

not themselves the original or wholesale manufacturers. They are merely commission merchants, and must sell what they receive, and as they receive it, free of all responsibility, except for the return of price. And just as some persons, otherwise good temperance men in theory, will sometimes sell rum on commission, because they think themselves justified, if not obliged, by the very nature of their commission business, to sell whatever is consigned to them—just so, some persons that in theory abhor scandal, false-witnessing, and lying, think themselves not only justified but bound to spread every report that has been committed to them, however diabolical and injurious it may be. The retailers of scandal do it gratuitously, and therefore imagine that they do not secure or receive a commission, as if it were a regular business; they think there is no account to be balanced, but there is; and there is a terrible commission to be paid, and no possibility of refusing it, or getting clear of it. The commission will be paid, cent. per cent., and compound interest, whether it is desired or not; for in this case no man can refuse his master's wages.

The wickedness and mischief, so pungently described in the Word of God as produced by this vice, spring very much from simply listening to scandal, and then, with a grave caution, repeating it. One of the definitions of a liar in the Word of God has this mischief in view, and is one of the most extraordinary things in all literature. *A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips, and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.* It is not said that the liar is the man merely who invents and originates the falsehood, but he that giveth ear to it; and the wicked doer is not the man merely who himself strikes his neighbour, or plays the assassin in person, but he that giveth heed to false lips, he that accepts and reports the accusation. Hence the burning maledictions upon tale-bearers, and hence the characteristic of a good man, as one that *taketh not up a reproach against his neighbour.*

If it were not for the ready listening ears given to false reports, most of the scandals in the world would die for want of nourishment. But these slanderers and listeners keep a foundling hospital for all reports deserted of their father. And some men are so constituted, that it is quite impossible for a report to pass through their hands just as it came to them. They cannot help adding to it. If the report is evil, it is sure to be exaggerated; if it is good, some flaw will be picked in it, or some amendment tacked upon it, frustrating its friendly operation, or some essential point will be left out, reducing it to a nonentity. If it is bad, it will lose nothing, but gathers like a ball of snow; everywhere it is sure of some kind of endorsement and enlargement. It is curious to see the process, if you stop one of these scandal-mongers or tale-tellers, and question him closely.

"As the north wind driveth away rain, so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue." You have a right, then, to put on an angry countenance, and to blow a gale, when such a tongue mutters its perverseness. And if every backbiting tongue had to encounter such a norwester, blowing back its calumnies, they would soon be stayed. "I tell you" (the slanderer whispers in your ear) "that such a one said, that Mr. So-and-So did so and so." "What! did he say that? Well, that's very bad, but it can't be." "Tis impossible. I know it to be false." "Well, such a one told me, and he must have known." "But, did he tell you those words? Did he say that Mr. So-and-So really did that thing?" "Well, I cannot say that he said exactly those words, but he said as much as would permit anybody to understand that he meant as much as might justify that conclusion."

"Aye! and so you have caught up the extreme of what might possibly have been, or might not have been, in his mind, and have put his supposed meaning in your own words as a certainty, reporting your own conclusion! In other words, he gave the raw material, and you have really coined the lie into a compact and convenient shape for handling and passing. He did not, indeed, say so, but you are sure he meant so, and you say so. He gives you a draft against Mr. So-and-So's character, but without any definite amount named, or any voucher, though he signs the indefinite calumny. But you, in your turn, instantly fill up the blank, and put your name on the back of it, and so pass it on. Well! it may possibly never come back to you in this world, but it will in the next. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. Perhaps you have acted as the pettifogger for a company, the receiver-general of their vague accusations, to put them into shape, and to

add by your own ingenuity and recklessness, a definiteness and malignity, a combination of venom and sophistry, which no one of the company, nor all together, could or dared furnish; but you, as employed by them, possess a license of weaving and stamping, an authority for putting their general and vague innuendos and half-truths into bold assertions and positive falsehoods. You are the brass nozzle of their bellows, the converging point of their compound blow pipe. You are the well-constructed sewer, through which the muddy compost of their multi-flavoured salmagundi of unbottomed injurious reports and misrepresentations flows forth, a consistent, well-kneaded, and concocted mass, into the carts prepared and sent far it.

Any scavenger's employment is more dignified than his, who lives by compounding and shoveling the scandals of society. A man had better work up to his waist in filling bags of guano, and never breathe any other atmosphere, than, make his living as the go-between of slanderers, or the penny-post of the Father of lies. We have an instance before us, of a man crushed to earth under a pack of injurious allegations, which, being without friends, he has no means of disproving, and the attempted refutation of which would only blazon the injury, without the possibility of repairing it. What can the victim of prejudice and slander, in such a case, do? And what should be the punishment of any man who, without positive knowledge of his own sets his name, as an original witness, to charges, of which he himself has but recently heard, and never knew anything at all but by hearsay only?—*N. Y. Independent.*

### Female Education.

For the Christian Messenger.

I am a warm friend to all our institutions, and of our institutions of learning. I am glad to see indications this year of a warmer interest in our Academy at Wolfville. This is a move in the right direction. Something should be done to increase the attendance. A plan has suggested itself to me to secure this object, and that is to make arrangements for the admission of females to its advantages. I would not propose this as a permanent thing; but only temporary, until such times as our college is endowed, and the denomination will be able to give their attention to the endowment of a good female institution, such as we very much need. Until this period arrives could not the managing committee of our Education Society devise some method for allowing young females to attend the academy, especially those who are thirsting for the Pictian spring, and whose hearts are burning for a preparation to occupy the numerous spheres of usefulness among our population as teachers, &c. I suppose some inhabitant of Wolfville could be induced to provide accommodations for a number of them, at the same rate as the young men at the academy are lodged on the hill, and a Matron employed to preside over them with maternal care. The addition of studious females to the classes in the academy would entail very little additional labor on the teachers. Every teacher knows that it is as easy to teach a class of 10 pupils as a class of 6. Then the tuition fees of these young women would pay the salary of the matron. Such a person could be employed also as could teach some of the ornamental branches at her own charges. I am convinced that this thing could be done without additional expense.

And are we not bound by every sense of honor immediately to carry out this, or some other feasible plan of female education? Our sisters have aided us in rearing our institutions, by contributing the produce of their needles, of their dairies, and of their looms, and lately we have an instance of a noble young lady giving from her hard earned substance the sum of £5 to the college endowment. And how have we repaid them for their assistance? By a systematic exclusion from those institutions which they have helped to rear. Also by refusing to provide any other school for them. Can anything be more oppressive? And have we not been the losers? In our educational pioneering have we not been trying to drag the plough with one end of the yoke? Yes—and we have found it a hard tug, and will find it so till both ends are brought up together. Surely we have been slow scholars in this department of duty. See the Wesleyan Academy at Sackville. Why does that institution, half as old as ours, have 3 or 4 times the number of pupils?—The answer is easy. They treat their females as if they had souls as well as the boys. Look at Oberlin institute in Ohio. Why do they have eleven or twelve hundred

pupils at the end of a few years, while Harvard, the oldest and the richest university in America, has only about one thousand? For the same reason. I hope, therefore, that we shall, as a denomination, awake speedily to a sense of our best interests in this particular, and that the Baptist Education Society of Nova Scotia will devise some plan whereby our pious females may reap the benefit of their own institutions.

REFORM.

August 2, 1858.

## Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, AUGUST 4, 1858.

### Marriage Law.

A measure which for some time past has excited much discussion in England, is now before the House of Lords. It is a Bill which has passed the Commons by a large majority, among other things, making it legal for a person to marry a deceased wife's sister or husband's brother. The English Statute law, as it formerly stood, contained no prohibition in this respect, the illegality resulting from the enactments of the old canon and ecclesiastical laws. The more just conclusions of enlightened reason in later years have very properly repudiated the prohibition, as neither sanctioned by sound morality nor christian doctrine. It is in fact one of the figments invented by the casuistry of the darker ages, to enhance the Papal power, and increase the revenues of the church, which claimed the right of stepping in and granting dispensations for the marriage of even near degrees of blood relationship, such as uncles and nieces, &c. Strange to say, however, so great an ascendancy did the High Church and Tractarian principles gain in high places in England a few years since, that a law was passed placing on the English Statute book the old Romish and ecclesiastical prohibition. As far as regards Scripture authority on the subject, no vestige of such law is to be found there, but on the contrary—as far as the analogy of the old Testament goes—the directly opposite inference is fairly deducible. Did we not see that other and more hurtful dogmas of ancient superstitions are daily prevalent among whole bodies of enlightened christian people, we might well wonder that so much opposition has been raised by sincere and pious men against the law now before Parliament, and, we believe, it is pretty generally feared that the House of Lords, who, notwithstanding their high character for wisdom and independence, are still the great defenders of effete and antiquated usages, will throw out the Bill.

It is, however, a matter that is engaging so much of public attention that the Law cannot long remain in its present state, especially after some late decisions of the English Courts upon the construction of the Statute. Before that enactment the old ecclesiastical law was constantly evaded, and, indeed, considered nearly obsolete.—We should be glad to see the question taken up and properly dealt with by our own Legislature, for although the English Statutes do not extend to the Colonies in such cases, yet, as the matter now stands, all doubts ought to be removed by a proper enactment.

We might say much on the moral and religious aspects of the question, which have been warmly mooted on the other side of the water. It is our intention, however, to return to it again. As above hinted, we consider it a matter well worth the attention of our own Legislators.

The *Morning Chronicle* is again making an attempt to dictate to us what we shall say or allow others to say in our columns. An editorial in the last Thursday's issue of that paper, indicates that the writer is greatly disconcerted, because, on the 21st ult., we admitted "without note or comment" a brief letter from the Hon. Provincial Secretary, respecting a resolution of the Pugwash Baptist Church, which also appeared in our columns on the 9th of June. The Editor of that paper does not seem so much troubled with what we do say, as with what we do not say. "Without note or comment" appears to be the burden of his complaint. He is doubtless desirous that we should take some partizan course. When the resolution of the Pugwash Church appeared in our columns "without note or comment," he copied it, on the 8th ult., with evident satisfaction, and declared, by way of adding to its weight and importance, that it was "prepared for, and published in the organ of the Denomination to which Mr. Rogers belongs," and yet after remarks such as he makes in connection

with that letter, he would now have us exclude any allusion to it by the person therein specially referred to. This may to him appear just and fair, but we think had we pursued such a course as that he evidently wishes we had, we might very properly have been charged with partizanship. As, however, we are resolved to avoid whatever would give just reason for such charge, we shall still use our own discretion both as to inserting communications and giving note or comment on them, or not doing so, just as we think proper, without consulting his convenience or wishes.

An anonymous writer,—also in the same paper of Thursday last—signing himself "A Baptist," but who leaves us little doubt as to his identity, tries hard to stir up the feelings of the members of the Pugwash Church against us, for permitting any one to question their decision. If the writer be indeed "A Baptist," we are sorry that he knows so little of the true spirit of christian liberty which is cherished in Baptist churches.—One would rather suppose him to be a Roman Catholic than "A Baptist," as he appears desirous of claiming infallibility for their decisions. We express no opinion with regard to the action of the Pugwash Church in this particular instance, but we apprehend no member of that Church would claim for it such character. He says:—"No other Church, no association of Churches, no clerical power on earth, much less a Provincial Secretary or a newspaper Editor, has a right to question their decision," and then with all the egotism and assurance which seems to belong to this self-styled "Baptist," he closes by saying: "before remarking further I shall wait to see how the Editors of the *Messenger* are going to exculpate themselves in this matter." If this vain man had not been ashamed to affix his own proper signature to his writing we might have made some attempt to "exculpate ourselves in this matter"; but as his writing comes from nobody we feel that it has received more attention than it deserves.

Our numerous subscribers in the Pugwash Church, and in other parts of the County of Cumberland would not thank us to occupy our pages with "notes or comments" on such matters as this. They are quite able to exercise their own judgment and defend themselves in political affairs, or matters of a personal nature. Those who suppose that they are ingratiating themselves with our eastern brethren by trying to seduce us from the independent course we have hitherto taken, will, we are assured find that they do not raise themselves in their estimation by such efforts as these. They may find again, as they have before, that they have made a great mistake in attempting such a silly attack on us for not lending ourselves to aid them in their political warfare.

On another page will be found another letter, having reference to the Pugwash Church Resolution, from Mr. Rogers, also without "note or comment." The writers for the *Morning Chronicle* will, perhaps, try and manufacture another article out of this. We may, perhaps, have a brief "note," but not "comment" on the subject next week.

We are much obliged to the Rev. Mr. Steele for reminding us, in a communication to the *Presbyterian Witness* of the 31st ult., that our compositor made a slight typographical omission by putting Acts vi., 32, instead of Acts xvi. 32. We would, however, just remind Mr. S. that errors, equally great, occur with some of our neighbors, and may be seen even in the same page and line in which he refers to this. He will now be able to find the text in his own Bible, which speaks of Paul and Silas, and the Jailer. But it is not our wont to deal with such small game as this. There is no necessity for any new version of the Bible to learn all that it teaches about "household baptisms, with infants included."

He says:—"They (infants) were necessarily included in the apostolic households." Will he favor us with the reasons for such necessity? Baptists are constantly having "household baptisms" where there are no infants, and we hesitate not to deny any such necessity. He becomes quite valiant when he challenges "the Editor" to prove that there were no infants included in the "households" baptized by the Apostles. We have a right to his proof of the positive, before we need prove the negative. When he has done this it will be time enough for him to give a challenge.

He then says:—"If the Editor can shew when, and by what expressions, infants were to be excluded from the church by its living Head—and that after an uninterrupted experience of 2000 years,—then we give up the argument." How strange that one accustomed