

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

A Denominational Spirit.

What do we mean by a denominational spirit? The manifestation of a whole hearted zeal for the maintenance of our principles and the prosperity of our body. And this we hold is a thing to be demanded of every Baptist. What right has any one to call himself a Baptist if it is not the deep conviction of his soul, that the principles he thus avows are the very truth of Christ, priceless in its wealth of power and blessing to a fallen race; and that the communion with which he is thus voluntarily allied, is set for the defence of those principles in a way most in harmony with the Gospel and conducive to its ends? Believing this, Denominational zeal is equally inevitable, as a logical result and practical consistency.

Robert Hall once described a certain person as appearing to be in a perpetual state of apology for his own existence. There are some members of our body who seem to be too meek to ask anything more for Baptist principles than mere toleration. They are not difficult to recognise. Their speech like Peter's betrayeth them. They are fond of airing their liberality of spirit by exalting other denominations at the expense of their own. While exhibiting great resignation with regard to the superiority they allege and love to eulogise in the colleges and missions, learning and activity, piety and social status of other denominations, they show equal readiness in discouraging all attempts to improve these things among ourselves. In fact, they seem to think that the less they are Baptists the more they are Christians. We must leave to that day when all mysteries will be explained, the solution of the enigma, why such persons call themselves Baptists, instead of joining some sect in which they could hold up their heads, speak forth their sentiments with manly boldness and maintain them with Christian fervor.

But such Baptists as these are the exception. Taking our body as a whole, while it may be, and, we fear is, deficient in denominational zeal, yet there is in it, we firmly believe, a wide and genuine appreciation of our distinctive views, and a strength of affection for them which any extraordinary demand, or forcible appeal would not fail to elicit in a form adapted to unpleasantly astonish any who might have presumed upon their non-existence. But we need more than this,—latent affection and dormant zeal are not enough. We want not merely the fire that quietly smoulders till the winds of opposition fan it into a flame, but the fire that steadily and vigorously burns. We want an attachment for our denominational principles and interests that will not wait for some extraordinary event or important crisis to draw forth indications of its existence, but which will consistently manifest itself as a uniform characteristic of our body.

Few who have read will ever forget Macaulay's description of Jesuit zeal; which, so far from being exaggerated is even less than the truth. Have we Baptists anything among us which will bear comparison with zeal like that which is there described? We possess the zeal of the Jesuit? would that we had the zeal of the Methodist! Let those who think that we have at least the latter, reflect upon all their past intercourse with members of the Wesleyan body and their knowledge of its history, and they will be compelled to admit that they see in it all a constant vigilance in behalf of denominational interests, a readiness, earnestness and tact in promoting them, seldom witnessed among ourselves. And why not? Are our principles less important, or do we hold them with a less tenacious grasp? Are we less informed as to their nature, or have we less confidence in their scriptural origin and ultimate triumph? Every Baptist worthy of the name will answer, No. The cause of a deficiency of denominational spirit among us, we believe, to be, strange as it may seem, largely owing, not to our principles being undervalued, but to their being overestimated in their power to sustain and advance themselves. They are so self-evident to our minds in their Scriptural character, they have given such countless and striking proofs of their matchless power in breaking through ignorance, prejudice and bigotry, and in finding their way to men's consciences and hearts in spite of any opposing influence. We have so often seen them open their own path, and push their solitary way into the very centre of hostile influence, and win trophies of victory in the most discouraging conflicts, that we have too generally

learnt to feel that our principles possess an innate power, that renders unnecessary on their behalf the strenuous efforts other denominations put forth for their own advancement. Besides this, there is the long-lingering, little-thought-of, but most potent influence of our past history. That history for many centuries has one of state persecution and social oppression, that drove Baptists into obscurity, and forced upon them a quiet undemonstrative policy whose traditional effects may still be traced in our usual quiet acquiescence in the arrogant assumption and impertinent supplanting that too often send Baptists and their interests to the wall. Add to this that worldliness of which we have at least our share, and there is cause enough assigned for a lack of denominational spirit among us.

Possibly some may be disposed to ask—What would you have, and how do you propose to obtain it? Would that we knew that these questions were eagerly asked by Baptist men and women, far and wide. Then with all the clearness and force at our command we would say, Our love of Baptist principles, our firm conviction is that they constitute the very essence of Christianity, and present it to the world in its most Scriptural form. Our strong belief is that through their triumph the nations will be converted to God, and the grand consummation of the Messianic dispensation achieved. The solemnity to us of the fact that by our own deliberate act we have numbered ourselves in an eternal binding covenant among the successors of the noble army of martyrs, who bled for the same truths that before God and men we have professed to believe, and that we have grasped, and promised to hold aloft in the face of all opposition, the banner to which they so faithfully clung, and for which they willingly died; that to-day we are among the representatives and guardians of a cause for which God prepared such defenders, and to which he has given such a history in the past; that most earnestly we pray, that we and all who are Baptists may duly appreciate our avowed principles, and have the genuine spirit of their history breathed into our lives. Then, will there be a glowing interest in all the institutions and operations of our body, because they are Baptist institutions, a readiness in perceiving and a zeal in promoting all that savors of their advancement and success, because it is Baptist advancement and success, a keen vigilance in detecting and prompt earnestness in defeating whatever may be inimical to them, because it is adverse to Baptist progress. Less sectional feeling, less of isolation, less of clique and party, more of fellowship among our members, more of fraternal spirit among our ministers, more of sympathy among our churches, more of genuine union, not in name but in feeling and prayer, giving and working will be our all pervading denominational spirit.

Brethren in Christ, Baptists in this land: Is not this what we need? Not to love other Christians less but Baptists more; not to be less liberal to others but more fervent in spirit to our own. Much will be done towards promoting such a denominational spirit among us by a general awakening to the necessity for it, and by each one who is convinced of that necessity, labouring to cultivate within the circle of his own influence the tone of feeling which he feels should prevail. Let us aim to do it in our own hearts, our families, Sabbath Schools, Bible Classes, social gatherings, Churches and Associations. Let it be no longer said that any minister among us may be listened to for years without a word being heard from his lips indicative of his distinctive principles, that any of our Sabbath School libraries might be read without a suspicion that Baptists had selected and paid for them, that any of our churches manifest interest only in what chiefly belong to their separate welfare or stand in rivalry towards each other. Let there be no uncertain sound from our lips, pulpit, or press; none standing aloof, none indifferent, but a warm, deep, zealous all-pervading denominational spirit.

M. A. H.

For the Christian Messenger.

"Calvary."

ST. JOHN, N. B., March 21, 1868.

Dear Sir,—Your correspondent, M. A. H., very justly, it not wisely, animadverted on the current error of calling Calvary a mount. But the preacher, whose discourse on Ebal and Gerizim gave occasion for the article which appeared in the columns of the *Visitor*, and which article has called out the criticism in this week's

issue of the *Messenger*, did not, in that discourse, describe Mount Calvary, nor did he use the word *mount* in reference to the locality of the crucifixion. He saw the harmless mistake at the time the article in question appeared, but did not deem it necessary to call attention to it. The critic in your paper correctly remarks, "that the term 'Mount Calvary' does not belong to sacred topography, but wholly to popular ignorance." This piece of popular ignorance, however, is very extensive, of long standing, somewhat obstinate, and while it may not be supported by the silence of those whose learning can supply a corrective, is yet not altogether unpardonable, nor very reprehensible. The infidelity that finds food for its appetite in such mistakes is hardly deserving of a refutation.

Whence originated the current notion that Calvary was a *Mount*? Dr. Robinson, in his "Biblical Researches," a standard work, gives us the following in answer to the above question. "The fact of a large court between the Sepulchre and this *Basilica*," (or church erected over the spot of the Crucifixion) "and also that later a chapel was erected over Golgotha, between the two, seems to favor the idea, that at this time the rock or *monticule* of Golgotha was left uncovered in the midst of this splendid court. . . . From this rock or *monticule* was doubtless derived the epithet *mount* as applied to the present Golgotha or Calvary. Hence the expression 'Mount Calvary' has been adopted almost without question into every language of Christendom. . . . Neither Eusebius, nor Cyril, (except as made to say so by the Latin translator,) nor Jerome, nor the historians of the 4th and 5th centuries, speak of it as a *mount*. Yet the expression must have early become current, perhaps among the pilgrims; for the *Itiner. Hieros.* speaks of it as '*monticulus Golgotha*.' Rufinus has the expression '*Golgothana rupes*.' Hist. Ecc. 9. 6. Antoninus and Adamnanus make no allusion to a *mount*; but Bernhard again has '*Mons Calvaria*.' At that time the usage appears to have become fixed; and is found in all later pilgrims and writers."

Do not suppose, Mr. Editor, that I am aiming to justify any preacher in the use of the word *mount* as applied to Calvary, but I beg M. A. H. to consider that the mistake in question is not the worst an "eloquent preacher," or "enthusiastic correspondent," or "able Editor" might make.

HOMO.

For the Christian Messenger.

Christian Wakefulness,

No. 2.

"Now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Rom. xiii. 11.

It is from spiritual sleep then, that the apostle insists, it is high time to awake. But is it not strange, that Christians, those who have already awoke from sleep, arisen from the dead, and received light from Christ should have to be addressed in such language. But so it is, for these are the words of an inspired apostle, and they are addressed to Christians; and few I think, will venture to say, that they are less applicable to Christians of the present day.

It is indeed strange, that Christians, those who "have passed out of death into life," who "have been delivered out of the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of the son of God's love," "called out of darkness into marvellous light," should again sink down into spiritual sleep, and have to be addressed in such language. It is surprising, that those, who have been convinced of sin—the evil, the malignity, the deformity of sin, and have had the least glimpse of the beauty of holiness, should ever again be ensnared by the former, and fall asleep in reference to the latter, "be ensnared by the sin, and lose their relish for the holiness. It is wonderful, that those, who have had the slightest manifestation of their Saviour and their Saviour's love should ever sink down into coldness, and inactivity, and practically, almost ignore his very existence. It is astonishing, that those, whose hearts have been awakened to the love of their Saviour, and the love of their Saviour's cause on earth—the salvation of the lost, and the sanctification of the saved—should ever again be found sacrificing that precious cause on the altar of their own self-will, and dogged obstinacy. It is indeed amazing, that those, who have had the slightest glimpse of the glory to be revealed, should ever again be dazzled, overcome by the glare of this world, and act almost as if they expected to live here forever.

I say these things are strange, surprising, amazing. Indeed they would be mysterious, if it were not, that we have the key to the understanding of them. But this we have in the constitution of the Christian. This key we have in the fact, that the Christian, after all, is a compound being—a being made up of two elements—the one, that which he inherits from nature, and the other, that which is superinduced upon him by grace, or wrought in him by the Holy Spirit; the one, dragging him downward, and earthward, the other raising him upward, and heavenward; the one, saying to him, "a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep;" the other crying awake! "awake to righteousness, and sin not, for some have not the knowledge of God."

Yours in Christ,

J. MORRISON.

Onslow, March 13th, 1868.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Mic-Mac Mission.

DEAR BROTHER,—

I have been waiting for a little lull in 'Messenger' matters, and a little time on my own part, to make known to the friends of the Micmac Mission, through your pages, something of our progress. Our Annual Meeting was held early in January, and quite a full Report of the last year's labors was presented. We have not yet published the Report, and it is quite possible that we may not do so. I have read it at public meetings held in several places since; and were about fifty dollars to be sent me for this express purpose I would like to publish it. But it is by no means important that this should be done. The names of contributors are not now published at all, and as a means of obtaining funds, the Report, however interesting, would in my opinion hardly pay. I do not discard the proper use of proper means for obtaining funds; but I find myself inclined to put less and less confidence in them, and more and more in Him who is above all means.

To such of our friends as are anxiously watching the working of the "Muller Plan," I am happy to say that it has not yet failed. During the year ending Dec. 1867, without having solicited a single donation, nor, so far as I can now remember, having asked for a single public contribution, (though several have been received) I received eleven hundred and two dollars, twenty-five cents. This was forty-three dollars, and 96½ cents more than was received the previous year; and eighty-one dollars eleven cents, more than was received the year before that; and one hundred and two dollars, twenty-five cents more than our allowance was altogether on the former plan; even had we received it all, which was not always the case. This money was sent in large and small sums, varying from one hundred dollars to a cent, and it came from different parts of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Canada, Prince Edward Island, England, and the *New Hebrides*. We have therefore been bountifully supplied with food and raiment, without difficulty or delay or anxiety. We have been permitted in addition to devote over a hundred dollars to works of charity and benevolence, to reduce old outstanding debts (contracted before we adopted the "Muller Plan,") and to continue our work "without let or hindrance."

During the winter, I have been translating the Scriptures. I have just finished revising the Book of Exodus, and have translated the Epistles to the Hebrews, Galatians and Romans. I have had a very intelligent assistant to whom both languages are as familiar as though each were his native tongue. I have found so few difficulties in translating these Epistles, that I have determined as soon as possible to go through the whole New Testament. Meanwhile I can do as I have before done, I can get the manuscripts bound, and make use of them before they are printed, in making known to the Indians "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

I have just learned through the "Messenger" who forwarded a donation of two dollars fifteen cents for the Mission, in an anonymous note "from a friend in Prince Edward Island." I beg to thank the "friend," and him through whom it came. It came in good time. The day I received it two little Indian girls had brought me a well written note, from their sick father, living a few miles off—the note having been written by his brother,—earnestly asking for aid. I had told them to wait till I heard from the Post Office. On opening the letter I found two dollars ready for them. The children were made glad, I was made glad, and the sick man, I trust he is one of the Lord's