

be changed in the slightest respect by what a person may think about it. It is saying I am indifferent to the word of Christ, if your conscience is satisfied. But, readers, this will never do. Follow such acting and you would have in the end to sanction about every error in the world that pertains to morals and religion. For what error has not had sincere advocates. No, on whatsoever God has left a sure word of revelation, we are not to consent that any man vary that word, though he have done it conscientiously. We are to respect God more than the individual. Oh! this yielding to what somebody may honestly think to be right, instead of manfully and loyally standing up to the definite word of Christ, this is what has played the mischief in Christendom. It is acknowledging a variable standard of right, when there is in truth but one constant standard. We say, then, that a person, who finds in the Bible regarding the first Christian ordinance, nothing but believers' baptism, and that an immersion as the symbol of death and resurrection, ought not to treat infant baptism and sprinkling with such a leniency as practically recognizes them to be truth. Not my friend's tender conscience, not my friend's sense of propriety, not hoary traditions, but "The Bible, the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants."—*San Francisco Evangel.*

**Christian Messenger.**

HALIFAX, MAY 13, 1863.

**Temperance Matters.**

The old subject again! Who wants to read anything on Temperance? we imagine some of our readers exclaiming. Nothing can be said on it that has not been said over and over again a hundred times. "The drunkard shall not inherit the kingdom of God." "Yes, we know it," says the reader. "We have told him so repeatedly, and find him so bound to the intoxicating cup, that if he abstains for a little time he is again entrapped by his old associates, so that we have given up all hope of re-creating him permanently to habits of sobriety." If reader, you have the charity that hopeth all things, and never faileth, then, and then only, are you adapted to labor in this noble philanthropic enterprise. We would ask our christian readers if past failures are a sufficient reason for ignoring this subject? If so, then all good undertakings must be abandoned.

Is all the work of reformation done that can be performed? Jesus Christ came to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and yet men sin. Has he left men to go on to the destruction which awaits the wicked, or is it found that, nevertheless, his power operates on men's hearts to influence and change them, even after repeated failures on their part? Yes, it does; and we believe that no proper effort, however imperfect, for the moral and spiritual improvement of others, is lost. At the judgment there will be thieves, and murderers, and liars, and drunkards, bound up in bundles to be burned, (Matt. 13, 24-30) but the truth may now be applied to rescue them from impending ruin. No man is a true patriot who is unwilling to apply the means in his power of rescuing the poor inebriate. He may have lost many of the noble features of his manhood, and rendered himself obnoxious, an outcast, a moral pest instead of a blessing to his family, but, we believe, however low he may have fallen, he may yet be restored and, at least, partially reinstated. We believe in moral suasion, now, as much as ever, it rightly undertaken by Christian people. The friends of the poor drunkard have looked for a brighter day and cried "How long!" But they must not be driven from their position by difficulty, and allow their love to wax cold because iniquity abounds. The greatest difficulty is not with drunkenness, but with what is called moderate drinking. This is the outer circle of the great maelstrom; and if the victims could but be placed beyond this current, and kept there, they would certainly never approach the fearful vortex which swallows up those who are to be for ever excluded from the kingdom of heaven. Who can tell where the line of demarcation may be drawn between the two classes? or where there is safety in the insidious circle? Let those belonging to the latter seriously consider, and courageously act out their convictions.

The coming Election will make special demands on the friends of temperance. If they cannot do much good, they may be able to prevent much evil, by using their influence at the proper time and place. Popular elections, and times of public excitement, are always promotive of drinking to excess, and unless a general sentiment against intoxicating drinks prevails at the hustings and polling places, there will doubtless be an unusual

amount of drunkenness. The dealers in these destructive beverages are fully alive to their opportunity, and are advertising their Liquors, probably for the purpose of inducing the men who value a triumph above the character of their constituents to purchase those potent persuasives for free and independent electors!! Let the real friends of the people be aroused to equal vigilance, and help to push back the flood of degradation and misery, which often comes over a community at such times.

We hope that the timely series of lectures, which have been delivered in different parts of the province during the past three months, will not be without their influence for good in the several communities visited.

Since we commenced writing this article we have received the advanced sheets of the Acts passed in the recent session of the Legislature, and are glad to find on this subject, Chap. 17th, "An Act to amend the License Law" some of the provisions of which may be acceptable to our readers. We therefore copy some of its clauses:—

2. In any County in which the majority of the Sessions may be disposed to grant Licenses to sell Intoxicating Liquors for beverage purposes, they shall nevertheless withhold such License in any Polling District where a majority of the rate payers petition the Sessions against the granting of such Licenses; and such decision shall remain in full force and effect until reversed by a majority of the rate payers in any Polling District where said action shall have been taken.

6. No Justice of the Peace shall hold a shop or tavern License.

10. Any person holding a License who shall sell Intoxicating Liquors to an Indian, shall, on proof thereof before a Justice of the Peace, forfeit his license, and also shall be liable to a penalty of twenty dollars for each offence, and in default of payment shall be imprisoned for a term of not less than ten days nor more than twenty days.

11. It shall be lawful for the Chief Commissioner of Railways, or any person authorized by him, to seize and destroy all intoxicating liquors found exposed or intended for sale, within the limits of the Railway, and for that reason, if necessary, upon reasonable ground of suspicion, forcibly to enter into any house or building within such limits, and to seize and take away all such Intoxicating Liquors.

12. No Licenses shall be granted to any person who shall reside or have his place of business within the limits of the Railway, nor to any person who shall reside or have his occupation within any proclaimed Gold District; and all sales of Intoxicating Liquors within such limits, or within such proclaimed Gold District, shall be deemed as made without License, notwithstanding the seller may hold a License, and he shall be liable to all penalties and forfeitures incurred by those who sell without License.

The penalties for selling contrary to the provisions of the license law are to be: for the 1st offence \$10 or 20 days in the county Jail; for the 2nd offence, \$20 or 30 days imprisonment; for the 3rd offence, \$40 or 60 days; and for every subsequent offence \$80 or 3 months imprisonment.

The repeated efforts of Avar Longley Esq., to secure the provisions of this Act, which is virtually prohibitory of the traffic, if the people are determined to carry them out, have been so far successful. As the head of the Order of the Sons of Temperance body he has been most persevering, and all good citizens should now strive to apply the law on this subject. This with legal suasion combined with moral suasion we may realize that, in this, we are, as it is said in the matter of civil liberty, that "Every people are as free as they deserve to be;" so we may have as much freedom from the worse slavery of Intemperance as we determine to possess. The work must be done by the people. He that would be free, himself must strike the blow.

**Infant Dedication.**

MR. EDITOR,—

I do not wish to be a troublesome correspondent, nor do I often write for the public, but as I live in this age of speculation and curiosity I sometimes meet with strange notions; and in some instances those notions respect subjects, in which matters of grave importance or so seriously involved that I startle at the thought, and however fixed my own sentiment on the point is, I wish to know what others think about it. For the foregoing reasons I propose some questions which I wish you or any of your able correspondents would answer, in harmony with the scriptures, by so doing you will favor me and probably benefit others.

I. Do the scriptures teach that a formal consecration of infants to the Lord should be practiced as an ordinance by the christian church?

II. Would it be by intelligent baptists considered as a proper act, for a Baptist Minister to meet a company assembled at an appointed time and place, for the special purpose, and officiate in the consecration of an infant, having introduced in that ceremony all the circumstances and elements, excepting water, which constitute a pedobaptist infant regeneration?

III. Would not such an act be a mighty con-

cession to pedobaptist practices, and a scandal on the principles and practices, that we have always held as scriptural?

Yours for the truth  
AN INQUIRER.

West End, April 20th 1863.

These three questions are essentially but one. The second is but an amplification of the first, and the third but relates to the consequences which follow from the practice spoken of. They refer to what may have been done by some Baptist ministers as a sort of concession to parents who have not quite got rid of pedobaptist prejudices. Finding nothing in scripture to sustain the practise of Infant Baptism they have, nevertheless, not been fully reconciled to renounce it, but have sought for a sort of substitute in a religious service calling it a dedication of the child.

To the enquiry in the first question we unhesitatingly reply, No, we have no foundation in scripture for any such practice. But it may be asked, Would you object to a solemn dedication or consecration of an infant to God? No, by no means. A parent who is a christian has already dedicated to God and his service, all that he possesses, but there is no foundation for making this an act of public or social worship. When Jesus was upon earth parents brought their young children to him that He might touch them, but surely that is no reason why parents should bring their children to those who profess to be Christ's ministers, either for their prayers or for baptism. To say that the latter practice is fulfilling our Lord's injunction, "Suffer little children to come unto me &c." is but little better than blasphemy—putting man in the place of Christ. If parents now-a-days would imitate those of our Saviour's times, and obey his injunction, let them pray for their infants and with them, and watch their first buddings of intelligence, so as to direct their thoughts and steps to Him who became a child, that he might be their Saviour and friend through life. Thus they may now bring their little ones to Jesus, and have them dedicated more effectually than by any ritual or ceremonial service.

The offspring of believers are partakers of the sinful nature of their parents, even as those of unbelievers, and they should have the benefit of their parents' pious example and instruction, and be invited to walk in the same faith rather than be cheated with a ceremony of dedication performed over them when altogether unconscious. No service, such as that under consideration, will supply the place of training up the young in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but it would be very likely to lead both parents and children to attach undue importance to it and to serious error; and so like infant baptism weaken the sense of personal responsibility as taught by the word of God.

There is no difference between Baptists and Pedobaptists in the necessity there is for inculcating the principles of the gospel upon their children. Because the latter take their infants to the Roman Catholic priest, or to a Protestant minister to have a ceremony performed which they choose to term baptism, it cannot be said that they, any more than Baptists, bring their children to Jesus, if they take no further pains to bring them under the influence of christian principles.

Baptists who properly estimate their own principles will be specially careful that they do not teach or countenance what has so obscured the vital doctrines of God's word, and by their practises allow the inventions of men to usurp the place of a positive ordinance of Christ.

EARLY RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.—We have received several brief expressions of deep interest in the preparation of a small book for the instruction of youth in christian doctrine. One is now before us from the Rev. D. W. C. Dimock. It was not written for publication, or we should be glad to have given it entire. A few thoughts from it will, we are assured, be acceptable to those of our readers interested in the instruction of the rising generation, and therefore the writer will, we hope, excuse our making such use of it. He says:

I hope brethren Angel and Higgins have been more attentive to your enquiries than I have. Some time ago the subject of some Manual for Baptist Sabbath Schools, as well for teachers as scholars, occupied my mind. A great deal of our Sabbath School literature needs revising. Something more permanent, I mean suited to impart more pointed and decided doctrine and ecclesiastical instruction is required.

Our Teachers, many of them need such a work, as you say "not a substitute for the Bible," but its doctrines and precepts succinctly stated, illustrated and proved.

Church history, suited to S. Schools is, in my opinion, a great desideratum. One written from a Biblical stand point, tracing the church of Christ, and not a history of Antichrist or his church, only as this is necessarily connected with the former,—not one of dry detail and endless divisions and subdivisions, but a sort of *mutuum*

*in parvo*, containing solid instruction for larger or more advanced Bible classes and teachers.

But in all the range of S. S. instruction, as regards its literature what have we as a compendium of christian doctrine and practice? A mere question-book or catechism, with its answers appended, as is general in such books, I have not much confidence in; unless in some few instances, where explanation and illustration might be given, which I fear would be rather the exception than the rule. A Catechism may I believe be used to very good advantage, especially in the family, but the danger is the tendency to mere word memory. Keach's Catechism I think defective in scripture proof,—this might be so improved as to make it a desirable companion for the family and Sabbath School. I think a judicious committee, appointed by the S. S. Convention, very desirable. The Convention being held in connection with the Associations gives a good opportunity for discussing the subject by all these bodies, the result of which would, I should hope, lead to something definite. Such information would be elicited as would be a great help to any who might be ultimately employed in the preparation of such manual.

That it is quite time for some movement in this direction, I think is obvious to all who carefully reflect upon the subject.

You will perceive this is not prepared for the public, but as hastily suggesting a few thoughts to yourself.

Since the above was written we have received another communication on the subject from Rev. A. H. Munro which will be found on our sixth page.

**Concerning Union.**

The New Brunswick Religious Intelligencer says:—

A great struggle is going on among the Baptists in England, between the strict Baptists who hold to close communion and the General Baptists who do not make immersion a strict prerequisite to the Lord's Supper. The latter is led by such men as Mr. Spurgeon and Baptist Noel. There is a proposition on the part of some to unite with the Independents or Congregationalists, leaving the opinions and practice on baptism free."

Our contemporary is mistaken in reference to the body he designates "the General Baptists." The churches known by that term in England are those which hold the doctrine of a general atonement, and agree generally with the American Free-will Baptists; except that in England they are close communionists whereas in America the same body differ in this respect, they being open communionists. The term "General" is in contradistinction to "Particular" or "Calvinistic." There are also strict or close communion Calvinistic Baptist churches in England, but they are much less numerous than those who practise open communion. Spurgeon and Baptist Noel, are "Calvinistic" or "Particular Baptists," not "General Baptists," but they practise open communion.

Much has been said, by certain parties, about this matter of a union between the open communion Baptists of England and the Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Far more we believe than the facts of the case warrant. We have seen nothing coming from the parties themselves, that is to say, the Baptists, said to be inclined to such combination. Some remark may have been made, like Spurgeon at a Presbyterian Tea Meeting calling himself an "Episcopal-Presbyterian-Independent." Those who have been so anxious to participate in the popularity of his name have sought to twist this into an endorsement of their church polity. All that he meant, we presume by the word "Episcopal" was that he was Bishop in the church of which he was the pastor. The "Presbyterian" part of his designation of himself, was that he had "helpers" or Presbyters with whom he consulted in the management of his church matters. This of course is essential in such a vast body as the church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The remainder of his cognomen—"Independent,"—which we take to be the substantive designation, of which the two former were but qualifications, is but what every Baptist minister and church is. Any minister could say the same thing of himself and still maintain the principles and practises of Baptist Churches in all their integrity. There may have been a remark respecting the feasibility of such union made by some ultra advocate of open communion, but there has been no movement, that we can learn, towards such an inconsistency, and we are pretty well satisfied that there will not be.

We take it that the talk of such union is an indication of the progress of Baptist principles. Members of pedobaptist churches are so indifferent to the baptism of infants, in consequence of the want of scripture to support the practice, that they would gladly find some way of escaping the defeat they are constantly suffering, and "leave the opinions and practise on baptism free." Finding this, their champions are anxious to place Baptists in a false position, and they