

"the austere sect of the Baptists," "the whole of the Western Churches" are in a similar position. One would say that all this looks very like "adding to" and "taking from" the Christian Statute Book, which the Dean doubtless knows cannot be done with impunity.

The above are a few of the many thoughts suggested by that part of the Essay which treats of the Mode of Baptism. The portion devoted to a consideration of the Subjects of the ordinance must be even more briefly reviewed.

On this point the testimony of the Essayist, as regards the original practice, is as unequivocal as on the former. It is to the following effect, "In the apostolic age and in the three centuries which followed, it is evident that as a general rule those who came to Baptism came in full age and of their own deliberate choice. We find a few cases of the baptism of children in the 3rd century and one case of the baptism of infants—an infant? "Gradually, however, the practice" of infant baptism "spread, and after the 5th century the whole Christian world with the single exception of the sect of the Baptists, have baptized children in infancy."

Our author next proceeds to inquire, "What is the justification of this almost universal departure from the primitive usage?" and to assign the reasons not merely with composure and unconcern as in the former case, but, as before, with approval and commendation. "The apostolic practice is deliberately and avowedly set aside, although the act involved no less than a change in the very constitution and meaning of the Church. We look in vain throughout the Essay for any other argument in favour of so momentous a revolution than those which have been made to do duty from the first, such as that "Christ took the little children" in His arms and blessed them," that "as Christian parents are holy, so are their offspring" and that the Redeemer "saw in the little children of Galilee, all unbaptized as they were, a likeness of the kingdom of heaven."

Whether the parenthetical clause was designed to strengthen the argument or not, one may be pardoned in wishing that other little children, not "all unbaptized," as were those of Galilee, but "regenerated," as some of the churches maintain, would prove in subsequent life by their deportment and conversation that they possessed the likeness in no less degree.

The Essayist sees in little children the qualities and virtues of "innocence, purity, truthfulness and guilelessness," but in this he is not singular or original. It is not every one, however, who would derive from such a survey the conclusion at which he arrives, namely, that "the substitution of infant baptism for that of adults, like the change from immersion to sprinkling, is a tribute of Christian charity." As the "Holy Roman Empire" was neither "holy" nor "Roman," so the "Christian charity" which the Dean commends, is neither "charity" nor "Christian."

That must be a mistake and spurious charity altogether, which is "wise above what is written," and which is begotten of the notion, so derogatory to the knowledge and love of the Redeemer, that more can be done for the spiritual well-being of infants than is provided for in the dispensation of grace under which it is our happiness to live. If the Divine wisdom had seen that Baptism would be of any benefit to infants, we may be assured that Divine goodness would have directed the Church to admit them to the rite.

Wolfville, Dec. 25, 1879.

For the Christian Messenger.

Thoughts in brief.

BY THE REV. J. CLARK.

God has made no provision for our happiness out of Christ.

No true child of God would do without his Father's assistance even if he could.

The honor of God's throne is involved in the safety of His children.

In the worst extremity we can fall back on God, even as the shattered army falls back on the fortress.

Good listening is just as essential as good preaching.

Inasmuch as we are told to "rejoice in the Lord always," there is no limitation to our happiness, either as to its extent or duration, providing it is in the Lord.

Our greatest difficulties in leading a religious life are always within ourselves.

A man is generally right when he is able to say, "I was wrong."

None of God's promises are exhausted by one fulfilment.

Each milestone along the road of life should be turned into pillars of memorial inscribed with grateful "Ebenezers."

For the Christian Messenger.

"Caution to Baptists."

Dear Brother,—

Will you please allow me a little space to reaffirm every statement of my article under the above caption in the Messenger of Feb. 18. This reaffirmation is called for, because another article appears in the Wesleyan of March 12, signed by Mr. Jas. H. Miller, Secretary of the Trustees of the Port George Methodist Meeting-house.

Does the writer know that in making quotations, it is dishonest to omit, add, or change words letters or punctuations. If he is ignorant let him learn, and let him also remember that a person who will be dishonest in this respect is not to be trusted in others.

The article may possibly mislead some who are not acquainted with the circumstances. The facts are plainly set forth in my former article, and are not changed in the least by perversions and perjuries.

The conversation between the Sexton and myself I plainly stated, and by that statement I stand. I asked the Sexton the question, did you receive instruction from Rev. Mr. Smith, the Methodist minister, not to let me into the meeting house. His answer was an unequivocal, strong affirmation that he had. His oath to the contrary is no credit to himself or the Methodist cause.

The witness who heard the conversation confirms my statement, Mr. Henry Fritz is not the man.

It certainly was very kind in the writer of the first article to leave so many "loopholes" for me, as is stated in the second article, but as I did not need them, they were found very convenient for the Trustees themselves to try to jump through. But you left them too small: Sirs, you can't get through.

I am surprised at two prominent, though opposite, features of the whole case. First; that Mr. J. H. Miller and his co-trustees allow themselves to be used as cat's paws with which the monkey tries to get the nuts out of the fire—the real author still further trying to screen himself by putting his pen into his wife's hand so that he himself can deny the writing. Some persons are noted for this sly deceptive policy.

Secondly; I am really astonished that a professedly religious society will enter into league and compact with men making no profession of religion, and will appoint as Trustees, Secretary, and Sexton of their church men who evidently fear not God neither regard man. Where this is the case such experiences as have been met at Port George, may assuredly be expected.

I could give particulars of a similar case in which the privilege was requested for a Baptist Minister to preach in a Methodist house in which Baptists owned a good number of pews. The request was not granted; but one of the Trustees subsequently said the Baptist Ministers could preach in the Methodist house if he would preach Methodist doctrine.

Now Mr. Editor, the fact is simply this; if Methodists think that Baptist Ministers must express their sentiments to please Methodist ears, and conform their practice to Methodist notions, they are mistaken; and the sooner they find it out the better. Let a Methodist preach his views of doctrine and prove them, if he can, by a "Thus saith the Lord" and we will respect him in his attempt, and we claim for ourselves the same right.

Why do they make such complaint against me for preaching two sermons on immersion as the only mode of Baptism, as they say, which however I never did at Port George? Their own minister has told them publicly and privately (as I am informed by those who have heard him) that he will immerse them if they wish it. How can the editor of the Wesleyan and Rev. R. Smith agree? Perhaps they have not met for "fourteen years."

The vain attempt to remove from the good sister the charge of hoisting the mill gate only confirms the opinion of very many persons at Port George that she really did it.

Now Mr. Editor, here I positively leave the matter by simply affirming that I have stated the plain facts. Oaths are not necessary. Other than oaths of confirmation are too common with the men whose names appear in that particular in the Wesleyan.

Yours very truly,

J. H. ROBBINS.

Middleton, March 23th, 1880.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., March 31, 1880.

A FEW SUPPOSITIONS.

The pertinency of the following suppositions will we doubt not be perceived by the parties interested in the discussion which we have recently had in our pages:

1. Suppose that one of our missionaries should be advised by the Mission Board to open a dispensary, and should receive from the Mission Treasury an appropriation of money for that purpose, and, further, that the law of the country where he resides requires that all parties engaged in such business must have a government licence and report quarterly to a government agent. Would it in any way compromise the independence of the church, if the missionary should conform to this law?

2. Suppose our F. M. Board should think it best to send to India a missionary physician, and that it is the law of the country that no one shall be allowed to practice medicine there unless he has a certificate of fitness from a Government Board, such certificate to be given with the condition that it will be revoked if the holder shall prove himself not worthy of it. Would it in any way imperil the independence of any church, if our missionary should accept a certificate subject to such a condition?

3. Again, suppose that the Dominion Government, to compensate for the sequestration of the Fishery Award, should propose to aid the Colleges of the Eastern Provinces, and should offer to the Governors of Acadia College a grant of \$1000 a year, on condition that every year ten sons of fishermen might receive education in the college, without any charge for tuition, provided also, that the course of instruction in the College should continue to be as liberal as it is at present. If the Governors should accept the grant and permit inquiries to be made by the proper officers to ascertain if the conditions of the grant are complied with, what principle of our church polity would be violated by such an act?

4. Or suppose that the Senate of the University of Acadia College should proceed, in the exercise of the power granted by them, to confer degrees in Law and Medicine, and that under pecuniary stress, they should confer these degrees on quacks and ignorant pretenders, thereby admitting such parties to legal privileges in the professions of Law and Medicine. It is quite certain that in such a case the lawyers and physicians of the Province would at once demand from the government protection from such an imposition and injustice. If now the Government should say to that Senate, "You are clearly using your power in a manner not contemplated when it was granted to you, therefore you must abstain from such corrupt practices or your charter will be revoked. How would this action of the Government in the least degree interfere with the independence of Baptist churches?"

FROM THE UPPER PROVINCES.

Our Ontario Brethren are giving tangible proof that they mean to endow Woodstock Literary Institute—Baptist College. They already acknowledge about \$5000 and the following brief note in the Canadian Baptist indicates that others are devising liberal things:

DEAR BRO. MUIR:—After seriously considering the subject of endowing the Woodstock College, for the sake of encouragement I have concluded to offer to be one of ten to give ten thousand dollars, on condition that the whole fifty thousand is secured, but at present I don't want my name to be known.

March, 1880.

Another item indicates that spiritual blessings are being sent as well as temporal. At Woodstock, "on Sunday March 7th, Pastor Ashley gave the hand of fellowship to forty-one persons, fifteen of whom were students."

Baptisms are also reported in other churches: "At Chatham, Dr. Davidson baptized twelve in a congregation of about 1200 persons."

"Rev. P. K. Carey recently baptized twelve at Aldboro. At Sarnia, and Eden, and Guelph, and Walkerton, and Simcoe, additions are reported. Also at St. Thomas, Stromness, Wyoming and Sidney. We rejoice with our brethren that these signs of prosperity and progress are appearing.

INFORMATION WANTED.—1st. Has a Baptist minister, who is not a member of the church, a right to exercise all the power and authority that he would if he were a member?

2nd. Has he a right to call an annual meeting at an unusual time, without consulting the deacons and principal members of the Church?

3rd. Has a minister the right to assume the chair at an annual meeting as his official right, and dictate its proceedings?

4th. Have the pastor and a portion of the members of the Church, with two out of three deacons opposed, at a church meeting the power to prefer a charge against members of the church, appoint a committee, himself being one of that number, to visit members so charged on a certain day, and the day following exclude them from the church?

By answering the above questions through the Messenger you will oblige.

These questions as they are put indicate a somewhat irregular state of things in the church to which they have reference, and can hardly be answered, so as to be likely to secure the acquiescence of all the parties concerned.

We have hesitated somewhat in replying to them lest it might be supposed that our replies would seem to have an assumption of an *ex cathedra* decision; whereas they can be but an opinion.

1. If the minister is not a member of the church, or if pastor of more than one church, of one of the churches of which he is pastor, he should be. In the latter case his power of voting is only with the church of which he is a member, but his authority as a teacher and pastor is all that it would be if he were a member of either or both churches, if that were possible.

2. It is not easy to define what is judicious and proper, and what is absolutely right. It may be a minister's right, and we are inclined to think it is, to announce a meeting at any time he may think proper, but it would be very unwise to do so at a time when it would be impossible or inconvenient for any considerable portion of the members to attend, and especially so without consultation with the officers of said church. Of course confusion must follow any such irregularity, as the members opposed would have the right to give expression to their opinion respecting the course pursued.

3. One of the pastor's duties is to preside at all meetings for worship or business, and to preserve order. The chairman of all business meetings is however in the hands of the meeting, and whilst he may not dictate the business he should be ready to render all the aid in his power to carry on the business and promote the best interests of the church.

4. A charge against a disorderly member, or members, of a church must be brought forward in a regular manner or the church is liable for the consequences. The votes of deacons or pastor at a church meeting count only the same as those of other members.

The officers of a church should avoid acting on any such matters in a partisan spirit, and they should if possible act together, or at least so far respect each other as to seek for harmony. In no case should discipline be exercised, or commenced, without communicating with the accused person, or persons, if that be possible, and giving them the opportunity of being present when the church takes action on their case.

The Witness of last week comments on the letter from J. W. Bars, Esq., in our last, and quotes from his letter the following:—

"I think that the records of no denomination of Christians will record a sum equal to a dollar a member for their ordinary measures of Christian benevolence."

The Editor then adds:—

"We know Mr. Bars will thank us for correcting the impression made by the sentence we have italicized. We have no boast to make of Presbyterian liberality but we think there are several branches of the Presbyterian family in which the contribution "for ordinary measures of Christian benevolence" are over one dollar." "Taking our own Church, in the Maritime Provinces, we are raising this year for Home Missions, Foreign Missions, College, and French Evangelization, over one dollar per member. This is exclusive of the College Building and Endowment Fund, the Aged and Infirm Ministers, and the Widows' and Orphans' Fund,—and of course, exclusive of ministers' stipends and all merely congregational expenses, such as Church and manse building, Sabbath schools, &c.

If therefore the Presbyterians are able and willing to raise for "ordinary measures of Christian benevolence" at the rate of more than one dollar per member, we are quite satisfied that our Baptist brethren can do quite as well. Indeed there are reasons why they might do better. They are wealthy; they occupy many of the elder settlements of

the country; and their proportion of weak congregations is not so great as with us. Our hope and confident expectation is that the Presbyterians will not in future fall much if at all short of \$1.50 per member for Missions &c."

The Press follows closely upon the heels of the young men who "Go West." We have before us a copy, No. 6 of the *Rapid City Enterprise and Nor' West Farmer*, a weekly paper published at Rapid City in the North West Territory. It would seem that the proposed new Baptist Industrial College and Theological School is to be located a short distance from that city. "Prof. J. Crawford, D.D., has already secured about \$5000 in cash and a land grant of 600 acres. Cattle and various implements for farming use have been placed at his disposal. Twenty-five students have already offered themselves, of these twelve have been accepted. Each student rich or poor will be required to work three hours each day. The school will be organized with four professors, two gentlemen and two ladies. The surplus funds of the institution go to a fund for the evangelization of the country."

"The recipient of the Governor General's Silver Medal at the Provincial Normal School, as announced at the close of the past Winter's Session, is Miss Ellen M. Freeman, daughter of Rev. David Freeman, of Canning N. S. The medal is awarded to the Student-teacher having the highest professional standing.

We notice with satisfaction that the fair medallist is an alumna of our Ladies' Seminary at Wolfville. As Miss Freeman necessarily becomes a teacher in this Province, we doubt not that the Trustees of St. John, or some of our towns, will early avail themselves of her superior abilities and training in their Schools.—*St. John, N. B. Christian Visitor*.

We offer our congratulations to Bro. Freeman and Mrs. Freeman on the above announcement respecting their daughter. No less would we present the same to Miss Freeman herself, who has not neglected her opportunities, but has so successfully made use of her advantages.

We learn by letter from Rev. John Craig at Ocanada, India, that the recent Conference had the matter of training men for Native Preachers under consideration. He says "the method in vogue at present is that each man trains his own native helpers. Bro. Timpany had quite a class for a while studying his book on theology. Bro. Armstrong has had one young man preparing for Christian work, and I believe he expects to have another soon. After a time I am likely to have a number of young men at Akidu, unless some better plan is devised. Now I need hardly say that, as a rule, missionaries themselves can devote very little time to the training of those who hope to be Christian workers."

In Mrs. Armstrong's School, he says "there are boys and girls of almost every caste in that school, a thing which one would look for long without finding in this town, as caste differences receive more regard here than they do in Chicacole."

The *Scottish Baptist Magazine* for March, one of our lively British exchanges has the following flattering notice of the Baptist body in these provinces:—

NOVA SCOTIA.—According to the statistics set forth in "The Baptist Year Book of the Maritime Provinces of the Dominion of Canada," the number of members in the churches is 37,617 with 6 associations and about 350 churches. Taking into account the population, about 1,000,000, this is a large number, and reckoning the usual proportions of adherents and children, makes about one-tenth of the population. There are two weekly papers—*Christian Visitor* and the *Christian Messenger*—and one monthly, *The Acadia Athenaeum*. There is also in connection with the denomination the well-known Acadia College, which is steadily increasing in efficiency and influence. A state of things this which is immensely in advance of anything yet reached in (old) Scotland. How so much has been done in the new country and so little in the old, is a question which is not difficult to answer. For one thing, in Nova Scotia, our friends during the last 50 years did not waste their strength in divisions and heresy hunts and purposeless iteration work, but sincerely and loyally set themselves, by union and co-operation, to plant churches in populous districts, to provide for ministerial education, and in every way in their power to encourage true denominational spirit and enterprise. The example of what wise action can do is before us, and it is to be hoped that it will prove encouraging and stimulating.