

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

MR. EDITOR, The following Exegesis was prepared at the request of the Baptist Ministerial Conference of Annapolis County; and by their request also it is forwarded for insertion in the Christian Messenger.

Yours as ever, CHARLES TUPPER. Aylesford, Nov. 15th, 1865.

EXEGESIS.

Matth. iii. 11. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

The term Baptism, which means immersion, when used with reference to persons and water, necessarily implies immersing in "much water." So we are informed that Naaman "dipped himself—in Greek ebaptisato, baptized himself—in Jordan." (2 Ki. v. 14. Compare Mar. i. 5, and Joh. iii. 23) Hence the verb and noun are naturally employed in a figurative sense to denote abundance. Josephus, describing the abundance of the miseries in which the inhabitants of Jerusalem were involved by robbers, says, ebaptisan ten polin, they baptized the city; that is, as Parkhurst expresses it, "They plunged the city, namely, into calamities." So when our Lord would indicate the abundance of sufferings which He was about to endure, He says, "I have a baptism to be baptized with." In this case Parkhurst defines the term, "To be immersed or plunged in a flood, or sea, as it were, of grievous afflictions and sufferings. The same thing is denoted by the Psalmist when speaking in the person of Christ, he says, "I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." (Ps. xix. 2.)

So the abundant and extraordinary measures of the Holy Spirit which accompanied the establishment of the gospel dispensation, in which the Apostles and others were enveloped, and figuratively immersed, are represented as a baptism.

Some imagine that because the Holy Spirit is figuratively spoken of as being "poured out," therefore the mode of literal baptism must be pouring. But it is preposterous to determine the literal meaning of a word from its figurative application. Who, for instance, could learn what was the literal action of circumcision from the figurative use of this word? So far as my knowledge of the subject extends—and I have examined it pretty thoroughly—no advocate of pouring or sprinkling has ever yet been able to adduce an instance from any Greek writer in which baptizo—acknowledged by all our learned opponents to signify to immerse—literally denotes either to pour or sprinkle. The late Rev. Thomas Trotter, in his controversy with me, did not attempt to maintain that it meant to pour; but stated that in classic Greek its meaning was "to plunge"; and remarked, "I do not pretend that baptize means to sprinkle." Moreover, every person who regards the pouring of the Spirit as determining the mode or action of Christian baptism, is obviously bound, in all reason and consistency, to practice pouring only, and never to sprinkle or immerse. It should also be a profuse pouring, that would thoroughly drench the candidates; since the abundant descent of the Spirit is described as "pouring water—and floods," (Isa. xlv. 3,) and not sprinkling, which is undeniably adapted to convey an idea directly the reverse of such abundance. But it is well known, that where immersion is practised, pouring is frequently employed as a preparatory measure. Indeed, the rivers, in which persons were originally immersed, as well as at present, are supplied with water by the pouring or descent of it from the clouds. The pouring is one thing, and the baptism is another.

It has also been alleged, that the use of the word "with" in the common translation—"with water—with the Holy Ghost"—indicates that the water is to be applied to the person baptized. But the translators, when referring to the element, and not the mode or action, have elsewhere used the preposition "with" instead of "in." Thus they have translated Exod. xii. 9. "Eat not of it raw, nor sodden (basal, boiled,) at all with water, but roast with fire," though it is certain that flesh boiled with water is "boiled in water." The learned Dr. Hammond, referring to the baptism of water and of the Holy Ghost, (on Matth. iii. 11.) speaks of John as baptizing persons "with water," though he candidly admits (on ver. 1.) that John "put them into the water, dipped them all over, and so took them out again." In like manner Archbishop Tillotson, in commenting on Acts ii. 2—"It filled all the house"—remarks, (Sermon 145.) "This is that which our Saviour calls

baptizing the Apostles with the Holy Ghost, so that they who were in the house were, as it were, immersed in the Holy Ghost; as they who were baptized with water were overwhelmed and covered all over with water, which is the proper notion of baptism." The use therefore of the word "with" in such a connection, even if it were admitted to be correct, would prove nothing against immersion, but if people were baptized in water, or in a river, it is evident that it was done neither by pouring nor sprinkling. So manifest, however, is it to all, that John did not baptize "with" the river of Jordan, but in it, that in all the Versions made by Pedobaptists in which I have examined Mark i. 5.—about twenty in number—it is expressed distinctly that the people "were baptized by him in the river of Jordan."

There is an important practical question connected with this subject, not yet mentioned in this Exegesis, namely, Is it proper for us to pray that we may be "baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire"? I have been requested to do this; but I could not, for reasons that may now be assigned. The baptism of fire, in my opinion, is being plunged "into the fire that shall never be quenched." The term fire is certainly employed very frequently to denote punishment. (Isa. xxxiii. 14. Mar. ix. 43-48) It is unquestionably so used in the verse preceding the text under consideration; "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire"; and in the verse following, which marks the distinction between the two classes of people present, the "wheat" and the "chaff"—the pious and the ungodly—it is added, "He will burn up the chaff with unquestionable fire." It is worthy of notice, that where no reference is made to the wicked, the baptism of fire is not mentioned. (Mar. i. 8. Jno. i. 33) Neither is it in the accounts of the fulfillment of the promise to the disciples. (Luke does not intimate (Acts ii. 4.) that the Apostles were baptized with fire; but describes the tongues that appeared unto them, as resembling flames "cloven," or parted, "like as of fire.") This fiery baptism, therefore, appears evidently to have related to the final doom of the impenitent and unbelieving. (Matth. xiii. 40, 41, 42.)

Moreover, as I could not presume to request the power of working miracles, such as speaking languages which I had not learned, so I could not adventure to pray for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, of which these miraculous gifts were the effect and evidence. (Acts i. 5. ii. 2, 4, 6, 11. x. 44-46. xi. 15, 16.) If we do not expect to be endowed with the miraculous gifts conferred by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, we can not consistently pray for it.

The Holy Spirit was unquestionably imparted, in His warning, comforting, and sanctifying influences, under the former dispensations, (Gen. vi. 3. Neh. ix. 20. Ps. li. 11, 12. cxliii. 10.) and He will thus continue with the Lord's people to the end of time. (Luke xi. 13. Jno. xiv. 15-17.) But that profuse and overwhelming power, or extraordinary measure, of the Divine Spirit called the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which was not given till after Christ was glorified, (Jno. vii. 39. Acts i. 4, 5.) was evidently restricted to the apostolic age. Those who received it were endowed with the gift of tongues, (Acts x. 45, 46. xix. 6.) which does not appear to have been ever imparted to any before; and—whatever pretences fanatics may make—it certainly is not continued. Any man who now professes to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, is obviously bound to give the proof of it by the exercise of the miraculous powers that attended it, especially the gift of tongues, which was peculiar to it.

Undoubtedly some men pray sincerely that they and the persons present with them may be baptized with the Holy Ghost, when they mean the same thing that others do who pray that the love of God may be shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, (Rom. v. 5. xv. 13.) But to me it is evident that the latter request, or manner of expression, is decidedly preferable. In conclusion, however, it may be remarked, that whatever diversity of views may exist among the pious with regard to the propriety or impropriety of praying for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, all unquestionably ought to pray most earnestly and perseveringly, that powerful and efficacious influences of the Holy Spirit may be granted, for the quickening and animating of believers, and for the conviction and conversion of those who are dead in trespasses and sins; and that every one should be very careful not to "quench the Spirit," or "grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby he is saved unto the day of redemption."

God protects men when they are in His way, but not out of His way.—Dr. Thomas Goodwin.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE POET YOUNG.

Mr. Editor,—

I have neither time nor taste for a controversy with Bro. Obed Chute about Young and his poetry, but, as his article contained very severe censures which I can escape only by confessing a mistake that I did not commit, it is necessary for me to point out a few errors into which our critical friend has fallen.

1. He writes as if I had expressed an opinion of Young's character and poetry. What I did was simply to class Young with certain writers, of acknowledged ability and former fame, who were less and less read an account of their want of a hearty sympathy with human life and progress. My remark was not the expression of an opinion but the statement of a fact.

2. He supposes Dr. Young to have been a model of "manly piety," "a christian divine whose heart was in his profession." Bro. Chute was never more mistaken in his life. Young was one of the most mercenary, worldly and timeserving of men. Among his cotemporaries, in a most venal age, he was notorious for these traits of character. The evidence is scores of letters written by him, for him and of him, to his eternal disgrace. His practical piety was gay society and church preferment—his theoretical piety, contempt for life and gloomy thoughts about death. He was alternately, a gay bird among the revellers, and a raven croaking among the tombstones. His work called "Night Thoughts" was not written, as is commonly said, in the grief of bereavement, but in the bitterness of disappointed ambition. Its morbid melancholy and false religious sentiment are faults from which its brilliancy of diction cannot redeem it.

3. Bro. Chute assumes that any one who does not admire Young's poetry must have a vitiated taste for what he terms, "rapid and sickly works." [It should have been "vapid," Ed.] I hope he does not include in this category the productions of the favorite poets of the present day, Tennyson, Elisabeth Barret, Browning and Longfellow. For in my opinion, if Bro. Chute will allow me to say so without charging me with impiety or bad morals, there is more christian sentiment to be found in a single page of either of the former, than in all Young ever wrote.

A. H. MUNRO.

Yarmouth, Nov. 14th, 1865.

For the Christian Messenger.

OUR FOREIGN MISSION.

Dear Brother Selden,—

The enclosed Letters, which have recently been received from Burmah, are forwarded for publication.

An acknowledgment of moneys received at the time of the Convention in Berwick and subsequently, will be furnished (D. V.) as soon as some useful information can be obtained. Meanwhile it may be now stated, for the satisfaction of all concerned, that the sum of \$100, contributed by one "Friend" for the support of a native preacher, was forwarded without any avoidable delay; as was also a like sum, contributed by there "Friends" for the same purpose.

Ever yours in Christ,

CHARLES TUPPER, Secretary.

Aylesford, Nov. 16th, 1865.

To REV. W. H. PORTER, WILMOT.

HENTHADA, Aug. 18th, 1865.

My Dear Brother Porter,—

Enclosed you will find a translation of a letter from Mounge Doké-gyee, the preacher supported by your church. He is a faithful earnest man; and there are few native preachers in whom I have more confidence. I hope he, and through him, your church will be instrumental of much good among this people, who know not God. With many thanks for the encouragement received in our work from you and your co-workers.

I am, yours faithfully,

ARTHUR R. R. CRAWLEY.

I, MOUNGE DOKÉ-GYEE, who live in Henthada, write a letter of love, and salute the Rev. and Sir, who live in Pine Grove, Wilmot. I became a Disciple in 1862. About six months afterwards I began to study with Teacher Crawley; and after studying about two years, I began to preach, first in the town of Zalson. Thence I removed to another village called Paing-Goung-Naw. In this village there are four Christian Brethren. Beloved, for them pray much. There are many inquirers. Pray for me also, as I continue to do for you.

1865, July 29th.

Burman year 1227, Wagoung month 5th.

To REV. DR. TUPPER.

HENTHADA, August 23rd, 1865.

My dear Dr. Tupper,—

My last to you was written on June 29th.

I have now the pleasure to inform you that I have engaged to support two more native preachers. Their names are,

MOUNG THEE-HAU,  
MOUNG THA-DONG.

And they are under the superintendence of the Rev. Mr. Rose, of the Rangoon Mission. Having ascertained that all his available means for sustaining these men were exhausted, I decided at once, in accordance with the wish expressed in one of your letters, that, if men are not procurable at this station I would use surplus funds in the support of preachers at other stations, to put these men on the list. Accordingly, after corresponding with Bro. Rose, I have made over to him the money required for the support of the two men for four months, from 1st June to 30th September. So long as funds continue to arrive for the support of preachers, and this station can not furnish the men, I shall continue this plan of supporting men at other stations where the resources may not be as ample as those I enjoy.

With kind regards to Mrs. T., I am yours faithfully.

ARTHUR R. R. CRAWLEY.

For the Christian Messenger.

CAPE BRETON.

STATE OF RELIGION AT NORTH SYDNEY, & C. WANT OF A MEETING HOUSE AT THE COAL MINES. EFFORTS TO BUILD ONE.

Dear Brother,—

I suppose that anything which points towards progress in the Baptist denomination is always interesting to the readers of the Christian Messenger. I, therefore, take the liberty to drop you a few lines, in reference to the state of things in this and the surrounding districts.

I am happy to say that the church at North Sydney, so long without a Pastor, is now well suited and appears to be thriving under the labors of brother T. H. Porter, Jr.; who has been with them now more than a year. The church have, this Fall, built for their minister a very fine parsonage. This is a step in the right direction.

It also gives me great pleasure to state that the church and congregation at South Sydney are highly pleased with their young co-pastor, Bro. Wm. Boggs. The brethren there, though few, have made noble efforts and fitted up their chapel, so that it is now second to few, if any in the Province, for neatness and comfort. And I confidently hope the Master will bear their prayers and crown their efforts with an abundant harvest. Bro. Boggs will also hail with pleasure, the assistance of his College classmate and brother in Christ, C. H. Creed, A. B. who has recently taken charge of the Sydney Academy. They will be co-workers in the glorious cause of God.

But it is to this part of the Island, more especially, that I would call the attention of your readers. I am now laboring, in the service of the H. M. Board in Miré Bay, Cow Bay and Little Glace Bay. This is a large district, and is becoming very populous. New interests in the Coal Trade are opening up yearly; and those already opened are very prosperous. Thousands of people have entered and settled in the place within the last three years—and thousands more will follow their example during an equal space of time in the future. I hope that among them will be some of our good, whole-souled, self-denying, Baptist brethren. Such men are needed every where; and by all. The Telegraph wire is already being stretched from the town of Sydney around these shores; and the coming spring will witness, very probably, the digging through of hills and the filling up of vales to make a path for the iron horse to travel in. So far as business matters go, every thing is progressing with rapid strides. But, as yet, there is a sad deficiency in respect to religious privileges. Every provision has been made for the interests of trade; and also very much has been done for the cause of Satan; but alas! almost nothing has been accomplished for the salvation of the thousands of souls who are filling up the place.

And here I would call especial attention to Cow Bay alone, where there were, three years ago, not more than 400 or 500 inhabitants; but where there are at present more than 8000. And still the tide of population rolls on. In this place, independent of Baptist preaching, once in two weeks, there has been no regular preaching during the past three years till this Autumn; when a Wesleyan minister was sta-