

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
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WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XLII., No. 26.

Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.
Evening of Life.

The step is less elastic now,
Than it was wont to be;
The bounding pulse, the fever'd brain,
Now comes no more to me.

The sun and moon are darkening,
The almond tree doth flourish;
While earth, and every earthly thing,
Do fade away and perish.

Though eventide be falling fast,
The vision seems more bright,
As Faith intently watches for
A gleam of heavenly light.

And while the distant melody
Enchants the listening ear,
How beautiful the battlements
Of Paradise appear.

And if the battlements be bright,
What must it be within,
Where neither heart, nor ear, nor sight,
Can be assailed by sin?

Like some poor vagrant bird from home,
Finding no place of rest,
So would I plume the weary wing
Back to the parent nest.

Halifax, June 6, 1878.

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.
Open Letters on Baptism.

REPLY NO. IV.

REV. D. D. CURRIE, METHODIST MINISTER, MONTGON, N. B.:

Dear Brother,—Your fourth letter has come to hand, and like those that have gone before, sheds no light on the question I sent you, which as you seem to have forgotten, I will repeat:—"Have you or have you not falsified the lexicons named on pages 12 and 13 of your catechism?" When will you give it your attention? Is it not time you did? Do you greatly enjoy lying under such a charge? In your letter No. IV. you are again in the track of Dr. Ditzler. If you just name the page of the Graves-Ditzler Debate, I can read what you have to say, and I shall know, whose work I am reading. You have read the story, I presume, of the Jackdaw in the Peacock's feathers. Then beware, lest, &c., &c.

You say you borrow largely from that Debate; "copy" would have been nearer the mark, without crediting the author; and by altering a word here and there, you seek to make it your own. That kind of thing will not pass muster with honest men. And as you quote "largely" from Ditzler I shall only refer you to pages 383-385 of that Debate for a complete refutation of your arguments from the Syriac version, I mean Dr. D's arguments; simply adding that versions are not our guide, but the inspired word itself. And now, as I intimated, I think, in my last, if your next letter (No. IV.) throw no light on the question at issue, I should make some further exposures.

1. You say, page 13, "The Scriptural washing of a person is always effected in connection with sprinkling." That is not true, and your concordance will direct you to many proofs to the contrary.

2. Same page, "The lexicons agree in giving wash as the most prominent meaning of baptizo." That is not true, and it is a marvel to me how you could say so. But it is in perfect keeping with page 12.

By the way, Bro. C., allow me to suggest in passing that in future you use some stronger argument than "must have." For instance, on page 15 you have four of them:—"It is evident that he (Naaman) must have sprinkled himself seven times." "Elisha must have told him to sprinkle seven times." "He must have sprinkled himself seven times." "The baptism of Naaman could not have been by immersion, and must have been by sprinkling." There are several others in the book, but I need not quote them all. Don't use

them, Bro. C.; it is too strong an evidence of conscious weakness.

3. On page 15 you say, "In Daniel iv. 33. Nebuchadnezzar it is said," was driven from men—and baptiz'd (it is translated "wet" in the English version but it is baptized in the Greek) with the dew of heaven." Not true Bro. C. NOT TRUE. It is not said he was baptized with the dew of heaven, and as a Greek scholar, you know it well. Neither is the word "baptiz'd" found in the verse. Not satisfied with falsifying lexicons, you now falsify the word of God itself. In your preface I read "He (that is yourself) has borrowed freely, when it suited his purpose to do so." That is true, and in your letters you adopt the same method, but where did you borrow the idea of falsifying the Bible? Let us know.

In the same preface you say "It is believed this book will do good." If a book containing misrepresentations, pervasions of the Scripture, and undeniable falsehoods will do good, your book will certainly do a great deal of good. Never in all my reading have I met with a work so replete with the above named articles as your work on Baptism. and it was only a short time since in talking with a brother about that work, that I said to him and here say to you, that I would not for five thousand dollars commit to paper, and send broadcast over the land what is found in the pages of your catechism, and I will now add, not for any sum that could be named would I stand in the position you now occupy. I write these words with calmness and deliberation, and I venture to think that you would do not a little to get out of the difficult position you are in, if you could do so without exposing yourself to the public eye.

But the most astonishing thing of all is this: you finish the preface of your book by "invoking the blessing of God upon it." Why my friend Currie did you at any time or in any place get down on your knees and ask God to bless that book? If you did to what God did you pray? Your ideas of the God of truth must be strange indeed if you expect him to bless a book that teaches doctrine in opposition to his own word, and containing such glaring falsehoods, subtleties, pervasions and misrepresentations as your book does. I beseech you for your own sake repent and go to God in prayer and ask him to forgive you your transgressions. I believe that you have done it principally through ignorance, and I therefore think the Lord will be all the more ready to forgive you. I intended to point out several other false statements, but the above will do for the present.

Once again I press the question upon you my brother, "Have you falsified those lexicons or have you not?" That is the simple matter in hand. As yet you have not written one word whereby any one could conclude you are innocent of the charge laid against you. I do not ask you whether you have falsified the Bible. I know myself you have done that, as I may further show you shortly. You are a prominent minister in a very large and influential denomination; you are charged with a string of falsehoods; that charge has appeared in the Toronto Bible Index, Christian Visitor, Wesleyan, and CHRISTIAN MESSENGER, and consequently has been read far and wide; you have written several letters professing to answer my question whether you are guilty or not; you have said many things on many subjects, but the question itself you have not touched. Is not this virtually admitting your guilt? Why not come straight to the question at once? Will you let me help you out of the difficulty? Well, do this: Begin with Schrevelius naming the edition, and so on with the other nine, and then say, "I hereby repeat and affirm that the definitions of baptizo as given on pages 12 and 13 of my catechism are the definitions as given by the above named lexicons." If you cannot do this then I suggest the following:—"I hereby declare that I have undertaken to defend a defenceless cause; and finding that the best lex-

icons of the Greek language do not give pour or sprinkle as a definition of baptizo, and inasmuch as it is indispensably necessary that they should, and that the doctrine of sprinkling must be sustained at all risks and all hazards, (and if truth and conscience come in the way so much the worse for them), and as the lexicons do not give sprinkle as a meaning of baptizo, I have taken the liberty of giving it for them."

Or a third might answer better; something like this:—"Well, to tell the truth, I never saw the lexicons at all, I copied the definitions from (here you can name your author or authors), I don't know whether they are correct or not, which is of little consequence to me so that I can get people to believe that baptizo means sprinkle." There, that is all I can do for you to help you out of the "tub" of boiling water into which you have plunged yourself, and I shall therefore leave you to your own resources to get out as best you can. Meanwhile I shall cry:—"question, question, editions, definitions, QUESTION, Brother Currie, QUESTION! and remain,

Yours, &c.,
J. BROWN.

Paradise.

For the Christian Messenger.
NEW YORK, June 12, 1878.

To the Editor of the Christian Messenger:

DEAR SIR,—I frequently get the Messenger, although not a subscriber, and have been reading the discussions on Baptism in the late numbers, and take the liberty of expressing my opinion—as to the scriptural mode of Baptism.

"I am a Presbyterian," have been sprinkled and brought up strictly in that faith, and the longer I live and the more I read the more I am convinced that the Baptists have the true and only scriptural mode of Baptism, every time I hear our ministers speak of baptizing infants it makes me feel ashamed. I cannot see a passage in scripture that authorizes it, and children who are brought up under this form cannot, to my mind, be exhorted to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. One of the strongest arguments the Presbyterians have for infant baptism is the custom of circumcision, and this to my mind has nothing to do with baptism. If we as Christians profess to follow Christ, why do we not follow him in everything. Christ himself submitted to all the Jewish Customs, and was he not also baptized by John, and did not he command the disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, saying "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be damned," and here also is a proof that baptism does not save us" it is our faith in Christ alone. But baptism is a necessary fruit of our faith, and we should therefore obey this command. Christ says nothing about sprinkling, and when Philip baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch, it was on condition that he believed with all his heart that Jesus was the Son of God—now how can a child believe and be baptized? Our ministers quote this passage: "The promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off even as many as the Lord our God shall call." But what has this to do with baptism? It is a very poor argument to my mind, and it is my firm belief that our ministers know that they are wrong in this particular, but are ashamed to acknowledge it. They preach about our being buried with him in baptism and they do not even symbolize it. I myself have been sprinkled, as also have my children but I do not think it the scripture method, since coming to years of understanding I have been led to think this way, and only had my children sprinkled because it was the custom. I think it would benefit the cause of Christ if all ministers of every denomination could exhort their hearers to repent and be baptized, but how can those who do not take the scriptures for their guide in

this particular do it, I think a great many parents put too much stress on infant baptism. I hope the day is not far distant when all denominations will follow Christ in this matter of baptism. I only wish I could speak on the subject as I feel. I never wrote and am not competent to write for a paper, but am glad to see the subject discussed in the Messenger, and hope to see it continually laid before the people, always in the spirit of love. Oh that we may all have more of the spirit of Christ, not of controversy! If we have light in this matter, let us bless God and be humble in mind as our blessed Saviour was.

Yours in Christ,
A PRESBYTERIAN.

Socialism has become an organized evil in Germany, and what troubles may arise from it we are just beginning to learn. A second attack has been made on the life of the Emperor William, and this time it came very near success. The man who made the attempt was the tool of a party who had conspired together; he managed to convince himself that he was playing the role of a martyr, so took what appeared a certain means of accomplishing his end, thinking little of his own escape. The Emperor was seriously wounded. The would-be murderer was arrested and got killed on his way to prison. But that is not the end of it. All can see well enough that had the attempt succeeded it would have answered no purpose at all. The Emperor is an old man—has a son made of no mean stuff and a Bismarck as First Minister. The army is popular because it is felt to be a necessity and for some time to come it will be paramount. But it is evident that many among the Germans chafe against the military character which the nation is compelled to sustain. They think the Empire has paid too great a price for the luxury of having a Bismarck. They may be fanatics, but such folly always proves a fruitful soil from which fools may grow, and Germany will have to take into serious consideration her present attitude in Europe. She is a great military power, but the nation is not rich; poverty among the masses will breed and foster discontent, and Socialism feeds upon that. It has before happened in world-history that great armies have killed the Empire they were raised to protect. The world cannot live on armies, but only on industry of brains and hands.—Canadian Spectator.

IMMERSION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.—We copy the following paragraph from one of our London papers:

"A Bacup local journal, in reporting the anniversary of the St. Saviour's Church schools, remarks:—"In the morning Rev. E. Thring baptized, by immersion, a young man from Smithy Bridge. The rite was performed in the baptistry provided for those Churchmen who may conscientiously desire baptism in this mode of its administration. There was not a large assemblage, it not being generally known that the ceremony was to take place. Unlike the fonts at many churches, that at St. Saviour's Church is suitable for both sprinkling and immersion; but this is only the second baptism of the kind that has been performed in that church that we remember. The circumstance is only notable inasmuch as total immersion is so rare in churches; but the Church of England has no other opinion on the subject than that of allowing either the one practice or the other, in accordance with the wishes of the candidates, as is seen in the rubric of the two public baptismal services." Though we hardly like the grammar of the paragraph, we quite endorse the sentiment.

Stewart's Hotel for women in New York city has proved a failure, and is being transformed into a public Hotel. Judge Hilton says: "The changes of structure essential

are now going on. A smoking-room, billiard-room, barber-shop and saloon will be added. There is \$3,700,000 invested in this hotel, on which the annual interest is \$259,000. There are over \$300,000 worth of choice oil paintings on the walls of the house. A hotel on an extensive scale exclusively for women is an impossibility. Women want to associate with the other sex, and the restrictions imposed upon them in this house were so severe that many who would gladly have taken advantage of its benefits declined for that reason.

Aside from the \$259,000 annual interest on the cost, the annual expenses were \$9,000 for gas, \$2,000 for water, and \$22,000 for taxes. It cost over \$500 a day more than was received since the opening in April.

Hating Hell.

Mr. Robert Ingersoll, who is not only the champion of Thomas Paine, but is evidently endeavoring to follow in the blasphemer's footsteps, recently said in a lecture, speaking of hell, "I hate it." This suggests to the Independent the following reflections:

"But what is the Bible and the Christian doctrine of Hell? It is nothing, absolutely nothing more than Nature has always taught everybody, Bible or no Bible. It is only that the same law holds in the moral world which in the physical world science has formulated as the last and best result of all her investigations—the law of the persistence of force. The Bible doctrine of hell is that the man who has here on earth formed the habit of being bad will continue to be bad in the next world, as he has been in this; and that he will continue to suffer the degradation and pain of it there, just as he has here. The Christian doctrine of hell and of heaven is one, and is thus formulated in the Christian Scriptures. "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Translated out of religious terminology into that of Science, it would read: The laws of nature will not fail. Causes will inevitably produce their effects. Actions ripen into habits, and habits become more and more fixed, until they are at last unalterable. Goodness brings; badness brings misery. This is Nature's law, and between Nature's law and the law of the Bible there is absolutely no difference. They are one and identical.

"This law Mr. Ingersoll hates" and, in hating it, he hates not the Christianity of the Bible, he hates nature and its laws. Let him hate them. They are wise and just. They are beneficial, because they are fixed and can be depended upon. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and let it die; for now we know what to expect, and can avoid the consequence by avoiding the cause. Let Mr. Ingersoll gnash his teeth, as *The Tribune* says he did when in his lecture on Hell he declared "I hate it." But nature is against him, whether there be a God and a revelation or not, if there be any immortality to the soul; and in the presence of the ponderous and resistless machinery of nature, his hatred is as puny as would be the resistance of a poor grain of iron interlocked with its mates in the beam of a Corliss engine. For Mr. Ingersoll is a part of nature, subject to its laws, and can do nothing but clatter, clatter against the forces of the universe.

"This nature of things we like. There cannot help being a hell, and we are glad there is one. We praise God for the law by which sin punishes itself, as well as for that law by which virtue brings its own reward. And when we see this doctrine caricatured and vilified and denounced, we know that the conscience of man is on the side of the law of nature and of God, though Mr. Ingersoll may have no good opinion of the law."—*Zion's Advocate*.