

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

"Chronicles" second defence.

DEAR BROTHER,—

As Rev. C. Duff has in the *Witness* of the 18th inst., stated that in his former communication he dealt me a blow, from the effects of which I have not yet recovered, and that my letter written in defence of myself against charges for misstatements abounds in misstatements more gross than the first, you will not refuse me the privilege of another attempt at parrying.

Notwithstanding his admission that it is not impossible for him to use improper means in promoting error—for it was only upon this condition that I withdrew clause (2), and he accepted the retraction—I confess I was not prepared for the misrepresentations which have crept into this "letter." Surely it would have been better for him to frankly acknowledge what must be apparent to those who read both sides, that in occupying two columns in correcting some of my misstatements, he, to say the least, exaggerated them. Indeed I think he admits as much in his expression at the beginning "we regarded, &c." and when, after his manifest failure to maintain the charge, he concludes, "we shall say no more on these matters," except, perhaps, to utter a simple denial or give the briefest explanation." But, Mr. Editor, this will not do. The charge of making a "wrong record—a misstatement of facts—is too serious to be thus dismissed. Nothing meets the case but withdrawal or proof.

And now permit me to direct attention to two or three errors into which he has fallen. He endeavours to make it appear that I wished to separate the first sentence of my "extract" from "the preceding context." Now surely it was manifest that all I attempted was to show that it did not necessarily refer to all embraced in clause (1). But not content with this, he now assumes that clause (2) was also dependent upon it, for which he had as much authority at first as for including in it the part of the sentence relating to the finishing of their house. To do it now, however, indicates a cause that needs propping. Better really "collapse" than resort to such expedients.

But he now positively denies the "record of facts," before, admitted, confirmed and repeated. And this being the case, I am justified in demanding that he distinctly specify wherein that which either precedes or follows "the first sentence" is incorrect, or consent forever to be under the imputation of having borne false witness against his neighbour. Is not the Baptist church in Margaree small, and has it not struggled to maintain an existence? Has not their Pastor labored self-denyingly and successfully, and witnessed the addition of a number to the church? the establishment of a flourishing Sabbath School, the finishing of the largest Baptist meeting-house on the Island, and the rallying of surrounding denominations that previous to his settlement, less than a year and a half ago, owned dilapidated meeting-houses, were destitute of preaching, and had "well nigh lost" ground once possessed? Respecting the denomination to which my friend belongs, does not he himself state that they "have only had about eight weeks of regular ministerial labor for the last four years, and this at three different times within the past year?" (Italics mine.) And have not the Methodists again a regular ministry, and both they and their neighbors their chapels finished on the outside, are not the latter straining every nerve to reclaim their ground, is it not true that no pains are spared to send among them such men as are "available," and do those men hesitate to avow their real object or neglect to employ all possible means to propagate the dogma of infant church membership, and the substitution of pouring for Bible baptism? And yet he thinks I have "suddenly collapsed!" He will be surprised to find how suddenly I have again become inflated. And now, let it be remembered that the only attempt he has yet made to prove the foregoing incorrect, is my withdrawal of clause (2) upon the condition specified. I shall anxiously await the performance of the real work before him.

But he also charges me with misquoting him. Now I beg to say that the probabilities are against this, since in no way could I more manifestly injure my own cause, detection and exposure being unavoidable. I am thankful that this is a matter respecting which I can appeal to our readers, who will observe that neither are his quotations all literal, nor does he hesitate to take advantage of typographical errors, and editorial alterations.

And now, while the most that he says upon this point is obviously correct, the inference he deduces is as obviously incorrect. What if I did transpose and curtail for convenience, can any one maintain that I made my opponent say what he did not say? It is true I took his statements out of their direct connection, and thereby obtained unintentional and unwilling—but the strongest kind of testimony. With regard to italics my closing explanation was sufficient, and as respects the "comma," most persons would suppose that the sentence requires one, and that if not placed where it is in my article, it must be inserted after "forward," which would only make the suggested "reluctance" more manifest.

As to my readers, I don't think I misjudge them in supposing that they will take as much interest in a record of what comes under my notice, as of that which is mere conjecture, or of which I have no certain knowledge. And his sincerity in this criticism will be apparent, when it is observed that with one breath he finds fault with me for representing so much as "the reflex

influence," and with the next, for not including more. Concerning personalities, I did not "complain" and his were more than a "reference." And as respects my use of his name, I was not aware that he was ashamed of the act alluded to, and only hope that such may be the case. Respecting "section (4)," he persists, by his silence on that point, in falsifying our word, but upon what ground? By his silence upon other points in my last, I think he tacitly falsifies his own.

In answer to the inquiry relative to "section (5)," I reply that in Apostolic times even those who preached Christ of contention had probably all been baptized, "the dogma of infant church membership and the substitution of pouring for Baptism," not having then been introduced. With respect to the "blind" under which I am still suffering, I beg to ask, is it kind or Christian thus to treat one regarded "blind?" And since he has "quite sufficient Scripture to authorise the baptism of infants," I respectfully request him to produce it, being at present much in the position of a converted Congregationalist of whom your readers have heard,—unacquainted with any, except, "submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." If he succeeds, I am sure he will receive, as he will deserve, the sincere gratitude and cordial thanks not only of his own denomination, but of the whole Pedobaptist world.

As to "modes of Baptism" our friend still wishes to be understood as holding that "conscientiously believing a thing to be right renders it so," and refers for proof to Rom. xiv. 6. But the Apostle in this chapter is simply laying down the principle that in matters of indifference the strong should yield to the weak. Adopt the interpretation suggested, and the author of the epistle from being "the chief of sinners because he persecuted the church," in "verily thinking he was doing God service" becomes at least innocent, and even those who crucified our Lord, if they sinned at all, committed a venial offence. In the same way the Quaker or Plymouth brother is justified in ignoring the ordinances, and no doctrine is necessary, no command is binding, no violation of law is sin. As respects Divine requirements, we may add, diminish, or change, just as our educated or uneducated consciences dictate. Indeed, our brother with these views becomes the ally of the modern rejecters of the Christian Sabbath, the passage he cites, with his interpretation, being their sheet anchor. How different his position from that of the apostle to whom he appeals. When a principle was at stake he "gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour," and "withstood" his fellow apostle "to the face, because he was to be blamed." Will not our readers conclude that it is safer and more consistent unswervingly to maintain that man's belief cannot alter God's requirements, or as this Apostle expresses it in the same epistle, "let God be true, but every man a liar." See Isa. viii. 20.

Lexicons or figures. But the foregoing principle, according to my friend, is the only solid foundation for immersion, and the baptism of the Spirit and not lexicons must decide the question of mode. Here once more we join issue. And let it be observed, I never disputed the point he so laboriously argues in the passages cited, that the Holy Spirit was poured out, and by that action those upon whom he descended were baptized. But this does not prove that "pouring upon and baptism are the same action." Milton says "A cold shuddering dew dips me all over;" must I therefore from observation upon the action of dew learn the meaning of the word "dip?" We frequently speak of persons being immersed in care or business, plunged into suffering, debt or difficulty, or drowned in sorrow. Do such expressions interpret these definitions of baptizo? Or to use scriptural illustrations, would we be justified in seeking for the literal explanation of baptize, in "I have a baptism to be baptized with," "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," the like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us," "buried with Him by baptism," "baptized into Christ" and "into His death?" As well might we attempt to learn the meaning of "plow" from "the plowers plowed upon my back," or "sow" from "blessed are they that sow beside all waters," or to return, "baptize" from "the figurative use of the word as applied to the outpouring of the Spirit." But my opponent will not yet admit that it is figurative. And here let me now be understood. I do not call this "act of Jesus a figure," so that he might have spared himself the next point in his laboured argument. The "act" is real, but the use of the word by which it is described is figurative. Nor does he "fairly answer the argument" I used. If the expression "vipers," in Matt. iii., does not occur in immediate connection with the other allusions quoted, does that justify his use of the *et cetera*? My argument was that the language of John's entire address was highly figurative, and he cannot disprove it. Again what does it prove that two "of the passages quoted" make no mention of the baptism of "fire," when the other two distinctly declare he shall baptize you with fire." The point is to show that baptism to be literal. And now be it observed that my friend can "conceive of a literal baptism of the Spirit," and moreover can see "identity" between that act and his own in administering the ordinance. Will our readers then look at the picture he draws—our Saviour taking the Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity in His hand and pouring Him upon the disciples! Can anything more "ridiculous" be conceived of, and yet he seriously argues that this must be a correct representation, and that, in defiance of all the laws of language and interpretation. How much more simple, sensible, and truthful the explanation of the Pedobaptist Bengel, and many, if not all of the commentators—"shall

baptize—shall abundantly impart." Tit. iii. 6. My friend says, "not all the house" was filled with the Spirit, but Peter in one of the passages cited replies "He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." In defence of 1 John v. 8, as a proof text, he has not yet attempted to establish that the "water" is that of baptism, without which the argument, if such it can be called, falls to the ground. And this he calls answering me "fairly!" If fair arguments can prove no more, then let our readers decide whose cause is most defensible. But our friend thinks that more than "one word is used in the original to describe the act of baptism." Will he favor us with the others, and at the same time shew what my "admission is worth," in "translating Rom. vi?" He also denies the necessity of its translation, on the ground that in the English Scriptures it is untranslated and "now is an English word." But it is the fact that it conveys no definite meaning that renders the translation necessary, every one, as he does, translating it to suit themselves. My readers will be surprised to learn that he admits that if it "must be translated" that translation can only be immerse. "Baptists must be called immersionists." Is it not astonishing that he fails to perceive that this renders it unnecessary for me to shew the reading, "He shall immerse you in the Holy Spirit and fire" "to be warrantable," and also distinctly defines "the action of the baptizer. But they will not be less surprised when they observe that he subsequently ventures to substitute for the very word which he represents as requiring to be translated "immerse," "dip frequently," "dip under," the expression "pouring upon" or "affuse," declaring that "the Divine Author of the Bible" inspired that which is "ridiculous nonsense" and "untrue," and closing up with a sneer at my "fidelity to my Master" in requiring a faithful adherence to the exact meaning of the word. He has chosen to describe his own blessed ordinance. Sir I am astonished at the lengths to which this Pedobaptist infatuation impels its votaries. As to my scholarship, in supposing the lexicon "affords me no aid" he gives me credit for learning to which I cannot lay claim.

And now sir, I will not imitate his example by boasting of what I have accomplished. But this I will say, my opponent has written two letters for the avowed purpose of fastening upon me the charge of "misstatement," and I have challenged him to lay his finger upon a single instance of it and defend his position. And further, failing in this, and making the *amende* necessary, if he is desirous of discussing "the question of baptism as to" either "subjects or modes," I shall most cheerfully undertake my part in elucidating this most interesting and important subject. Not that I regard myself eminently qualified, but simply because I believe truth never suffers from investigation and discussion.

Yours most truly,
T. H. PORTER, JR.
North Sydney, C. B., Jan. 25th, 1868.

For the Christian Messenger.

Departure of our Missionary Miss DeWolfe.

Doubtless many of the readers of the worthy *Messenger* would be glad to learn something respecting the departure of Miss Minnie DeWolfe, Missionary from Nova Scotia. Our sister and cousin having been appointed by the Provincial Board, and starting from Halifax arrived in Boston in the early part of October last, expecting to meet Mrs. Van Meter and others, and start at once for Burmah, but Mrs. VanMeter was not ready to sail in the ship in which they with Miss DeWolfe were expected to take passage. That of course was a disappointment to Miss DeWolfe. Weeks passed on but there seemed to be no ship destined for that port, and it became uncertain how Mrs. VanMeter would go, and finally doubtful if she went at all before Spring. We were deeply impressed with the necessity of a step that seemed to us, at least, should be taken by the Provinces in reference to forming themselves into an independent Board of Foreign Missions; the entertaining of which idea seemed absurd to some of our friends, supposing there was not a go-ahead spirit in the Baptists down there to make such a move. I was not ashamed to say in reply, that neither the Baptists nor the people of the Provinces were fully understood by these men of Boston.

We begin to see something of what Union will do in political and national matters: What where heretofore but isolated Provinces, by Union become the Dominion of Canada, no longer to act separately but united, having a common interest. Who shall predict anything but a prosperous future for the new nation. May wisdom from above be granted unto those who sit in responsible places. Every loyal subject should wish the enterprise success. The men of influence and means should see to it that their part is performed, that new factories may be started and mills set in operation, and that the mines with which the Dominion abounds may be properly worked, instead of giving the good chance to the Americans, to run the precious metal into their pockets, and thence to Boston, the brags of which I have heard re-

peatedly on the streets of Boston. Industry and manufactures would take a new impetus; and the country would not hereafter, as heretofore, be compelled to import Yankee farming implements, machinery and shoes in abundance, and even snow levelers for the City of Halifax—draining the country of money, there being no further market in the States for the main products of the Dominion. Our increased duties cut off the profits formerly realized in that respect. Inducements would then be presented to the noble young men of the land to remain who now, by hundreds, and, I am safe in saying thousands, drift abroad to seek their fortune. Let no man who loves his native land satisfy himself by saying it is not with us as it is with adjoining nations. I would ask such an one, Are you willing to lend your whole powers to aid in bringing about a better state of affairs? There is not a man or even boy in the whole land who would be willing to bolster up the good qualities and worth of a neighbour's farm, shop, business, horses, cattle, or anything else at the expense of sacrificing his own; so, while we wish success to others, let us not undervalue our own abilities, but each strive to do what he can to advance the interests of the whole people. Soon we shall see the current of national independence and self support, flowing through all hearts from the great lake to the Atlantic.

Now what may we not derive from a full denominational Union in the Missionary work at home and abroad. The Baptists of Ontario, Quebec, and the lower Provinces have been giving largely into the Treasury of the Missionary Union. This is praiseworthy, and I have no doubt but that in the gift of every dollar the giver has the words of scripture verified, which says, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth," and it has been suggested by Dr. Warren of the Missionary Union, that the Baptists of the Provinces should either be an Auxiliary to the Union of Boston or form themselves into an independent society. Who will say let us have the former? Methinks I hear many saying, let us have an independent Baptist Union. May a suitable, timely and real union not only be contemplated but set in operation, which will awake the churches and pastors to new zeal and Christian effort to give the Gospel to the perishing heathen, as well as the destitute portions of our own dear land.

After a tedious delay there was an opening for about three to take passage in a ship from Boston direct, and there were six to go, Mrs. VanMeter and her two little boys, and Miss Watson appointed by the Missionary Union, and Miss Higley, sent out by "the Woman's Aid Society" of New York. Mrs. VanMeter had promised Miss DeWolfe that she should go with her, and to the joy of all the Captain manifested a willingness to make some little alterations in the berths and so forth, providing they would consent to put up with some inconveniences, being closely quartered. To this they all readily agreed, so it was decided they should all go together, and the matter was settled with our dear sister, and she felt considerably relieved, and could but say, that a wise Providence had ordered all things well. We often think how calm and trustful was the spirit manifested by Miss DeWolfe in view of the great undertaking, the separation from dear friends; with perhaps a faint hope of seeing them again in time; and denying herself of all the privileges in the dear land she loved. She became endeared to many who formed her acquaintance while in Boston and vicinity. Those who did in any way add to her comfort or happiness were glad to have the opportunity, not only for her sake but for the cause of our common Master. As the day of starting drew near, she was gladdened by the receipt of some tokens of Christian regard, in books and keepsakes, and a nice silver hunting watch and gold chain, with the good wishes and prayers of many. The day dawned, it was fine and sunny but severely cold, the noble men from the Mission rooms, Drs. Warren, and Mardock, F. A. Smith, Esq., and many others assembled on board the ship about ten o'clock on Tuesday, seventeenth December, to have services and commit them to the care of Him who never slumbers nor sleeps—earnestly praying that He would protect them in journeying, and make them abundantly useful in the field of labour to which they are destined. Miss DeWolfe was much resigned and quite cheerful, and as many were on the wharf to witness the moving of the fine ship "John Bunyan" out of dock, we thought of the appropriateness of the name and preciousness of her freight; and as we looked upon our departing Sister a pleasant impression was made on the minds of all by our dear Sister's hopeful countenance and remarkable courage. We do hope for her great success, in answer to the prayers of the Baptist friends, throughout the land. Should the sterner sex show themselves tardy in inaugurating measures for her support, whether by a union with Ontario and Quebec or otherwise, it is to be hoped that the ladies of our societies will not let their efforts be wanting, and show that there can be something done—perhaps none of us know how much we can do until we try. I sincerely hope the men, leaders in Baptist interests will take up the matter of forming an independent society, and advocate it before the public; and be the means of starting an enterprise which will result in the furtherance of the Mission work and the salvation of many precious souls.

Respectfully yours,
L. E. D.

Charleston, Mass., Jan. 20th, 1868.