

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

CANNOT YOU COME TO THE PRAYER MEETINGS!

What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Matt. xxvi. 40.

It is desirable that week day services commence and close at a specified time and that they should not be too long. All who attend could then make arrangement to be free from business at the proper time, and at the close of the meeting they might resume their duties with regularity. At some seasons of the year, and in favorable circumstances it might be the highest wisdom to prolong a meeting, but as a rule it is better to close at the time, though that may be its most interesting period. The people would be far more likely to be present at the following week meeting if they had not been detained half an hour beyond the time they had to spare. Perhaps at this time of the year when business presses and hired help is so difficult to be attained, one hour may be the specified time for the weekly prayer meeting.

Now this "one hour" our Saviour most surely requires from us all; and if every professing christian exerted himself to meet with his brethren and sisters for one hour of earnest prayer every week a glorious revival of religion would soon spread over this and other lands.

1. I think I hear my Saviour saying to every one of us, Could ye not watch with me one hour when I suffered so much for you? We think of one three disciples very unworthy of such a friend when we read of them sleeping while he was suffering. They should have ministered what little consolation they had to spare. Let us pause before we rebuke them. What do we more than they? Our sins as well as theirs helped to press the life blood from his sacred veins. We owe him as great a debt of gratitude as they, and though we cannot be said to sleep beside a suffering Saviour, yet his cause suffers, which is all one to him. He endured long watching and prayer more earnestly for us. O shall not we watch one hour for him?

2. Think of the loving and earnest manner in which he makes the request that they would watch. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death, tarry ye here and watch." How could they refuse? How can we decline to watch and pray? Every pang the Saviour bore makes an appeal to us to support his cause and show our love to him by prayer and watchfulness.

3. It was not a great request that the Saviour made. One hour. He imposes no intolerable burdens. The Saviour is no exacting tyrant. Jesus knew the duty was possible to them and they doubtless could make no favorable reply. When similar questions are asked by deacons of churches about the prayer meetings, excuses are always ready. What reply should we give to the same questions if asked (as they will be at the judgment) by a heart searching God?

Who cannot give one hour? The person who really cannot, must be in distressing circumstances and his case should be a subject of prayer for those who can attend the prayer meeting. Leaving twenty-four hours for the Sabbath the week affords eight hours every night for sleep, and four hours every day for food and rest. This leaves seventy-two hours for work and worship, can't there be an hour spared for the prayer meeting? Not one hour?

4. Think of the consideration and compassion which Jesus exercises toward these unworthy disciples. We are sometimes too thoughtless in our rebukes and some would unchristianise their brethren for their apparent inattention; but, to quote an excellent writer, our Lord weighs us in more equal scales, and says: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." He knoweth our frame he remembereth that we are dust." It doubtless required some considerable effort on the part of the three disciples to keep themselves awake. They may have broken their rest on previous nights. This would not be forgotten by the stoning One, and when the time for watching was over he would hush them to sleep. The Saviour looks down upon us in this struggling world. He understands our weaknesses and our difficulties. He is well acquainted with the whole range of our possibilities, and never requires us to overstep the boundary, except as he gives strength and opportunity. He knows that in this world vigilant watching must be followed by natural repose and that rest must succeed to every toil. And how

sweet is that rest! And how balmy the sleep which follow the diligent discharge of those acts of service and devotion which our loving Saviour requires and to which, if we are his our willing hearts, will respond. H. B.

For the Christian Messenger.

Mr. Editor.—

Under the caption of "A brief Review," the Rev. J. H. Saunders in the last number of the Messenger closes a characteristic article with this sentence: "In order to establish this point (viz that the affiliation of the French Mission would give strength to the Union.) I was under the painful necessity of proving that our worthy and honorable brother McCully had been led to misrepresent the French Mission, &c., &c."

I had concluded to withdraw from a controversy that to onlookers was evidently degenerating into personality, to a large extent, but unauthorized assertions like this, subscribed by the proper name of the writer, demand the notice I am about to take of it.

I now therefore respectfully, take occasion to deny the truth of the statement hazarded by the writer, that I had "misrepresented the French Mission;" Let him prove his assertion or withdraw the uncivil offensive language.

What I had said of the French Mission and to which exception is taken if I understand him is this:

"During the past year the French Missionary does not appear to have been permitted to gather any fruit of his labors, though doubtless bearing precious seed."

This it will be observed was figurative language often used by writers belonging to our denomination with regard to Baptisms.

Writing, as I was, with the Reports of the French Mission Boards for the years 1871 and 1872 before me, I noticed in the Report for 1871, that the French Missionary had baptized 6 converts, 2 French and 4 English. The statistics there given may be briefly stated thus—

Family visits.....	293
Miles traveled.....	2118
Sermons preached.....	106
Converts baptized.....	6
New Testaments distributed.....	36
Pages of tracts do.....	8576

Now for 1872, that is the past year, the Statistics in the report are as follows:—

Sermons.....	80
Family visits.....	223
Miles traveled.....	1776
Pages of tracts distributed.....	2890
New Testaments 4; and Bibles 4.	
(Baptisms—none.)	

This report is signed by the Rev. J. H. Saunders himself as Secretary. He knew, he could not but know, surely, when publishing these offensive remarks that in speaking of the past year, I was basing my observations upon the public, printed Annual Report of the Mission.

Every body possessing a copy of the minutes of the Western Association by reference to their pages, can now satisfy themselves as to whether I have "misrepresented the French Mission," or no, and draw their own conclusion as to how far the Rev. J. H. Saunders was justified in publishing to the world that I had done so, and that he had succeeded in proving it—and then they can judge of the extent of the pain he has suffered in consequence of the "necessity" imposed upon him by a sense, I suppose, of his public duty! I am amazed to witness such rashness. So much for that.

In the Christian Messenger of 16th April, Rev. J. H. Saunders in endeavouring to show that an "affiliation of the French Mission with the N. S. Baptist Home Mission Society was contemplated in the formation of the Society," after referring to its "constitution" and "the Appeal" which was issued, and quoting at large from their contents, added:—"These are just the views of the N. S. Baptist Home Mission Union and the Baptists of this day"

What Rev. J. H. Saunders was attempting here to do was to prove that it was inconsistent on my part now to object to the Missionary Union, because the views of the Society as propounded in 1857 to which I had assented "are just the views" of the Union in 1872. If that be so,—then I proposed briefly "to dispose of his case"—on that point, and I did it too, as all must I think admit, by asking what need of a new organization in 1872, identical with that of 1857? He has conveniently ignored my arguments on that point of the case, however. But unfortunately for this controversialist, he was in error, I do not follow his example, and assert that he "misrepresented" when he said:—"These, the Constitution of 1857 and the Appeal—are just the views of the Union," and I now prove it to the world that he was mistaken

in that assertion, by quoting from its Constitution, and showing that neither in its membership, nor in its objects is the Union's Constitution identical with the Society's Constitution of 1857. And nobody understands that, I apprehend, better than does he, who penned these harsh, unjustifiable statements, and but for which, I should not have again referred to this matter.

Does the Rev. J. H. Saunders require my proofs? I turn then to the 3rd and 4th clauses of the Constitution of the Union, and I ask him to show me where the Home Missionary Society declares its object, as the Union does in the last clause of this Article, to be the "dissemination of denominational literature," whatever that means. Again, the entire of the 4th Article of the Union is new, and not to be found in the Constitution of the Home Missionary Society, viz. "That the Union be composed of the Pastors of the Baptist Churches in the Province, and delegates appointed by churches, each church in good standing with its respective Association, sending not more than three delegates."

Let there be no mistake here. For this, if adopted is a complete subversion of the entire basis of the present Home Missionary Society, as any school boy comparing the two constitutions, can easily discover. And so "I dispose of much, if not all he had advanced," and I repeat the avowment.

Now, what I have said all along, I reiterate. If it be the policy of the denomination, after a full fair consideration of the subject at their annual meetings about to come off, if they wish any degree of unanimity, pronounce in favour of abolishing the existent societies, and substituting the Union with its platform and new Constitution, and Annual Meeting separate and independent of the Associations, instead—why, let it be done. Many people think we have annual meetings enough as we are.

But I have no idea that any sixteen gentlemen, be they who they may, shall be permitted, to hold a meeting and change the entire frame work of our denominational policy unchallenged—a policy that had been in operation, and I say it too, notwithstanding assertions to the contrary—in comparatively successful operation, for very many years. It would be a dangerous precedent, I think, and one of questionable propriety.

What I have written—except to correct misrepresentation when repeated, and to compel if possible respectful controversial courtesy and treatment, I have written I maintain, in a fair, and kindly spirit. I have not attempted to attract attention by severe strictures, by fierce retorts or unchristian imputations, by accusations of inconsistencies, or by indulgences in personalities. The moment I discovered that a printer's error, had provoked an unjustifiable remark, I hastily, as all who read the Messenger are aware, made the amende honorable.

One word now as applicable to both Secretaries, alike strangers to me personally. Patience herself, it is said, has been known sometimes to turn short upon her pursuers. If so disposed, the probability is, I could acquit myself tolerably well in a joust, or break a lance with either of the so belligerent divines, that seem so anxious for it, just now, in any field of their choice—and that too in such a way, as not to reflect much discredit upon my own questionable prowess. I have had a little experience in lists, where men as great probably as either of them, if they did not go down, were not always decided to be the victors.

They who are acquainted with my antecedents, will be the best judges—better judges a good deal, than the Rev. Dr. Day, as to whether ever I belonged to that class, who "raise clouds of dust, under cover of which, they may make good their escape"—or no. A little dust just now—a very little would do—might be considered a desirable event, to one whose mind is so suggestive. In conclusion, I add, the rashness that prompts any man, much more a minister of the gospel, without being able to make proof, though challenged to do so—to charge another person, however humble, with "daring to deny his statement in the face of his own language," in my view of matters, requires no notice,—for it carries its own well-deserved rebuke with it wherever christian courtesy, and refinement obtain.

J. McCULLY.

Brunswick Place, 13th May, 1873.

Death, to God's people, is but a ferry-boat. Every day and every hour the boat pushes off with some of the saints, and returns for more.

For the Christian Messenger.

ELUCIDATION OF SCRIPTURE.

"He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoreth himself, and lacketh bread." Prov. xiii. 9.

In the Geneva Version the first part of this verse is rendered, "He that is despised, and is his own servant, is better," &c. Dr. Gill states, that the same rendering is given servus sibi ipsi, &c.) by Montanus, Vatablus, and Schulters. In the Syriac version it is translated to the same effect, "Better is a poor man that serves himself," &c., and in the Septuagint, "Better is a man without honor, that serves himself," &c.

It should be noticed that the Hebrew word translated "despised," meaning despicable, in verse 8th, is altogether different from that used in verse 9th. The latter is employed by David with reference to himself, prior to his elevation to an exalted position; 1 Saml. xviii. 23, and this text is by Gesenius coupled with Prov. xii. 9, denoting that the word has the same sense.

As the original may be fairly rendered "is servant to himself," this appears to me to be its natural and true import. Some men need a servant, or servants; but it is obviously far wiser and better for a man in moderate circumstances, who can do his own work, or wait upon himself, to do so, rather than to employ a servant, in order to honor himself by a vain shew, and thereby incur needless expense, and subject himself to want. (Compare verses 11, 24, and xiii. 7.)

As an illustration, a case may be noticed in which the writer knew a boarder, who had all that was needful provided and done for him; but, to appear honorable, he was disposed to pay the wages of a man, and the cost of his board, that, as he said, "he might have a servant, whom he could order about." As might be reasonably anticipated, he came to poverty.

The writer's own course of life has been in accordance with his view of the import of the text now considered. A correspondent who was not personally acquainted with him, writing on the necessity of revision of the English Scriptures, said; "Ask your servant what is the meaning of Phil. iv. 20?" Evidently he was not aware that the servant had as much knowledge of this, and of all other subjects, as the master.

Yours sincerely,

C. TUPPER.

Aylesford, May 9th, 1873.

For the Christian Messenger.

MISS. M. B. DEWOLFE.

Dear Bro. Selden,—

A letter written in March by this devoted sister, recently received by Mrs. Tupper, contains some items of intelligence that will doubtless be interesting to the readers of the Christian Messenger.

She says, "Most of the time through the last rains I was enabled to go through with my daily duties without much fatigue; but towards the end of the rain my strength began to fail; and I attributed it to the fever I had at the beginning." She states respecting a skillful physician whom she subsequently consulted, "He tells me general debility is the cause, and when I get over that, the other will cease. I am endeavouring, therefore, to build up my strength as fast as possible, to be ready for work when the next school term begins, which will be in May. I have improved very much, have gained in flesh and strength since I came hither, and can walk now for an hour, and not be weary."

Sister DeWolfe remarks, "The work of the Lord is going on here and there, somewhat slowly it appears to us, as it is a few now, and a few more the next time. If we, His children, were more earnest and active, would not His cause advance more rapidly? And yet, as I look at the laborers in this land, it seems to me they do as much as lies in their power."

This zealous sister goes on to express an ardent desire for an increase of laborers, and a fervent wish that at our coming Convention "a decisive move may be made in the establishment of an Independent Mission" among "Karens who are anxious to hear the gospel."

Yours affectionately,

C. TUPPER.

Aylesford, May 13, 1873.

In addition to the above articles from our venerable friend Rev. Dr. Tupper we make the following extract of a letter just received from him:—

"Since the last meeting of the Western Baptist Association, in June, 1872, the rate of mortality in the Upper Wilmot Baptist

Church has been unusually great, as seven members have been called home. Five others, having removed, have been dismissed. The state of vital religion being also low, and no additions made, the prospect became gloomy.

At Stronach Mountain, one of the sections of this Church, where no stated ministerial labor is enjoyed, excepting my services one sixth part of the time, brother J. S. DeWolfe assisted me during the Week of Prayer. But the state of the weather and roads was quite unfavorable; and no special results appeared at the time.

While, however, it might be hoped that the prayers offered would be graciously answered in due time, some individuals evidently derived immediate benefit. In particular, one young woman, whose pious mother was removed from the church militant last autumn, was peculiarly attentive, and appeared manifestly to be deeply impressed with a sense of eternal things. She has recently given a satisfactory relation of her christian experience, and, on Lord's day, the 11th instant, it afforded me sincere pleasure to baptize her, and receive her into the fellowship of the Baptist Church. May this be in the place the beginning of good days, in which many may be brought into the fold of Christ, and thus openly confess Him."

For the Christian Messenger.

IN MEMORIAM.

DEACON BENJAMIN STERNS,

departed this life at Goshen, Guysborough County, February 25th, aged 70 years. The Church at Goshen has sustained a great loss in the death of Brother Sterns. He was born in Massachusetts, and when quite young came to this country with his father, who was a Doctor of Medicine. When married he removed his family to St. Mary's, Guysborough County, into a place now called Goshen where he settled in the year 1840. In April 1849 the writer visited that settlement and baptized Brother Sterns and wife with two others, and organized a church comprising 21 members, some of whom had been baptized in Scotland, some by our Brother Whidden, now gone to his rest, others by Brother Hobbs, and myself. Brother Sterns was chosen to the office of Clerk by the Church at that time, which office he filled to the entire satisfaction of all concerned, and subsequently was chosen to the office of Deacon, which office he held until his death. Bro. Sterns was a good man and a lover of good works, he was grieved when he saw or heard of improper conduct in professing christians. He rejoiced with them that rejoiced, and wept with them that wept. He was always in his place with his brethren in the church when his health would allow. He always had something to tell about Jesus. For the last few years he was confined at home the most of the time, but the church had his prayers. He suffered very much in body at times, but was composed being fixed upon the rock Christ Jesus. At times he was very happy in view of the heavenly rest. The writer visited him a few days before his death and found him strong in the Lord and he continued so up to his departure. I hope that all who read this may be as well prepared for death as we think he was. The Church in the death of our Brother has lost one of its strong pillars, the settlement a good neighbour and the family a kind husband and loving father. May our Heavenly Father comfort and sustain the bereaved ones.—Com. by Rev. H. Eagles.

Religious Intelligence.

BRIDGELOWERS.—On May the 4th, six youthful believers in Christ were baptized at Bridge-town. It was a gracious and encouraging service. God's ordinances are clearly sustained by his word and by their beauty and simplicity, and appropriateness to represent some of the great and sublime doctrines of christianity, these ordinances attest their divine origin, and claim submission from those who love Christ. "In keeping the commandments of the Lord there is great reward."—Com.

REVISION OF THE BIBLE.—Speaking at Sheffield recently, the Rev. Dr. Angus stated that the work of revising the New Testament would be completed in seven years, and the Old Testament in twelve years, if the committees continued, as at present, to devote forty days a year to the work. The Americans, he said, had also appointed two committees to whom the English work was referred for suggestion. The completed work would therefore represent the united scholarship of the English-speaking people.