

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

"Critics and Commentators."

MESSRS. EDITORS,

My worthy Brother, Rev. Dr. Cramp, has favored us, (C. M., April 3rd) with an extended notice of the views of "Critics and Commentators" on Luke xviii. 7. I was aware from the first, that his opinion coincided with that of Bro. Armstrong; and that a majority of Lexicographers, Translators, and Expositors, have regarded the pronoun "them" in the clause rendered "Though He bear long with them," as referring to the "elect." It is known, however, to every attentive and independent student of the Bible, that in many instances these adopt the view of some noted predecessor, (who may have erred) without any scrutinizing investigation. Dr. C. admits that "the verb makrothumeo here translated 'bear long,' ordinarily means to be patient, long-suffering;" but suggests that it "is in this passage used in a peculiar sense, which," he states, "it sometimes bears."

To this last statement I demur. Both he and I well know, that no array of great names can establish this. Plain examples only can do it. Have they been adduced? The attentive reader will observe, that, excepting a slight allusion to James v. 7, 8, where the word obviously means to be patient, all the critics who take that side of the question are obliged to rely wholly on one solitary instance, namely, the oft-cited passage, Eccles. xxxv. 18.

It has not been pretended that the classical use of the word gives any countenance to the "peculiar sense" assigned to it in Luke xviii. 7. Neither is it denied, that in nine cases out of ten in which it occurs in the New Testament—the tenth being the one in debate—it means to be patient. According to Kircher it is found only once in the Septuagint, viz: Prov. xix. 10, "Eleemon aner makrothumei, i. e. A merciful man is patient." In the Apocrypha it occurs 7 times, viz. Baruch iv. 18, or 25. Eccles. ii. 4, xviii. 10, or 11, xxix. 11, or 8, xxxv. 18, 2 Mac. vi. 14 and viii. 26. It may be easily seen, that the idea of being patient precedes these texts. In Eccles. xxxv. 18, the first clause is obviously to be taken in connexion with the closing part of the preceding verse; "The Lord will not (brodanei) be slack [to execute judgment]; neither will the Mighty be patient toward them, till he have smitten in sunder the loins of the unmerciful, and repaid vengeance to the heathen." Here the parallelism is plainly preserved, and the sense is natural and perspicuous.

I had shown that the theory of Dr. Geo. Campbell and others, by which they represent the pronoun (autois) them in this passage as referring to the humble in verse 17th, is inadmissible; because the word (tapeinos) humble, is in the singular number. Dr. Cramp has attempted to meet this by an "extract from Winer's Grammar," as follows, "Pronouns referring to a noun singular are put in the plural when the noun has a collective signification, or is an abstract used for a concrete." But every scholar who examines the point with care, will see that this rule has no relation to the subject. Obviously tapeinos, the humble, is neither "a noun having a collective signification," nor "an abstract used for a concrete." It denotes what every individual should be, an humble person. Of the 12 passages cited, the learned reader who examines them, will find there is not one case at all parallel, or similar, to this. In Prov. xv. 6, one separated from Christ is represented as a withered branch (ktema); but as it is not natural to speak of gathering one branch alone for fuel, ktemata, branches, are implied. (This text illustrates and confirms my view of Luke xviii. 7, with reference to "an unmentioned antecedent." The English has it "Men gather," &c., but the Greek reads, Lunagousin, i. e. they gather. The word for men is not expressed, but implied.) In Exod. xxxix. 33, my copy of the Septuagint, published at Frankfort in 1597, reads auton, him, with a note appended, "Al autous, vitiose, i. e. Another reads autous, them, corruptly." This text, therefore, is not in point. The correct copy has the pronoun in the singular. In the remaining 10 passages the pronouns refer to such collective nouns as laos, people, ochlos, multitude, &c. Every one acquainted with language is aware, that such nouns of multitude, and abstract nouns implying plurality, as peritome, circumcision, used to denote persons circumcised, may have pronouns in the plural. But the intelligent and unprejudiced inquirer will require a rule that applies to the case, and examples in point. Here evidently we have neither.

Facts are stubborn things, "I beg to call at-

tention" to one that can hardly be called irrelevant. Wherever the word tapeinos occurs in connexion with a pronoun referring to it, either in Scripture or the Apocrypha elsewhere, the pronoun is invariably in the singular number. (See James i. 9, Lev. xxvii. 8, Eccles. xi. 1 xiii. 25 and xxix. 11 in Greek). Surely this ought to be considered "entirely conclusive."

If any man could meet the argument by which I showed, that Eccles. xxxv. 18,—the sole reliance of the opposite party—gives no support to their view, but confirms mine, undoubtedly Dr. Cramp, with his numerous advantages, is the man to do it. The manifest failure of his laborious attempt, consequently furnishes strong proof that it can not be done. Until, then, this difficult task be performed, or some plain and unequivocal instance be adduced in which makrothumeo denotes delaying to afford relief or to avenge. I shall deem it more consistent to believe that the language in Luke xviii. 7, is elliptical, and that the pronoun, as in many other cases, refers to an antecedent implied, than to imagine that the verb is here used "in a peculiar sense," wholly unsupported by its use elsewhere.

In conclusion I remark, that, in reference to the general import of the text, if my esteemed and beloved Brethren Armstrong and Cramp be right, I am not wrong; for it is obvious to every person of discernment, that as long as God 'delays' to avenge His oppressed people, so long does He "bear with" their adversaries.

Whatever may be the opinion of the reader with reference to the point that has now been very fully discussed, let us all be careful to remember the Saviour's gracious object in this whole passage, namely, to encourage and stimulate "men always to pray, and not to faint."

Yours in gospel bonds,

CHARLES TUPPER.

Aylesford, April 8th, 1861.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Right of Private Judgement.

"MENNO" AND THE Witness.

MR. EDITOR,—

I desire no "angry controversy" but would fain see a "little friendly discussion" in the points at issue between your able correspondent "Menno" and the Witness. Menno writes as though he believed the Presbyterians of the present day to avow the principle of the right of private judgment in religious matters, and as though what he terms the "Golden sentence" of the confession of Faith, were inconsistent with the one of "iron" connected with it. I don't know what reply may be made to this by the Witness, but I do know that by claiming "that God alone is Lord of the conscience," the framers of the "Confession" never intended to grant to any man or to any body of men, the right to believe and propagate error, however conscientious they might be about it. And I know too that the Presbyterians of the present day, agree with them in this. I have heard the Rev. Mr. Somerville openly avow the sentiment that the Queen of England and all the Lords and Commons, and all the Judges, Magistrates and officers throughout the Empire, ought to be Presbyterians, and members of that church, and that that church should be, and would be, if a solemn promise made to it at the time of the "Restoration;" a promise still believed to be binding, were fulfilled. It would in that case be the State Church. I heard him further declare that in that case they would afford no protection to such as believed, worshipped, and practiced contrary to the Laws and Ordinances of the said church: He did not say that they would extirpate them with fire and sword. But he did say, "We would afford them no protection." "We are as rigid," he added, "as the Roman Catholics. But we differ from them in taking the word of God for our guide, whereas they take the Pope." I do not know that these were the identical words he used; but I think I have not misrepresented him. I have mentioned his name on purpose, because I have no wish to misrepresent him. He will, I dare say, remember the occasion and the discussion at the house of Mr. George Fisher in Cornwallis. He further assured me that the sentiments of the Covenanters on this point were identical with those of the Free Church. And I have heard the same sentiments advanced by a minister of the Free Church.

Now I gather from all this that while they disavow the right to enforce on the consciences of others what is not taught in the Scriptures, they do claim that the Scriptures are binding, and that no man has a right to disbelieve and disobey God! And that both the Church and the State are bound to see that God is obeyed. A

sentiment from which I think, after all, when thus put, many Baptists would find it difficult to dissent. But if I am correct in my opinion, the Presbyterians claim that the "Presbyterian Church" is the only authorized expositor of the Bible, and not the Baptist Denominations, nor any Tom, Dick or Harry who may choose to set himself up as a Religious Demagogue.

I am a Baptist. I claim the right of private judgement for myself and others; consequently for my worthy and esteemed friend Rev. Mr. Somerville, for the Free Church, and for the Roman Catholics, the Campbellites, the Thomases, the Deists, the Atheists, the Anythingarians, and the Nothingarians. But I freely confess it makes me wince a little to pen the latter part of the string. I am afraid that were I put to the test, I would find it difficult to confine myself in my opposition to them, to plain kind argument. Deadly error is a deadly evil.

In fact, if the Presbyterians, highly as I esteem them, really do desire to absorb all the power in Church and State, and if they would, in case they could be successful, crush us poor Baptists out of being, or even withdraw all legal protection from us, I am not sure but I would be unwilling to confine my opposition to loving and affectionate argument and remonstrance. I am afraid my claims as a "man" and as a "citizen," would be heard now and then clubbing my "theory" to death; and that the "elective franchise" would occasionally jostle aside my bland and liberal sentiments about the "rights of conscience," and "all that," and "all that."

In fact, if either "Menno," or the editor of the Presbyterian Witness supposes that the right of private judgment in religion, and the non-interference of the State, are settled doctrines and generally held, I can only tell them that they are very much mistaken—both of them. Therefore,—and this is my inference from the foregoing,—give us the proofs upon which the sentiment is based. Certainly the Old Testament dispensation allowed nothing of the kind. Does the New?

Yours truly,
IMPUDENCE.

For the Christian Messenger.

Horton Academy Exhibition. Baptism.

The usual opening Exhibition of Horton Academy came off on the evening of March 20th. The manner in which the exercises were carried on, as well as the character of the pieces recited, evinced pretty clearly the nature of the previous training. So just an estimate of men and things, of the objects of education, and of the true method of its attainment could hardly be expected where the instruction is inadequate and superficial. The mind of the pupil receives its impression from that of the teacher, and is moulded by it, as truly as the marble is made to exhibit the sculptor's ideal. There was no attempt at display; but the whole we thought an exhibition of good common sense, without the vain parade too often discoverable on such occasions. This was to us a highly gratifying feature, because it afforded a fresh argument for the claims of these Institutions, to the confidence and support of the friends of education generally, and of the Baptist Denomination in particular.

We extract from the Programme the subject of the essays, with the names of their authors, in their order.

- "While we live, let us live," By T. A. Blackadar.
- "The expulsion of the Acadians," By W. Graham.
- "Energy of character," By I. Shaw.
- "Spirit recognitions," By Miss A. D. Shaw.
- "The highest style of man," By A. Starratt.
- "Slavery," By S. D. Shaw.
- "Swiss freedom," (a poem), By Miss I. Elder.
- "Hugh Miller and his works," By S. McVean.
- "The power of Music," By Joseph Murray.
- "The Bible," By Wm. Boggs.

They were all good; some, that we might name were it necessary, were excellent, and would have done credit to students of the higher grade. Here it may not be amiss to remind our young friends of the necessity, in their future efforts, of distinct articulation, since they wish all to enjoy what they have been at great pains to prepare. In the dialogues there was a sprinkling of the witty, amusing and serious. The choir under the direction of Miss Lawrence, the music teacher, performed admirably. The union of the Male and Female department was a novel

feature, and doubtless contributed to make the exercises of the evening as interesting, at least, as those of a similar character on any previous occasion.

In addition, we may be allowed to state that another Quarter has commenced, under favorable circumstances. The Female department, recently established, numbers fifty scholars. The teachers are fully competent and devoted to their work. The establishment is conducted upon sound religious principles, and the fruits are already becoming manifest.

A good work has commenced among the pupils. Yesterday nine followed their Saviour through the yielding wave. Thus early has the Lord given the seal of his approval to the enterprise. Five other persons were also baptized, three of the number belonging to the Male Department of the Academy. More, it is believed, are seriously enquiring. Brethren and sisters, when you pray, remember your Institutions at Horton.

PHILANDER.

Wolfville, April 8th, 1861.

For the Christian Messenger.

N. S. Home Missionary Society.

MR. EDITOR,—

In a former communication, I suggested, as the best method of replenishing the Treasury of the Home Missionary Society, the employment by the Board of an Agent, who would visit all the Baptist churches in the Province, instructing them in the principles of "Systematic Christian Benevolence." Not wishing to make that article too long (as editors and readers equally prefer short articles), I forebore to refer to the great success which has attended the employment of a Financial Agent in New Brunswick. In the N. B. Baptist and Christian Visitor, under date of Jan. 16th, I find the report of the Agent, Rev. T. Todd, for the quarter ending Dec. 31st, 1860, showing collected by him in that time \$254 28c., and subscribed \$386 10c.: total, \$630 38c. The closing paragraph of his report is,—

"I have preached on an average five times a week, and have travelled about 1150 miles; have passed over some of the worst roads I ever saw. But wherever I have gone I have met with kind hearts and pleasant looks, and am still encouraged in the work."

The editor, in the same issue, after giving the names, and fields of labor of eighteen missionaries employed, remarks:

"But how comes it to pass that we are enabled to employ so many missionaries? Simply for the reason that we have a permanent agency in the field. To the indefatigable efforts of the Financial Agent of the 'Union plan,' the Board is largely indebted for the funds they appropriate. When he commenced his labors the number of our missionaries had dwindled down to one or two. In a little more than one year the number has increased to eighteen. What encouragement to him, to the pastors and churches to go on in this work and labour of love. We are aiming at a thorough organization upon the Union principle, let this be effected, and the present number of missionaries may be doubled."

There is another method which will, if adopted, increase very largely the means of the Home Mission Board to send the gospel to the needy. The Wesleyans, Presbyterians and Episcopalians, have all adopted the plan of holding Missionary Meetings annually, and though in the government of our churches, we acknowledge no authority but the word of God, in matters of mere business we should not object to copy their methods, if superior to our own.

As it is now, Baptists have the privilege of attending the Annual Missionary Meetings of the denominations named, and aiding their missions, while we do not give them the opportunity of reciprocating, which no doubt they would be pleased to do; and what is worse, we have not the opportunity (thus afforded them) of liberally subscribing to our own missions. Let, then, every Baptist Church in the Province adopt the plan of Annual Meetings for the cultivation of a Missionary spirit, and let it be part of the Agent's duty to remind the churches of the importance of such meetings, and when practicable assist in holding them. The Annual Missionary Meetings would soon become one of our institutions, and I believe a profitable one.

At the risk of becoming tedious, let me make one more suggestion. If the Baptists of Nova Scotia wish the Missionary Society to be useful in sending the Gospel to the destitute, let them pray more to the Great Head of the Church to bestow his blessing upon it. If they pray in faith, they will give accordingly. Let, then, one evening be set apart every month to pray for missions, and take up a collection at the same time. The meetings of the different Associa-