

# A DAY IN CHARLOTTETOWN HIS FIRST SERMON

## The Mail Party's Experience in a Storm.

### ON THE S. S. HALIFAX

#### Impressions of Our city and its Points of Interest.

LOWELL Sept. 12. The Mail's six days' sea voyage which left Lowell on Tuesday morning, Sept. 5 came to a very successful close Monday morning about 7 o'clock when the steamship Halifax arrived at the north side of Lewis wharf, and the final breakfast especially prepared for the party under the supervision of Chief Stewart Wait: W. Noyes, was partaken of, the choice viands being eaten with a relish.

Captain Charles E. Pye occupied his accustomed seat at the head of the table with the Mail's party and before the meal was finished he arose and said: "I want to pay Mr. Durning a compliment for the manner in which he has conducted this tour during the past six days. You could not have selected a better conductor, as he attended to every detail with the most accurate system, and I hope you will all come with him again." Mr. Durning, who sat at the head of an adjoining table, arose and thanked the captain for the compliment bestowed upon him.

A resume of the six days' tour since it left Lowell is as follows:

The steamship Halifax was scheduled to arrive in Halifax, the garrison city, at 5 o'clock on Wednesday evening, Sept. 6, and the steamer came in on the trip within 20 minutes of the time.

The party sailed at 9 for Cape Breton; arrived there at about 10 o'clock Thursday morning, Sept. 7, having passed through the Straits of Canso by early morning light.

About one hour was spent at Cape Breton and a large number of the party paid a visit to the telegraph office and other places of interest.

Thursday was a day of absorbing interest and thrilling experiences. A northeast storm followed the 1700 tons steamer and by the time the steamer had reached the erstwhile peaceful waters of St. George's Bay, the gale had reached its height and the wind was blowing at the rate of 60 miles an hour. Many of the timid ones were afraid that something might happen, but the manager of the party knew that everything would be safe because the ship has been covering this route for the past 10 years and has never met with an accident. Mr. Durning was also aware that it is one of the best managed crafts in operation on any line and he

had implicit confidence in Captain Pye, the commander, who has won the highest encomiums ever bestowed upon a mariner: not only for his courtesy and bearing, but for the strict discipline that he so indiscriminately enforces in every detail. He had the ship made ready for the storm, and his handsome blue eyes were alert to every threatening danger, and in the twinkling of an eye his crew of 50 men from the first officer to the chief engineer, labored with such clock work regularity that the vessel rode the waves proudly and majestically, but not before some 20 of the Mail party had succumbed to the dread malady.

The storm soon cleared and at 7 o'clock, Thursday evening, two hours behind schedule time, the boat reached Prince Edward's Island, where a delightful stay of 19 hours was indulged in.

The party slept in port and the next morning (Friday) all breakfasted at Hotel Davies, where a fine breakfast was served. After breakfast the company was toured through Charlottetown in the Kent Street livery carriages for three hours, and there was nothing in the capital worth seeing that the Mail party did not see. Among the noticeable places visited and passed en route were: The famous market place where a halt was made for half an hour, after which the party proceeded to the south side of Queen Square and Victoria row on Richmond Street, passing en route the postoffice, the Esplanade office, city hall, Zion Church, Y. M. C. A. building, Bank of Nova Scotia and the new St. Augustin's Cathedral, which occupies a prominent place, and from which position the town can be better seen than from any other, and the sight was a pleasing one to the Mail's party.

The route, next covered, was through Victoria Park, for the adornment of which her majesty, Queen Victoria, annually contributes beautiful floral specimens. Other places passed en route were: The government house, "Where dance and song within the walls have sounded

And breathing music rolled in dulcet tones."

On many a notable occasion. One of the most delightful drives enjoyed by the Mail's party was across the bridge at North River and on the return trip to the steamship Halifax the following places were viewed from the carriages: St. James' Church, which dated its beginning back to the year 1825; Grace Church, the second Methodist church of Charlottetown, which had its beginning in a series of Sunday school and prayer meetings; the Prince Street Methodist Church, an imposing brick edifice of the Gothic style of architecture; the church of England, St. Peter's at the northwest corner of Rochford Square. While this building is neither handsome nor imposing the church is one of the best equipped in Canada and was built by voluntary subscriptions in 1868.

The party was informed later, by a prominent gentleman in Charlottetown, that its first incumbent was the saintly George Wright Hodgson, one of Canada's foremost sons, who by his learning and piety, his eloquence and activity, broad-mindedness and largehearted sympathies not only rose to a foremost position in the estimation of his fellow churchmen in the Dominion, but enjoyed the well-earned distinction of being among the foremost on the roll of honored sons of his native province.

One of the principal features at Charlottetown is the Cathedral, but the Mail's party did not have time enough to enter this magnificent specimen of Gothic architecture.

Other notable buildings passed during the drive through Charlottetown were: Prince of Wales College, St. Dunstan's College, residence of Hon. B. Rogers, residence of Malcolm McLeod, Q. C., residence of W. H. Aitken, Esq., residence of Hon. F. Peters, residence of T. C. James, residence of James Paton, Esq., the Athletic Grounds, Fort Edward Kent school for boys, Prince Street school for girls, and the new Prince Edward Island Hospital.

It was noon, Friday when the steamship left Charlottetown for Cape Breton on the return trip where another brief stay was made for about two hours and the city of Halifax was reached at 10 o'clock Saturday.

The steamship Halifax sailed for Boston at midnight Saturday and she sea, using the words of Captain Pye, was smooth as a kitchen floor and the blue canopy of heaven lighted by diamond stars beautified the scene on Canada's greatest harbor beyond the power of description.

On the afternoon of Sunday it was announced that Divine service will be held in the saloon and nearly all of the 315 passengers on board congregated there and worshipped God on the seas. Rev. A. K. Sanford of New York city conducted the services and preached an instructive discourse on the uncertainties of life and the greatness and goodness of God, and Mr.

# HIS FIRST SERMON

## Rev. J. A. Gordon Assumes Pastorate of the

### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

#### Born in Uigg, P. E. I. and for Many Years Pastor in Ch'town

MONTECAL Sept. 11. -The Rev. J. A. Gordon preached his initial sermon as pastor of the First Baptist Church, to a fair-sized congregation, yesterday morning. He gave the impression of being a thoroughly consecrated man; one who recognized the hand of God in all the affairs of life.

The Rev. J. A. Gordon, M. A., was born in Uigg, a little village about sixteen miles from Charlottetown, P. E. I. His father was a prosperous Scotch farmer of that place, and the subject of this sketch was the eldest boy of the family. When only five years of age his father died leaving him in what was practically the sole charge of the farm. Here he labored for about eighteen years, and from that work he obtained that self-reliance which has been a marked characteristic of his life ever since. As much as it was possible he attended the village school, and afterwards the grammar school at Montague, a neighboring town.

At the age of twenty-three he, with his brother, opened up a general business of Montague Bridge, and about the same time he was married to Miss Margaret A. Ford, a sister of the Rev. J. A. Ford, M. A., pastor of Eastport, N. S., Baptist Church. During this period he was clerk of the district court, and a prominent temperance debater.

Converted and baptized at the age of fifteen, he soon became one of the leading lights of the Baptist Church. While in business at Montague he left the concern in the hands of his brother and went to Horton Collegiate academy in Wolfville, N. S. for a further course of study. Returning home, he pursued his work under the direction of Dr. McNeil. For some time he felt that it was necessary for him to preach the gospel, and in order to further fit himself for his life's work he entered Newton Theological Seminary with the class of '76. He remained there for two years, and then returned to Prince Edward Island, taking up the work at a mission field in Cape Wolfe. At this field he was ordained in 1876. In that year he received a call to the East Point Baptist Church, to succeed his own former pastor, an incumbent of forty-six years.

In 1880 he was called to the pastorate of the Milton Baptist Church, Yarmouth, N. S. This church, on account of internal dissensions and financial failure, was practically demoralized. Mr. Gordon only preached one sermon in his new charge before he was taken ill with pneumonia, and for weeks he lay struggling with death. His Scotch persistency pulled him through, and one Sunday, looking more like a ghost than a human being, he ascended the pulpit and, to the delight of the people, preached in the text, "I shall not die, but live, etc." After his recovery he began the work with his usual energy, and in a short time the church became one of the leading ones of the convention.

In 1885 Mr. Gordon was called to Leinster Street Church, St. John, N. B., which was in an unenviable position. By indefatigable work on the part of pastor and people, the church united and prospered.

W. A. Dickson of Lowell, by special request, sang a beautiful solo, the audience joining in the chorus.

Among those noticed in the large audience were: Alfred Ellis, first officer of the ship; John Dobbin, chief engineer; George C. Cook, purser; Walter W. Noyes, chief steward; Herbert Mathew, second steward; and several of the deck hands. The services were enjoyable and impressive.

The six days' trip was an emphatic success from beginning to end and Mr. Durning desires to thank Capt. C. E. Pye and the officers of his ship and Mr. W. W. Clark for courtesies extended.

About this time the Union Baptist Seminary was organized at St. Martin's N. B., and Mr. Gordon was asked to assume the superintendency of it. This he did, but in about a year's time an urgent call brought him back into the ministry. The beautiful Baptist church at Charlottetown, built on the model of the Jarvis street church, Toronto, was destroyed by fire. The members decided to rebuild in Mr. Gordon's services or disband—and he was asked to come at a reduction of \$400 from his previous salary. They had nothing but a hole in the ground and a \$18,000 debt, and taint of a former scandal hanging over them. It was a hard uphill struggle to finally place the church on a proper footing, but in a couple of years a new brick building was erected which is one of the most commodious and beautiful structures of its size to be found in the Maritime Provinces.

In the summer of 1893 Mr. Gordon was invited to go to Main Street Church in St. John. This day Main Street Church is one of the most desirable Baptist pastorates in the provinces.

During Mr. Gordon's twenty-three years' pastorate he has baptized about fourteen hundred persons, and has secured for the church building and debt funds and special collections for denominational purposes, about two hundred thousand dollars, and he never yet asked for an amount of money but what he obtained every cent.

The Rev. Mr. Gordon is regarded as one of the most thorough, persistent and persevering students in the Baptist ministry.

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PROF. MELVILLE B. BUCKLEY, Instructor Boston Dental College, Boston Mass.

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