter came on board, and soon convinced me that it was my duty to stop here."

That young man, named Bernardus Harson, was the son of a worthy Dutchman, who, before the Revolutionary War, had removed with his family from Albany to Niagara, where, at the beginning of the war, the British, instead of permitting him to return as he desired, stripped him of his property and then sent him far westward to what still bears the name of Harson's Island. The old man's trade as a gunsmith introduced him to much intercourse with Indians, and their language became almost as familiar to his children as his own vernacular, the Dutch. His house was evidently a good place for learning the Chippeway (or, as we now call it, the Ojibway) language; and with the young man Bernardus Harson for interpreter, it was likely to be a good place for intercourse with the neighboring Indians. Detained by adverse winds, the vessel did not arrive at Harson's Island (only forty miles from Detroit) till the fourth day of her voyage. Mr. Bacon, at the date of the letter, had been twelve days in the Harson family, having contracted to pay two dollars weekly for his board and lodging, and ten dollars monthly to the interpreter and teacher, who was to be half the time at his service. He was full of thankfulness and hope. After the foregoing details, he said:—

"When I left home, like Abraham, I knew not whither I went; but I expected I should have to lie upon the ground in the open air for several

<sup>1</sup> A note appended by the trustee who received the letter says, "Mr. Bacon's good judgment directed him right. He found in the place of which he speaks the Indians for whom he was designed."



nights while on my journey, and then to take up my abode in a dreary wilderness, at a great distance from civilized people, with nothing better than an Indian hut for a house and a blanket for a bed, and where I should suffer for food that was comfortable, and have no one that I could converse with but an Indian interpreter. But instead of this, the Lord has richly provided for me on the way, has not suffered me to lie out one night, and has brought me into a pleasant place, among civilized people, and where I have a prospect of success, and has provided me a comfortable house, a convenient study, and as good a bed and as good board as I should have had if I had remained in Connecticut. But I am still ungrateful. I know of no place in the State of New York so healthy as this. I believe the water and the air are as pure here as in any part of New England. And I have never been before where venison and wild geese and ducks were so plenty, or where there was such a rich variety of fresh-water fish."

Nanga, the principal chief among the few Chippeways scattered along the river St. Clair, had his quarters at the same house, but was then absent. He was well reported of by young Harson, and by others, as "one of the worthiest and most influential characters in the nation." After a visit the year before (1799) to Congress at Philadelphia, he had expressed a desire to have a minister and schoolmaster come among his people. He had talked of applying to Congress for aid, and was proposing to gather his tribe into a village, that they might be more accessible to preacher and teacher. It was represented that his mind had been turned in this direction by conversation with benevolent persons whom he had met in his tour to Philadelphia; and that a book which had been put into his hands by a minister in New York, and which gave an account of "the Northern Missionary Society,"<sup>1</sup> had confirmed him in his views and hopes. That book, it was said, had been carefully preserved by him, and several times he had heard it interpreted and explained by Harson, though not without expressing his apprehension "that some of the Indians were so stupid that it would be impossible to beat religion into them."

Letters from Michigan in those days were under a necessity of waiting for some opportunity of conveyance. The letter dated at Harson's Island, Sept. 29, was kept open till Oct. 8, and was then completed at Detroit. Gen. Tracy had returned

<sup>1</sup> See Gillett's History of the Presbyterian Church, i, 397, 436.

from Mackinaw, and on his arrival at Harson's Island Mr. Bacon had re-embarked with him for Detroit, in order to attend a grand council of Indians who were to meet him at that place. In his official character Gen. Tracy had held a talk with a meeting of chiefs at Mackinaw, and he had taken the opportunity to confer with the chiefs of an Ottawa village at Arbre-Croche<sup>1</sup> about a mission to their people. They appeared to be well pleased with the proposal, "and they observed that they had great need of ministers to restrain their young men and make them like the young men who *"wear hats."* But, after the manner of the Indians, "they must defer the decision of the business until they could call a council," and then they would send their answer.

At Detroit, Mr. Bacon had a brief interview with two Presbyterian ministers from Pennsylvania, members of the Ohio Presbytery,<sup>2</sup> who had been sent to "obtain information respecting the Indians with a view of sending missionaries." Their inquiries had not been very successful, the Indian agent who could have given them information being absent with Gen. Tracy. But the Connecticut missionary communicated as much of what he had learned as could be imparted in so brief an interview, and they departed, depending on him for additional information, "as there would be frequent opportunities to write." They were expecting that their presbytery would be able ere long to institute an effective mission, though their funds were as yet too small for any considerable undertaking. As a beginning of the work they took with them a young Shawnee, for the purpose of giving him an education. Mr. Bacon's view was that it would be wiser to begin with some nation more numerous than the Shawnees. He wrote, for the information of his employers, —

"The Chippeways are supposed to have twenty thousand fighting men, and there are seven other nations, beside the Ottawas, that understand

<sup>1</sup> Arbre-Croche was represented to Mr. Bacon as twenty-five miles distant from Mackinaw, but the map shows that the distance is not less than forty miles. Writing the name as he heard it, without knowing its orthography or its origin, he wrote "Arber-Croash," which by a mistake of the compositor was printed "Arber-Croask." — *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*, i, 234, 236.

<sup>2</sup> See Gillett, i, 324, 471; also, for a notice of a later visit of the same sort, at the appointment of the same zealous and enterprising presbytery, ii, 134.

their language. There are above a thousand Chippeways near Sagana [now Saginaw], on the south of Lake Huron, but they are not in a compact village. While I was at Mr. Harson's a large company of them called to see me. They appeared to be very dirty, but were exceeding friendly. I am informed that the Moravians have been very successful among the Delawares, on the river Detrench [in Canada, the river now known as the Thames], forty miles east of where I have been living. The Indians at Harson's Island appeared very friendly, and very desirous to have me continue with them; but they told me that Nanga was absent, and that they could give me no decisive answer till he returned. I did not see Nanga till I came back to this place. He tells me that he is very glad that I have come among them. He says that the Moravians have been the means of making the Delawares sober, industrious, and happy, like the white people, and that he hopes that my endeavors will have the same effect on his Indians."

At the great council of Indians, Oct. 7, Gen. Tracy, after his political conference with the chiefs, introduced the missionary to them as the representative and agent of a Society that desired to do good. He told them that good would come from their having such men to instruct them and their children; he requested them to treat the missionary hospitably and kindly, and told them that if that first teacher should find a favorable reception, they might expect others to be sent on the same benevolent errand. "He hoped they would not be so unwise as to defeat the good intentions of their white brothers, which respected their own happiness; and the whole council gave their hearty approbation to all that he said." The Indian agent, Mr. Schieffelin, testified that the General had given great satisfaction to the assembled chiefs.

Such a letter, printed in the Magazine for December, could not but be read with deep interest in the study of many a pastor, and by the winter fireside of many a Christian home in Connecticut. In its closing sentences there was a tone of exultation:—

"I have everything to support and animate me. I think the most sanguine have never dreamed of such an encouraging prospect. Surely the fields are white already to harvest! May the Lord of the harvest send forth his laborers. If I am prospered, I expect to return home some time in the month of March. I hope that I shall be appointed again, and that the Directors will send back two or three with me. There are a number of sober, likely young Indians, who wish me to take them under my care and give them a good English education; and I have given them encour-

agement of keeping a school one half of the time through the winter. I expect that a good schoolmaster would have constant employ, and be very useful."

It soon turned out that the young Indians who desired "a good English education" were not so ready to begin as the missionary had hoped they would be. The letter just described had not gone far towards its destination when the wild men determined to spend the winter months in hunting; and the proposed school must needs be preceded by a long vacation. Nothing could be done towards teaching them till spring. The Magazine for January announced that Mr. Bacon had returned, arriving at Hartford about the middle of December. Although his return at that time (after four instead of six months' absence) was unexpected, it was by no means disapproved. It had "not arisen from any circumstance unfavorable to the great object of his mission, but quite the reverse." The information which he had acquired — his commission being "to go among the Indian tribes with a view of exploring their situation, and the propriety of sending the gospel among them" — would "greatly aid the Trustees in systematizing the future plan of proceeding"; and it was "a kind of information which could not be obtained in any other way." The Trustees had been called to meet on the 30th of December, and it was expected that then Mr. Bacon would "be directed to return with enlarged powers of acting."

From the records it appears that the Committee of Missions met Dec. 15; that "Mr. David Bacon, missionary to the Indians, appeared before the committee, and gave an account of his proceedings on the business of his mission to the present time"; and that thereupon it was voted, "That the chairman of the Board of Trustees be requested to call a meeting of the Board, in this city, on the thirtieth day of instant December, at 2 o'clock, P. M."

That conference with the committee was sufficient to assure the missionary that he would be empowered by the Trustees, at their expected meeting, to pursue the work for which he had been making the preliminary exploration. On the 24th of December he was married at Lebanon to Alice Parks, then not quite eighteen years of age. On Tuesday, the 30th, he

received his new and enlarged appointment from the Board of Trustees at Hartford, and on the next day (the last day of the eighteenth century) he was ordained in the same city to the work of an evangelist.

In those days "the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut" considered themselves competent to ordain their own missionaries without consulting any church or calling any council. The record of that meeting (Dec. 30, 1800) shows that "the question concerning the expediency of ordaining Mr. Bacon to the work of the gospel ministry, previous to his going out again as a missionary, was taken up and largely discussed"; that thereupon it was "voted to proceed to the examination of Mr. Bacon, with a view to his ordination"; that "the Board then proceeded to examine him," and "gaining full satisfaction" on all the points on which an ordaining council examines a candidate, "voted unanimously to ordain him accordingly, and that the solemnity of his ordination be attended at the North Presbyterian Meeting-house in this city, to-morrow, at eleven o'clock, A. M." On the next day's record it was entered that "the ordination of Mr. Bacon was performed according to the votes of yesterday."<sup>1</sup>

With the least possible delay, Mr. Bacon and his wife began their journey, setting out from his brother's house in Mansfield on the 11th of February, 1801. They were accompanied from Bethlehem by one of Mrs. Bacon's brothers, Beaumont Parks,

<sup>1</sup> [*From the American Mercury.*]

"HARTFORD, Thursday, Jan. 1, 1801.

"Yesterday the Rev. DAVID BACON was ordained in this city to the work of the gospel ministry, with a particular reference to his laboring as an Evangelist among the Indian tribes of North America. The Rev. *Abel Flint* made the introductory prayer; the Rev. *Benjamin Trumbull*, D. D., preached the sermon from Mark xvi, 15; the Rev. *Levi Hart*, D. D., made the consecrating prayer; the Rev. *Nathan Williams*, D. D., gave the charge; the Rev. *Cyprian Strong* gave the right hand of fellowship; and the Rev. *Nathan Strong* made the concluding prayer."

This, I believe, was the first instance in Connecticut of an ordination to the specific work of a missionary to the heathen. David Brainerd was ordained at Newark, New Jersey, by a Presbytery in 1744. John Sergeant, the elder, was ordained by Congregational ministers, at Deerfield, Mass., in 1735. The younger John Sergeant was ordained to the same work in 1788, — in Massachusetts, as I suppose.

a lad in his fifteenth year, who was expected to become serviceable as a teacher after learning the Chippeway language. Mr. Parks, afterwards a lawyer at Middlebury, Vermont, a professor in the University of Indiana, and in his old age a beloved and honored teacher at Springfield, Illinois, gave me at my request, not long before his death, some recollections of that journey. His narrative is so vivid in its simplicity, and so suggestive of old times, that I cannot refrain from transcribing some portions of it:—

“I can hardly tell how it happened that I went with your father. I know that Alice and he wished it, as I could be company for her when he was away among the Indians, and might be useful in various ways. The Missionary Society also wished me to go. My uncle was very unwilling; he expected me to remain till I should be twenty-one, and I was now able to help a great deal. But by the influence of Dr. Backus<sup>1</sup> and others, he consented. I was unprepared for the journey,—had no clothes fit for travelling. Here again Dr. Backus came to the rescue; he and others gave me a good outfit, so that I could pass very well among strangers. Mr. Bacon and Alice came for me—remained one night at uncle’s. We started next day. It was hard parting from the family. . . . Still I was glad to go. There was something romantic in leaving home, perhaps never to return, to go to the great West and live among the Indians, learn their language, and lead them to God. On our way we called on the Doctor, bade him farewell and received his blessing. A great and good man!

“The weather was very cold, but we did not suffer; we had a good sleigh and two good horses. Although we did not leave Bethlehem till near noon, we were at Canaan before dark,—stopped at a noisy country tavern. We were a large company all together in the bar-room; some were drinking, some telling stories, and some swearing. This was new and rather painful to Alice and me. We had never stayed at such a place before. What we here saw was common in nearly all the public houses where we stopped. At that time everything was done by sleighing. The roads were full. Sometimes we would meet thirty or forty sleighs loaded with wheat going to Albany and Troy to market. This made travelling to the West rather unpleasant. We, however, got along very well—had fine sleighing till we got as far as Geneva, where the snow left us. We dragged along on bare ground and in mud to East Bloomfield. Here we remained till the spring, when the roads were settled. Nearly all the first settlers [in Bloomfield] were from Connecticut; many from Bethlehem, old acquaintances of our family. They were intelligent, strong-minded farmers, most of them Christians. Mr. Williston and Mr. Bush-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Azel Backus, afterwards President of Hamilton College, was pastor of the church in Bethlehem at that time.

nell [missionaries from Connecticut] had been there, and God had displayed the glory of His grace in those ends of the earth. We were treated with great respect and kindness. Alice and I were a kind of wonder to them. That we, so young, should be willing to forsake home and friends and good old Connecticut, and go among the wild sons of the forest, they thought strange indeed. Your father preached every Sabbath, as they had no preacher.

“About the first of April we started for Buffalo, having sold the sleigh and things we could not carry. We had two good horses and one man’s saddle, and a Mackinaw blanket for the other horse. Mr. Bacon and Alice would ride on two or three miles, while I trotted along on foot as fast as I could. After a while he would tie his horse to a tree, and go on with Alice. When I overtook them, I rode on ahead a mile or so, and then tied and went on again. Thus we did till we reached Detroit, about two hundred and fifty miles by land. There was no wagon road, only a path through the woods, sometimes rather obscure, the trees marked to show the way. We crossed the river at Rochester, where there was only a house for the ferryman, *I think*. At Batavia there was a log tavern. From that to Buffalo there was only one log-house, not chinked, that is, the chinks [between the logs] not filled. We remained there over the Sabbath. The next day we reached Buffalo. As the lake was not open we had to remain a number of weeks. . . . The town was full of Indians, many of them drunk. There was a large village of them on Buffalo Creek. Red Jacket was the chief. Here Alice and I, for the first time, saw what we then called wild Indians. We were at first afraid, but in a short time ceased to fear. They were a miserably degraded specimen of human nature. I thought then there was little hope of doing them good by teaching or preaching.

“We waited for a vessel to take us to Detroit till we were tired. Then we concluded to go by land and ‘ride and tie.’ We crossed at Black Rock, and went down on the Canada side to the Falls of Niagara. There was at the Falls a good tavern, where we took breakfast; but there was no other house, and I think there was none on the American side. Upper Canada was then almost an unbroken wilderness,—no public roads. We came to London on the river Thames. There we remained a number of weeks, very kindly treated.”

What Mr. Parks, writing his recollections in 1864, called “London on the Thames,” Mr. Bacon, in a letter to his brother, June 26, 1801, called by another name. After describing more briefly their journey to that point, his narrative proceeds thus:—

“Though we met with some hindrances by means of bad roads [in the journey through Canada], we arrived at the Pinery on the River Detrench in ten days, one hundred and sixty miles from Buffalo, and within one hun-

dred and forty miles of Detroit. There we were told that the way through the fifty-mile wilderness was extremely miry and difficult, and that by waiting three or four days, we might have an opportunity to go down the river on a raft ; we therefore waited. But we were detained much longer than we expected ; the raft did not start till the tenth day after we arrived there, at noon. We slept on it two nights, but as we built us a little hut, kept a good fire, and had hay for a bed and blankets for covering, and plenty of coarse provisions, we were pretty comfortable. The third day, at about noon, ourselves and horses were safely landed this side of the wilderness. That evening we came to Fairfield, or Moravian Town, where we were treated in the kindest manner by the Moravian ministers and their wives, who appeared glad to see us. It being very rainy, we tarried there the next day till near night, and spent the time very agreeably."

Among the incidents of that rainy day was one which Mr. Bacon communicated to the trustees in his letter to them,<sup>1</sup> and which was, in his view, so interesting that he told the same story in almost the same words to his brother. The incident ought not to be omitted from this narrative :—

"Having occasion to speak of Brainerd, as they were giving the character of some of their missionaries, they observed that they had two Christian squaws in their society who were baptized by him, and that one of them had showed them a Bible a few days before, which she said she received as a present from him. Recollecting that these Moravian Indians were Delawares, and that it was near this nation that Brainerd visited, I thought the story was probably true, and was highly pleased to hear that some of his Indians were still in the land of the living, and in the very neighborhood where I was. It was very rainy, but I immediately sent for the one who lived nearest to come and see me. She came according to my request ; she appeared very decent, sensible, and clever ; she spoke pretty good English, seemed considerably advanced in years, but could not tell her age, as is commonly the case with Indians. I think she told me that it was on the Forks of the Delaware that she became acquainted with him. She observed that she was very small when she was baptized by him, and putting her hand out about three feet and a half from the floor, said she was not more than so high when she saw him last. She left that place about that time, and knows of no other who was acquainted with him but the one that is with her.<sup>2</sup>

The day after leaving Moravian Town, Mr. Bacon sold one of his two horses, fearing he might not have so favorable an opportunity at the end of his journey ; and the remainder of the

<sup>1</sup> Conn. Evang. Mag., II, 159.

<sup>2</sup> Brainerd's residence at the Forks of the Delaware ended fifty-five years before the date of this incident. — *Memoirs in Edwards's Works* (Dwight's edition), X, 193.



way to Detroit, about fifty miles, he and his young brother-in-law went on foot. At that season the paths that served for roads were extremely bad, the soil often miry, the streams swollen; but in two days and a half of difficult progress they arrived at Detroit, Saturday evening, May 9, three or four weeks earlier than would have been possible had they waited for a vessel from Buffalo.

Happy and thankful were they all to find themselves at the end of a journey so wearisome and perilous. Nothing had disappointed them save the too early melting of the snow when they had hardly measured half the distance. Not one of them had been detained a day by any illness. The young wife's "strength and courage held out through the whole way as good as at the first." Five Sabbaths the missionary had preached at Bloomfield, once at Buffalo, and twice in Canada, doing really missionary work wherever he was hindered in his journey.

Their arrival before the opening of navigation was a surprise to the few friends who were impatiently expecting them, and who received them with great kindness. None of Mr. Bacon's letters had reached Detroit; but at his former visit he had arranged to open a school at his return from Connecticut, and "the proprietors" were waiting for him. A few days were spent in getting ready to keep house with scanty apparatus, and on the 25th of May the school was begun. A special school being desired by some of the inhabitants for their daughters, Mrs. Bacon, four weeks later, undertook that work. The missionary family had become, for the time, self-supporting. Indeed, it seems to have been expected that the missionary would go that warfare very much "at his own charges."

In 1800 and 1801 the Society paid for the Indian Mission a sum total of \$400. This included the entire expense of the lone pedestrian journey, beginning in August, 1800, and the outfit of the mission in Jan. 1801; and from that time till September, 1803 (a year and eight months), there was not another cent of payment for its support from the Society.<sup>1</sup>

Those schools were not the only employment of the missionary. With some assistance from the government interpreter at Detroit, he was struggling with the difficulties of the Ojib-

<sup>1</sup>Conn. Ev. Mag., I, 479; II, 399; III, 330.

way language, which had not then contributed its marvels to the science of Comparative Philology; and he thought himself able to report in that first letter, "We are making pretty good progress." He had also begun a home missionary work, of which we get some glimpses in his letter:—

"The first Sabbath I did not preach, as I was very much fatigued and not prepared. Before the next Sabbath I made preparation, and in the forenoon I gave them an introductory discourse, showing the need and advantages of Divine revelation and of a regular ministry of the Word. The assembly, which was more numerous than I expected, appeared to be all attention. We make use of the court-house, which is very convenient for the purpose. As the congregation is more numerous in the forenoon (on account of their being in the habit of visiting and riding out for pleasure in the latter part of the day), if I have a sermon of my own, I deliver it in the forenoon.<sup>1</sup> I am so cold and lifeless through the week that it seems as if I should be no way useful to this people. But when the Sabbath comes, I am generally so unexpectedly assisted, and the people appear so uncommonly attentive, that I cannot but hope there is mercy in store for them, and that it will be poured out upon them in answer to the prayers of thousands who are pleading for my success. I use notes, but the best of my sermons often come to me while I am preaching. Four or five of my hearers are men of liberal education, but I have not heard that they have made any unfavorable remarks. Indeed, I am treated with much more respect by all classes of people than I had any right to expect. . . . Though I have been enabled, as I believe, to declare to this people the counsel of God without reserve, yet the number of my hearers increases."

Yet he expected to encounter difficulties in that ministry. He was not surprised to find that the people all demanded baptism for their children, thinking, indeed, "that this was the principal thing for which they wanted a minister." His refusal to baptize the children of parents making no profession of religious experience had already been talked about; and he had preached on the subject from Rom. iv, 11, showing, among other things, "the sin and folly of misapplying the seals of the covenant." The subject was one on which discussion, renewed from the time of Edwards and the "New Lights," had hardly ceased in the New England churches; but he had no doubt of his duty. In his sermon on that subject, "I had," said he, "uncommon assistance; and they have since been very silent." Silent they might be without being

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, it seems, he would read a printed sermon.

satisfied. Mr. Parks's recollections describe more distinctly the difficulties of the position :—

“Detroit, at the time we were there, was the largest and most important city west of Albany. . . . It was the great emporium of the fur trade. The Indian traders, as they were called, were men of great wealth and highly cultivated minds. Many of them were educated in England and Scotland, and generally spent the winter there. They returned in the spring with new goods, all purchased in Europe, and most of them brought in vessels through the lakes. The inhabitants were English, Scotch, Irish, and French, all of whom hated the Yankees most cordially. I am sure there was not an American in the place except the officers and soldiers of the garrison, which was composed of a regiment of infantry and one company of artillery. The city was enclosed by cedar pickets about twelve feet high and six inches in diameter, and so close together that one could not see through. At each side were strong gates, which were closed at night and a sentinel placed at each. No Indians were permitted to come in after sundown, or to remain over night.

“Your father had a fine school at first. The children of nearly all the principal men attended. The school was popular and well-taught, for your father was a good and faithful teacher ; but he was a *Yankee*, and after a while a strong influence was brought against him. The people, as I said, hated the Yankees. The Roman Catholic priests, four or five in number, had great influence even over those who were not Roman Catholics. They were classical men, he was not. All this was against us. One thing was very much in our favor : the officers of the army and their families treated us all with great kindness and respect. Your father had a letter from the Secretary of War, requesting those at Detroit and Mackinaw to show him kindness, and give him all the aid they could in the good work. This they uniformly did.”

In the Magazine for November there was given a portion of another letter from the missionary, dated Aug. 25, 1801. He was still preaching at Detroit, but had discontinued his afternoon service there, and had undertaken to preach every Sabbath afternoon at another place, to which he had been invited by the people, about six miles distant. He had found his audiences generally “more attentive to the Word preached than is common at the East.” He had received a visit from Nanga and several other chiefs, who had talked favorably, and had promised that, at their next visit, they would have a formal council and hear his “speeches,” *i. e.* the communications of which he was the bearer from the Missionary Society and others. But he added,—

“Since this interview with the chiefs, Mr. Denkey, one of the Moravian ministers, has been to see me, informing me that his brethren had sent on another missionary to supply his place among the Delawares, requesting him to begin his mission with the Chippewas, as had been proposed. He observed that it was his desire, and the desire of his brethren, that he should begin with the Chippewas that lived nearest to their village in Fairfield, but as this would require him to take those at the River St. Clair, he would not do it without my consent. . . . All things considered, I did not hesitate to give my consent, and assured him that I would use my influence with the Indians in his behalf.

“We make but slow progress in the Indian language; I find it hard work to commit their words to memory, and when I have learned them I find it extremely difficult to construct a sentence according to the idioms of their language. It seems to be full of irregularities; but if life and health are spared, I expect we shall be able to surmount every difficulty. The chiefs frequently call to see us, and appear extremely pleased to hear us talk their language, and do what they can to help us.”

A letter to his brother at Mansfield, Conn., bears date Oct. 22, 1801. His wife had been ill, but was nearly well again, though not well enough to resume her school. The prospect of his usefulness in Detroit had begun to be less hopeful. A certain class who had been at first among his hearers, “our greatest worldlings and men of pleasure,” he called them, men who had “manifested uncommon uneasiness when the truths of the gospel had been most clearly exhibited,” and who had been no better pleased with the printed discourses which he selected for reading than with those which were his own, had at last entirely forsaken public worship, though they treated him personally with undiminished courtesy; nor was the discouragement lessened when he saw more clearly that they disliked the message rather than the messenger. Having alluded to his own want of classical learning, he added, —

“But a circumstance has lately occurred which has made it evident that they will not receive the same truths from the hands of the learned. About the 25th of September we received a visit from Mr. Badger, who was lately sent as a missionary to New Connecticut, and a Mr. Hughes from Pennsylvania. Mr. Hughes is one of the ministers I saw here on missionary business last fall. Hoping that the Lord had sent them for good to this people, I exerted myself to give general information that Mr. Hughes was to preach on the Sabbath; but to our great grief and disappointment, he had as few, if not fewer hearers than usual, though he is one of whom the world is not worthy, and was educated at Princeton College. Mr. Badger

preached an evening lecture, and had more hearers. But though he preached an excellent and solemn discourse, a contemptuous sneer was visible on the countenances of several gentlemen, some of whom had the impudence to express their feelings by winking and grinning.

“The Sabbath before these men arrived here, finding so little prospect of usefulness and so much difficulty in learning the language here merely by means of an interpreter, I almost came to a determination that I would go among the Indians as soon as next spring, if Providence would permit; and we were rejoiced to find that Mr. Badger was disposed to go with us, and that there was a prospect of his being sent out, either by the Boston or the Connecticut Society, in the spring. I have now written to the trustees that if they will give me orders, I will try to set out for Arbercrosch (four hundred miles northwest of this, and twenty-four miles southwest from Michilimakinac) as soon as the first of May.”

Another letter, dated Feb. 10, 1802 (but postmarked “Cincinnati, 19 March, 1802”), intimates a possible change of his plan. He had learned that there was a “very encouraging prospect on the Miami [now written Maumee], seventy miles south” from Detroit; “and I have concluded,” he said, “to go there the ensuing season if the trustees and the Indians are willing.” The place had been “very populous before it was destroyed by Gen. Wayne,” and it was still attractive to the Indians, thirty families having lately removed thither from near Detroit, for better hunting ground and better planting ground. The letter illustrates, indirectly, his idea of what a mission among Indians ought to be:—

“It is the opinion of Nanga and the interpreter, who are well acquainted with the Indians and the country, that a thousand might soon be collected there, if we would go among them and afford them what assistance we could by making them ploughs, helping them to plough their ground, etc. . . . It is said that the situation is beautiful and healthy, containing a mill-seat environed by excellent land, interspersed with large openings covered with grass that is sufficient to support any number of cattle that could be wished. It seems that the greatest objection to it is that it is too tempting for missionaries. The difficulties and expense of beginning and supporting a mission there would be much less than at Arbercrosch. . . . Immediately on the opening of the spring, if permitted, I mean to visit them and take Beaumont and a hired man with me to make a beginning for me, and assist the Indians about ploughing their land. They have horses, and they have plough-irons which they received from Congress. But I must return and tarry till the last of May to fulfil my engagements here. Then, if the Lord will, I purpose to move immediately on with my family. I hope Mr. Badger will be there soon after.

But perhaps the trustees will think it best to send us to Arbercrosh ; if they do, I trust I shall go cheerfully, though the place is much more remote and friendless."

Mr. Badger, whose visit at Detroit in September, 1801, has been mentioned, returned to Connecticut in the winter, and was present at a meeting of the trustees, Jan. 6 and 7, 1802. In that meeting the Indian Mission seems to have been particularly considered. "Several letters from Rev. David Bacon were read, and verbal communications were made by Rev. Joseph Badger respecting the Indians round Lake Erie, etc." What Mr. Bacon was intending to do, "if the trustees and the Indians should be willing," was voted to be expedient. A memorandum drawn by Gov. Treadwell was adopted and put upon record, intimating the will of the Board.

That he "proceed on the opening of the spring to Arbercrosh or some other settlement of the Chippewa tribe, which on inquiry he shall find best adapted to the object of his mission ; that he perfect himself in the language amongst them by intercourse and conversation as soon as may be ; that when he shall have acquired a sufficient knowledge of the language, or before, if an interpreter can be found in the vicinity to assist him at a moderate expense, he deliver to the assembled chiefs and others the Talk composed by this Board for that purpose, and receive their answer ; that he acquaint himself with their circumstances, manners, and customs, and with the best means of bringing them to give up their wandering habits of life and to attend to a regular course of education and religious instruction, with the obstacles in the way, and the best means of avoiding or surmounting them ; that as he has power and opportunity, he impart to them, in conversation and in public discourses, the first principles of religious truths ; that he continue among them on this visit as long as the public service shall require and the circumstances of himself and family permit ; and that he report to the Board his proceedings and prospects as opportunity presents."

Such was the plan which the honorable and reverend Board proposed for a vigorous prosecution of the work. It was just what the missionary was himself proposing. But what ideas the trustees had concerning the necessary cost of the campaign they were planning may be inferred from their next vote, which munificently appropriated to the Indian Mission "an aggregate sum not exceeding \$250," but at the same time repealed an appropriation of \$150 which had been made in the September preceding.

How early, in those days of infrequent and uncertain communication between Hartford and Detroit, the instructions drawn by Gov. Treadwell, and adopted by the Board on the 7th of January, reached the missionary, does not appear. It only appears that he went forward in a courageous attempt to obey the instructions which accorded so well with his own judgment expressed in his February letter to his brother. The trustees were willing, and without loss of time he went to find out whether the Indians were also willing. As early as the 12th of May the Board seems to have learned that the "aggregate sum not exceeding \$250" was hardly adequate to "the object of the Indian Mission"; for on that day Mr. Bacon was "authorized to employ as interpreter the man mentioned in his letter of Jan. 1, provided he can procure him upon the terms proposed." On the 25th of May, the Board had gained, it seems, a still broader view, and "voted that the sum of \$410 be appropriated to the object of the Indian Mission for the current year, including the sum of \$250 appropriated to said object by a vote of this Board in January last." But those judicious men had yet to learn how much the work would inevitably cost, even on "a plan of the strictest economy." Only a few days after that more generous appropriation, there came a draft from the missionary for an amount larger by \$100 than what remained unpaid of the appropriation. Not only was the account overdrawn, but there was an informality in the draft itself, and no letter of advice had been received. The Committee of Accounts could only suffer the draft to be protested, and a special meeting of the Board was held on the 14th of July, to meet the emergency. Should the missionary, at so great a distance, be disgraced without a hearing? It was agreed that the committee had done right in suffering the draft to be protested; but on the other hand, a suit at law against the missionary "would be of unhappy tendency," and a communication from him was daily expected. So the Committee of Accounts, with two members more, were authorized to accept the draft in whole or in part, if the expected explanation should seem to be sufficient, and meanwhile to intercede with the holders for reasonable forbearance. It was provided, nevertheless, that if the draft should be accepted in

whole, \$100 of the amount should be considered as paid "in advance towards another year's salary." The record of the next meeting (Sept. 1) shows that "a lengthy letter was communicated to the Board" from the missionary, and that thereupon it was "voted that the bill of exchange drawn by Mr. Bacon, be paid, \$100 of the same to be considered as advanced towards another year's salary." It would seem to have been inflexibly determined that the Indian Mission in the depth of the wilderness, a thousand miles away, whatever the cost to the missionary, should not cost the Society more than \$250 a year.

A large part of that "lengthy letter" (seventeen printed pages) was published in the Magazine for October. The letter, dated "Michilimakinak, July 2, 1802," gave a detailed account of what had been done in strict obedience to the instructions of the Board. An abridgment of it would be difficult, and would much impair the vivacity of the story. Some passages from the recollections written down by Mr. Parks, years afterwards, may be illustrated from the more extended sixty-two report of the missionary. Before proceeding to Arbrecroche, it had been necessary to investigate the possibility of establishing the mission "at the Miami"; and the experiment which the missionary had made in that quarter was the subject of his report to the Trustees. In the words of Mr. Parks, —

"Your father and I went to the Maumee to make trial of the natives and see what could be done for them. We made preparations for our perilous journey, and purchased a canoe or dug-out large enough to carry us and our baggage. . . . We packed our 'plunder,' as it is called by the natives, and prepared for an early start in the morning. The first day [April 29] we reached Brownstown, — twenty miles. This was the last settlement between Detroit and Fort Wayne, except a few cabins at the mouth of the River Raisin, where Monroe now is. Sometimes the lake was very rough, but the man whom we hired to go with us, a large, courageous Pennsylvanian, was a good waterman, and managed the canoe with great skill. We arrived safely at Maumee Bay in three or four days. Here was an old Indian village on a beautiful, elevated place, covered with blue grass. The Indians had just returned from Detroit, where they had been selling their furs and peltry. They received in payment whiskey, bread, flour, and meat, and were preparing for a grand drunken *powwow*. I think there were about 1,500 Indians on the river, or near it, when we were there. Our



man could talk the language so as to be understood about common matters, but not so as to act as interpreter; but fortunately, or providentially, we found a white man who had been with the Indians many years, and spoke their language as well as an Indian.<sup>1</sup> He acted as interpreter for your father as long as we remained on the Maumee. He boarded with us, and I believe was paid for his services.<sup>2</sup>

“When we started on our expedition we laid in a good store of pork, bread, flour, and salt. We got very good maple sugar from the Indians. Our tea and coffee were made of wintergreen. . . . Fried pork, bread baked before the fire, wintergreen tea sweetened with maple sugar, — oh, how good! And then the sleeping — how delightful! — on the cool earth, under a blanket. . . . Sometimes I was afraid of the Indians when large numbers were drunk, but I soon got over this, and became so familiar with their ways that I ceased to fear.

“Your father had many talks with them, and met them in council when large numbers, five hundred or a thousand, were present. They listened to all he said, and answered with great deliberation. They did not wish to make any change in their religion, but thought the good old way was the best. Having done all he could, and having no hope of doing any good to the Indians there, your father concluded to leave them and seek a more favorable location.”

The missionary's more extended narrative shows that when he arrived at the mouth of the river (near the place where the thriving city of Toledo now gives employment and homes to more than 30,000 people) most of the chiefs were drunk at the trader's, above. After waiting there two days, and finding that their absence might be indefinitely prolonged, he, with his companions, went up the river eighteen miles to Fort Miami (now Maumee City), that he might there deposit the provisions and the farming tools which he had brought. The next day he returned, having learned that the chiefs had gone down. On Saturday, May 8, he found the head chief (whose name being interpreted was Little Otter), and one other at the main village, all the rest being drunk in the neighboring villages, and with those two he held a conference of several hours, explaining to them the nature and design of his mission. They were courteously attentive, and when he had finished his statement Little Otter made reply (so the missionary wrote), —

<sup>1</sup> He had been taken captive “when he was ten years of age, and adopted into the head family of the nation, and was considered a chief.”

<sup>2</sup> “An excellent interpreter,” says the missionary, “who served me faithfully for a much less sum than what either of the others would have asked.”

“That the Great Spirit had been listening, and that they and their young men had been listening to all that I had said ; that he believed it was true ; that the air appeared clear and no clouds in the way, and that he would assemble his chiefs and hear me again as soon as possible, but that till then he could give me no further answer.”

Through the next day, the Lord's Day, they “enjoyed peace and quietness” in that heathen village ; but the night which followed was noisy, for a poor child was dying in one of the wigwams, and conjurers were at work to save its life by making an uproar with drums and rattles. Such work, as the morning drew near, required whiskey, and from drinking some of the conjurers got to fighting. “But at the request of the sober Indians, who chose not to interfere,” the missionary party separated the fighters, and after a while succeeded in putting an end to the quarrel which otherwise would have been a murder. No progress could be made on Monday, for most of the chiefs being still drunk, Little Otter could not convene his parliament, but he informed the missionary that they would be sober the next day, in preparation for a dance that was to follow in the night. On Tuesday it was found that nothing could be done before the dance ; and Little Otter advised that the business be deferred three days, intimating that the chiefs might be expected to be wise by that time, and ready to attend to a communication from the missionary. One incident of that day, Tuesday, May 11, may be given in Mr. Bacon's own words :—

“As there were sick people who needed my charity, and as others were constantly begging from me, I had disposed of all my provisions, and found it necessary to go up to the fort for more. When I arrived at my interpreter's, which was one mile above, I found there the head chief of Rushdaboo, who was very troublesome when in liquor. I perceived that he was intoxicated, and soon discovered by his gestures and the tone of his voice while talking with another Indian, that he had something against me. Within a few minutes he accosted me in an angry manner, — told me that he had heard bad news, that he had been informed that the white people were a-going to collect all the Indians together, and then fall upon them and kill them, and that he believed that I had come upon that business. But I soon convinced him by means of my interpreter, that I had neither inclination nor ability to destroy them ; and that I had come among them to be one of their people, and to do them all the good that was in my power. He then gave me his hand, and told me he would be my friend,

but begged that I would lend him a dollar to get some whiskey. I put him off by telling him that I had been so long from home that I had spent the most of my money, and that if I had to remain there much longer, I did not know but I should have to call on him for assistance. But before we parted, he kissed me more times than I could have wished, and hugged me till he obliged me to return the compliment."

An adverse wind hindered their going up the river more than five miles that afternoon, and they encamped for the night about a quarter of a mile above the Indians' dancing ground. The interpreter (who, it will be remembered, was an Indian by adoption) advised Mr. Bacon to go with him to the dance ; but he, knowing that some of the Indians would be intoxicated, that such would be apt to be jealous of him at that time, "and that nothing would be too absurd for their imaginations to conceive or too cruel for their hands to execute," judged it "not prudent to be among them that night." One night, however, was not all ; for that was "their annual conjuration dance, which they celebrated every year on their return from hunting." The next morning a son of the head chief was sent with an express invitation to the missionary, and he went. From his full description of the conjuration dance and the conjurers, one passage may be transcribed :—

"The dancers appeared to be about one hundred and fifty in number, very fairly dressed. Their parade was on a beautiful eminence on the bank of the river. The turf was taken off from their dancing ground, which was about twenty feet in width and forty in length. In the middle stood a red post with a white feather in the top, round which the conjurers took their stand, who seemed to be musicians to the rest who were dancing round them. On each side they had bark roofs erected, under which they smoked their pipes and refreshed themselves when fatigued. The most of them had begun to be intoxicated, and some were very noisy and quarrelsome ; but when they attempted to fight, the rest would hold them till they got pacified, or till they got them drunk enough to sleep. The Indians who did not belong to the dance were seated round at some distance from the rest, and were merely spectators. I took my stand at the end of a bark hut, within four or five rods of them, where I had a fair prospect. While I was standing there, I recollect to have seen one of the conjurers walking about for some time, and looking at me ; but I paid no attention to him till I saw him advancing very fast towards me, with a countenance that bespoke bad intentions. He was just enough in liquor to feel insolent and courageous. The nearer he advanced, his countenance assumed a more threatening aspect. By the time he came within a rod of

me, while approaching with greater speed, he railed out at me, flourishing his fist, and charged me with despising them and coming there to make game of them. I must acknowledge, with shame, that I was daunted at the first shock, being off my guard ; but on looking to God for grace and strength, and recollecting that this enemy could not raise his hand without His agency, I was immediately strengthened. As soon as the words were interpreted to me, I replied that he was mistaken, and that what he said was not true ; that I had a great regard for the Indians, and had come out in a friendly manner to visit them, in order to do them good ; that I had been invited there by one of his own people, but had not come with the least intention of making sport of them. This, however, did not satisfy him, for he immediately added that he supposed I thought he was poor and did not know much ; but he said that he had property at home, and that he thought himself as good as a white man. I replied that I had a good opinion of the abilities of the Indians, and that he had no reason to think that I was disposed to undervalue them, as I had come out to live with them and be one of their people if they were willing to receive me. But he said that he did not want to have me stay there ; and after some remarks about the French and the unsatisfactoriness of their religion to Indians who had tried it, he added that the Great Spirit had made him an Indian, made him red, and made him every way just as he was, and placed him there on that ground, and he said that he meant to remain just as he was, and that he did not mean to hear to me. . . . I told him that I was waiting to have a council with the chiefs, and if they were not generally disposed to have me stay, I should go away immediately. And I observed that if I did stay, he or any other one would be at liberty to do just as they pleased about embracing my religion. . . . To cut the business short, as he was disposed to be tedious, I offered him my hand and told him I must leave him, as I was in a hurry to go up the river ; that if I remained there and he wished to have any more talk with me, he must come to see me ; and I added that, notwithstanding all he had said, if I came there to live, I meant to treat him well and to have him for one of my best friends. At first, he seemed unwilling to receive my hand ; but on hearing that I meant to be a friend to him, he shook my hand and said, if that was the case, he would be a friend to me ; and as a token of this, invited me to come and eat meat and bear's grease with him."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Something more than ordinary courage was necessary in the presence of so many drunken and half-drunken Indians, any one of whom might suddenly shoot or tomahawk the missionary at the slightest provocation, or at none. The two instances mentioned by him, in which he was enabled to baffle the malice of savages ready to murder him, remind me of another incident. It was while my parents were living in Detroit, and when I was an infant of less than four months. Two Indians came as if for a friendly visit, one of them a tall and stalwart young man, the other shorter and older. As they entered, my father met them, gave his hand to the old man, and was just extending it to the other, when my mother, quick to discern the danger, exclaimed, "See ! he has a knife !" At the word, my father saw that while the Indian's right hand was ready for the salute, a gleaming

It was now Wednesday, the 12th of May. Mr. Bacon, with his companions, continued his voyage to the fort, and there, recognizing the probability that those Indians would not permit him to remain among them, he reloaded his canoe with what remained of his goods, so that he might be ready for an immediate return to Detroit.

At last, on Friday, the 14th, the Indians being sufficiently sober for business, the great council was held at the mouth of the river. The missionary, obeying as closely as possible the instructions which he had received from the trustees, made a short introduction, and then "delivered to the assembled chiefs and others, the talk composed by the Board for that purpose," giving them such translation and exposition of it as was possible. The "talk" had been "composed" and published two years before,<sup>1</sup> and seems to have been regarded by the trustees as the very first thing in the enterprise of converting the savages; but with all deference to the memory of Gov. Treadwell, who "composed" it and subscribed it as chairman of the trustees, I will venture to say that, though very good, it was an instance in which there was "too much of a good thing." It began in this fashion:—

TO THE INDIAN TRIBES BORDERING ON LAKE ERIE.

"FRIENDS AND BROTHERS, — The person whose name is underwritten announces himself to you as the chairman of a council of twelve persons, who are here known by the name of the *Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut*; you will please to listen while, in the name of the trustees, he explains to you their origin, their views, and the objects of this address."

Having made this announcement, the talk proceeded to explain the constitution and functions of the General Association of Connecticut, and (what is not easy for the average

knife in his left hand was partly concealed under his blanket. An Indian, coming to assassinate, waits for a moment when his intended victim is looking away from him, and then strikes. My father's keen eye was fixed upon the murderer, and watched him, eye to eye. The Indian found himself strangely disconcerted. In vain did the old man talk to my father in angry and chiding tones, — that keen black eye was watching the would-be assassin. The time seemed long. My mother took her baby from the birch-bark cradle, and was going out to call for help, but when she reached the door she dared not leave her husband. At last the old man became weary of chiding; the young man had given up his purpose for the time, and they retired.

<sup>1</sup> Conn. Ev. Mag., I, 16-18.

Connecticut Christian to understand) the identity between the General Association and the Missionary Society, which is nevertheless not the same thing, but another ; also what missionaries are, whence is derived the name of the Missionary Society. Then came an explanation of what is meant by religion, — an explanation including a summary of theoretical and practical theology, and ending with a description of the Bible as the authentic source of religious knowledge. It seemed necessary, also, to explain that the Legislature of Connecticut had “granted liberty to the trustees to ask the contributions of the good people,” and that thus the means had been provided for sending a missionary. The bearer of the talk was commended to the Indians as “a good man and a good Christian.” Then, with a few words expressing the kind feelings of those who had sent him on that errand, and asking for him that he might be received and treated as a friend, — words which, had they been all, might have been sufficient for their purpose, — the talk of the trustees was brought to an end.

It will have been seen that the missionary, bound by positive instructions, could not evade the duty of delivering to those chiefs and others the written message which had been put into his hands. He felt the difficulty of the task. First, he must make the document intelligible to his interpreter, a wild man of the woods, whose education in English had been broken off in his childhood ; and then he must trust that man to make it intelligible through the probably inadequate medium of the Ojibway language. He had gone over it with the interpreter beforehand, carefully endeavoring to make him understand it ; but when he came to the public reading of it in that assembly, he felt that the interpreter was still in need of help. “I took care,” so he reported, “to read him but a few lines at a time, and then to express the ideas in language better adapted to his capacity, and more agreeable to their modes of speaking.” He added frankly, though modestly, “I think the address was much too long, *i. e.* it contained too many ideas on that subject, to them so uninteresting, to be delivered to Indians at once, but this made it longer.” To help his explanation of the address, he drew on the ground, before beginning to read, a map of Lake Erie, of the State of New York, of Connecticut, and (more

vaguely) of regions beyond, even as far as the city of Washington. He showed them how Connecticut was divided into towns, each with its great house for worship, and its minister; and thus giving them some notion of what Connecticut was, he tried to make them understand that the trustees whose talk he was about to read were persons of great eminence and authority. The map excited their curiosity, and they were somewhat attentive to the statement of matters of fact. It was also observed that when they heard such parts of the address as accorded with their notions, when they were told that God made all things, and that we must not murder, steal, cheat, or lie, they responded, though not very fervently, with their "Huoh!" as an English audience responds "Hear! Hear!" But to other parts of the address they were less attentive, giving almost no response. "This shows," said Mr. Bacon in his report, "the difficulty of teaching a disorganized people."

Having gone through the task of interpreting the official talk, he told the chiefs that if their patience was not exhausted he desired them to hear what he had to say for himself. They readily consented, and as he began to speak, they seemed more attentive. His discourse, as reported by himself to the trustees, was by no means a brief one. He began by explaining how it had come to pass that no missionary had been sent to them till then. Having heard of certain objections to their receiving him, he stated those objections one by one, and answered them. Had it been said among them that the white men's religion was not designed for Indians? His answer was, God has revealed it for the world, and has commanded that it be preached to every creature. Was it objected that this religion is not good for red men? He answered by showing what effect it would have on their children, on their young men, on their entire community, and how it would fit them for Heaven and bring them thither; and how other Indian nations had tried it and found it good. Had it been objected that by receiving him they would "expose themselves to the fate of the poor Moravians [on the Muskingum], who were destroyed by our people in consequence of their embracing our religion"? His answer was, that our bad men would be restrained by our laws, for the Indians were at peace with us and under the protection of

Congress. But the most serious objection of all was that if they were to receive instruction they must live together in permanent settlements, which was impossible on account of their fighting and killing one another when intoxicated. This great objection he answered more at length by explaining to them what his method would be, and how he hoped to do them good. He acknowledged that the objection was valid while they made such use of spirituous liquor, and his plan was that they should begin a new village in which none should be allowed to get drunk, and from which every one should be expelled who would not comply with that regulation. His report tells how he argued with them:—

“I showed them the advantages of adopting the plan,—that they would live in peace, as they never quarrelled when they were sober; that with my assistance they would be able to give their children an education, for want of which they were going on blindfold in their business with white people, who frequently imposed upon them, but who would not be able to cheat them if they once had eyes of their own to see for themselves, as would be the case if their young chiefs and others should get an education and learn to speak English; and that then they might have books printed in their own language for them to read; that I would show them and assist them what I could, about making carts and ploughs, and about ploughing their ground; so that they might improve [employ] their horses, which were then almost useless to them, and raise a plenty of corn and wheat, potatoes, squashes and tobacco, horses and cattle, sheep, hogs, and poultry; that I would show them and assist them what I could about building a mill, building houses, and making furniture for their houses; that I would make them wheels, and show them about making looms; and that my wife would learn their young women to make their own cloth; that our good people would send them on schoolmasters enough to school all their children for nothing; that I would try to have them send on a blacksmith who was a good man, and would mend their guns and do all their work for them in the best manner, and at a much more reasonable price than what they had to give for it then, besides saving them the trouble of going a great distance for it. I told them that, as their land was excellent, if they would adopt this plan and their young men would assist their women and children, they might enjoy all these privileges within a few years, without working hard, and that then they would have a comfortable home for their old people and for those who were sick, where they could remain through the winter whilst the others were gone to their hunting grounds; and what was infinitely more than all the rest, they might then enjoy the religion of God’s Word, which, if they would rightfully attend to it, would make them unspeakably happy forever.”



He showed them what the prospect would be if they should reject his proposal. Game was growing scarce, and would soon be too scarce for them to live by hunting. Unable to obtain their living from the soil, they would become in a few years very poor and hungry. They would sell their excellent land for little or nothing, and would be under the necessity of leaving that pleasant river and delightful country, and of seeking a home in some distant and unknown wilderness. He urged them, therefore, not only to prevent liquor from being brought into the proposed village, but to desist entirely from drinking it. He would have them more afraid of those who brought whiskey among them than of those who came with fire-guns. He told them how the tribes that once lived eastward to the Atlantic had almost perished, "principally by means of this destroying liquor." This universal drunkenness was displeasing to God, and had provoked Him to give them up to die as by their own hands. If the Indians there continued to go on as others had done, they must expect to be swept from the earth in like manner. They might think they could not keep from drinking, but if they would strive against it, and pray to the Great Spirit to help them, He would enable them to keep from it. The peroration of his discourse was in words like these<sup>1</sup> :—

"I might have lived much happier at home among my dear friends and acquaintance, where we had everything that was comfortable around us ; but knowing how much you need my assistance, and having a great love for you, and being commanded by God, I have forsaken all, and have come a great distance to spend my days with you, in order to make you happy in this world and in the world to come. I have come by the desire of God's ministers and good people, who have always been your best and only true friends, both in time of war and in time of peace, and have always been praying to God for you, that you may enjoy the great privileges which they have now been at so much pains and expense to help you to. I have not come merely of my own accord or by the desire of those good people ; but God has sent me and commands you to listen to me. Since it is thus, if you do not receive me and attend to the good things which I am sent to teach you, you will make me very sorrowful ; you will exceedingly grieve the hearts of God's ministers and people, and what is infinitely worse, you will dreadfully offend God who has sent me, and will make Him very angry with you.

<sup>1</sup> Conn. Ev. Mag , III, 153, 154. The language in the quotation is changed simply from the oblique form to the direct.

“To conclude my speech, you are not to blame for not having this good religion sent to you before ; but if you reject it now it is sent, if you reject the goodness of God in sending it to you, and all our kind offers to you which have cost us so much trouble and expense, you will certainly be inexcusable. I hope, therefore, you will give me a favorable answer.”

He was thus urgent in his appeal to them because he suspected that the majority were determined not to receive him. The patience with which they heard him was partly due to the fact that he had “furnished them, in the first place, with as much tobacco as they could smoke.” The council was prolonged into the night. The next day, about noon, they assembled on the grass, and sent for the missionary that he might receive their answer. Little Otter, as the principal chief, announced the result of their long deliberation in a speech, which, as written down by Mr. Bacon, is by no means the least noteworthy among the recorded specimens of aboriginal eloquence. The answer was courteously and ingeniously evasive. Game was indeed becoming scarce, but there would be enough of it if only the “great black-gowns and chiefs” would keep the white people from settling so near the Indians. Whiskey was very mischievous, but it would do them no harm if the white people would leave off making it and bringing it to them. What the missionary had been saying was all very good, but they of that tribe would not wish to steal these good words or keep them to themselves, and therefore they advised the missionary to confer with other Indians, of whom there were a great many. The only promise they would make was that if all the tribes would agree to have black-gowns, they would agree to have one too.

All this was only “a more polite way of answering than to say No.” Most men would have regarded that indirect refusal as conclusive. “But,” said Mr. Bacon, “I was not disposed to take even No for an answer, till I had a further trial.” He immediately begged another hearing, and went on with a fresh argument on all the points which their answer had proposed. Without repeating what he had said before, he refuted their evasions in a way level at every point to their capacity, and then he ended with this appeal :—

“Fathers, you see that I am very unwilling to leave you. I have come a great way to visit you, and I find there is a prospect of my doing you so

much good if I remain here that I do not know how to think of going away. You see that it is just with me as it is with your children. If you tell them that you can't have them with you, and that they must go off and look for another home, they will tell you that they love you so much that they can't leave you. And if you insist on their going away, they will hang round you and tell you they can't, and they will plead with you to let them live with you, and will tell you how much good they will do you if you will let them stay. Now, Fathers, if you will not turn away your children who love you and are willing to do anything for you, and who plead with you in this manner to keep them, I think I may conclude that you will not turn me away."

All this the Indians heard with increased attention, and then they held a secret consultation. After some time the missionary was summoned to receive the answer which they had agreed upon. Little Otter again exhibited his oratorical skill. The reply was courteous but decisive. It was to this effect: You think the Indians are like wild horses, and that we are tame enough to be caught and to be used in catching others. But we are all wild, and if you were to try ever so long, you could never get us to live together. You can go home to the great fathers who sent you, or write to them and let them know how it is. Tell them that you have tried all you could to have us live together and could not get us to do it, and that this is the way with their red brothers. Your religion is very good, but only for white people; it will not do for Indians. When the Great Spirit made white people He put them on another island, and gave them farms and tools to work with, and He made horses and horned cattle, and sheep and hogs for them, that they might get their living in that way, and He taught them to read and gave them their religion in a book. But when He made Indians, He made them wild and put them on this island in the woods, and gave them the wild game that they may live by hunting. We formerly had a religion very much like yours, but we found that it would not do for us, and we have discovered a much better way. If you had only proposed to school our children, you might have got here and there one to attend; but we are afraid of your religion, and therefore we cannot listen to you. You said that you had come a great way to see us. We go a great way sometimes to see folks and get news, but if we do not make out anything, we do not mind it or think anything of it. This is all that your red brothers have to say to you.

So the negotiation with those Indians was ended. Sadly the missionary thanked them for their civility, and expressing at once regret for their delusion and hearty wishes for their welfare, he took leave of them. It was Saturday, the 15th of May, and night was approaching, but as he had made everything ready, and the wind was favorable, he and his companions made haste to embark in their canoe, and by dint of hard rowing, with little rest, they reached home safely on Tuesday, having been absent almost three weeks, exposed to wind and weather, and lying on the ground almost every night.

Mr. Bacon's narrative of his attempt at the Maumee River is the longest and most elaborate writing of his that has been preserved. Inasmuch as it exhibits the man better than I can describe him, I have given the story in full, and much of it in his own words. The traits of character which the reader will hardly fail to discern are the traits which live in my remembrance of him from my early childhood till my sixteenth year.

The next thing in Mr. Bacon's plan, and in directions given by the trustees, was to visit the Indians at Arbrecroche. Only fourteen days elapsed before he was embarked with his family for Mackinaw. Seven days of pleasant sailing brought them to the beautiful island, whence his voluminous letter was despatched, bearing date three weeks after his arrival there. He had been cultivating an acquaintance with the Indians, whom he found far more numerous there than at Detroit, and apparently "more sprightly, cleanly, industrious, and agreeable than those." He had not yet been able to talk much with them for want of an interpreter, the public interpreter being a Frenchman who could speak only a little English, and their dialects, whether Ottawas or Chippewas, differing perceptibly from the dialects spoken by the same nations at Detroit. He was hoping to obtain the help of a young man whom he had lately seen, who could speak both English and Indian well, and who had partly agreed to serve "for his board and schooling." Without such an interpreter, his progress in acquiring the Indian language would be slow and difficult. Having learned that the Indians at Arbrecroche were having a drunken bout, and were in respect to drinking and fighting no better than those at the Maumee, he had not attempted to visit them without an inter-

preter. He deemed it doubtful whether the chiefs there would permit him to reside among them. Two difficulties were to be overcome, which had not before been mentioned: first, the remaining influence of Roman Catholic priests, who had formerly been there; and then, the superstitious fear which those Indians had in common with others, as if ministers were another sort of conjurers with power to bring distempers and sickness upon them. "But," said the missionary, "if I cannot prevail on the chiefs to receive me, I mean to insist on their letting me have a number of their sons to educate here on the island while I am learning their language"; and lest the trustees should be alarmed at the prospect of expense, he added, "I shall require them to find [for their sons] food and clothes." The conclusion of the letter is:—

"My present determination is to remain about here till, in one way or another, I get the language, and, if I can get a good interpreter at a moderate expense, be preaching through the summer to all the Indians who will hear me. As they are always absent through the winter. I must try in that part of the time to be doing something to help support myself, either by a school (which must be small) or by some kind of labor."

Mackinaw was, at that time, one of the remotest outposts of the fur trade. It was garrisoned by a company or two of United States soldiers, and under that protection the traders and the Indians could meet for the exchange of commodities. The place could hardly be called a settlement; it was little more than a military and trading station. Mr. Bacon was able to obtain what was considered a comfortable house, as houses then were at that place, where the best houses, if my impressions are correct, were built of hewn logs and consisted of perhaps two rooms and a garret. But living was costly even in the humblest style; and the mission, it will be remembered, was to be sustained without expense to the Society beyond \$250 for the year.

All the discouragements anticipated in that first letter were realized. The missionary was there in obedience to orders, but the Indians at Arbrecroche were not less determined than those at the Maumee that no missionary should be admitted to live in their villages. His letters preserved in the archives of the Society, and the few private letters from him and from his

wife that have happened to come into my possession, show what difficulties he encountered, and how he kept on hoping. Through the summer his work was obstructed by the impossibility of obtaining an interpreter, though the chiefs, so far as he was able to communicate with them, showed no unfriendliness. He was making what progress he could in the circumstances towards the acquisition of the language which he was to use in his work. From a Dr. M——, who was well versed in that language, and whose wife was also familiar with it, he had received some indefinite promises of help in the difficult study. He hoped that by means of a school for the children of the few white families on the island he might earn in the winter \$150 towards the expenses of the mission. But as time went on, those expectations were disappointed. The friendly doctor and Mrs. M—— were so busy with the gayeties and dissipations of the winter that they had little time to help the missionary and his wife in the conflict with Ojibway etymology and syntax, though it appears that in the latter part of the winter Mrs. Bacon had begun to spend much of her time with Mrs. M—— for the purpose of talking with her in the Indian language, —an expedient which till then had been impracticable, because it had been impossible to hire a woman, at any price, to do the work of the family. “This,” said her husband, “seems the only way of doing anything to purpose. Mrs. Bacon will acquire the language by talking there much faster than I should, and what she gets, I shall get of course.” But this hope soon failed. Mrs. M—— was prostrated by illness, and did not recover till the Indian trade, returning with the spring, required all her attention. The school, too, by which the missionary had hoped to support himself in part while acquiring the language, did not entirely meet his expectation; it was continued four months, and then was closed for the season, because many of the children were kept at home for want of clothes, and because many of the parents found themselves too poor to pay what they had promised.

A letter from my mother to one of her young friends in Lebanon happens to be in my possession. It bears date “Michilimackinac, Feb. 11, 1803,” and beneath the date is a memorandum, — “Just two years ago I left Lebanon.” A few

sentences from it may help to fill out the picture of life in Mackinaw seventy-three years ago.

“MY DEAR JERUSA, —<sup>1</sup> . . . Though nature has twice performed her annual round since I bade farewell to the dear companions of my youth, it seems not long since I was a happy resident in your thrice happy village. I cannot, nor would I wish to forget the pleasure which I there enjoyed; but, though you will scarcely believe it, I am far from being wretched where I am. It is true that I am deprived of many privileges, but there are many things which still afford delight. I am favored with the most excellent books, which I often read with pleasure. I have the satisfaction of believing that God fills Heaven and earth, and does not confine the manifestations of himself to persons in particular places, but condescends to reveal his glory to all who humbly and ardently desire it. . . . God has given me a dear son, and has hitherto smiled upon him in a remarkable manner. . . . I am anxious about his life, his health, and trust that I am anxious also about his immortal part. I am pleased to see his daily improvement, and am often diverted with his little, playful airs. Oh, that I had that grace which is sufficient to enable me to train him up for God! . . .

“It has been impossible for us to get much assistance in the Indian language this winter, as the gentleman who promised us assistance has been constantly taken up with amusements, as is customary for all in high life here [high life being a little circle, ‘about twenty-five on the island’]. Card-clubs stately, two evenings in a week for ladies and gentlemen, balls, dinners, tea-parties, etc., occupy nearly all their time, the Sabbath not excepted. When I first came here, there were not so many people as at present. A large number of troops have since been sent on, among whom are several officers and their families. These are, generally, destitute of religion. What a place must this be! Could you be transported hither and hear the awful language which I daily hear, methinks you would be filled with horror, and imagine that this is the place where infernals rave.”

So the first winter in Mackinaw wore away. On the 12th of May, 1803, the missionary received from Hartford the first communication addressed to him at that distant outpost. The letter itself, written by the secretary of the trustees, and dated Feb. 10, has not been preserved; but it was more than a mere copy of record. From the record, it appears that a special

<sup>1</sup> This friend, Miss Bayley, afterwards Mrs. Little, gave a son, the late Rev. Charles Little, to the foreign missionary work. Mr. Little was, for some years, in the Madura Mission of the A. B. C. F. M. He, after his mother's death, gave me two old letters which she had kept as memorials of her early friendship with Alice Parks.

meeting of the Board was held on the 8th of February, the particular occasion being a communication lately received from Rev. David Bacon, missionary to the Indians. A generous soul in Vermont, Mr. Solomon Goodell,<sup>1</sup> had made a gift of more than \$100 to the specific work of Indian missions. The communication from Mr. Bacon, together with the evidence which that contribution gave of interest in missions to the heathen, seems to have produced a deep impression. It was voted that \$500 should be "appropriated to the object of the Indian mission for the current year." Of that appropriation \$400 was to be remitted to the missionary, and the remainder was to be subject to his order for the payment of certain debts which he had been struggling to pay ever since he entered on the mission. An explanatory vote was added that the appropriation should be "in full for Mr. Bacon's services for the year, and for the payment of an interpreter to be hired by him," the trustees having been distinctly informed that the wages of an interpreter would probably be not less than \$150. At the same time it was ordered that the secretary procure, at the expense of the Society, three complete sets of the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* (then in its third volume), and transmit the same to Mr. Bacon<sup>2</sup>; and also "that the secretary procure the last letter from Mr. Bacon to be copied at the expense of the Society, and transmit a copy of it to Mr. Goodell," with an assurance that his donation should be expended according to his request, and with the information that \$500 had been appropriated to the Indian Mission for the current year.

These extraordinary indications of interest in the work called forth from the missionary a joyful response: "I am perfectly satisfied, and most cordially approve of every measure which our worthy trustees have adopted with respect to this mission. The sum they have appropriated for the support of this mission for the current year, though not more than will be

<sup>1</sup> See "Memoirs of William Goodell, D. D.," pp. 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Nine months later Mr. Bacon said in a letter to the secretary, "We have not yet received the magazines. We should be willing to go fifty miles to have an opportunity to read them. For more than two years past we have been as much secluded from the circle of religious intelligence as if we had been under ground. We are extremely anxious to hear something respecting missions and poor missionaries in different parts of the world."



necessary, is greater than I dared to hope for, considering that the most of the supporters of the mission are unacquainted with the expenses of living in this country." Evidently it was his expectation, as well as that of the trustees, that a mission to the Indians in that distant wilderness would be able to do much for its own support. The \$500 in full for a year's service, with \$150 deducted for an interpreter, could not have been considered, either by the missionary or by the Board, as anything more than a generous "grant, in aid" of his self-sacrificing zeal.

"The spirited exertions of the venerable Board of Trustees, and the liberal donations which are made by the children of God who are ardently praying for the success of the mission, loudly call for thanksgivings to the Great Inspirer of every good design, and afford the highest encouragement to hope that the Lord is about to do great things for these poor, wretched, and long-neglected heathen. . . . The directors and supporters of the mission seem to have done their part, thus far, very faithfully; and as they have sowed bountifully, they will doubtless reap bountifully. May that liberal soul in Vermont be rewarded with a plentiful harvest of grace here and of glory hereafter! I pray that I may not be left to counteract these noble exertions by slothfulness as a laborer, or to waste by unfaithfulness as a steward the sacred treasure that has been deposited for such a benevolent and god-like purpose. . . . If the Lord were not sovereign in the choice of instruments to be employed, as well as in the ends to be answered, I could have no hopes of success unless baptized anew with the fire of that love which is stronger than death. . . . But why is it that I am so unprepared, when such great preparations are made in other respects? Is it not because that for all these things God will be inquired of; and the friends of the mission, depending too much on temporal means and too little on his power and grace, have offered more money for my support than prayers for my sanctification and success?"

After describing the failure of the help which the missionary and his wife had hoped for in their efforts to acquire the Indian language, the letter proceeds:—

"I have therefore tried to get a sober young Indian into the family, who was much pleased with the idea of coming, as he is very desirous of acquiring an education. But a trader, to whom he is indebted, would not consent to it unless I would pay \$50 for him. I was therefore obliged to relinquish this plan also. The young fellow appeared extremely sorry, and says that as soon as he has paid the debt, he will come and live with me till he is qualified for mercantile business. I expect him in about a month. He proposes to work for me a part of the time, and I am to pay him for what he does. He is a young chief, of a very worthy and respectable

family, and is possessed of superior abilities. The worthy old chief mentioned in my journal last fall<sup>1</sup> (an uncle of this young chief), lately made me a present of a bark containing more than forty weight of the finest maple-sugar I ever saw. After making a hole in the top, he cut it open in the side to show me that it was all of the same quality, and assured me that it was a 'mokok' of 'sisebauquet' that he had made on purpose for me. I was pleased with the present, especially as it was an expression of friendship which no other person on the island received from him, though it is common for the commanding officer to receive such presents from the Indians, especially from the chiefs. I suppose it was owing to my having treated him with more kindness and respect, always bringing him to my table, whereas if others fed him it would be in the manner that we feed our dogs. We made him presents in return, to more than the amount of what he would have sold it for.

"Mr. —, who had offered me a hundred acres of land, and made me many fair proposals, if I would go and live by the side of him, when I went to draw writings refused to fulfil any of his promises, and would not suffer me to come on to his land unless I would consent to give him my improvements when I might leave them. I have therefore been making provision on this island for my family. I have begun to build a log-house, a mile and a half from the village. We have cleared a little piece of land, and are now fencing and planting our garden. The land is the best on the island, and full as good as it is at Arbrecroche, and the wood is chiefly taken off, just there, by the citizens, so that the place is very suitable for an Indian village. . . .

"I hope to see my interpreter here within a month. As soon as he comes, I calculate to go directly to Arbrecroche, and spend most of the time there through the summer. My family will remain on the island.

"The Indians are very unwilling to part with their children; but if it is possible, we mean to take a little boy and girl to live with us till they are of age, in order that they may hurry us forward in the language, and be of service to us in other respects. I expect that most of the chiefs of Arbrecroche will soon be here; but for want of an interpreter that speaks English, I shall not be able to say much to them."

About five weeks later (June 25) the missionary had another opportunity of sending a letter. The young chief, Sigenog, had been with him since the last of May, and was confirming the favorable opinion already given concerning him. His behavior in the family and out of it had been better than could reasonably be expected of one "brought up in a heathenism greatly corrupted by intercourse with what are called civilized people." The time when Sigenog was one of our family is a

<sup>1</sup> That "journal," like many other letters in the correspondence, is not now found in the archives of the Society.

little beyond the reach of my recollection ; but his name was a household name with us in my childhood, and I remember vividly the copy-book filled with his neat penmanship and long retained as a sort of keepsake. I may be permitted to transcribe here some part of what was written about him at the end of the first month : —

“ He eats and drinks at our table, is very fond of our way of living, tries to conform to us in everything, conducts with as much decency and propriety as a white person, and is very modest, cheerful, and sociable. . . . He has such an aversion to intoxication that he will not associate with Indians who give way to it. He has not slept out of the house more than one or two nights since he has been with us, and then he was with his near relations. He goes to the fort (a mile and a half from where we now live) two or three times a week, but seldom stays more than three or four hours, and often returns much sooner, with the complaint, ‘ Enish-enâbâge kenâssquiebe mozhuk, mozhuk, mozhuk.’ (Indians drunk always, always, always.) He is very fond of his book, finds great difficulty in pronouncing *l* and *r*, but has got so far as to read tolerably in two syllables. For his amusement, I have lately put him to writing, in which I doubt not he will make great proficiency. . . . As he has not been used to constant labor of any kind, I am afraid that he will get tired of it if I require him to do much at present. I believe he has done about enough to pay for his board ; and I think it likely that after he has got a little more into the habit of working, he will do enough to pay for his clothes. We are all of us extremely pleased with him, pay him the utmost attention, and find that we make much more rapid progress in the language than we ever have made before.

“ The chiefs have not met at this place this spring, and I believe never will, as they are not likely to receive any presents from the Americans. If my interpreter [so long negotiated with, and so often expected in vain] comes, I expect to go to Arbrecroche soon after he arrives. If he does not come, I do not see but that I must remain here this season, and improve my time in learning the language and in making preparation to lighten the expenses of the mission, by clearing and cultivating a piece of ground. . . . We live at present in a very small log-house, which I was obliged to build this spring. I am preparing a more convenient one, which will not be finished before another year. We expect to spend the winter in the village. I shall not raise much of anything this year. The flies and worms have destroyed the most of my garden vegetables, and what is worse, the most that are on the island.”

The second summer at Mackinaw was wearing away, and the prospect of success did not brighten. The attempt to obtain an interpreter was continually renewed and continually baffled. Probably it was a grave mistake to suppose that any interpreter, w ever serviceable to fur-traders or to military

officers in such intercourse as they held with the Indians, would be of much use to the mission beyond the aid he might render in learning the language. Mr. Bacon's experience with interpreters was teaching him that lesson; and he was learning, at the same time, that no negotiation with chiefs, like that which he had with Little Otter and others at the Miami, was likely to open the door for him. He saw that success was to be achieved only by establishing his abode in some convenient proximity to the Indians, and beginning a new village for such of them as might be induced to learn a better way of living; and he was gradually bringing his plans into accordance with that view. In a letter written on the 27th of September, he expressed a feeling like that of the Psalmist, crying out, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!" His latest communication from the secretary had told him, incidentally, that in New England there were still "revivals of religion in many places"; and he could not but think with sadness how far away he and those dearest to him were from "sanctuary and sacramental opportunities, and the fervent prayers and animating discourse of those whose hearts are warmed with love to God and to the souls of men"; he, with his wife and her brother, and the little one just learning to lisp an infant's prayer, the only worshipping household within hundreds of miles. "How dark and gloomy! . . . And what adds to the gloom, there is little prospect that it will ever be otherwise. There seems less hope with respect to the white people than for the poor Indians who are so greatly corrupted by intercourse with them." His soul was vexed with profaneness, drunkenness, licentiousness, absolute godlessness, all around. Yet he and his family were not altogether friendless there, nor without refined society. One of the officers in the fort was "Capt. Dunham, who with his wife and brother and one other person seem," said the missionary, "to be the only people here who are willing to hear anything on religion."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Capt. (afterwards Col) Josiah Dunham was a graduate of Dartmouth College, 1789. After leaving the army, he resided at Windsor, Vermont, became distinguished on the Federalist side in the politics of that State, and was eminently useful there (and in his later years at Louisville, Kentucky) as the head of a school for young ladies. His wife was Susan Hedge; and it was in testimony of grateful affection towards her and her husband that my eldest sister, born at Mackinaw, was named Susan Dunham.

The want of access to the Indians was still more discouraging. Without a competent interpreter, there would be no hope of gaining anything from a visit to Arbrecroche. The interpreter with whom he had corresponded through a friend, and whom he had so often hoped to obtain, had again disappointed him. Finding another man who could speak both Indian and English, he had attempted to obtain his help in the expedition ; but that man's father and mother—the one a Jew and the other a Papist—were unwilling that he should fulfil his engagement, and he had reasons of his own for his reluctance. The Indians, he said, had been for a long time carrying home kegs of rum ; not half-a-dozen in the whole village would be found sober, and the drunken ones would be very troublesome. Sigenog had already made a similar representation ; and when he saw Mr. Bacon ready to embark, and urging the interpreter to go, he renewed his remonstrance. “ Father, if you think it is best to go, I will go with you, but I think you had better not go. I am an Indian, and I think I know Indians better than you do. They have got a great deal of rum, and they will, almost all of them, be very drunk. I am sure they will not listen to you nor mind what you say to them. I know they will talk very foolish to you ; and I should not like to be there, for I should not know how to bear it.” The question, to go or not to go, must be reconsidered, and this was the result.

“ Finding on inquiry that the Indians had probably more than one hundred nine-gallon kegs of liquor at Arbrecroche, knowing that nothing could be done with them when they were intoxicated, remembering how long I was detained with drunken Indians at the Maumee, where they had not a tenth part of the liquor ; thinking that if I dragged a Jew or a Roman Catholic there against his will, he would not be likely to favor the pure gospel of Christ, and finding Sigenog so much opposed to my going, I reluctantly gave up the idea and returned home. . . . Another thought which had weight with me was, that going among them at such a time might create prejudices in their minds, which would be likely to prevent my usefulness among them afterwards. I was also aware that my life was in danger ; but considering how much had been expended and how little had been effected, and as I had waited so long for an opportunity, and was afraid that the friends and supporters of the mission would be discouraged, I believe I should have gone if Solomon [the interpreter] had been willing to go with me.”

No opportunity of friendly intercourse with those Indians

had been neglected. An invitation sent through the head chief to the five other principal chiefs had been ineffectual, though the head chief had promised to bring them down for a conference. Two of the six were understood to be distinctly opposed to the missionary's coming among them. "It is strange," said Mr. Bacon, "if they are not all opposed to me, as I have none to speak a word in my favor, and as I am dependent on the French for interpreters, most of whom are undoubtedly doing all in their power to prejudice the Indians against me." The old chief, Pemenechaugun, Sigenog's uncle, had continued his friendly visits, and the young chief himself was at once a steadfast friend and a hopeful pupil.

"Sigenog is much respected by several of the principal chiefs and all the best Indians, but the others are opposed to him, because he is trying to be something more than an Indian, and is going to be a *Kiche Makomon* (great knife), as they call the Americans. But he says they are fools; that they would rather be always drunk than to learn anything; and that he does not regard them. It is not in the power of Frenchmen or Indians to persuade him away, though many of them have exerted themselves to the utmost. He has never gone to see his friends till very lately, and seems much more fond of our company than of the Indians'. They are always inviting him to drink, but he appears not to be fond of it, and tries to avoid them as much as he can. He seldom goes out, and I have never known him to come home intoxicated but twice (which could be said of hardly any gentleman in the place), and then he had been with some chiefs who were old acquaintance and would take no denial. . . . He is twenty-five years of age. He showed himself very brave in their war with us (which he says was caused by the British, who were constantly persuading and urging them, and giving them presents), and he is accounted one of the best hunters in the country. . . . On hearing my speeches interpreted to him, he appeared highly gratified, and said he could sit all night to hear such talk, and greatly lamented that Indians at Arbrecroche were such fools. He seems fully bent on getting an education, is very fond of writing, and improves as well in reading as could be expected considering his age, that he has to begin where a child does, that he understands not what he reads, and has no others with him to excite his ambition. . . . I spoke to him some time ago, to know if he would be willing to go to Connecticut to get an education. The idea was very pleasing to him, and his desire to go appears to be continually increasing. I have told him that I would write to the trustees to know whether they would be willing to take him, and he is impatient to know. He thinks he could get another sober young Indian to go with him, if they would wish to have two. Their education would cost but a trifle there to what it would here; and if Sigenog were there he would soon learn the English lan-

guage. He understands a good many words, but he will not be likely to learn the language here, as we always speak Indian to him. . . . Sigenog is a great help to us in acquiring the language."

The next opportunity for sending a letter was not till Nov. 4. In the letter of that date, Mr. Bacon communicated the formal answer which he had received from the chiefs at Arbrecroche. Early in October, Pondegakauwan (the head chief by birth), with two other Chippewa dignitaries, came to the missionary, and presenting to him a string of wampum, delivered the following speech:—

"My father, I have spoken to your children, to get them to listen to you, but they tell me that they think they are too foolish to learn.

"My father, we think the Great Spirit did not put us on the ground to learn such things as the white people learn. If he had thought it proper, he would have taught us such things when he put us here. My father, we cannot live together so as to attend to these things like the white people. The Great Spirit has given them cattle and everything about them that they want to live upon. If they are hungry they have only to go into their yard and kill a creature. But he gave us no such things. He put us upon the ground to run in the woods to get our living. When we are hungry, we have to go away and hunt to get something to eat. If we set out in the morning, we may have to run all day to find something, and we sometimes have to go without. My father, we hope you will be disposed to give our people such things as they need. And we hope they will do better in future. If it was not for rum, they would like what you have to say to them very well. But rum is our master."

There being no interpreter at hand, this official speech, so freighted with Indian philosophy, and so diplomatically non-committal on the main question, was delivered to Sigenog to be retained in his memory till a translation into English could be made. Afterwards the head chief, in a less formal way, but in the presence of his two associates, said something more which Sigenog might report to the missionary:—

"If our father were to come and stay with us, so that we and our children could run in and out and talk with him when we pleased, perhaps we might learn something. Our children would get used to him, and it may be that they would listen to him. But I do not know that it would be best. Our father is a great man, and knows a great deal; and if we were to get to know so much, perhaps the Great Spirit would not let us live."

Although that official communication, with its unofficial

supplement, was on the whole as favorable as Mr. Bacon, with his previous knowledge of the case, had expected, he judged that the question whether to make the long-contemplated attempt at Arbrecroche ought not to be decided without further advice from his patrons in Connecticut. He therefore proceeded to lay before the trustees, distinctly, the considerations which occurred to him as having weight either for or against the prosecution of the work at that point. The discouraging considerations were very grave. 1. Those Indians were so near to Mackinaw and to the British fort on the island of St. Joseph, that they were constantly and abundantly supplied with the means of intoxication, and the Act of Congress prohibiting the licensed traders from supplying them was of no effect. They were able to purchase as largely as they might desire, bringing to those markets every spring their furs and maple sugar, and in the autumn their corn and birch-bark canoes, and whatever else had been the result of their women's summer industry. At the same time they were receiving from the British large annuities in goods, which of course could be bartered away for whiskey. Consequently, the most of them were half the time intoxicated, and there was no time when all were sober. 2. Another obstacle was the influence of the French Canadians, who were only one degree more civilized than they, and with whom their relations were every way intimate. Everything that those "bigoted, persecuting Papists" could do to defeat the mission was to be expected. 3. "British influence" would be adverse to an American mission in that region. Already it was understood among the Indians that the redcoat officers at St. Joseph's were displeased with Sigenog on account of his living with an American missionary. While the British were expending some thousands of pounds yearly for the sake of influence with the Indians, hostility, either open or covert, must be expected from that quarter. 4. Opposition from traders as such, whether French, British, or American, was to be expected as soon as the mission should seem to have any possibility of success. It being the highest object with them to obtain the greatest quantity of furs at the lowest possible rate, "they would not be willing to have the attention of the Indians diverted from



the chase for the sake of saving their souls, while a paltry skin was to be had"; and every trader was aware that if they became more temperate and more knowing, they would be much harder to deal with. 5. There was discouragement in the fact that those Indians had little acquaintance with the Americans, and had received no favors from the Government. "Many of them had seen Montreal, but none of them had visited Congress or the States." It had been deemed important to conciliate other tribes, by taking notice of their chiefs and by presents, but those Indians in the far Northwest had been in some sort disregarded. They were avoiding intimacy with the Americans for fear of losing the more substantial friendship of the British, and they were frequently telling Sigenog "that he would receive no more presents from that quarter since he had become an American." 6. Those Indians at Arbrecroche were under some special influence from French priests at Montreal. Some of them had been baptized by French priests, and had learned to cross themselves, to count their beads, and to repeat certain formulas. Between Arbrecroche and a village of Romanist Indians near Montreal, there were relations which might be a very serious hinderance to a Protestant mission. 7. But on the other hand, it was a common belief among the same Indians that they had already made trial of the white men's religion and had found no good in it. "This," said Mr. Bacon, "is an objection that is in the mouth of every one in this country, and it is thought to be so conclusive that to make any further attempts is the height of folly. Pemenechaugun gave me this as a reason for his concluding that I should not be successful; and I believe it is so considered by the Indians in general."

Discouraging as these views were, the missionary found reason to believe that it was not wise to withdraw from that particular field without a most thorough trial of its possibilities. Nowhere north of the Ohio could success be reasonably hoped for after an acknowledged failure at Arbrecroche. That neighborhood, therefore, notwithstanding the hinderances, might be the place for a beginning; but whether there or elsewhere, he would have no more negotiating with chiefs for permission to preach the gospel:—

“If I am left to act for myself, I do not propose to ask their permission, or pay them any other compliment than to inform them of my business and that I should be glad to enjoy their friendship and protection. I esteem the friendship of the principal chiefs to be of great importance, and would spare no pains or reasonable expense to procure it by lawful means; and I have always made a point of inviting them to my table, and of treating them with more attention and respect than they receive from any other person. But there seems to me to be an impropriety in asking permission of them, or of the rulers of any nation, to preach that gospel which Christ has commanded to be preached to every creature. . . . I know of no instance in Scripture in which a faithful minister of God, when he had received a message from the Lord of Hosts, went to any of the ruling powers of the world to know if he might publish it. The apostles and old prophets acted prudently, and it is safest to follow their example. By our doing so, the pride of haughty rulers would be mortified and we should be exposed to persecution; but it would be no matter, since God would be glorified, his gospel spread, and souls saved. I pray that I may have Christian fortitude to act up to these principles. . . . But should I be found destitute of such courage and fortitude, I know I should be utterly unfit to be a missionary to the heathen or a minister of Christ.”

In a subsequent part of the same letter, the missionary, having had occasion to mention that he had begun to clear a piece of ground a mile and a half west of the fort and village, and to begin the building of a log-house there for his own residence, brought out incidentally but clearly the plan on which he was proposing to conduct his mission:—

“If I can get the Indians to listen to me, I think it will be necessary to proceed upon the Moravian plan, that is, to begin a new village and draw them into it as fast as they can be brought to submit to good regulations. It would probably be in vain, and worse than in vain, to attempt to introduce any new regulation in the old village at Arbrecroche. And if a new village is to be built, I know of no better place than where I have begun. Lines drawn south and west from my house to the lake will include about a mile square of the best land on the island, and about all the wood except what is reserved for the use of the garrison. As this land is the property of the United States, we need not ask the Indians for it; and if there should be a prospect of success, it is likely that Congress would grant it to the Society for their use, if they were to petition for it.”

The same long letter gave some further information, which might naturally make the trustees anxious for the future. That modest log-house (twenty feet by thirty) for which Mr. Bacon had procured the logs at some expense, could not, for want of help, be put up in time to be occupied by the family

when obliged to leave the house in which they had lived through the winter. A mere hut, about ten feet by fifteen, built of poles and roofed with bark, had been their only shelter from the last of May to the beginning of September, when they returned to winter in the village, having had the offer of a comfortable tenement, rent free, till the next May. But how, in the mean time, was the log-house to be put up and made habitable? That would cost more than he could foresee the means of paying "at present." But it must be done, or else they must move into the hut again; "for," said he, "stables rent higher here in summer than houses in Hartford." People in Connecticut might think that such a house as he proposed could be built without any expense worth mentioning, but in Mackinaw the prices of window-glass, of nails, and of boards<sup>1</sup> were such as Connecticut would be astonished at; and no house, however humble, could be comfortable without some of these things.

The trustees might reasonably ask themselves whether the cost of a mission to the Indians, on that frontier, was not likely to exceed their appropriations for its support.

That young chief, too, of whom the missionary had such hopes, — should the Board run the risk of some expenditure for his education? "Sigenog," said the missionary, "continues to do well."

"If he remains with us, I do not think it is likely he will ever be intoxicated again. . . . He appears so perfectly honest that I do not hesitate to trust him with anything; and he is so very agreeable that he is exceedingly dear to us. He is very desirous of going to Connecticut to obtain an education, and wishes to take a young Indian with him, who, he says, is willing to go. . . . I have frequently told him that he must not depend on going; but he will be extremely disappointed if the trustees do not receive him, as he is fond of believing that they will. I sincerely wish they may. I cannot but hope that he is designed for great usefulness. It is thought very strange by every one that he should quit his own people while in the midst of them, and that he should break off his former habits and become so completely civilized in so short a time in spite of the solicitations of his friends and the evil insinuations of perfidious Frenchmen. He is thought to be very eloquent in his own language, and if he were to become a sincere and zealous Christian, with but a mod-

<sup>1</sup> "Boards, forty dollars a thousand; nails, half a dollar a pound; glass, a quarter of a dollar a pane."

erate education he would perhaps be worth half-a-dozen English missionaries among the Indians. I beg, sir, that you will let me know what the trustees mean to do about him.”<sup>1</sup>

One point in that letter of Nov. 4 was faintly premonitory of what proved to be the burthen of the next letter. The remittances in support of the mission were made by the Committee of Missions, in orders on the treasury, payable to the missionary, and negotiable with his indorsement. But the committee seem not to have known how necessary it was that those remittances should be made early in the season. “The summer,” said Mr. Bacon, “is the time to purchase goods here; and for ready money I can procure them much cheaper. . . . This year my orders came much too late. I have sent them

<sup>1</sup> A letter from Mrs. Bacon to her friend Miss Bayley, was written the next day, and gives some glimpses of the missionary family.

“To visit good old Lebanon once more, to see and converse with those dear friends of mine who still remain there, would afford me inconceivable pleasure. No other earthly joy could equal it. . . . But it is not often that I allow myself the pleasure of visiting you even in imagination. When I bade farewell to Lebanon, it was without the least expectation of returning.

“I bade a long, a long farewell  
To all I left behind;  
To flowery meads and shady groves,  
And friends profusely kind.

“Behind I left an aged pair,  
Guides of my youthful days.  
Ah, how it tore my aching heart  
To give the last embrace!  
. . . .

“Where am I now? Beyond the lakes,  
Beyond the Huron bay,  
Far from my friends, far from the land  
Of Christian harmony.

“Upon an isle in Huron’s lake  
Is pitch’d my humble tent,  
Perhaps no more to be removed,  
Till life, short life, is spent.

But if my God hath thus ordained  
And I return no more,  
No more behold those absent ones,  
Whose loss I still deplore, —

all to Detroit [to be cashed], but I have not yet received more than one half of the money. The consequence is that I have been obliged to purchase goods on credit at a higher price, and then to borrow money to pay my bills." Eighteen days later (Nov. 22) he had opportunity for another letter :—

"I have just received a statement of accounts from my agent at Detroit (which I have not been able to obtain sooner), and find that my bills so far exceed my expectations that I shall not be able to spare the money [for the payment of old debts in Connecticut] till the following year. It is painful to me to write thus, and I can hardly believe that it is so, though I know it to be a fact. What makes it more strange is that I have endeavored to get nothing that we could do without, and have taken the utmost care to purchase at the lowest rate possible. Lest it should be thought that we have been extravagant, I will mention as an instance of our economy, that our common diet for morning and evening, last winter, was bread and tea; that but twenty weight of butter was used in the family from November till May; and that, in order to lay up butter for this winter, we have made use of bread and sour skimmed milk sweetened with Indian sugar through the summer. When I mention this, I mean to except Mrs. Bacon, as I would not suffer her to conform to us in this respect. Her health would not have permitted it. I do not recollect that I have purchased a fowl since we have been here, except in case of sickness, and six pounds of poor beef (for which I paid a dollar) and about as much pork, at a quarter of a dollar a pound, is all the fresh meat I remember to have bought since last winter.

"But so it is, my money is gone, and I am so much in debt that I shall need all my pay for the ensuing year, and must practise the strictest econ-

"Then let His sacred will be done  
Whose wisdom is divine;  
His seat be ever on the throne,  
And at His footstool mine."

After these stanzas of what I remember to have heard my mother call (in describing the difference between John Newton's hymns and Cowper's) "home-made poetry," the letter proceeds :—

"Mr. Bacon has proposed to the Missionary Society to take Sigenog, our young chief, and another Indian boy, for the purpose of educating them. It was proposed that Beaumont should accompany them as their guide and interpreter. Mr. Bacon told me that I might go with them, if my desire to see my friends would lead me to encounter the difficulties and dangers which would attend such a journey. I was at first pleased, but have since thoroughly considered the matter, and think it would be an undertaking too great for me. Besides, the expense would be greater than we could afford. . . . I can jabber Indian a little now, and hope, if Sigenog remains with us, that we shall all learn to speak it very fast. My little L. is more attached to our Indian than he is to me. He now understands a little of his language, and will probably be master of it before me."

omy in order to be clear of debt at the end of the year. And unless the trustees will lend me \$100 to enable me to build the house I have begun, I am afraid we shall have to spend another summer in the little hut made of poles and covered with bark, and which is without a window and not worth putting one into, and is too small to be convenient for one person. And in that case we should have to return to the village in the fall, draw in whatever we raise and all our wood, nearly two miles, besides having a great deal of trouble in making one of their dirty, shattered houses comfortable for winter, and in putting it in order when we leave it in the spring. . . . The loan of \$100 for a year or two would enable me to avoid all these disadvantages. . . . Such seasonable assistance would put me in a way of helping myself much sooner than I otherwise could. And it will not do for the Society to be always burthened with the enormous expense which must unavoidably attend this mission at present. . . .

“The advanced prices of several important articles, and the expense of procuring things there [at Detroit], of getting them on board of vessels, and of freight to this place, have swelled my bills to a size that has far exceeded my expectations.”

On this last letter is a memorandum by the secretary, “Received Jan. 3, 1804.” It had been six weeks on the way, which appears to have been the ordinary time for the transmission of a letter from Mackinaw to Hartford. Its arrival was opportune; for the records show that on the next day a meeting of the trustees was held at the house of Dr. Strong, by adjournment from the annual meeting in September. As the letters from Mackinaw were read, the eyes of the venerable Board were opened, at last, to the fact, palpable and stubborn, that a mission to the Indians, so far from its base of supplies, could not be maintained on the narrow scale of their appropriations. They saw that their missionary was forming a larger plan than they had dreamed of,—a plan that would send young chiefs to Connecticut for such an education as might make them efficient instruments of good among their wild brethren, and that required ground for a village of such Indians as could be induced to adopt a new mode of living; and that he was becoming more burthened with debt while struggling on in sanguine hope of better days in which the mission should be self-supporting. The record shows what the effect was.

“Sundry letters from the Rev. David Bacon having been communicated to the Board,

*"Voted,* That the said Mr. Bacon be directed to leave that part of the country where he now is, without unnecessary delay, and repair to New Connecticut, there to itinerate as a missionary and to improve himself in the Indian language; and that the Rev. Joseph Badger, in concert with Mr. Bacon, endeavor, as soon as possible, to gain information respecting the state of the Indian tribes in the vicinity of New Connecticut and Sandusky Bay, and the expediency of sending a missionary to them or any of them; and that they communicate such information to this Board.

*"Voted,* That the sum of \$150 be granted to the Rev. David Bacon, to defray the expenses of his removal from Michilimackinac to New Connecticut; and that the Committee of Accounts take measures to transmit the same to him."

Of course, Mackinaw was at that season of the year, and till the opening of navigation in the month of May, inaccessible to any communication from Hartford. The missionary might almost as well have been at the North Pole. No direction, no advice, no remittance for his relief could reach him while the lakes were frozen. Put entirely upon his own resources, he could only do as he had been doing. He had his Indian pupil, whose language he was learning; he had occasional intercourse with neighboring Indians, chiefs and others, whose confidence he was trying to win. No writing remains nor any living memory to tell how that winter passed away. His letters to the Society the next spring are not now in its archives. The first information from him that I can find after Nov. 22, 1803, is in a letter to his brother at Hartford, which was dated "June 1, 1804."

"The fourth vessel has just arrived, and though one or two of them came from Fort Erie, we have not received one word from Connecticut. It seems as though all our friends were dead. I fear that you have forgotten your promise to write often. But we wish to believe that you and Mr. Flint (secretary) and many more have letters on the way. It is not so much matter about my writing to you, as you have frequent opportunities of perusing my letters to the Society.

"I wrote to Mr. Flint the 16th of May; you will have learned from that that a letter from Mr. Badger has informed me that I am appointed to go to New Connecticut. As my mind was fully bent on prosecuting the objects of this mission, and as I had strong hopes that God would glorify Himself by granting success to it, notwithstanding present appearances, I was not thinking or wishing for a removal. But the information I have mentioned gave a turn to my thoughts, and the more I contemplated the increasing discouragements attending this mission and the brighter prospects which

were presented from another quarter, the more occasion I saw for joy and thankfulness. It gave me new feelings with respect to almost every Frenchman and every Indian I met with. I had considered my life to be as much as possible at their disposal, and that their alike savage tempers needed no more than a divine permission to put an end to it. . . . Though I still wish to give no occasion of offence, I am less anxious to please. I also feel very much relieved as to worldly incumbrances. My attempts in farming, which seemed necessary here, have proved too burthensome and ensnaring for one that should be wholly devoted to the gospel ministry. . . . I think there is a prospect of my being able to dispose of my improvements, farming utensils, horse and two cows, household furniture, etc., for as much or more than they cost me. . . .

“If I am ordered away, we shall not be able to leave this place before the last of July.”

In such suspense was Mr. Bacon waiting for some communication from the trustees of the Missionary Society. Information that the mission was to be discontinued, and that he was to be transferred to the Western Reserve, had found its way to that region, and thence to him, in a letter from his friend, Mr. Badger. He could only wait for orders. At last the orders came in the following letter from Capt. Dunham, who happened to be just then in Detroit:—

“DETROIT, June 20, 1804.

“DEAR SIR,—Excuse the hasty and short letter I must give you. Col. Kingsbury has arrived and has just inquired after you. He says, Mr. Strong of Hartford, who saw him just as he was leaving that place, requested him to tell you that he had not, at that moment, time to write you, but wished you to repair with your family somewhere into New Connecticut, and then to report yourself to the Society and give them an account of your pecuniary affairs,—to let them know how much you have already received, and how much you wanted,—that your drafts would be always honored, etc. etc. This was on or about the 1st of June that he left Hartford. And he says that Mr. Strong wished you to consider his verbal communication to you, through Col. Kingsbury, as *official*, and a sufficient warrant for your quitting your present station. I mention this by his particular request.

“The vessel is now ready to sail. I hope to be at Macana before your departure from that place. Pray, sir, make my compliments acceptable to Mrs. Bacon, and believe me to be with much respect and sincerity, your obedient friend and very humble servant,

“J. DUNHAM.”

The foregoing letter must have reached Mr. Bacon at Mackinaw, not long after the 1st of July. Being now at last author-



ized to relinquish the mission there, and officially assured that his drafts on the trustees would be honored, he proceeded to close up his affairs, by selling what he had that could be sold, and by drawing for the balance necessary to the payment of the debts contracted in his work. The farm which he had partly cleared, and by which he had hoped to make his mission self-supporting, was left in the care of his brother-in-law, and soon passed into the possession of a man who had advanced means for the purchase of cows and other live stock from Detroit, and to whom (if my impressions are correct) it became ultimately a mine of wealth. About the 1st of August — certainly not much later — he sailed for Detroit with his wife and two children, the youngest an infant, born on the 4th of the preceding month. From that point, there was a regular though slow conveyance of letters by the post-office department; and he wrote to Dr. Strong for the information of the trustees, — a letter which is not now found in the archives of the Society, but which seems to have given a statement of his proceedings, and of the drafts which he had made according to the authorization sent to him through Col. Kingsbury.

At Detroit that migrating family was detained by sickness and other causes nearly two months; but they did not wait long for a solution of the question how to find their way from that point to their destination. When they were able to proceed, they embarked in a canoe, with what remained to them of their worldly goods and with provisions for their voyage, — the father, the delicate mother, and the two little children. With I know not what help for rowing or steering, they went down the straits, out into Lake Erie, creeping along the silent shore, resting at night, making progress by day, till having performed a voyage of nearly two hundred miles, they arrived at Cleveland, which was then a mere hamlet on the lake shore. In a letter written thirty-five years afterward, my mother said to me :

“We had completed a long and perilous journey through an uninhabitable country, had all been sick on the way, and had expended our very last mite before we reached Cleveland. . . . We did not reach the place of our destination till near the middle of October.”

Mr. Bacon had received no communication from the trustees later than the unwritten message which had reached him

at Mackinaw. In obedience to that message he was now in his new field. Two missionaries from old Connecticut were itinerating there among the scattered settlements, and by them his coming to their help had been anxiously expected. Mr. Badger, the true apostle of the Western Reserve, knew him, and loved him as a brother. The Rev. Thomas Robbins, who had been sent out the year before, knew him only by report and by his letters published in the magazine, but was equally prepared to bid him welcome. As early as April, while he was still ice-bound at Mackinaw, a letter from Mr. Robbins to the Secretary said : —

“We have heard indirectly that Mr. Bacon is recalled from the Indian mission and appointed to come here. If that be true, I am very glad, and am well pleased with the appointment. We much need a fellow-laborer.”

Another letter from him to Dr. Strong, Oct. 21, says : —

“We have long been in great doubt and anxiety concerning Mr. Bacon, but this is now removed by his late safe arrival in the county.<sup>1</sup> I suppose he is now in Hudson. I have not seen him, but have seen Capt. Tanner, of Canfield, who has lately been at Hudson and spent some time with Mr. Bacon. Capt. Tanner is much pleased with the man, and this appears to be the case generally with those who have seen him. His wife and two children are with him.”

The letter from Detroit, in answer to that unwritten but “official” message from Dr. Strong, could hardly have reached Hartford before the annual meeting of the trustees, Sept. 6; but at that meeting, the Board, acting on such information as they had, or acting in the want of information, put upon their record a peremptory vote, which was to be their first greeting to their missionary on his arrival in the new settlements : —

“*Voted*, That the Committee of Correspondence write to the Rev. David Bacon, directing him to exhibit an account of his claims on the Society without delay, comprising a particular statement of his expenses while at Michilimackinac, in order to an equitable settlement; and that any further payment on his draughts be suspended until such settlement is made, or until the further order of this Board: That Mr. Bacon be at liberty to return home, and that in the event of his choosing to return, Mr. S. P.,<sup>2</sup> of

<sup>1</sup> What had been New Connecticut (or the Western Reserve) was now the County of Trumbull, in the State of Ohio.

<sup>2</sup> For a reason which will appear in the sequel, these letters are substituted for the name on the record.

Warren, in the County of Trumbull, State of Ohio, be requested, on Mr. Bacon's application, to advance him, on account of the Board, a sum sufficient, in Mr. P.'s judgment, to defray the expenses of his return, and that the said committee write to Mr. P. accordingly."

This order, if immediately sent, would arrive at Warren, in the due course of the mail, not later than the last week in September. Mr. Robbins, writing from Warren, Oct. 21, said, after mentioning Mr. Bacon's arrival in the county, and that Capt. Tanner had seen him at Hudson, —

"Major P. of this town has shown me a letter from Mr. Brace, containing a vote of the trustees relative to Mr. Bacon, which appears to manifest some dissatisfaction. I cannot know all the circumstances, but I presume a statement of facts by way of explanation would give them satisfaction. Mr. Bacon says he has received no official communication from the trustees in a long time, and all the information he received that they wished him to return from his Indian mission and come to this county was a verbal errand by a certain colonel (I suppose Col. Kingsbury — Capt. Tanner had forgot his name) from Mr. Strong. Upon that information he left Michilimackinac, and came to this county, but [he] was still waiting for positive instruction. This, I conclude, he will have from Mr. Badger. If their dissatisfaction was on account of delay, I trust this will appear sufficient; if there are other reasons, I do not know them, and have nothing to say. I earnestly wish, if consistent, that Mr. Bacon may be continued a missionary in this county. On many accounts, certainly, he is the right man. . . . I shall advise him not to go to Connecticut, for I think the vote of the trustees does not require it. . . . And I think I shall not err in advising him to perform the duties of a missionary here till he shall receive further directions."

At last, I know not precisely at what date or where, Mr. Bacon received the communication which informed him that his drafts were protested; that he was "at liberty to return home" (as if he had somewhere on earth a home to which he might return); and that for the expenses of his return he must make application to Mr. S. P., of Warren, who was to judge how much it would be safe to put into his hands. The short time that he had been in Hudson had been long enough for him to win the confidence and friendship of good people there, and he left his little family to be protected and sustained by them. Setting out from Hudson about the first of November, he went to Warren, but he did not refer to Mr. S. P. the question how much it would be necessary to expend in a winter

journey to Connecticut. He conferred with his apostolic friend Badger in the neighboring town of Smithfield; and on Thursday, Nov. 8, afoot and alone, he continued his journey. From the place then known as Presque Isle, where the city of Erie now is, he wrote, on the 15th, a report of his progress:—

“MY DEAREST,—I wrote to you from Warren and from Smithfield, by Mr. Badger. I expect you will have seen him before this reaches you, and will have learned how happily we spent a day and a half in each other’s company. I left him on Thursday about noon. Meeting with Dr. Reeve, an old acquaintance and a Christian friend, I was detained so that I got on only about six or seven miles that afternoon. I tarried over night with pious Pennsylvanians, who appeared very happy in my company, and would receive nothing for entertaining me. I took breakfast with them, as it was five miles to the next house, which made me late in starting. I had not gone far before it began to rain. I had a very blind path all day, and once got some distance out of my way. The rain continued to increase, and when I had travelled twelve miles it came down like a thunder-shower. I then put up with a Capt. Ewins [Ewing?], who with his wife appeared to be pious and very agreeable. They made me welcome. I took breakfast with them, and set out with an expectation of spending the Sabbath with the minister of Meadville, who lives off the road, five miles west of the town; but I could find no one to direct me to him when I came near the place where I should have turned off. I therefore kept on to the town. I reached the tavern by the ferry, where I lodged, about 8 o’clock in the evening. A great quantity of rain had fallen the day and night before, and considerable that day; the roads that were travelled had become intolerable; but I travelled sixteen miles, which was as bad as to have travelled twenty-five in a good road. Sabbath morning I crossed French Creek, and put up at a better tavern in the town. As Mr. Stockton<sup>1</sup> had gone to preach to his other congregation, I offered my services there; but as it snowed very hard, and their place of worship not very comfortable, the time for giving notice short, and the roads very bad, it was thought not best to make the attempt.

“It continued to snow all day on Monday, but after procuring some little necessaries, I started,—took dinner with a pious Mr. Davis, four miles on my way, where I was again made welcome. While they were preparing dinner, a young licentiate from the Ohio Presbytery came there in order to preach in that neighborhood. He had come but a small distance that day; but he complained much of the tediousness of the weather, though he had a good horse, was wrapped in a cloak, and had socks over his boots. However, when he found what a journey I had undertaken and my manner of performing it, he talked no more about his hardships. After

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Joseph Stockton. See Sprague Annals, IV, 243.

dinner I travelled till about eight o'clock, but got no more than seven or eight miles farther, as the snow and mud had become so deep as to make it very slow travelling. Tarried at a tavern where they would receive no recompense. I travelled as late the next day, but got on not more than twelve miles, the road growing still worse. The next day, which was yesterday, it snowed the most of the day. I lost my road several times, and went three or four miles out of my way; but I got ten miles ahead, and reached here about dark, very tired in consequence of travelling through mud and snow half-leg deep, and very lame in one of my ankles, having strained the cords by jumping across many sloughs, brooks, and other wet places. I supped the night before on mush and milk, and breakfasted and dined that day on cold johnny-cake and milk. In consequence of this, I had become debilitated. I rested but poorly last night. My stomach being very much out of order, and my ankle still lame, and finding myself in good quarters and the weather continuing to be very stormy, I have spent the day here. I am at the house of a Mr. Reed whom we saw at Buffalo, and who came with Mr. Olmstead to our house in Detroit. He treats me very politely. I am now four miles from the lake. Perhaps the account I have given you of my journey has increased your sorrow and your anxiety; but I wish you to believe that my mind was so agreeably occupied most of the time that I thought little about the way. The greatest trial of a temporal nature that I have hitherto experienced is that I have been going, and must continue to go, farther and farther from the dear partner of my joys and sorrows, and our lovely little children; and that it is uncertain whether I shall ever see you or them in this world again. But faith tells me that it is not desirable that it should be as I would have it; that it is enough for me to know that the Lord reigns and hath promised that all things shall work together for good to them that love Him; and that He hath said 'Leave thy fatherless children and let thy widows trust in me.'

"*At the Lake, Monday, 19.* Finding myself in better health, and partly recovered of my lameness, I came from Mr. Reed's on Friday last. Learning that the 'Lark' was expected to sail for Buffalo on Saturday evening, and the prospect being fair, I concluded to wait and take a passage in her, as they commonly run it in twelve hours. I knew that my route by land must be very tedious and attended with some dangers, and concluded that to start in the evening, in a good vessel, well manned, with a good land breeze, would be attended with little if any more risk. But on Saturday, near night, it was found that the vessel, having been aground, had broke one of her rudder irons, and that it would be impossible to sail before Monday evening. Just at night the Rev. Mr. Patterson, who lives twelve miles down the lake, being in town on his way to a congregation eight miles back of this place, providentially heard of me and came to see me. He urged me to go with him. I consented, and he soon procured me a horse, and we proceeded on. I was extremely happy in his company, and he seemed pleased with me. I found the people very agreeable where we spent the Sabbath. I preached in the forenoon, and he in the afternoon.

I found much assistance in the service. He received four dollars for preaching and would make me take two of them. I wish you could see him; you would be charmed with him. He is about twenty-five, blessed with a strong mind, a liberal education, an easy address, and with all the graces of the Christian spirit. He is the son of the pious and Rev. Mr. Patterson,<sup>1</sup> who went on a mission to the Shawnees, accompanied by Mr. Matthews and G. Blue-jacket, about the time that we sailed for Mackinac. He told me that he had often heard his father say that he had a great desire to see you and talk with you. I asked him why, and he said it was because he had seen a letter of yours that had been published in the Magazine. Mr. Patterson has offered to procure me a horse to go to Connecticut, clear of expense, but as the snow is two feet deep back from the lake, and is going off very fast, the streams will be exceedingly high and the roads excessively bad between here and Buffalo, so that it is not likely that I should arrive there under a week if I were to go through by land. As it is now near night, and we have the fairest prospect for wind and weather that we can wish, I expect to go on board and sail this evening."

A passage of twelve or fourteen hours brought the traveller safely and pleasantly to Buffalo, and thence he wrote to his wife another letter, which might relieve her anxiety but which she did not receive. Yet her chief anxiety for him was not about the storms on Lake Erie, nor about the hardships of his journey through the wilderness, but rather about what he might suffer from angry creditors. In those days an unfortunate debtor might be imprisoned at the discretion of anybody to whom he was indebted; and of all creditors, the holder of a protested draft was most likely to use his power vindictively. This must be considered in order to appreciate the distress which compelled that long, lone wintry journey, and the anxiety of the heroic wife, left with her two little children to the pitying hospitality of friends who had hardly ceased to be strangers. Long afterward she said, "When he left me at Hudson among strangers, with my two little ones unprovided for, I never expected to see him again. He was just recovering from a very serious attack of intermittent fever, and was pale and emaciated." A letter from her, dated "Hudson, Dec. 24, 1804," shows with what spirit she endured the trial, and with what fidelity of love she sought to comfort him:—

<sup>1</sup> Sprague, III, 523, 524. The father was Joseph; the son, probably, Robert.

“When I contemplate the many changes through which I have passed during the last six years of my life, I am astonished, and cannot forbear exclaiming with wonder, ‘Is it I?’—Is it I that have escaped so many dangers, that have experienced so much mercy? and is it I that am so insensible and ungrateful? This, my dear, is the anniversary of that happy day which joined our hands. Happy, did I say? Was that a happy day which was only a prelude to so much sorrow, anxiety, and distress? Can I commemorate that event with joy, which has been the apparent cause of so much adversity? Yes, to my dying day, I will. . . . You are well acquainted with my many peculiar trials, yet I can assure you that they have ever been lessened by your sympathy and love. . . . Though my trials have been great, they have never exceeded my expectations (except the late unaccountable affair). You never proposed to place me in easy, honorable, or affluent circumstances; but on the other hand, you represented to me the greatness of the undertaking and the necessity of counting the cost. You painted to my imagination the cruelty and ferociousness of the savages among whom we were to reside. . . . But God has preserved both you and me. We have not fallen a prey to savage cruelty, but to —. I can say with safety that I have never experienced anything since I became yours which so much overpowered me with grief as our late trial. It was a thing wholly unexpected, and therefore I was altogether unprepared for it. I have reason to be ashamed that I bore it with so little fortitude and resignation. Grief, like a torrent, seemed to bear down all before it, and had it not been in a measure assuaged, it would before this time have swept me into the grave. . . . But, blessed be God, I am yet in the land of the living, and have cause to sing of mercy in the midst of judgment, and to rejoice in the loving-kindness of the Lord. I have not, in this four years past, enjoyed so much serenity of mind, for such a length of time, as I have since your departure. My sorrow and anxiety have been strangely hushed, and I am left to wonder at my composure. You left me weak and infirm: I am now in vigorous health. I was unprovided with a comfortable home, — supposed myself friendless, forsaken, and forlorn. But my accommodations are far better than I could reasonably have expected in a country like this, and I find myself in the midst of the most agreeable friends. I am now at the house of good Mr. Norton, and have been almost ever since you left me. It is impossible for me to tell you how kindly I am treated both by him and his amiable companion. . . . If I was her [Mrs. Norton’s] sister her tenderness could not exceed that which she expresses towards me. If my children were her own she could not treat them with more mildness. Now I am speaking of the children, I suppose you would wish to hear something more about them. . . .

“It appears to me that I never saw so much to be thankful for as I have of late. Though your absence is a great calamity, and I consider it to be one of the greatest trials that I have been ever called to endure, yet I have been enabled to bear it with a greater degree of fortitude than I expected. I think it has already been of service to me. I know not what

will be the issue of the late event which has occasioned us so much distress, yet I am sure that it is at the disposal of that All-Perfect Being who cannot err. . . . I hope that you are before this time at Hartford, and know the worst of your circumstances. Pray make me acquainted with your situation and prospects as soon as possible. If you are to be imprisoned, fear not to inform me of it ; for if that should be the case, I am determined, if my life and health are spared, to share with you in the horror. I trust I shall be prepared for the event. I can assure you that I have thought much of the matter, and think that I feel in a measure reconciled to it. I would rather be in a dungeon with the dear partner of my woes, than in a prince's palace with any other person on earth. . . .

"Mr. Badger has been here since you saw him. What a dear, good man he is! What a blessing to the world! He says that he will probably be here again in the course of the winter, and proposes taking me to Austinburg with him."<sup>1</sup>

The date of Mr. Bacon's arrival at Hartford does not appear, but it was near the end of December. A letter written on the 29th describes his journey from Buffalo to Connecticut, and tells what friends and relatives he had seen on the way or since his arrival. "It would take me a week," said he, "to tell with what kindness, attention, and respect I have been treated by all Christian people on my way and since I have been here, and what tenderness and respect they have manifested for you." At Bloomfield, among the friends they found there in 1801, he had kept a New England Thanksgiving. Through all the wilderness from Buffalo to Whitestown (two hundred miles), he found it hard, because of mud and snow, to advance at the rate of fifteen miles a day ; but thence eastward into Litchfield County, he "had a good, hard snow path," and found himself "able to travel thirty miles a day" without intolerable fatigue. The settlers of Hudson were from Litchfield County, and he had seen some of their friends. "Mr. Owen Brown," said he, "brought me from Torrington to this place in his sleigh. Tell Esq. Hudson that Mr. Brown and his friends calculate to move on next summer."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the margin is written, "I am not able to pay the postage on this letter, I hope you can." The postage was twenty-five cents.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Owen Brown (I remember him well) was the father of John Brown, famous for his exploits in Kansas and at Harper's Ferry, and for his death at Charlestown, Va. The old farm-house in Torrington, whence Mr. Owen Brown conveyed my father to Hartford, is now celebrated as "John Brown's birthplace." Among my earliest school memories is my being in school with John Brown and his brother, at Hudson, hard by where the college buildings now stand.



The same letter gave an account of an interview which the writer, on his arrival at Hartford, had with Dr. Strong. But before transcribing that portion of the letter, it seems fit to say that Dr. Strong had already learned some things since the meeting of the trustees in September, when the vote was taken which exposed their missionary to arrest and imprisonment. Mr. Robbins had written deferentially (as we have seen) concerning the impression made on him by the letter and the vote which "Major P." had shown to him. He had not only intimated that good people generally, in those new settlements, were receiving Mr. Bacon with much favor, but had said, as an argument for his being "continued a missionary" there, "Hudson will probably be glad to settle Mr. Bacon for half of the time, immediately." The more free-spoken Mr. Badger had written, Nov. 21, in a different style, having withal some grievances of his own to write about.

*"Rev. and Dear Sir,* — Yours of the 8th of October came by Mr. E. Root last evening. Mr. Bacon left the county, on foot, last Thursday, on his way to Connecticut. He feels himself extremely wounded and injured by the official communications sent to him and Mr. P. That sent to Mr. P. has surprised everybody of feeling. If I am to be dismissed for any unwarrantable step in my mission, I beg that I may have opportunity to make the most full and fair statement to the society before I am committed to the tender mercies of infidels in New Connecticut. In regard to Mr. Bacon, I have no doubt but his necessary expenses far exceeded the calculations of the Board. The knowledge and experience I have had of expenses in this part and about Detroit lead me to believe his expenses have not been extravagant. I was obliged to pay a man four dollars for paddling me across the mouth of Detroit River to Malden and back again, — about four hours' work. This kind of marauding has been practised on Mr. Bacon continually. He will be able to state the whole matter. I hope the Board will hear him patiently.

"I must now say a word for myself. Next March, if I should continue until that time, gives me four years' experience in missionary labors and support. I have tried to be prudent. I am positive there is not a gentleman in the Board of Trust that would be willing to do and suffer what I have done, and to have his family suffer as mine has done, for double the sum I have received. . . . Am I to go on with the warfare at my own charges? If the apostle to the Gentiles be consulted, he says not. . . . You can send young men [unmarried]; they can live on the pay; it is enough. But must I starve because I 'lead about a sister,' or, rather, leave her in a very poor cabin without the comforts of life? . . . On settling accounts with myself, I find my suggestions about sending minis-

ters with families here, to be missionaries, will not do, unless they can go a warfare at their own charges."<sup>1</sup>

[Apropos of a proposed mission to Indians at Sandusky Bay.] "The only way to do anything permanent among those Indians is to obtain a plot of ground to farm it on, either of them or of the Government, who have lands lying near them. . . . I have not a doubt but that if Mr. Bacon had been directed to establish a farm at Mackinaw, at his first going there, it would, in four years' time, more than have supported the mission there. . . . The people and traders about those garrisons and Indian trading places, plunder, by an exorbitant demand for every trifle, whoever goes among them to live on money.

"The good people here have a high esteem of Mr. Bacon, — are anxious for his return. At Hudson they have provided for his support half the time."

"Received Nov. 27" is indorsed on that letter in Dr. Strong's handwriting. Hartford had then some comfortable things for its honored pastors, as it has now; and from Thanksgiving Day to Christmas that good man, sitting by his warm fireside, might have thought, sometimes, of the late missionary to the Indians, performing his journey of six hundred miles afoot, — tramping on through mud and snow, encountering the rigors and storms of the season, learning what that meaneth: "Pray ye that your flight be not in winter," — that he might respond to a summons

<sup>1</sup> It is worth remembering, as an illustration of those times, that while Mr. Badger was making such complaints, the contributors to the Missionary Society were giving, year by year, more than the trustees, in their wisdom, thought fit to expend. Not only were the profits of the Evangelical Magazine given by the editors to constitute a fund of which only the income could be expended in support of missions, but as early as 1801 the trustees "voted that all donations which have been or may hereafter be made to the Society, exclusively of the annual contributions in the several parishes in the State, be appropriated to the establishment of a *permanent fund*, when not otherwise especially appropriated by the donors; and that the interest of the permanent fund be added to the principal until otherwise ordered by the Board." Besides all this, the accounts published annually show that not even all "the annual contributions in the several parishes" were expended in support of the work. Thus, in the year 1802, the parish contributions were \$2,986.16; and the disbursements for all expenses (including the loss by three counterfeit dollars) were \$2,221.72½. In 1803 the parish contributions were \$3,069.96 and the disbursements \$1,908.25½. In 1804, the year of Mr. Badger's complaint, the contributions from the parishes were \$2,740.86, and the disbursements \$2,334.13½. Some portion of the surplus in those successive years is what was saved by keeping Mr. Badger's family as near to starvation as they could live.

No missionary society in these days salts down its contributions to make permanent funds.

from the honorable and reverend trustees, and give them an account of his mission. Dr. Strong had befriended the mission and the missionary; and "the official communication" to Mr. P., which "surprised everybody of feeling," was not from his pen. He was, therefore, not unprepared to give the returning missionary a friendly reception. Of all the pleasant news from kindred and friends in the letter of Dec. 29, nothing could so effectually relieve the anxious wife and mother as the brief description of that interview:—

"Dr. Strong received me in a very friendly manner. He says I have wholly misunderstood them; that he does not believe there was a member in the Board that had the least suspicion that I was dishonest, or that it would be unsafe to leave it to me to name the sum for my [travelling] expenses; but that, as they were taking a vote to have Mr. P. furnish me, it occurred to them that they were unable to determine how much would be wanted, and therefore said 'such a sum as he should judge necessary,' without meaning thereby to intimate anything to my disadvantage. He blamed me for not insisting on having money enough of Mr. P. to furnish me with a horse, or to defray my expenses in the stage from Pittsburg. He says it is true that they were alarmed on finding that I had drawn on them to so great an amount, and could not think that they could be justified in paying the drafts without inquiring into the matter, as it appeared to them that I had not managed the business with prudence. However, he seems to be of opinion that they will answer the drafts."

The meeting of the trustees, by customary adjournment from their annual meeting in September, was at the house of Dr. Strong, Jan. 9, 1805, at ten o'clock, A. M. From the record we learn that "the Rev. David Bacon appeared before the Board, and gave a general statement of his late mission to the Indians, and of the expenses attending the same." Evidently the "general statement" was drawn out into particulars and occupied the day, for nothing more appears on the record, save the adjournment "to to-morrow morning, nine o'clock." The next day's record opens thus:—

"THURSDAY, Jan. 10.

"Met according to adjournment.

"*Voted*, That the payment, by the Committee of Accounts, of two orders drawn on them by the Rev. David Bacon, at Detroit, the one for \$110 and the other for \$50, be and the same is hereby sanctioned by the Board as having been proper under existing circumstances.

"*Voted*, That the sum of \$700 be granted to the Rev. David Bacon, which, with the sum of about \$250 laid out by him in stock and farming

tools at Michilimackinac, heretofore advanced for his support, is in full for his services as missionary to the Indians, which sum of \$700 shall be paid to his future order or orders on the Society."

These votes might have been accepted as a sufficient vindication of the missionary. But the business was not yet concluded. Mr. Bacon had been recalled, and virtually dismissed from the service, in terms which had been understood by him and by others as implying censure. Should he be honorably reinstated? He was the bearer of a letter addressed to the trustees by David Hudson, Esq., the founder of the town which bears his name. Mr. Hudson, in behalf of the people there, certified for Mr. Bacon that having become acquainted with him, and "having enjoyed the ministration of the Word since his coming among [them] from his lips," they had "an ardent desire to live under his preaching." In the newness of their settlement, they were "hardly able to do anything to support the ministry," yet "with much unanimity" they had subscribed an amount nearly equal to half the pay of a missionary,<sup>1</sup> and expected to subscribe more, for the purpose of employing him in that settlement half the time, "provided he could any way be employed and supported the other half." As Mr. Badger had an ample field in the northeastern part of the county, and Mr. Robbins in the southeastern, so they desired "that the labors of Mr. Bacon might be continued in the western part." "I hope," said Mr. Hudson, "that your Honorable Board will so far co-operate with us as to continue Mr. Bacon for the one half of the time in your service, as we are unable for the present to support him wholly."

In view of that appeal, and of the letter from Messrs. Badger and Robbins expressive of earnest desire for Mr. Bacon's return to New Connecticut, the trustees could not well hesitate. The proposed arrangement was consented to by the Board, and the way was open for the missionary to go back with a cheerful heart to his family and to his ministry in the woods.

Mr. Bacon had said to his wife, in his letter of Dec. 29, "I mean to set out for home as soon after the meeting of the Board as possible." Cheerfully anticipating the result of

<sup>1</sup> The Society paid its missionaries \$6 a week. Hudson people had subscribed \$136.

the meeting, he had "pretty much determined not to go back on foot." He was "impatient to set out," and having mentioned his sleepless hours at night, he added, "If I could know that my dear wife and the dear little ones are alive and well, perhaps I should fall to sleep much sooner." He left Hartford, Jan. 17, and arrived at Hudson, March 5, having performed some missionary service on the way.

He immediately began his *quasi* pastoral work in Hudson, occupying with his family a little hut of which I have a dim remembrance, and which I think had been built for some other use. His letters to the Society describe his missionary circuits, of which I give some specimens to show how such work was done in those days. In his first excursion, of one week only, he visited Warren, preaching there on the Sabbath, and at Nelson, Mantua, and Aurora on other days. The second was occasioned by a call from Austinburg, where his assistance was desired in the adjustment of a church difficulty. Leaving home on Friday, he preached in Cleveland on the Sabbath, and from Austinburg (to fulfil an engagement which Mr. Badger had made but was unable to meet) he went, accompanied by several members of the Austinburg church, to Greenfield, Pa., that he might assist Mr. Patterson in a sacramental four-days' meeting of the Pennsylvania or Scotch-Irish sort. There he preached Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. Turning homeward, he preached at Conneaut on Friday, and again on the Sabbath, having meanwhile preached on Saturday, at a place ten miles eastward, in Pennsylvania. For that Sabbath service at Conneaut, he was "poorly able, having been almost sick with a cold and violent cough for more than a week"; yet he proceeded to Austinburg the next day, and then, on Tuesday, he and Mr. Robbins attended a church meeting which had been called "to attend to the complaints of four discontented members." On Thursday he preached at Morgan. On Saturday, according to a previous arrangement, Mr. Patterson, accompanied by several of his church members, came to assist him and the Austinburg church in a sacramental celebration, like that in which he had been assisted two weeks before. In the services which followed, and which were attended by "a large number of communicants" and "a very

numerous congregation," Mr. Bacon preached once on the Sabbath, again on Monday ; and his report was, "It appeared to me that there was more of the power of religion in that church than in any other that I had ever been acquainted with." Going homeward, he kept Sabbath at Cleveland, and preached, as before, at the line between that town and Euclid, to a congregation convened from both places. The next day he arrived at Hudson.

Thus dividing the time between his parochial charge and his missionary circuits, he became thoroughly acquainted with the wants and with the possibilities and prospects of those new settlements. Less than a year's experience convinced him that more could be done for the establishment of Christian institutions, and for the moral and religious welfare of the Reserve as a whole, by one conspicuous example of a well-organized and well-Christianized township, with all the best arrangements and appliances of New England civilization, than by many years of desultory effort in itinerant preaching. The idea was not wholly new. Four years earlier Mr. Badger's journal contains a record of his attending a consultation at Rootstown "on the subject of forming a settlement in some place so compact as to have schools and meetings."

There must have been in many minds a longing, more or less distinct, after the old Puritan way of colonizing. Doubtless the matter had been talked of between Mr. Badger and his two fellow-missionaries. Mr. Bacon was a man more likely than the others to seize upon such an idea, to brood upon it in his thoughts, to shape it into a definite scheme, to picture to himself in strong colors the good that might be done by making that Utopia a reality. While residing at Hudson, he had the opportunity of observing what effect had already been produced upon the character of that town by a few of its earliest settlers from Litchfield County, and especially by the strong-minded and great-hearted old Puritan whose name it perpetuates. He would naturally form in his thoughts the idea of what Hudson might have been in 1805, if in 1800 the ground had been occupied by a religious colony strong enough and compact enough to maintain schools and public worship, with a stated ministry of the Word, as Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windsor

did in 1636. Being near what was then the western limit of the progress of settlement in that region, he looked about him for a vacant township in which such an attempt might be made. Ten miles south from the centre of Hudson was the centre of such a township, "No. 2 in the tenth Range." His prophetic mind saw the exquisite capabilities of that five-miles square, its fertile soil, its salubrious air, its beautifully undulating surface, its pure and abundant water, its streams singing in the grand old woods, and rich with power for the service of man. He saw that the proprietorship of it was chiefly in the hands of men who, as his trusting and hopeful nature led him to believe, would enter into his views, and would even be willing to sacrifice something of their possible gains (if need should be) for so great a scheme of public usefulness as that with which his mind was laboring.

Having determined to make the attempt, he relinquished his prior engagements for the new enterprise. Leaving Hudson with his family, Nov. 7, he passed two weeks at Canfield, preaching and performing other missionary work, his last in the service of the Society, and at the same time finishing such preparation as he could make for the journey which he contemplated. From that place, he set out, Nov. 21, for Connecticut, with his wife and two children, in a wagon which was returning by way of Pittsburg and across the Alleghanies, and which his ingenuity and dexterity as a mechanic had made in some sort comfortable. Thus ends the story of his missionary life. It has been narrated somewhat in detail, because of its relation to the general history of American missions, home and foreign. What remains of the labor and the sorrow through which he entered into rest may perhaps be told more briefly.

Through the ensuing winter he was busy in making arrangements for his new enterprise. The trustees, at their January meeting, soon after his arrival at Hartford, renewed his appointment, but he did not continue in their service. He succeeded in making a contract with the proprietors of the selected township, and in forming such arrangements for the purchase and sale of the lands as seemed to him safe and sufficient. He went through various parts of Connecticut to make his plan known, and to procure the migration of the right sort of settlers. In

the summer of 1806 he returned to the Reserve, and again established his temporary home at Hudson till he should remove to the place where he expected to live and die.

A survey of the township, with the laying out of the ground plan for its settlement, was commenced in November, 1806. With what forethought that was done the inhabitants of the town to-day, and all who are acquainted with it, are witnesses. The laying out of a town before its settlement is a matter of no slight importance to the successive generations of those who are afterwards to dwell there. A township measured off into quarter-sections, divided among a few landholders, broken into scattered settlements, and with no roads but such as lead to a convenient market for its produce, can hardly grow into a town. Its population of isolated families, having no acknowledged centre, does not readily become a community with a vital organization and with united interests and sympathies. The unity of a town as a body politic depends very much on the fixing of a centre to which every neighborhood and every homestead shall be obviously related. In no rural town that I have ever seen is that necessity so well provided for as in Tallmadge.\* No observing stranger can pass through the town and not see that it was planned by a sagacious and foreseeing mind. Villages and cities have often been delineated on paper before the first house was built, and sometimes the aspirations of the projector have been realized ; but I know not where else the same sort of forethought has been expended in marking out beforehand the highways that were to bind together in ties of mutual dependence and intercourse the scattered dwellings of an agricultural township. Public spirit, local pride, friendly intercourse, general culture and good taste, and a certain moral and religious steadfastness, are among the characteristics by which Tallmadge is almost proverbially distinguished throughout the Western Reserve. Much of that character may be referred to the forethought of the man whom its traditions honor as its founder. The meeting-house at the geographical centre, with the parsonage, the physicians' houses, the academy, the country inn, and the mechanics' shops and dwellings around

\* The town was so named by the early settlers from Col. Benjamin Tallmadge, of Litchfield, Conn., the most distinguished among the original proprietors.



the neighborhood, school-houses at the corners made by the intersection of the parallel roads with the diagonals, the attraction drawing all households, on the Sabbath, towards the central place of worship where all the highways meet, the gentle pressure of the bond of neighborhood, binding every family to every other, — all this was in the mind of the projector when he drew the plan, and was often on his lips while he was toiling to achieve the reality.

It was fit that he who had planned the settlement, and who had identified with it all his hopes of usefulness for the remainder of his life and all his hopes of a competence for his family, should be the first settler in the township. He did not wait for hardier adventurers to encounter the first hardships and to break the loneliness of the woods. Selecting a temporary location near an old Indian trail, a few rods from the southern boundary of the township, he built the first lone cabin, and there he placed his family. I well remember the pleasant day in July, 1807, when that family made its removal from the centre of Hudson to a new log-house in a township that had no name and no other human habitation. The father and mother — poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith and in the treasure of God's promises, rich in their well-tryed mutual affection, rich in their expectation of usefulness and of the comfort and competence which they hoped to achieve by their enterprise, rich in the parental joy with which they looked upon the three little ones that were carried in their arms or nestled among their scanty household goods in the slow-moving wagon — were familiar with whatever there is in hardship and peril, or in disappointment, to try the courage of the noblest manhood or the immortal strength of a true woman's love. The little ones were natives of the wilderness, — the youngest, a delicate nursling of six months, the others born in a remoter and more savage West. These five, with a hired man, were the family. I remember the setting out, the halt before the door of an aged friend to say farewell, the fording of the Cuyahoga, the day's journey of somewhat less than thirteen miles along a road that had been cut (not made) through the dense forest, the little cleared spot where the journey ended, the new log-house, with what seemed to me a stately hill behind it, and with

a limpid rivulet winding near the door. That night, when the first family worship was offered in that cabin, the prayer of the two worshippers for themselves and their children, and for the work which they had that day begun, was like the prayer that went up of old from the deck of the *Mayflower* or from beneath the wintry sky of *Plymouth*.

One month later a German family came within the limits of the town ; but it was not till the next February that a second family came, a New England family, whose mother-tongue was English. Well do I remember the solitude of that first winter, and how beautiful the change was when spring at last began to hang its garlands on the trees.

The next thing in carrying out the plan to which Mr. Bacon had devoted himself was to bring in, from whatever quarter, such families as would enter into his views and would co-operate with him for the early and permanent establishment of Christian order. It was at the expense of many a slow and weary journey to older settlements that he succeeded in bringing together the families who, in the spring and summer of 1808, began to call the new town their home. His repeated absences from home are fresh in my memory, and so is the joy with which we greeted the arrival of one family after another coming to relieve our loneliness ; nor least among the memories of that time is the remembrance of my mother's fear when left alone with her three little children. She had not ceased to fear the Indians, and sometimes a straggling savage, or a little company of them, came by our door on the old Portage path, calling, perhaps to try our hospitality, and with signs or broken English phrases asking for whiskey. She could not feel that to "pull in the latch-string" was a sufficient exclusion of such visitors ; and in my mind's eye I seem now to see her frail form tugging at a heavy chest with which to barricade the door before she dared to sleep. It was, indeed, a relief and joy to feel at last that we had neighbors, and that our town was beginning to be inhabited. At the end of the second year from the commencement of the survey, there were, perhaps, twelve families, and the town had received its name, "Tallmadge."

Slowly the settlement of the town proceeded from 1807 to 1810, — too slowly for the hopes, far too slowly for the personal interest and pecuniary responsibilities of the founder. During those three years emigration from Connecticut to the Reserve was almost at a stand. The crimes of the first Bonaparte, who was then ravaging Europe, had their effect even in that Western wilderness, bringing disappointment and unexpected poverty into the homes of the pioneer settlers. The embargo and other non-intercourse measures by which the administration of President Jefferson, whether wisely or wickedly, annihilated for a time the foreign commerce that was so rapidly enriching our country, produced a universal stagnation of business. Property could no longer be converted into money. Men in Connecticut who might have emigrated could not sell their farms, and were compelled to wait for better times. What money came into the Reserve in the early days was brought on the current of emigration; and the little that came was continually returning, in payment for lands as well as for those articles of necessity which the wilderness could not yield. There was little buying and selling but by barter. Inevitably, under the pressure of such times, the founder of Tallmadge became embarrassed in his relations to the proprietors in Connecticut. The strict fulfilment of his contract with them became impossible for a twofold reason: first, because the land which he had contracted to purchase could not be sold, and, secondly, because there was no money wherewith to make payment for what little had been sold. It will be seen at a glance what anxieties, what fears, what depressing thoughts were crowding upon him year by year.

In January, 1809, a year and a half from the date of his removal into the township, he assisted in the gathering of "the church of Christ in Tallmadge." On that day, and through I know not how many following months, it was "the church in his house." That earliest log cabin had been, from the first Sabbath on which two or three families could come together, the place of united worship, and under that roof (most fitly) the solemnities connected with the gathering of a church and with the first administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

were performed.<sup>1</sup> In the report made to the Connecticut Society by one of its missionaries, who had a leading part in the services, there was a prophetic word which did not fail: "This society promises soon to be the best on the Reserve." That church holds fast its Congregational self-government among the churches of "The Reserve," and is distinguished by the efficiency of its salutary influence on the surrounding community.

The year 1810 brought some encouragement, for it was marked by the arrival of the first settlers that came directly from New England. Some new aspirations began to be awakened in the leading minds of the little community, for it had been greatly strengthened, especially by the coming of Elizur Wright, Esq., from Canaan, Conn., who brought with him not only a large family, but more capital and more wealth of culture and information than any who had come before him. Just then the story was told that one of the most honored pastors in Connecticut, the Rev. Asahel Hooker, of Goshen, had been dismissed from the church which he had guided for twenty years with eminent success, his impaired health being unequal to the severity of Litchfield County winters. Some of the Tallmadge people, even in that day of small things, were bold enough to think of obtaining Mr. Hooker for their pastor. A letter from Mr. Bacon to Mr. Hooker, dated Aug. 01, 1810, shows what they were then thinking about in Tallmadge.

*"Rev. and Dear Sir,* — After having been long afflicted in your afflictions we rejoice to hear by Mr. Cowles that your health is so far recovered that you are able to preach. I learn from him that it was your conclusion that you would have to leave Goshen, as your health would not endure the severity of the winters in that place or the labor of composing sermons. On hearing this, I was led to hope that one of the designs of God in afflicting you was to prepare the way for your removal to this place. Though it would have seemed to be an act of cruelty to your people at Goshen to have made such a proposal while you had it in your power to serve them, and though such an event seemed very unlikely to take place, yet I have been often led to think within these four years past, that should

<sup>1</sup> The writer of this memoir—at that time not quite seven years old—is probably the only survivor that can remember the transaction when the first fathers and mothers of Tallmadge entered into covenant with each other and with God that they would walk together as a church of Christ. He remembers, also, the baptism on that day of an infant, who is now his only surviving sister.

it be so, I should rejoice in it as one of the happiest events to this church and society that they could ever expect.

“I learn, also, that it is probable you may have an opportunity to settle at New Haven.<sup>1</sup> That is doubtless a place where the senses and the social feelings may be highly gratified, where the understanding may be greatly improved and the heart made better, where children may be well educated, and where a clergyman of your respectability may be genteelly supported and be extensively useful. Notwithstanding, I should give it as my opinion that it is best by far that you come here, —

“*First*, On account of your health. It is a fact that winters have been much more severe at New Haven than at this place, though the latitude is about the same. Sea breezes, I have been told, are unfavorable for people of consumptive habits: it is rare that a person dies of consumption here. Many weakly people and such as were inclining to a consumption have emigrated from New England to this country, but though my acquaintance has been extensive, I do not recollect one who has not been benefited if not completely cured by the change of climate, except here and there one who was worn out with age. But Dr. Wright, our beloved physician, whose practice has been very extensive both in the eastern part of this purchase<sup>2</sup> and in this quarter, will give you sufficient information on this head.

“*Secondly*, As it respects your usefulness. Many may be found who would be both useful and acceptable to that people, whose minds revolve within the narrow bounds where all things are made ready to their hands, whose breasts were never fired with a holy ambition to preach the gospel where Christ had not been named or in such parts of His territories as are overrun by the enemy, who like to occupy the strongholds built by their ancestors in the face of danger, but never aspire to the honor of breaking through the ranks of the enemy to build more. That society is formed, this is in the forming state. Should there be a few years' delay as to the settlement of a suitable minister there, it probably would not materially affect that society, while such a delay would be likely to prove fatal to this. If that flock has no shepherd over it, it has many about it: here it is not so. When I consider the immense importance of the objects contemplated in this plan of settlement, and when I consider that the first minister and the people who first fill this township are to give it a character, either good or bad, which will probably last for ages, I want the wings of a dove and liberty to fly, till I have secured, as far as possible, its highest interest. Your settlement here would add another very important inducement to those which already operate powerfully for bringing in the best of settlers. Should I see you settled here soon, I should rejoice in the high assurance which it would afford me that the grand object would

<sup>1</sup> The first church in New Haven had been made vacant by the removal of its pastor, Moses Stuart, to Andover.

<sup>2</sup> The Reserve had been *purchased* from the State of Connecticut by the Conn. Land Company.

soon be accomplished. I might be tempted to boast as he that putteth off his armor, but I think I should not relax my exertions till I had filled the township with proper characters, nor even then; for if you were here, Sir, I should feel almost as certain of accomplishing the other important object which I have had in view, — that of raising funds and establishing in this place a seminary for the education of needy candidates for the ministry. I believe I conversed largely with you on the subject before I left Connecticut. Esq. Wright seems as much determined about it as I am myself. I mention his name because you know the man. My settlers generally will exert themselves to the utmost to set the thing on foot. The way is now clear for us, as Burton Academy is not likely to succeed. If our seminary were once established, with you at the head of it, I would fear no want of funds. The General Association of Connecticut would help us; no pious person of our denomination could withhold his mite. Should you come and have an opportunity to officiate in both capacities, I think you could not expect to be more useful in any part of the world. Add to this the importance of your counsels and influence to the infant churches in this country, who are as sheep without a shepherd; add to this the good to be done through the influence which this society shall have on the inhabitants of other towns (situated around this as were the nations around God's people of old) when they shall see the regularity, order, and beauty which shall have been effected in this society in a great measure through your instrumentality; add to all this the great encouragement which the success of the experiment would hold out to others to form other new settlements on the same plan, — and then say if God does not call you to 'come over into Macedonia and help us.'

“*Fourthly*, As it respects making a comfortable provision for your family. I know something about the expense of supporting a family in such places as New Haven, and I think you should not calculate on laying up anything there. The property which would scarcely shelter you there, if laid out here would soon rise into a good estate. It is my opinion that if you come and lay out your property here, you will twice double it in a few years. I shall sell centre lands low, according to what would be their value without a college, and if the plan for that succeeds, the profits on them [to purchasers] will doubtless be great. But I calculate to have you do still better; for if you come on immediately, or between this and next January, and officiate not less than three years, and purchase lands of me to the amount of \$1,000 as they are selling at the time you purchase, I will give you \$500 for my part of the settlement. Esquire Wright told me that if you would come, he would give you one hundred acres of land that is now worth \$300. Mr. Kilbourn told me that he would defray the whole expense of moving you out. What others would do, I know not, as I have not had time to call the church and society together. All I have conversed with seemed very desirous that I should write by the first mail, fearing you might be engaged if I delayed till next week.

“ I think I never saw a better township of land than this. When improved it will be very pleasant. It seems likely to be as healthy as any place in the world. It is remarkably supplied with excellent water, and it abounds with mill-seats. It is so situated as to receiving travel, and as to water carriage into the lakes and to New Orleans, that it will be a favorable place for business. There are now in the township about thirty families, a good physician, a merchant, mills, distillery, etc. We have twenty-five persons who are professors of religion, but they have not all of them joined the church as yet.”

At the date of the foregoing letter, Mr. Bacon regarded himself as far more prosperous than he could have expected to be had he foreseen the public calamities which had almost arrested the stream of emigration from New England westward, and which had greatly embarrassed him in his relations to the proprietors of the township. Two months earlier he had written to his brother at Hartford a hopeful letter though confessing some anxiety. “ Sanguine as I was,” he said, “ I should not have dared to undertake had I foreseen the turn of times which was coming on ; but when enlisted, I should have failed had I been otherwise. That persevering *sanguinity* which you expected would (and which may yet) ruin me is what hath saved me. So many, so great, and so various have been the difficulties I have had to struggle with that had a succession of your prudent, cautious calculators been brought forward, in my circumstances, to fill my place, scores, if not hundreds of them would have given up before this, and come out bankrupt, and would have found themselves and their families involved in perpetual wretchedness for this world,—and all for want of David’s ruining foible which makes it so dangerous for his friends to afford him any assistance. But if it is true that men of an opposite turn of mind would have done nothing, it is also true that I should not have succeeded so far, if it had not been that many peculiar instances of Providence, counteracting the natural tendency of things, have favored my designs. . . . If I am prospered, I hope to be in Connecticut within three or four months, and to make sale of the rest of this township before I return. As the plan of settlement makes it an object for good people to move in, as there are twenty-six families in the township, etc., and as I can carry with me vouchers sufficient to satisfy candid minds that it is

without exception the best township in the purchase and that the remainder is as good as what has been sold, I think I can find people enough who will be willing to purchase without coming to view, and who will be able," etc. "I should hope that the whole might be effected in six or eight months, hard as times are at present. Should I be prospered so far, I should hope to have little more to do with the world than to try, with others, to reform it."

His intended journey to Connecticut was not performed till the next year. Meanwhile his relations to a part of the church and society in Tallmadge had become increasingly painful. And that readers of this narrative may appreciate the cares and sorrows that were crowding upon him and upon the loving and delicate one who had already been his partner in so many trials, it must be said that among the inhabitants whom his invitations and persuasions had brought into the place, and who had been his friends,—and among the members of the church of which he was, by a provisional arrangement, the minister,—some were in danger of losing both the land which they had purchased of him and whatever partial payments they had made to him, inasmuch as he had become, in those disastrous times, unable to fulfil his contract with the proprietors, and so to obtain for them a valid title. It is not to be wondered at that some of them felt themselves wronged and were ready to blame him. They did blame him, and there was painful alienation between him and them. That was the bitterest ingredient in the cup which he and the partner of his sorrows were, in those days, compelled to drink. Such was the complication of troubles against which he struggled, hoping on and hoping ever. He had friends in the place, kind friends, true and faithful friends, who clung to him like brothers, and whose affectionate confidence in him could not be shaken. To their sympathy and kindness he left his wife and his five little children, while he went to Connecticut in a last endeavor to retrieve the fortunes of the enterprise in which he had embarked all his hopes this side of heaven.

He set out from home on horseback, early in April. Most of his letters to his wife, and of hers to him, during that separation of nearly a twelvemonth, have been preserved, and by their



aid I am able not only to recollect many particulars of our home life that year, but also to trace the story of his journey and of its results. Generally his letters were full of his characteristic hopefulness. His first Sabbath was passed near the eastern border of the Reserve, with a minister who had been understood to be in some sort an abettor of the Tallmadge malcontents, but by whom he was, nevertheless, received fraternally. Naturally he reported to his wife, for her comfort, any incident tending to show her that though some of her neighbors would not hear him, he was respected elsewhere, and by better judges. Expressions of approval from that minister were, in the circumstances, worth reporting.

“He treated me with much respect and attention. At his urgent request I preached in the forenoon on the Sabbath, and assisted him in administering the sacrament. As the meeting was on the line between H. and S., and the day pleasant, most of the inhabitants of both places were present. Being requested, I went, accompanied by Mr. L., and preached at S. in the evening. I felt much liberty in preaching, and I learned that my discourses were much applauded and by none more than Mr. L.”

Arriving at Hartford not much earlier than the first of June, he entered at once on the business which had brought him to Connecticut, negotiating with the proprietors for a postponement of their demands, and at the same time finding out, in one place and another, the men whom he might persuade to purchase farms in Tallmadge. Eager for intelligence from his family, he returned to Hartford, and on the 4th of July he received a letter from his wife, dated on the 29th of May, but ending with a postscript a week later. Evidently she had struggled to write cheerfully, but she had not succeeded. Her letter began : —

“Hitherto hath the Lord helped me, and through His goodness we are all alive, and most of us in good health. I am the only one that is complaining, but perhaps not more unwell than when you left home. . . . I suffer greatly from a depression of spirits, which I cannot shake off. I think I never was so unable to endure your absence as at present. . . . How much do I need your sympathy ‘in all the cares of life and love’! All the sweets of life seem to be embittered to me, and everything I see reminds me that you are not here. The care which devolves upon me in your absence is considerable, and I sometimes feel it a burthen almost too great to struggle with. But this is the dark side. I have infinite

cause to sing of mercy in the midst of judgment, and to rejoice in the loving kindness of the Lord. Our beloved children are all healthy, lively, and happy. . . . I have been comfortably supplied with the *necessaries* of life since you left me. My neighbors are as kind as can be reasonably expected. . . . I am not without friends even here, and trust that you have some also. God is able to raise up friends in the midst of enemies, and to provide for us in every strait and difficulty. How often hath He appeared for us in darkness and distress, and wrought out deliverance for us! We have been called to pass through the fire and through water; our path has been frequently hedged up so that we could see no way of escape, and had nowhere to look for relief but immediately to God. He has always appeared for us in our extremity. . . . It becomes us to —

“Praise Him for all that is past,  
And trust Him for all that ’s to come.”

. . . . .

“I have this day received a letter from — directed to you, which is written in a very imperious style. I am much mistaken if you do not find him as unaccommodating as any person you ever dealt with. I hope, at any rate, that you will get the business off your hands as speedily as possible. I am not anxious *how*, if it is only done. I long to have you free from such embarrassments and such a load of cares. You have almost worn yourself out in the arduous employment. I hope you will not find it necessary to stay so long in Connecticut as you expected. . . . I dare not tell you half I suffer, nor could I if I would. I do not wish to intimate that I suffer for food or raiment, but you know that I have many sources of sorrow. Oh, that I might find consolation in that ever-living Fountain from which all true comfort flows!

. . . . .

“Mr F. has preached here two Sabbaths. It is expected that he will administer the sacrament here next Sabbath. I think he is an excellent man, though not a popular preacher. He has called upon me a number of times, and I have enjoyed his conversation greatly. Mr. D. preached a lecture here a few weeks ago; he also made me a polite visit. Thus, you see, I am not wholly neglected. Mr. F. tells me that I have many real friends in this place and that your opposers manifest very friendly feelings towards me.

. . . . .

“I am afraid you can never read this letter, for I have written the most of it with the babe in my arms. . . . Forgive me for not writing before. I have many excuses, but can’t offer them now. Do not retaliate. . . . I need an interest in your prayers. I hope you will not protract the time of your absence to an unreasonable length. Oh, may we have another happy meeting, another opportunity of rejoicing together in the land of the living!”

Tallmadge had no post-office in 1811, and it seems there

was no opportunity of sending the letter to any post-office that week. So it came to pass that there was a postscript, dated June 5 :—

“ I have broken open my letter and torn it sadly to inform you that my health is miserable. My spirits are so depressed that it seems to wear me out. [A few words are illegible.] My heart is full of sorrow, and my eyes are overflowing with tears. The real cause of my depression is unknown. Dr. Wright is doing his best for me. My friends are all kind. Would to God you were here ! But, oh ! now I have hit the sore ; it bleeds afresh. Gracious Father, give me submission to Thy will ! If my life is spared, I mean to write to you again soon. It is more than three weeks since I began to write this letter, but I could not get it mailed.”

It is not without reluctance nor without a tear that I unveil these sacred confidences, but how else could I fairly tell the story of the “ much tribulation ” through which the subject of this memoir “ entered into the kingdom of God ” ? His reply to the foregoing letter was dated “ Litchfield, July 12,” and from the sheet inscribed with his close but most legible handwriting five and sixty years ago, “ he being dead, yet speaketh ” :—

“ When I read, I tenderly sympathized with you in all the trials of which you complained, but that was not the first of it, for I had anticipated all that you complain of as to ill health and depression of spirits. Great is my sorrow . . . especially that I cannot be there to bear your burthens and administer to your relief. But greater is my joy in that you were all alive, and so many of you well, and in that you are favored, as I trust, with the cheering light of God’s countenance, the earnest of your heavenly inheritance, that by which you are sealed unto the day of redemption. All that God does is well because it ends well, — well for Himself, for His kingdom, for every individual who shall be an heir of it. How precious to you has been the trial of your faith ! How much more precious than that gold which perisheth ! Sweet affliction, sweet affliction, not in itself but in its fruits, — especially the fruits of the latter harvest, when they who went out weeping shall return rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them, and when the wheat shall be gathered into the heavenly garner. Be strong, my dear, and be of good courage. Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, for, through Christ strengthening you, you can do all things. Be of good courage, for if you trust in Him He will cause all things to work together for your good, and will not suffer you to want any good thing. It would certainly ruin us to have our own way. We could not do well, if at all, with less affliction, for, if we are in heaviness, there is a ‘ need-be.’ I trust, my dear, the time is coming when we shall both see occasion to bless God for this long separation, painful as it now is.”

Such confidence in God's sovereignty, such walking in the light of things not seen, was the faith in which he endured affliction, and by which he overcame. But writing to one so dear, who was depressed on his account, he could not refrain from telling her some things which he would hardly have reported to any friend less intimate.

"Since I have been in Connecticut I have preached at Canton, at Torrington, at Cornwall, at Warren, at New Preston, and at Litchfield. And in every place I have been free from embarrassment and have enjoyed great liberty in preaching. I find myself much animated in exhibiting and applying the great truths of the everlasting gospel to hundreds of souls at once, in seeing so many eyes fastened upon me, in observing such a multitude eagerly or anxiously listening to my discourse, and hanging upon my lips till the closing sentence is pronounced. From ministers and other good judges where I have preached I have received encomiums enough to ruin me if not restrained by grace. Said Father Hallock, after meeting, 'Why, Brother Bacon, I had formerly heard of your preaching in different places, and had always heard that you preached well; but I had *no idea* that you would preach so.' He observed that such was the attention that the house was as still as in the dead of night, and seemed to fancy that he saw, under my preaching, the commencement of another revival. He compared me to a plowshare grown bright by use, and himself to one that had lain in the shade till it was covered with rust. This was enough to make me very much ashamed, but he said a great deal more.

"I think it probable that I had in this place, last Sabbath, not less than fifty hearers who were men of liberal education, among whom are three or four of the first characters in the United States, and they are used to very extraordinary preaching; but as Mr. Beecher was absent, and I had agreed to supply his place, I gave myself no trouble about these circumstances, for I calculated on getting so near the great Lawgiver and Judge of all, and on having my mind so overawed by His presence as not to be unduly affected by the presence of the judges and legislators of the earth, and I hoped, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to get them so to realize His presence, and that they had to do with Him, that they should find no time nor inclination for criticising my performances. The event was much as I had hoped. I soon perceived that I had their serious attention, and I discoursed to them with as much freedom as I should to my own children. Many have manifested their high approbation, but none, perhaps, more fully or heartily than Col. Tallmadge and Judge Reeve, the two great and good fathers of this great church, who are greatly beloved by the people of God around them. The attention and respect I received from them before I preached here was greater than I expected, but it was easy to see that it was much greater afterwards."

Under a later date, "Hartford, July 19," he made something like an apology for the foregoing paragraphs:—

"You will wonder, perhaps, why I took up so much time in writing about my public performances, and will think that it savors too much of vanity. I don't know that I have any sufficient reason to assign for it; but as so little was thought of my services in Tallmadge, as you felt that to be an affliction, and as I am not willing that you should be unhappy or think meanly of me, it was natural for me to wish to do away the impression. . . . But the most important reason is that you may have an opportunity to unite with me in presenting a tribute of praise to Him who lifteth up those who are cast down, for His rendering my services in the gospel ministry so acceptable to so many, and thereby intimating that, if spared, I may be useful in the important work, notwithstanding my want of education and the many disadvantages under which, hitherto, I have had to labor."

At that time he was hopeful in regard to the business which he had in hand. "On the whole," said he, after giving some particulars, "the prospect is favorable, but how soon I shall be able to complete the business I cannot tell."

It is hardly possible for those whose memory does not run back more than thirty years to conceive how difficult was intercourse between parted friends before the era of cheap postage. Blessed be the memory of Rowland Hill! Blessed be God who raised up Rowland Hill, not only to confer new benefits on commerce and international communication, but especially to be the benefactor of the poor. In 1811 there was a weekly mail eastward from the Connecticut reserve, and the postage on a letter was not three cents only, but twenty-five. It was only the rich (as men were counted rich in those days) who could indulge in the luxury of frequent letters even to the dearest friends. Bearing this in mind, the reader will understand why the correspondence from which I have given quotations was not more voluminous. Every letter was a serious affair for a poor man struggling to feed and clothe a helpless family and to meet the demands of creditors. Thus it is easy to understand why a second letter from the lonely wife to her husband so far away, though begun on the 15th of July, was not completed till the 26th. Referring to her first letter she said:—

"You have probably received it some time ago. If you have, it has probably given you some anxiety, though I hardly know what I wrote. I

recollect that I broke open my letter and added something after I had sealed it. Judging from what I remember of my feelings at that time, I think I could not have written anything very pleasant. I think I was not far from a state of distraction. I have since learned that my friends were quite anxious about me. . . . My neighbors are all exceedingly kind, and I think you could not have left me in a better place. O my dear friend, I have infinite cause for thankfulness, but blush to acknowledge that I am one of the most ungrateful of creatures. How can I be so unmindful of the God of all my mercies, who has raised me up so many friends and put it into their hearts to treat me with so much kindness? . . . I think my health and spirits are rather improving, though far from the best. . . . Capt. S.'s people [a family from Warren, Conn.] arrived here the first of July. . . . I have to acknowledge the good hand of Providence in sending to me so good a young man and woman as young Mr. S. and his wife. They live with me, and I hope they will stay till you return. Before they came I frequently thought to myself, What would I give for some one to stay with me who would be willing to assist me when I am unable to raise my head, and who would take some care off from my overloaded mind. Little did I think that God was providing for me exactly to my wishes."

The answer was written Sept. 16, while thousands, as the writer said, were "gazing at the eclipse." Let them gaze. To him his reception of a letter from that log-house in Tallmadge was "a more important event."

"Your last letter has relieved me, in a great measure, from an almost insupportable burthen. What cause have I for thankfulness that the God of all grace and consolation has so far answered my daily prayers for the dear companion of my life, and also for our dear children. Since I left home, thousands of husbands and wives and children have been torn from their dear connections in life by the hand of death; thousands of the living who were then rational have become distracted; thousands who were then in health have been lying on beds of languishing; millions have been suffering the want of all things, and millions more have been experiencing the horrors of war. We have been spared, we have been blessed, not because we were not equally ill-deserving, but because God delights in showing mercy to sinners, through the mediation of His Son, as far as is consistent with His infinitely wise and benevolent purposes; and to His name be the praise! It is necessary for us to bear in mind what we deserve, and the trials to which we are exposed in order to our being grateful for the mercies we experience and submissive under the trials which must befall us. But we need not be 'afraid with any amazement,' and shall not be if we trust in Him who hath said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,'—'my grace shall be sufficient for thee'; for great peace have they that love God's law, and nothing shall offend them. They may there-

fore say, 'Though I walk through the valley and shadow of death I will fear no evil.'"

In regard to his business, he was still hopeful of success ; he was making progress in his negotiations with men in various places who were contemplating a removal westward, and were attracted by the advantages which his township offered ; he was expecting to obtain something by compromise, as better and less costly than a lawsuit, from two men who had refused to pay what he claimed as justly due to him for service which he had rendered to them in the sale of lands ; he suggested some possible arrangements for himself and his family in the future. "The doctor" (his brother at Hartford) had desired them to send their eldest child to him, that he (the doctor) "might put him to school." After writing of such matters, he added, in reference to the uncertainty of the day when he should set his face homeward, —

"I hope you will strive to be patient, my dear, under your present trials. Remember, that if it should be eight or nine weeks before I return, the time will soon slip away ; and that, if we are of those who are called according to God's purpose, the time is coming when we shall see cause for thankfulness for this long and painful absence. The thought that I am not gone to 'Guinea'<sup>1</sup> should be some comfort to you. And surely you can imagine something much worse from which we are exempted. I hope you will take good care of your health for my sake. Do not fail to get wine if it can be procured, or anything else that can be procured that is calculated to strengthen you. I would rather live on bread and water than that you should want anything that is necessary to your comfort in your debilitated state.

"I am looking for another letter from you, but if you shall not have written before the reception of this, I fear it will be too late for you to write again."

"Another letter" was already on its way by a private conveyance. It was dated Aug. 12. That morning it had been reported to Mrs. Bacon that there was a letter for her in the nearest post-office, five miles away. Leaving her baby in the care of a neighbor, and borrowing a horse for the expedition, she had gone the five miles, had obtained the precious communication, and had returned rejoicing. The letter [pp. 91-93]

<sup>1</sup> The allusion is to John Newton's *Letters to His Wife*, a book which they had recently been reading.

begun at Litchfield, on the 12th of July, and posted at Hartford on the 19th, had arrived at its destination in three weeks and three days. Such were the then existing facilities for correspondence between places a few hundred miles apart. A few sentences from the lonely wife's reply will show in what spirit she was waiting. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick"; but her heart was steadfast.

"I rejoice with you, . . . and hope you may realize your expectation so far as may be consistent with our *best* interests. But should you finally be disappointed, and should I realize all my fears and dismal forebodings, may we be submissive! I trust I shall never give myself so much trouble about the event as I have heretofore done. I know that all my anxiety will not make one hair white or black. I most heartily wish that you might be so far prospered as to be able to satisfy your creditors; beyond this I have no concern. I have many times thought (of late) that it was pleasant to be in the situation of the poor widow who was about to bake her last cake, for it is then that we most sensibly see the hand that feeds us. I love to be immediately dependent on a heavenly Father for my daily bread; He is the best provider; He never wants for means to supply His creatures, for the earth is His and the fulness thereof. I think a thankful heart with a mouthful of bread is better than thousands of gold and silver without thankfulness. . . . God grant that though we walk in the vale of poverty below, we may lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, even durable riches and righteousness.

"I rejoice that you have found so much liberty in dispensing the great truths of the gospel. . . . I thought, and had hoped that you would not preach in old Connecticut, because I knew you had no sermons with you. But I hope it is for the best. I think, however, if I had been with you, you would not have preached at Litchfield."

On the 6th of November the long-absent husband wrote from Sharon, where he was working, that his sorrowful absence might not be in vain, and hoping persistently. "I fear," said he, "I shall hear no more from you till I see you, if that happy event is ever to arrive."

"I find myself frequently sighing and saying to myself, 'Oh, my dear family, my dear wife, and my dear children!' . . . But I must not murmur at the Providence of God which has caused this long and painful absence, but pray that it may be sanctified to us, and that we may be unfeignedly thankful that we have enjoyed so many mercies. . . . But methinks I see your eyes impatiently running over these lines to find whether I have set out on my journey home, or when I expect to start. What would I not give that I could tell you.



“ It has afforded great relief to my mind to reflect that it is to make provision for *you* and the *dear children* that I am so long absent from you, — as well as to be able to do justice to my creditors, and promote the spiritual and everlasting good of the thousands who are to inhabit the town of Tallmadge. . . . I seem to have a fairer prospect of succeeding than I ever had before. . . . I have no money to send you at present, but hope to bring you some soon ; and I must stop writing and go about my business that I may bring it the sooner. I know not how you are to be provided for, but I trust the God of all our mercies will never leave you nor forsake you.”

This seems to have been the last letter before his return. But his homeward journey, which he then expected to begin “ within three or four weeks at the longest,” was more distant than he thought. He was then negotiating with a principal proprietor of lands in Tallmadge for an arrangement which he was sure would be advantageous to both parties, and the negotiation seemed almost concluded. It was in this confidence that he said, “ I seem to have a fairer prospect of succeeding than I have ever had before.” But when that prospect had deluded him a while, it vanished. My next information concerning him is a letter (of which a copy has been preserved) from his brother to that proprietor. The letter was dated “ Hartford, 8th January, 1812 ” ; and I cannot tell the story better than by transcribing a portion : —

“ As your letter to my brother, of the 25th of November, has not been answered, I beg leave to address you on his account, and must apologize by informing you that his present state of mind is such that, though he has made several attempts, he has not been able to write. Yours he received early in December, while in Litchfield County, but as he has but just now arrived at my house, I have known nothing before of his unhappy condition. He feels that his last earthly friend on whom he could depend for succor, and in whose constancy he had the utmost confidence, has now forsaken him. His countenance, at first sight, impressed me with the idea that he had been sick, and I instantly made the inquiry. He answered that he was not well, and, handing me your letter, said, ‘ ——— has broken my heart.’ He sleeps but little and with constant interruption, and during the day seems like one from whom hope, the last consolation of the wretched, has departed. I love my brother and feel most sensibly for his unhappy case, and have not been without fear that he would sink under his mental depression, at least so far as to injure his future usefulness. . . . He has now been for five years beating against the stream of adverse incidents, in pursuit of a favorite object, in the accomplishment of which he hoped to subserve the cause of religion, advance the interest of his

friends, and obtain a pittance for his family. In this pursuit he has used his credit to the amount of at least a thousand dollars. He is now six hundred miles from home, and destitute of money. If aided by his friends to return, to what will it introduce him but to scenes of more complicated woe, — to behold a beloved wife of feeble health, and five helpless children, who look to him for bread but look in vain; for he must immediately resign himself to a host of disappointed creditors, whose tender mercies are cruelty, and who will probably seek revenge in attempts to vilify his character and through him to wound the cause in which he is by profession engaged.”

“I never doubted that my brother would exert himself to the utmost in the service of his employers, and would advance their interest; but [I] was not without fears that he would eventually involve himself in difficulty. I therefore, in the beginning, endeavored to dissuade him from the enterprise; but it was too favorite an object with him to be given up. Of course, I had nothing further to do but to wish him success and hope he might succeed. This hope strengthened into expectation after I had the pleasure of an interview with you, and heard you express your friendly wishes for his success and your determination to lengthen out his term of probation, as you had already done, till he should succeed.”

The letter then refers to Mr. Bacon’s “repeated disappointments during the last summer in procuring purchasers who could make payment” either in cash or in secured obligations. It mentions an interview in which, at Mr. Bacon’s proposal, that proprietor had consented to exchange all his lands on the Reserve for Connecticut farms under certain conditions. It tells how the enthusiastic canvasser for purchasers had found the men who were willing to sell their farms and take those wild lands in part payment; and how, having obtained assurance of the necessary aid from his brother and other friends, he had written to that proprietor requesting him to consummate the arrangement which had been agreed upon between them. Then it tells what the reply was to that communication: —

“Your letter came, which (if I understand it) seems not to recognize the last agreement, but proposes new conditions beyond his power to execute. To a mariner returning to his long-desired haven, shipwrecked in sight of land, and clinging to his shattered bark, expecting that the next rolling surge will sweep him from his feeble hold and engulf him in the ocean, proposals for another voyage would administer but poor consolation. Pardon me, sir, if I have used too much freedom. I have labored to make you acquainted with my brother’s unhappy case. I cannot, I will not believe, after what I have heard from your lips and seen on

paper in your former correspondence with my brother, that his future peace and prosperity is a matter of indifference to you. There must have been some misunderstanding or want of recollection on one side or the other. I have therefore, after much hesitation what advice to give, prevailed on my brother to suspend his determination of giving up all and returning home till I should hear from you.

“ I am not asking alms for him. Could he so far succeed as to find the means of discharging the just debts he has contracted in prosecuting the business, though it left him without a cent for the time he has spent and the fatigue he has endured, I would not have become his intercessor; but I fully believe that this and more than this can be effected, and your interest promoted by carrying the negotiation into effect, agreeable to your last conversation with him; that is, you will eventually realize a better bargain than though the original contract had been carried into execution.”

The correspondence with that proprietor was continued into February, but resulted in nothing. So far as the projector's interests were concerned, the undertaking in which he had expended so much of his life was a failure. Instead of a homestead with comforts for his declining years, instead of shelter and support for his wife and helpless children, nothing remained to him but the burthen of debts which he had contracted in good faith and with most reasonable hope of ability to discharge them.

From the termination of that correspondence, the story of his life is very short. With difficulty he obtained the means of returning to his family, and of removing them from the scene of so great a disappointment. All that he had realized from those five years of arduous labor was poverty, the alienation of some old friends, the depression that follows a fatal defeat, and the dishonor that waits on one who cannot pay his debts. Broken in health, broken in heart, yet sustained by an immovable confidence in God and by the hopes that reach into eternity, he turned away from the field of hopes that had so sadly perished, and bade his last farewell to Tallmadge and the Western Reserve. Some time in the month of May, 1812, we left the home that, to the children certainly, had been so pleasant, and parting from friends who had kindly aided our preparations and contributed to our comfort on the way, began the slow journey towards “ Old Connecticut.” Our arrival at Hartford, after resting at various places where there were friends to greet us, was not till near the middle of July. In the autumn

and through the ensuing winter, Mr. Bacon found a temporary home in Litchfield, supporting his family by a school, as he had done twelve years before in Detroit. Though he had relinquished the hope of anything for his family out of the wreck of his Tallmadge undertaking, he labored on "to do justice to his creditors" there, and "to promote the spiritual and everlasting good of the thousands" who have been, or are now, or are yet to be the inhabitants of the township on which so much of his life had been expended. I think that his sojourn in Litchfield, near the places where he had been so industriously canvassing, and not far from some of the proprietors whose agent he had been, was partly with reference to those ends. Some of the best of the emigrants from Connecticut who afterwards settled in Tallmadge went in consequence of his persuasions; nor was he altogether unsuccessful in his endeavor to obtain justice for his creditors.

Through the year 1813-1814, he performed a pastor's work in a parish on the ridge between Cheshire and Waterbury, now the town of Prospect. The next year he resided in the parish of Westfield, in Middletown, preaching there and in the neighboring parish, now the town of Middlefield. Finding that his health was no longer equal to the stated work of the ministry, he removed to Hartford early in 1815, and entered into an undertaking which, while it had the charm to him of usefulness in the service of Christ, would give him work better suited to his physical condition than the care of a parish could be. He took part (without investment of capital or credit) in publishing a Hartford edition of a work highly esteemed in those days (and with good reason, for it was without a rival), — Scott's Family Bible. His varied experience, first as a missionary and then as a canvasser, West and East, for settlers in his township, his wide acquaintance with good people, and his never-failing zeal in religion, were special qualifications for such a service. In that itinerant work he passed on horseback through large portions of Connecticut and Western Massachusetts, renewing his intercourse with old friends and forming new friendships, preaching occasionally, as his health would permit, and lingering especially where he found a revival of religion. In the early years of my own ministry, I sometimes heard from ministers

and others of a generation now gone how powerfully he had preached on some occasions in their hearing. My own memory does not enable me to testify concerning his power in the pulpit, for it so happened that I never heard him preach after I was old enough to remember anything about a sermon ; but what I have learned from such tradition leads me to think that his power as a preacher was manifested not so much in the ordinary course of ministration as when he had some favorite theme or was excited by some inspiring occasion.

His bookselling enterprises (for besides his connection with the publication of Scott's Family Bible, he published on his own account an edition of DeFoe's Family Instructor) yielded for the time a better support to his family than he had gained from any former undertaking ; but meanwhile his infirmities, the accumulated effect of his hardships and trials through so many years, were increasing, and there were indications that his constitution, originally hardy, might soon break down.

In the autumn of 1816 he took up another employment requiring less of fatigue and exposure, and promising much larger returns. But the night was near in which he could work no more. He was a little while at New Haven, where he had previously formed some friendships ; and then he was at New York. There, about the first of December, he suffered what seems to have been a dangerous attack of illness. A few days later, thinking that he had recovered, he wrote, with characteristic hopefulness, " Since that my health has been comfortable, though I have been so feeble, by turns, as to be able to do little or nothing. You may depend on it that my business will eventually succeed to admiration, if it is faithfully pursued." On the first of January, 1817, he wrote that his return might be expected in two or three weeks, and added, " I intend to rid my hands of the business I have been engaged in, and to be in a way to live with my dear family if the Lord will."

" If the Lord will !" Such was the habitual attitude of his mind. Confiding in the Supreme Will and Wisdom, he could always say, " Father, not my will but Thine be done !" His hope was that he might soon return " to live with his dear family " ; but the will of the Lord was that he should come home to die. The springs of his life had been broken, and after his

arrival at home he could do little more than wait for the end. His disease was that to which physicians have given the expressive name *marasmus*, from the Greek word which signifies *to wither*. As a plant withers when its root is dried, so he withered, the strength failing, the flesh wasting away, though the mind was unclouded and serene.

I remember three letters that came to him in those months of slow decay, possibly at a somewhat earlier date. One was from his kinsman, Dr. Abiel Holmes, of Cambridge, Mass., inviting him, in behalf of some Board of Trust, to be as a pastor to some remnant of an Indian tribe, perhaps the Marshpee Indians. Of course he could give no thought to such a proposal. Another letter was from some old friends of his in Tallmadge who had been alienated from him and had judged him harshly. Frankly, and in a Christian spirit, they acknowledged that they had wronged him in their judgment and in their feelings. It was a solace to him in his waiting for death that those from whom his parting was so painful had remembered their old affection towards him, and at last had judged him kindly and truly.

The third of the three letters referred to was also from the place for which he had done and suffered so much. The essential features of the plan on which he undertook the settlement of that township were beginning to be realized. But, as has been indicated on a former page, the plan shaped and rounded out in his mind included a hope that the Yale College of that "New Connecticut" might become the crowning institution of his model town. A pleasant swell, now covered by a cemetery, close by the centre of the township, was the spot which in his thoughts he had destined to that use. Not very long before his death he received a letter written by the pastor of the church in that town, and expressing the wishes of some of the leading citizens. The time had come when it seemed as if something might be done for the establishment of a college on the Reserve, and he was invited to attempt that arduous labor.<sup>1</sup> It was thought that his projecting and en-

<sup>1</sup>The Western Reserve College, which he had hoped to see at Tallmadge, was organized about ten years after his death, and was established at Hudson, the place of his first residence on the Reserve, and among the people who first chose him for their minister.

thusiastic genius and his strenuous perseverance might be again enlisted in the service of the Western Reserve and of Tallmadge ; but the application came to a man whose force had been exhausted, whose heart had been broken by disappointments, and whose frame, worn out by many hardships, was already wasting away.

I have drawn out to an unexpected length the story of my father's life. Why should I not complete it with the story of his death ? " Whether we live we live to the Lord, or whether we die we die to the Lord." If he glorified God in his life, it was to be expected that he would glorify God in his death. Let me say, then, that for some time before the end he was perfectly, and with entire serenity, aware of the approaching change. I remember being present at a conversation when the certainty that he must die was distinctly spoken of between him and his brother,<sup>1</sup> the physician. " I know myself to be a sinner," said he ; " I feel it, but I submit myself to God, and I hope to be saved through Christ." In the evening of Aug. 24 (which was the Lord's day) he was visited by friends with whom he had some talk, more, perhaps, than his failing strength could bear. The next day, as if aware that the time of his departure had come, he called me to his bedside, and reminding me of his many godly counsels, charged me to keep them when I should be fatherless. What words of paternal solicitude he spoke to the younger children I can only infer. On Tuesday, before noon, there came a sort of shock, as of paralysis, premonitory of death, and he thought himself dying, as those who were around him also thought. My mother, standing over him with her youngest, an infant, in her arms, said to him, " Look on your babe, and bless him before you die." He looked up, and said with distinct and audible utterance, " The blessing of the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, rest upon thee !" His brother, who had often befriended him in his difficulties, and who venerated his religious character though he himself had not then made a religious profession, came in, and after feeling his pulse and silently observing the indications of

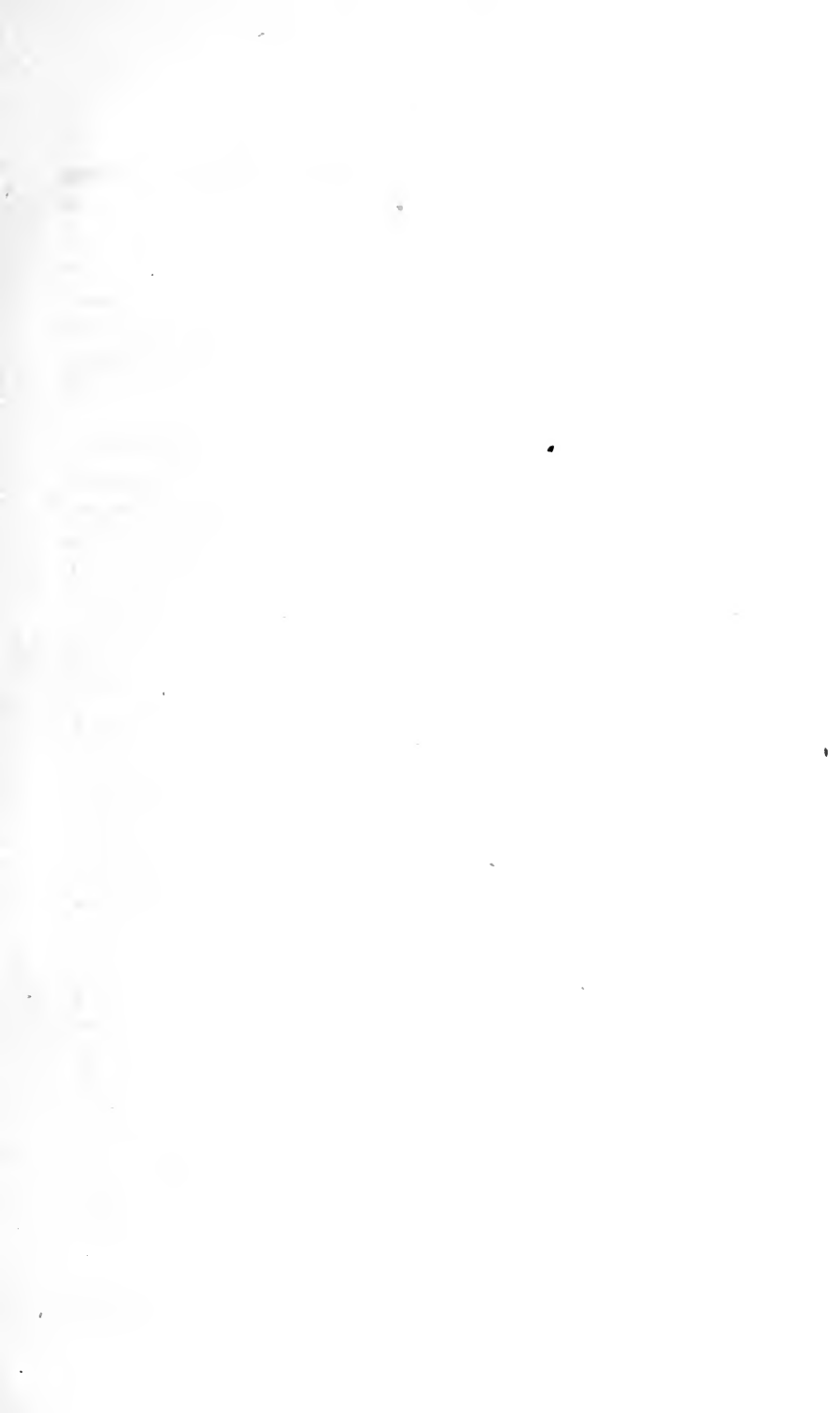
<sup>1</sup> Dr. Leonard Bacon (often mentioned in this memoir) removed from Mansfield to Hartford in 1802, became eminent there in the practice of medicine, was, in the later years of his life, a communicant in the First Church, under the pastorate of Dr. Hawes, and died in 1839.

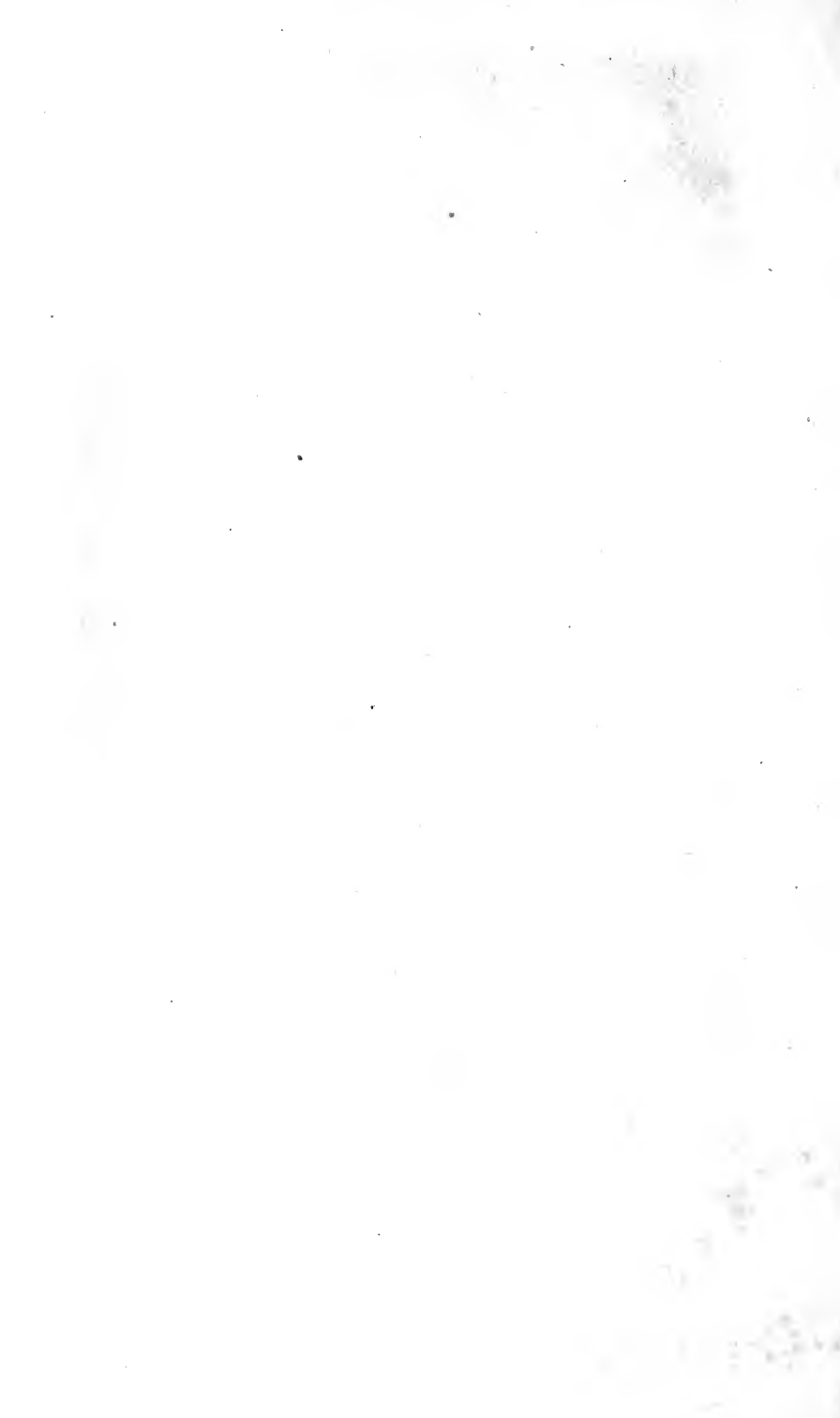
death, sat down by his side. I cannot but think of the contrast between the two brothers at that moment: the older, a shrewd and careful man, prudent in his affairs and prosperous in the world, health in his stalwart frame, and with years of life before him; the younger, an enthusiast by nature, but wise to eternal life by grace, born to a career of disappointment in this life, but trained by the discipline of defeat to a better inheritance hereafter, and dying at what might have been the noon of life to him but for the hardships he had endured in his self-sacrificing efforts to do good. Some tender memories of childhood and of later years were doubtless in both their minds, when the younger, turning his eyes towards the elder with affectionate gaze, said to him, "I entreat you to make sure that better part which shall never be taken from you." Through the remainder of that day, and through the two following days, he was failing, and his mind was often confused and wandering; but when the sunset of Thursday was approaching, he collected his thoughts, and with a deliberate effort took leave of his wife, committing her to the care of a divinely gracious Providence. After that farewell there was only one articulate utterance from his lips. To some word from her he loved best, he answered "All is well." Just before dawn on Friday, Aug. 29, he breathed his last. "Now he knows more than all of us," said the doctor; while my mother, bathing the dead face with her tears and warming it with kisses, exclaimed, "Let my last end be like his!"

His funeral was on Saturday, Aug. 30, from what is now called the Centre Church, Rev. Abel Flint and Rev. Joseph Steward conducting the service, and the next day Mr. Steward preached an appropriate discourse from the text, 2 Cor. iv, 17, — "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

NOTE. — On page 21, the ordination of Mr. Bacon is spoken of as probably the first instance of an ordination to the specific work of a missionary to the heathen. I have since learned, through Rev. F. D. Avery, of Columbia, Conn., of the following instances of earlier date: At Lebanon Crank, now Columbia, Conn., where Dr. Wheelock was pastor, Charles Jeffrey Smith, of Long Island, in 1763. — (*Sprague's Annals*, Vol. I, p. 402, note). Samuel Kirkland, June 19, 1766. (*Sprague's Annals*, I, 624.) — Titus Smith and Theophilus Chamberlain, April 24, 1765. — (*Narrative of Moor's Indian Charity School*. By Mr. Wheelock, printed in Boston, in 1765, p. 8.)









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