

dropped the name of one of our ministers from its records. Here you have nothing but fault to find with the Association and the *Visitor*, which shows that you wrote without sufficient information.

The facts are these. For the last few months, reports have been afloat detrimental to the character of the brother referred to. These reports were spoken of privately at the Association, by aggrieved parties and by some who felt that the matter should be looked into, and the accused minister's character defended against any untrue or malicious reports. He was supposed to be a member of a small church in the country. Up to Saturday noon I heard of these things and meditated on what was necessary to be done. Then I met the Pastor and clerk of that church, and enquired as to the standing of this brother. They informed me that the church had excluded him some two or three months before. The letter from that church said nothing about this matter; I do not know that any except the church itself knew that he had been excluded. Some probably did.

He might have returned from his present home in a Western state, and enjoyed all the privileges of a minister in good standing, in most of the churches in this province. His name was on our minutes, and had not the committee who had the publishing of the Minutes in charge, known that he had left the province, his name would still have stood upon our records, and we should have been justly blamable as a denomination, for upholding a man who had lost character among those who knew him, and who had been excluded by the church of which he had been a member. I will not pretend to say what was my duty under the circumstances. But this I did, after the opening of the Saturday afternoon Session I moved the following:

"That whereas certain reports are in circulation detrimental to the character of Rev. — and whereas we learn incidentally that he has been excluded from the church of which he was a member, therefore—

Resolved, That this matter be referred to the committee on special business, that they may ascertain what are the facts, and report to the association what is best to be done, and the proper course to be pursued."

While this resolution was under consideration, the pastor of the church referred to came in, and being called upon, testified that this brother had been excluded for various reasons which he assigned.

My resolution was then objected to, on the ground that we do now know officially that this brother has been excluded from the church. Whereupon a Prof. in Acadia College arose, and read the following article from our constitution:

"Although we as an Association disclaim all power over the churches, so far as respects any interference with their independence and discipline, yet we deem it our privilege to judge for ourselves of the propriety of continuing any church or minister in our connection, which to us shall appear to be unscriptural in principle or irregular in practice.

In order however that we may not withdraw our fellowship without sufficient reason from any church or minister, against whom a complaint is made by tried members of this body, it shall be the duty of this Association, to appoint a committee to investigate the points of complaint, and report the result of their enquiries, to the Association that they may decide as duty shall appear."

(Here let me observe, this article is the same as the one found in the minutes of the 1st session of our Western Association held 1848.)

Then the N. S. Professor moved the resolution to which you object. Mine was withdrawn, and his adopted. The committee brought in their report as you have published. And then it was moved, that for this reason, the name of this brother be dropped from the Minutes, and not simply for the reason that he had left the Province. But you seem to take pleasure in finding an opportunity to twit the *Visitor* and Association with the fact that no Council was called in this case. You seem to be unmindful, that in another column, on the same page of your paper, "C" tells you of a resolution on the subject of councils, moved by Bro. Todd and afterwards withdrawn. That resolution was moved with direct reference to this case. We believed that this church should have called a council before proceeding to withdraw fellowship. The merits and demerits of the case should have been fully considered, and then the disciplinary action of the church, would have carried with it that weight which the case demanded. The Brother would have been innocent and acquitted, or found guilty, and deposed from the ministry as well as excluded from the church. Such disciplinary action would have followed the brother wherever he went, and either led to repentance and reformation, or saved others from being deceived by him. But when we brought in a resolution to

give advise to our churches (and this is all Associations and Councils either can do) in such cases of discipline, we must, in deference to the feelings of our N. S., brethren withdraw it; and for this deference and respect, all the thanks we receive is a taunt in the *Messenger* for our silence on the subject of councils in this case of discipline.

But dear Bro. I have not done with brother Todd's resolution. "C," says it was "artfully prepared, and it is not likely it was manufactured at Sackville." He throws out the insinuation that it was "quasi-Presbyterian," that it "required" the church to call a council, and "bound" it to an acceptance of its decision.

That resolution has been published in the *Visitor*. Will you, if you have not already, publish it in the *Messenger*, that your readers may judge for themselves whether it possesses all these reprehensible qualities. It was composed in Bro. Todd's house in Sackville after the opening of the Association, and had direct reference to this very case of discipline. It was shown to me before it was presented to the Association; at the very time I was talking about the conduct of this church. That the writer, and all who had anything to do with it thought of the conduct of another church, and knew that the Association would think of that church when it was moved, I doubt not. But what of that, if it were true and righteous, and made no unkind references to any Church, why should it be thought to possess such an unfavorable character.

Will you please to compare it with the 4th article, part second, of our Articles of Faith. If I mistake not they are identical in sentiment. But let your readers see and judge for themselves.

Please do not interpret our silence and our kind respect and deference to the wishes of our N. S., brethren, as an endorsement by us, of the action of any church, who having an important case of discipline to attend to, especially with a minister, shall either refuse or neglect to call a council to consider the case; or who, after being advised by a wise and judicious council, shall neglect, or refuse to respect that advice.

Please excuse the length of this article. It is unavoidable, I did not wish to write, but duty demanded. Let us all think, act, pray, and labor for peace, unity, truth,

Your Brother,

E. C. CADY.

(From the Christian Visitor.)

Letter from Rev. Geo. Armstrong.

REV. I. WALLACE AND THE WESTERN ASSOCIATION, NOVA SCOTIA.

In my communication, some weeks since, relating to the proceedings at the above Association, I said that the "report on the *Ch. Messenger* was rushed through in hot haste, and without allowing brethren an opportunity to show that the *Christian Messenger* deserves not the commendation of the Baptists of Nova Scotia. The honest expression of disapproval was feared, and it was determined, it would seem, that all discussion on that paper must be shut out; and that determination was persistently carried out. And it is with regret that we must add—The Moderator gave the weight and influence of his position in that direction." This representation is very distasteful to some. Bro. Wallace thinks I have misapprehended the motives and conduct of my brethren, and that, consequently, I have made a misstatement regarding the manner in which the report on the *Christian Messenger* was passed by the Association. I saw and heard all, and do not require Bro. W. to interpret for me language and conduct that were plain, direct, and forcible enough to make themselves deeply felt. I understand stopping to mean stopping, a shutting of the door not to mean opening it, and a refusal to hear, as expressing determination not to hear. I have all the light that Bro. W. has given; but my view of the matter, to which he refers, is unchanged. It may, indeed be true that "my statement reflects not a little on the christian deportment of the W. Association, as also on the conduct of the Moderator;" and Bro. W. may feel it needful to justify that conduct: but it will, I think, be very difficult to show, that under the circumstances, that conduct resulted from, or harmonized with christian courtesy and brotherly love. Bro. W. says: "Discussion on the *Christian Messenger* was feared, though not for the reason implied in Bro. A.'s remarks; it was only feared that, as at Gasperaux, the cause of the Redeemer might be wounded." It is well to have a tender and jealous regard for the cause of Christ—as I suppose Bro. W. has; and that he meant well in the course he pursued. I hope others, whom he would not hear, have the same regard, and would not willingly or wantonly wound the cause of God. But it is well to remember that, while the Divine cause, which we profess to love, is sometimes wounded by discussion, it is also sometimes wounded by preventing discussion. "Let all things be done in charity—in love." But how does Bro. W. know that discussion on the *Christian Messenger* was not

feared? Is he authorized to declare the feelings of the Association, or of those who seem pledged to uphold that paper, at all hazards? or is he merely expressing his own views and feelings? I am surprised that Bro. W. should say this. He knew that the course taken by the *Christian Messenger*, and the polity which it advocated in a certain case, and upheld with all its power and influence, were objectionable, particularly the latter, as introducing among us an element of strife and confusion, and as tending to disunion and disintegration. But he now tells us that discussion on the *Christian Messenger* was not feared, as I alleged; thus implying that, in his view, the conduct and polity of that paper were all right—met his approval; that its position was impregnable, and could not, successfully, be assailed! And yet, when battle was offered and urged, it was persistently shut out, and rendered impossible by those who had no fear for the object of assault! How fearless!

Notwithstanding what Bro. W. says, I think a review of the facts connected with the case will show that the statement of which he complains is correct. On Saturday afternoon, in Committee of Nomination and Arrangement, Rev. N. Videto and myself laboured earnestly to prevent the nomination of a committee on the *Christian Messenger*, but were overruled, such committee being appointed by a majority of one. It was by being somewhat oblivious of modesty that I succeeded in getting Bro. Videto and myself put on this latter committee. With this committee we could not meet, as, at the hour appointed for its meeting, the D. Missionary Board was in session on important business, which we, as members of the Board, felt we could not neglect. The report on the *Christian Messenger* was prepared without our views having been heard by the committee, or our concurrence asked. When released from the Board, I sought out the Chairman of the committee; and, on enquiry as to the meeting, learned that at the appointed hour the brethren were not present; that subsequently he had seen a member of the Committee, and that a majority had agreed to the report. I asked to see this report, and, on reading it, told the Chairman, I could not agree to it—that I must oppose it. No offer was made to call the committee together. This was on Tuesday morning. Nothing now seemed left but to oppose the report when presented, and endeavor to prevent its acceptance; and, though pressed by circumstances to return home immediately, we resolved to attend the afternoon session for the above purpose. This was known to the Moderator; for Bro. Videto went and requested him to call in the report on the *Christian Messenger* as soon as possible, in order that expression might be given to our views of the subject. The report, however, was not presented till just before the vote of thanks to the people at Freeport was proposed. When the report was read by the Chairman, a motion to accept was made and seconded.

The Moderator declares that he deliberately and respectfully said: "Brethren, have you any remarks to make on this report?" No doubt, the Moderator believes that remarks were called for; but parties who were paying special attention to the proceedings say that no remarks were called for. I do not recollect that such a call was made. But supposing that it was, the pause that ensued before putting the question was short—I thought very short. Had a person jumped up immediately, he would, no doubt, have been in time. But, as I supposed speeches in favor of the report would be made, and especially as I expected another brother to speak before me, in opposition to it, I did not rise as quickly as I might, or as I would have, had I supposed that the question would be put so suddenly, or that a few seconds delay in rising would be taken advantage of to prevent discussion on an important subject. But, without the question being called for, and without the Moderator asking, "Gentlemen are you ready for the question?" or the least intimation given that he was going to put the question, greatly to my surprise he put the question. I immediately arose, while the Ayes were being given, and before the Nays were, or could be, called for, and expressed my surprise that the question was put so suddenly, and declared my earnest desire to speak; Bro. Videto also expressed himself to the same effect. The Moderator refused us the privilege, and, though we urged, he persistently refused to hear us, and earnestly called on the Association to sustain him in this position; and the Association sustained him; and with this result the Moderator did not fail to express himself pleased.—Subsequently, the Nays were called for and the vote declared as in favor of adopting the report. Observe this: though up before the vote, so suddenly and unexpectedly put, was completed, we were at every attempt refused a hearing; and thus was discussion shut out—persistently and effectually shut out—by a rigid adherence to a Parliamentary rule of order, or what the Moderator regarded as such. The report was carried straight through, in spite of remonstrance; nothing was permitted to hinder it; even christian courtesy and brotherly love were, it would appear, forgotten, or deemed of secondary importance as compared with a rule of order, or the interests of the *Christian Messenger*. I have no desire to wound the feelings of Bro. Wallace, or those of other brethren; but they must not be surprised if brethren treated as Bro. V. and myself have been treated should feel aggrieved, and express their disapproval as we have none.

But the Moderator, it is urged, said, frankly and fairly to Bro. Videto: "Move a reconsideration of this question, and you will then be in order to speak"—thus, by this offer, removing just cause of complaint. But a little thought will suffice to show that this "frank and fair" offer, though, no doubt, well meant, had no value. As the right to move a reconsideration

belongs only to those voting in the majority, Bro. Videto and myself, being in the minority, would have been wholly out of order, had either of us made such a motion; and the Moderator himself was clearly out of order in making us the offer. Had such a motion been made by those voting in the majority, it would have been in order, and would, perhaps, have afforded us an opportunity to speak, tho' with but little prospect of success; for the thing we wished to prevent had been done. And it is often difficult, if not impossible to induce a public body like an Association to reverse an opinion to which it has just committed itself by, it may be, an inconsiderate or hasty vote. But no such motion was made from that quarter. Hence the conclusion was forced upon us that there existed, in the body, a determination to keep the door closed against us. I think the attentive and unprejudiced reader will now perceive that my statement is correct; that the report on the *Christian Messenger* was hurried through; that brethren, taken by surprise at the suddenness with which the question was put, desired and urged to be heard, but were not allowed to speak; that the ruling of the Moderator and the action of the Association were alike adverse to their speaking; that thus discussion was completely shut out; and that no subsequent action of the body gave us the opportunity we desired.

Yours, respectfully,

GEORGE ARMSTRONG.

Bridgetown, N. S., Aug. 5, 1868.

P. S.—As the *Christian Messenger* has published what it regards as a "vindication of the brethren composing the N. S. Western Association," and pronounces it a "refutation" of my statement, which it characterizes as "highly-disrespectful to the whole body," I take this opportunity to ask the Editor of the *Christian Messenger* to do me the justice to publish my reply to Bro. Wallace's communication. Truth appears sometimes very disrespectful, but always honest, earnest, and fearless of consequences—She speaks right on—fearless, though surrounded by adverse circumstances, and forsaken, or left unsupported by her professed or timid friends; and though seemingly defeated, yet unconquered and unconquerable, she will in due time come forth in surpassing beauty and power, and opposition shall flee before her as mista before the rising sun. However offensive, my statement cannot be refuted, unless truth has deserted her, nature and fact has turned into nonentity. The *Christian Messenger* says of the Moderator's communication: "The above will, doubtless, be thankfully endorsed by every member of the Association—except perhaps, Bro. A. and another brother."

Notwithstanding the *Messenger's* endorsement and the one it seemingly volunteers for every member of the Western Association, except "Bro. A. and another brother," I believe that, in addition to "Bro. A. and another brother" (Rev. N. Videto), several other members of the Association would thankfully endorse neither the "action" nor its "vindication." G. A.

For the Christian Messenger.

VALEDICTORY.

ADDRESS OF THE GRANVILLE STREET BAPTIST CHURCH TO THE REV. A. F. PORTER.

Dear Brother,—

The time has nearly come when you expect to leave your native country for New Zealand. You are about to separate from your relatives and friends, and from us to find a home among strangers. We cannot allow you to part from us, without an expression of our esteem and christian love for you self and Mrs. Porter.

We have enjoyed your acquaintance in the house of God. Our attachment for you and sister Porter has increased since you became members with us. We have felt that you have been, since that relation was formed wholly identified with us in our labors, joys and trials.

As you have given us sympathy in affliction. May the Lord always give you the like blessings when in trouble. The prospect of a final separation makes us sad, but it is not final. We hope to meet where parting is unknown.

We rejoice with you in the prospect that you have of being able to resume your labors in the ministry favored as you expect to be with a genial climate in your future home.

It was, we know, a great trial to you to be compelled to terminate your pastoral labors, in which you had been engaged for some years with pleasure and success.

We would recognize the hand of God in the failure of your health in our severe climate, and in the drawings of your soul to seek a more favorable one, where you may be able to continue the preaching of the gospel.

Although for a time engaged in secular employment you have evinced your love for the work of the ministry, by engaging as far as your health would permit in preaching the gospel.

It is our prayer that your fondly cherished hopes may be realized, that you may give yourself wholly to the work of the ministry in New Zealand, and win many precious souls to Christ. If this shall be the case, this sad parting will be a matter of eternal rejoicing.

May the Lord preserve your life, and the lives of your family, and bring you safely to your future home. We pledge ourselves not to forget