

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Dear Editor,

Mr. J. R. Lithgow's strictures of my remarks upon 1 Cor. xv. 29 call for a brief final reply. I do so only in the interests of truth. And I would say in the first place, that if Mr. L. wishes to command any respect for his literary attainments, his Biblical knowledge, or his christian spirit, he must pay more careful attention to the wording and pointing of the articles he attempts to criticise, and thus avoid misrepresenting those who differ from him.

Had Mr. L. done justice to my explanations of 1 Cor. xv. 29, he would have seen, and helped others to see, that when I wrote, "Else what shall those do who are immersed on behalf of the dead, why are they then baptized into a belief of the resurrection of the dead, if in fact the dead rise not?" I enclosed it, as now, in quotation marks, and, moreover, prefixed it with the italicised question—"Is not the meaning plain?"—thus showing that I was presenting—not a literal translation—but a free or paraphrased rendering of the passage. I now inform Mr. L. that the above quotation was the explanatory part of one already taken from the Lexicon of Rev. Edward Robinson, D. D., L. L. D.—Mr. L. may look sneeringly at human titles, or speak slightly of "the learned Biblical interpreters;" but I would remind him that their reputation as standard, though not infallible, authorities, has been earned by dint of enlightened, earnest, and, for the most part, candid study, and that, therefore, they will justly continue to receive much confidence as interpreters of the inspired Word.

But I am now quite willing, for a few moments, to direct my remarks more exclusively to a common-sense view of the passage in discussion.

Mr. L. very dogmatically asserts that "if a baptism in water is the baptism in the passage under consideration, then there is no alternative but to understand that certain in Paul's day were immersed in water on behalf of the dead."

Again he affirms quite as positively that "no matter what the nature of the baptism, the literally dead were not referred to."

Others—myself included—will exercise the liberty of modestly but decidedly entertaining a different opinion of the meaning of the passage.

And I think they make good their claim to such differences of view. True the accurate literal rendering of the phrase would seem to be—"Baptised on account, or on behalf, of the dead."

So far I believe we are all agreed. But does not Mr. L. know that in every language an ellipsis, or omission of the complete sense, not infrequently occurs? If not aware of such fact, it would be wise for him to bear it in mind in his future studies and attempted "expositions" of the "Word of God," or of any uninspired book.

With this fact before us, it by no means follows that being baptized in water on behalf of the literally dead teaches "a most extraordinary practice; and a strange argument for Paul to urge in maintaining that there is to be a resurrection of the dead."

Recalling the words in John xi. 4, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God," the full meaning of the latter clause evidently is, "in order signally to manifest the Divine glory." So in respect to 1 Cor. xv. 29, it is not necessarily any perversion or misinterpretation of the passage, to supply the probable ellipsis, and thus explain the verse as meaning, Why are they then baptized on account of,—with a view to—the resurrection of the dead? or still more freely and fully, Why are they baptized in water into a belief of the resurrection of the dead, if in fact the dead rise not?

I believe this exposition to be correct, and therein agree with bro. Brown, with Dr. Edward Robinson, and, I believe, with a majority of the best Biblical interpreters.

As to Mr. L.'s expressed opinion that the figurative sense of the passage is essential to its connection and harmony with the next verse. He should know that Paul's clear, logical mind, was not in the habit of repeating its thoughts—which would be the case, if the baptism of persecution and suffering be the true meaning. The 30th verse would then be little else than a repetition. On the contrary, if baptism in water, or the profession thereby of faith in the resurrection, be Paul's thought in the 29th verse, then his pertinent question "Why also are we in peril every hour?"

suggests another thought and is really an advanced point in his sublime argument.

In conclusion, I would say that Mr. L.'s mere assertion, in his last letter, of his belief in "spiritual death" will not bear "sanctuary" or logical weight, when placed in the scale opposite his attempted explanation of death in his first communication in the Christian Messenger. His and my Bible reads "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Let Mr. L. squarely meet and disclaim his well-known views of death, and the expressed views of his sect, before he repeats such an assertion, with at least any expectation that discerning readers will believe him consistent or even sincere.

Let him also—if he can—reconcile with the foregoing assertion his absurd belief—recently expressed in print—that spiritual beings, and of course all spiritual things, are, after all, only material existences or facts! This is truly making a nonsensical jargon of all distinctive significations of words. For example, the word material and its lexical opposite, immaterial, or the words material and spiritual, according to Mr. L.'s theory, mean about the same thing!

For my part, I much prefer the common-sense views of "the learned Biblical interpreters."

August 5th 1874.

A. CHIPMAN.

For the Christian Messenger.

"Brother Paul" has truly, "written some things hard to be understood." Of this class appears to be 1 Corinthians xv. 29, for the plain import of the word, as rendered into English, in the authorized version, cannot be the true one.

Your correspondents have examined this exegetical bone of contention, but the prospects of ultimate possession are as remote as ever. It is questionable whether the honor of obtaining the undoubted explanation will be conceded, while we see, as now, "through a glass obscurely," and "know but in part."

I do not purpose at present, entering the lists: but having seen a translation by James Macknight, D. D., which brings out the meaning I have myself attached to the passage, I quote for the benefit of others—"Otherwise, what shall they do who are baptized for the resurrection of the dead, if the dead rise not at all? And why are they baptized for a resurrection of the dead?"

The 3rd, 4th and 5th verses of the 6th chap. of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, furnish a valuable commentary to the verse in question, as well as certain information concerning the meaning and mode of baptism.

A very much more important subject is introduced by Mr. A. Chipman. What was the sentence pronounced upon Adam, and under which his posterity lie?

As we have it, it was, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground: for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." The law, of which this sentence is the Judges rendering, was, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, as the original has it, "dying, thou shalt die," which is an epitome of the physiological history of mortal man. Had not Adam eaten of the fruit of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would have continued to eat of the tree of life and would have lived for ever. "Lest having become a sinner, "he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever, therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden: and he placed at the East of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." What we have lost through Adam's disobedience and our own, the right to the tree of life—we may regain through Christ's obedience and our own—(see Rev. xxii. 14). For "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all (all in Christ) be made alive." When? How? Spiritually? No, not spiritually at least in the sense intended by your correspondent, Mr. Chipman, but at the resurrection when at the coming of Christ, as is plain from the next verse, (23rd of 15th chap. 1st Cor.) the writer continuing, "But every man in his own order—(shall be made alive.) Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." Christ is "the resurrection and the life."

That the dissolution of the body is the penalty, is to my mind evident, without travelling out of this most splendidly argumentative chapter, the 15th of 1st Cor. Otherwise—what does Paul mean when he

writes, "If Christ be not raised \* \* they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished? Is there a way of attaining to a future life" except by a resurrection? or does a part of us attain to a future life, or immortal life, or the "rest that remaineth for the people of God"—previous to, and independent of, the resurrection of the body? Then Paul would not be without reward for having stood in jeopardy every hour," and the resurrection is a matter of very secondary importance, instead of being the sine qua non of the christian. Paul declares that he suffered the loss of all things, etc., "If by any means he might attain unto a resurrection of the dead,"—Phil. iii. 11.

I know that we are apt to be bound and blinded by prejudice and error and to be led away by false philosophy, but until shown my error, I must continue to believe that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, (return to dust) but have everlasting life," by a resurrection from among the dead.

E. S. C.

For the Christian Messenger.

REPORT OF THE GRAND WORTHY PATRON CADETS OF TEMPERANCE, PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA, PRESENTED TO OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES IN GRAND SECTION ASSEMBLED.

CANNING, KING'S CO., N. S., July 15th, 1874.

Worthy Brothers,—

It is a great source of pleasure to me, to meet you here this day, to aid you in the advancement of this Order. It may seem to some a trifling matter, for you and me to leave our particular business engagements to come together at this time.

I believe such is not the case by any means, for I feel perfectly satisfied that the order of the Cadets of Temperance has done a great amount of real good already, and in proportion as the older organizations encourage and foster this valuable auxiliary, just in that proportion will the principles of Temperance be perpetuated throughout the land and through the world at large. I must confess that I am an enthusiast in this reform, and prominent among the organizations, that I feel proud in being permitted to aid in advancing, the order of the Cadets of Temperance. It is true we will be called upon to meet with real difficulties, in our efforts to extend this order, but we must not be discouraged for fidelity to principle will surely bring its due reward.

Let us then be up and doing, With a heart for any fate; Still achieving, still pursuing, Learn to labor and to wait.

The greatest hindrance to the extension of this order throughout our Provinces is found in the fact, that men cannot be obtained who are willing to make the sacrifice that is required to induce them to take charge of Sections of this order. I am fully satisfied that they are losing very much by their apparent backwardness in coming to the front in so good, so great, and so praiseworthy a cause. Here is presented an opportunity of instilling into the members these thoughts, precepts, and principles, that will grow with advancing years, and generations unborn may be in a position to call such blessed. Dear brethren let your language be,

I live for those that love me, For those who know me true; For the heaven that smiles above me, And waits my coming too; For the cause that needs assistance, For the wrongs that lack resistance, For the future in the distance, And the good that I can do.

If we would all act upon that principle, there would be a great many Sections of our beloved Order in active operation, let us look for very much greater results in the coming future. We are glad to hail another section to our ranks, being St. Georges Section, No. 6, organized at Halifax by P. G. W. Patron, P. Monaghan, on the 23rd day of April with eleven charter members I am happy to say that I believe this Section will do well in that part of the city where it is located. I am sorry to say that Jubilee Section has ceased to work and I fear will not be revived again, this is to be regretted in many ways, let us hope that before the charter is surrendered the parties interested may see their way clear to bring the section into line again.

It affords me a great degree of pleasure to hear of the prosperity of Canning Section No. 1. After a season of rest, they have buckled on the armour, and to day is in a very much better condition than ever, may this section prove to be a valuable aid to senior organizations.

Acadia Section, No. 2. This section is still prospering, it is in very efficient work-

ing order, the members are faithful and earnest in the discharge of duty, and a permanent influence for good is exerted in the City of Halifax by this section.

Oxford Section, No. 4. This section is also in fine working order. I had the pleasure of installing their officers at the beginning of the last quarter, and was greatly pleased with the warm interest taken in the proceedings.

Mayflower Section, No. 5, located in Port Williams in this County, has ceased working some time. I would like to be able to do something to revive it on my way home, if possible, but I fear I will not remain for that purpose this time.

I hope the day is not very far distant when Yarmouth, Liverpool, Shelburne, Windsor, Wolfville, Pictou, Amherst, and other towns in this Province, will have their Section of Cadets of Temperance. Let us all be fully determined to do what we can in the section room, in the world, to forward the interests of so good, so noble a cause.

I am happy to inform this Grand Section that a supply of Constitutions and Bye-Laws, will soon be available for the use of Subordinate Sections, the Printer has them in hand, and they will soon be ready and on sale to Subordinate Sections at cost, postage included. Full particulars will be given you by the Grand Secretary. There will also be blank forms of Withdrawal Cards, ready for delivery about the same time, we hope by degrees to arrive at the position of efficiency in every particular.

Allow me to express a hope that our coming together at this time may tend to advance the leading principles of our order, Truth, Virtue and Temperance, to the end that our efforts may not be in vain. And may our every action tend to raise the standard of Temperance higher and, yet higher still, until our mission is accomplished. To this end, may all our deliberations be conducted in a spirit of harmony and peace, that the Great Patriarch above may be honoured, and humanity saved from the curse of strong drink.

Respectfully submitted in Truth, Virtue and Temperance,

THOMAS HETCHINGS, G. W. Patron.

For the Christian Messenger.

LATE UTTERANCES OF BISHOP B.—

Having availed myself of the privilege of seeing the administration of Confirmation, I send you a few select sentences of the bishop's address delivered on the occasion. There were a very few people present, some of whom were Baptists. Speaking with considerable emotion the bishop said "it is unaccountable that there is so little interest manifested in the solemn ordinances of the church." Admitting that other denominations were rapidly increasing he remarked that "it was probably owing to the introduction of schemes which might be tolerated in other denominations, but not in the church of God." He confessed that "members of the church were less able to give an answer of the hope that is in them, than the members of other denominations." He appeared to have an idea that to remedy this, two kinds of training are required, for said he "where there is right christian training, and church training, the evil does not exist." What kind of "church training" is intended will be gathered from the following: Speaking of confirmation he says "this is one of the means of grace appointed by our Lord" but he endeavored to improve that by adding "although we have no account of its institution"; yet he said "probably it was ordained during the forty days between our Lord's resurrection and ascension." Having jumped to that conclusion he added "Confirmation, and the laying on of hands are spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the epistle to the Hebrews," but unfortunately for the bishop the two things are nowhere spoken of in conjunction.

Having laid down the doctrine, he entered upon its application; and very solemnly remarked, "we cannot tell how much of mischief may accrue to our souls by neglecting the ordinance of confirmation"; but he did not inform us how much of good would come by attending to it. He was sure that there were misapprehensions of its meaning—"it is not the profession of faith: the subjects (candidates?) must be prepared to state that they believe, and are resolved to do, all that is included in their baptismal vows"; that looks like a profession of faith notwithstanding: but the marrow of it all is couched in the following sentence "if you come, not expecting a blessing through

the laying on of hands, you will receive none." It is not becoming of us to use harsh language, but when one poor sinner believes, and requires that other poor sinners shall believe, that a peculiar but indescribable blessing shall proceed from his hands and which cannot otherwise be procured, it reminds us of an address delivered on one occasion to Socva's sons. The counsel with which the bishop concluded his address, on "the necessity of studying God's word," was all that could be wished for; but what authority he had for saying "you will not have a more solemn moment until you come to leave this world," is not so clear; the same language has probably been addressed to thousands, who have afterwards, by some "means, which are not to be tolerated in the church of God" become enlightened, and the most solemn point of their history has been reached when they professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in believers' baptism.

J. P. B.

For the Christian Messenger.

PROVINCIAL UNION IN HOME MISSIONS.

(As I have not seen all the copies of the Messenger, some of my observations may have appeared already; but even in this case, as they may arrest the attention of some who have not hitherto considered this subject, they may not be altogether unserviceable.)

As far as we know, no attempt has been made to furnish arguments against the Union of the Maritime Provinces in Home Missions, neither has any thing been published to prove the unsoundness of the many arguments advanced in favor of it. So notwithstanding the private opinion of any, publicly expressed, that some of these arguments are bad, if the fact that they are unanswered indicates, under the circumstances, that they cannot be answered, they are unanswerable.

The objections urged against this Union do not hold against the principle or desirableness of it, but against the time and method of putting it in operation.

It is said that the present Union at home has been but just consummated—that the special act of assembly just passed would be made a nullity—that a new act would be required, &c. Well brethren what if all this is true? If the Union is desirable because best for the cause of Christ, shall the little trouble incident upon bringing it about be permitted to outweigh what gives greater promise of good to lost men? Besides, if the Union is ever effected, this trouble must be taken, unless the cause of Christ be left to suffer forever because of it.

While the counsel to wait until the present Union at home has more fully proved itself, and then act upon the knowledge thus gained, is prudent, do we need such additional light to redeem present action in reference to this wider Union from rashness? We think not. The past year has shown at least that the new system is preferable to the old—that combination is better than separation. The Union of the three Home Missionary Societies in Maine in one convention has been attended with a similar result. In addition to this, if we take into account the fact stated above—that no arguments have been brought to favor separation versus Union, and no objection has been published against the many urged in favor of Union versus Separation, we are compelled to conclude that we have abundant knowledge to justify the belief that such Union would be for the good of the cause of Christ. If so, then does not the greatness of anything which effects this cause press upon us immediate action, with the greatest urgency. At least none should shrink from what is preliminary to final action a year hence.

The last objection we propose to notice is that this Union will bring Home Missions into the Convention. In reply we might remark that there would be no objection to Home Missions in the Convention which does not lie equally against its present supervision of Foreign Missions and Education. Hence all who oppose the Union on this ground, if consistent, must go further and seek to remove these objects from control of the Convention—in short—seek to abolish the Convention altogether. The objection that Home Missions in the Convention would add another day to its sessions is not, to our mind, a very grave one. It will not give so much trouble to brethren to spend another week day at the Convention as to attend a separate Home Mission Convention with the additional time, expense and Sabbath. In any case, considering the interests of souls at stake in such a Union, a day more or less in a yearly session appears a trivial matter.