

seditions, and told he must find six hundred pounds' bail to appear next sessions at Bristol; and be of good behaviour, or lie in prison."

Oct. 10.—"New mayor and sheriff being chosen, James Twyford, sheriff, threatens to find out our little meetings, and he would be like death,—spare none."

1685. Jan. 13.—"At the quarter sessions, brother Fownes was treated as before, and Justice Powell, the chairman, told him, Sir Richard Hart, of Bristol, should say he way a dangerous man. So they still kept him there at Gloucester, prisoner."

"On the 29th of November, 1685, our pastor, brother Fownes, died in Gloucester Jail, having been kept there for two years and about nine months a prisoner, unjustly and maliciously, for the testimony of Jesus and preaching the gospel." He was originally committed for six months, but they would not release him unless he would give bond for his good behaviour, which meant, that he would not preach again. This, of course, he would not do.

Thus the enemy prevailed, and the servants of God were brought low. Truly, they were "perilous times." Let us thank God that the Stuart race is extinct.

You have observed that there were some intervals of rest during this period. The King was bent on removing the restrictions imposed on Roman Catholics, and on several occasions the severity of the persecution was relaxed, in the hope that some general measure would be introduced in Parliament embracing all parties. In 1672 he issued a "Declaration of indulgence," by which, in the exercise of the prerogative the operation of the penal enactment was suspended, during the royal pleasure. Many nonconformist ministers availed themselves of it and took out licenses to preach.

But the Dissenters generally refused to receive the "Declaration," declaring it an unlawful exercise of the prerogative, and fearing the consequences that might follow the admission of Roman Catholics to power. They did more. They submitted without a murmur to the First Act, which was passed in 1673, and by which all persons who accepted office of any kind under government were required to take the Lord's supper according to the rites of the Church of England, and to subscribe a declaration against transubstantiation. The primary object of that Act was the exclusion of Roman Catholics from power, and that being accomplished, it was expected that the door would be opened to Protestant Dissenters, by a repeal of the test, as far as they were concerned. But bigotry kept the door shut till the year 1828, and the Lord's supper was all that time "an office key, a picklock to a place."

In the midst of the uncertainties and perils of the times a meeting of ministers and delegates was summoned, in 1675, to consider the propriety of taking steps for the education of candidates for the ministry. Whether the meeting was held or not, I am not able to say; but the proposal itself, under those circumstances, indicates moral courage as well as enlightened views.

Two years after, a Confession of Faith was published, under the following title:—"A Confession of Faith, put forth by the elders and brethren of many congregations of christians (baptized upon profession of their faith) in London and the country. With an Appendix concerning baptism." In an address "to the judicious and impartial reader," prefixed to the Confession, the following observations occur:—"One thing that greatly prevailed with us to undertake this work, was (not only to give a full account of ourselves to those christians that differ from us about the subject of baptism, but also) the profit that might from thence arise unto those that have any account of our labours, in their instruction and establishment in the great truths of the gospel; in the clear understanding and steady belief of which, our comfortable walking with God, and fruitfulness before him in all our ways is most nearly concerned. And therefore we did conclude it necessary to express ourselves the more fully and distinctly, and also to fix on such a method as might be most comprehensive of those things which we designed to explain our sense and belief of * * * In those things wherein we differ from others, we have expressed ourselves with all candour and plainness, that none might entertain jealousy of aught secretly lodged in our breasts, that we would not the world should be acquainted with; yet we hope we have also observed those rules of modesty and humanity as will render our freedom in this respect inoffensive, even to those whose sentiments are different from ours."

In doctrinal points the language of the

Assembly's confession is for the most part adopted, while on baptism and church government the views of our denomination are very clearly and fully expressed. The alleged grounds of infant baptism are critically examined in the Appendix, and their insufficiency proved. "Let it not therefore be judged of us, (because much hath been written on this subject, and yet we continue this our practice different from others) that it is out of obstinacy; but rather, as the truth is, that we do herein, according to the best of our understandings, worship God, out of a pure mind, yielding obedience to his precept, in that method which we take to be most agreeable to the scriptures of truth and primitive practice. * * * It would not become us to give any such intimation as should carry a semblance that what we do in the service of God is with a doubting conscience, or with any such temper of mind, that we do thus for the present with a reservation that we will do otherwise hereafter upon more mature deliberation; nor have we any cause so to do, being fully persuaded that what we do is agreeable to the will of God. Yet we do heartily propose this, that if any of the servants of our Lord Jesus shall, in the spirit of meekness, attempt to convince us of any mistake, either in judgment or practice, we shall diligently ponder his arguments, and account him our chiefest friend that shall be an instrument to convert us from any error that is in our ways; for we cannot wittingly do anything against the truth, but all things for the truth."

This is thoroughly Baptist language. So we have always held and professed. We are "ready to give an answer to any man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us," and we trust that we shall ever be thankful to any man who will convince us of error or shew us "a more excellent way."

Yours truly,
MENNO.

From my Study,
March 13, 1858.

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, MARCH 24, 1858.

The enemies of truth and righteousness are constantly active in the dissemination of their principles and in using endeavors to undermine the faith of Christian men. Doctrines of the most specious and dangerous character are being introduced by stealth as well as openly. We have had put into our hands two tracts of this nature, which were sent a few days ago in an envelope to a member of a Christian church in Halifax.

They contain sentiments destructive of the truths every christian should hold most dear—Salvation by grace and faith in the Divine Redeemer; and questioning the doctrine of future punishment.

How extensive the movement may have been made, we know not. It behoves us to be on the alert, knowing that still "the enemy goeth about," sometimes as a roaring lion and at others as the silent serpent, but always "seeking whom he may devour."

Protestant Alliance.

We find by allusions in the papers, as well as by communications from some of our friends in the country, that Circulars have been sent throughout various parts of the Province purporting to be the Manifesto of a Protestant Alliance, with the names of several ministers and laymen attached, as members of the Committee. As, however, we do not find the document copied, as a whole, into any of the papers, and we have not ourselves received a copy, we presume it is not desired by the promoters of the combination that it should be brought before the public, and its merits discussed by the press.

We are informed too that the document is without date, and does not state where the meetings of the "Alliance" were held. It may possibly, as some of our readers suppose, have been prepared at some of the meetings held in Halifax during the sitting of the Legislature last year. Some of the gentlemen said to be on the Committee have, we learn, expressed great surprise that their names should have been attached to the document, and sent to the country, without their knowledge or sanction.

Whilst we would not for a moment question the right of any parties to form combinations for the accomplishment of either political or religious objects, we do not think the manner in which this Alliance has been brought about, or the times at which alone it has had any publicity given to it, are calculated to convey a favourable

impression concerning it. An opportunity should have been afforded for Protestants generally to attend its meetings, and unite in it, if the objects were really for the purpose of advancing genuine Protestantism.

The N. B. Christian Visitor and the Presbyterian Witness.

The Editor of the N. B. *Christian Visitor* will not be much gratified at the embrace given him by the Editor of the *Presbyterian Witness* last week, when he finds that at the same time an effort is made to bring a charge against the denomination to which he belongs.

After making a long extract from our New Brunswick contemporary on the subject to which we referred, but too briefly, last week—the demand of the *Visitor* that certain versions of the Bible should be used in all schools receiving government aid,—the *Witness* remarks:—

"We wish with all our heart that the *Messenger* could speak out with equal plainness and wisdom. But no; the *Messenger* fears if there will be any enactment on the subject that our schools will be filled with 'Protestant, Catholic, Unitarian or Universalist Bibles.' We confess that we have heard of attempts to make a 'Baptist' Bible by leaving everything like 'Baptist' out of it; but we believe the Unitarian and Universalist Bibles remain unmanufactured yet—if not unthought of."

What the Editor of the *Witness* "believes" may nevertheless not be a fact. If "the attempts to make a 'Baptist' Bible by leaving every thing 'Baptist' out of it," of which he has heard refers to the operations of the American Bible Union, we beg to inform him that it is an entire perversion of the truth. What Baptists have demanded is that the whole Bible shall be translated, and words used in the vernacular language of every country, which are equivalent to those in the original.

Whilst we do not endorse all the proceedings of the Bible Union, we must sustain their leading principle—"the Bible faithfully translated for all the world." Let the Bible speak as plainly to the unlearned as it does to those who understand the original.

If the word baptize means sprinkle, why not translate it sprinkle? If, however, it means what the Church of England rubric commands its clergymen to do, when it tells him "he shall dip it, (the child) in the water discreetly and warily," or "if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it," it is not a very extravagant demand to ask that those words be translated. Let the whole Bible which Chillingworth says "is the religion of Protestants," be translated.

If the views Baptists hold are erroneous, we believe they are quite willing to have them corrected by the Word of God.

The Witness's Retraction.

It would be well if gentlemen connected with the press, especially what is by some regarded as the religious press, would make enquiry into the truth of "rumours" respecting the action of churches, before they give them currency. The motive which brings forward a report injurious to a body of Christians may possibly be of the best kind, but the probabilities would seem to indicate a feeling of quite the opposite character, when such a false statement is made as that to which the following paragraph refers.

The Editor of the *Witness* has thought fit to correct the statement he made last week, by saying:

"We are glad to be able to correct a statement made in our last with regard to a Baptist church in this city. We have it now on the authority of the Rev. David Freeman that the assertion is 'groundless.' We the less regret the inaccuracy into which we were led, inasmuch as this counter statement will be the means of stopping a rumour which gave much pain to every one who had the cause of religion at heart. Instances of political feeling interfering with the harmony of churches are comparatively rare; still there have been such. It is however extremely gratifying that a congregation so influential and highly respectable as that alluded to is untainted."

We think the Editor would have evinced more honorable feeling if he had given an apology somewhat more commensurate with the wrong done by such an attempt to injure a Christian church and its minister.

We find in the *Christian Instructor* for March, a small monthly pamphlet, published by the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, and edited, we believe, by the Rev. Geo. Patterson, a statement that "The Baptists and Free Church have had the subject before them and have had Committees on Popery for several years." Now we do not like to charge upon the editor, or any other parties whether in the metropolis or otherwise, who may have contributed

the article from which the above is taken, a desire to make a wilful misstatement, but as far as Baptists are concerned we believe there is no truth in the above extract. If the Baptists thought it necessary to have "a committee on Popery" because it was one form of error, why not have another on Episcopalianism, and another on Presbyterianism, and another on Universalism, because they do not adhere to what are believed to be the commands of Christ.

It is strange that the principles of Baptists are still so misconstrued and imperfectly understood. We ourselves have been maligned and charged with abetting Popery, with complicity with a political party, and other things equally false and ridiculous, because we are not disposed to join in the hue and cry for the interference of the civil power to enjoin the use of the Bible in Schools. This demand we can well understand, when made by Free Churchmen and other bodies who maintain the principle that their church should be established by law and its ministers supported by the State if they only had the power, but when it comes from the "Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia,"—the Secession—the Anti-burghers—who have always denied the right of the civil magistrate to interfere in church matters, and of some Baptists, who, as a body, have always rejected either the control of human governments over their churches or the claim of their ministers on them for support, we are at loss to account for such a demand. It is neither more nor less than an attempt to insert the thin end of the wedge, which would overthrow and demolish our glorious inheritance of civil and religious liberty. If, as "Roger Williams" asserts, "the *Christian Messenger* is the only religious press which dissents from the position of the Bible in Schools as a condition of government aid," we feel our position one of overwhelming responsibility. Notwithstanding our loneliness we rejoice in the high honor put upon us, and trust that we shall be able to withstand all the assaults of our enemies and mistaken friends, and shall have grace and wisdom given to enable us to adhere to that for which our forefathers have shed their blood, and resigned all the blandishments of civilized life, which they might have retained by giving up the precious truths committed to them.

The following letter was written with the expectation of its appearing in the *Morning Chronicle*, and sent to the Editor of that journal on Saturday morning last. It was however returned on Monday with the following note.

"DEAR SIR,—It is impossible to comply with your request. The columns of the *Chronicle* are engaged for some time to come, but were it otherwise, there would be some degree of hesitancy in giving up the columns of one paper to the use of the Editors of another."

Of the propriety of the Editor's conclusion we leave our readers and the public to judge. Our object in making the request for its appearance in another journal than our own, was simply that as we considered an unfair statement of our views had been given by his correspondent, we might reply to the false issue there raised. As a large number of our readers would not see the letter to which it refers, it would be more fair and impartial that it should appear elsewhere than in our own columns.

To the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle*:

The Christian Messenger and the Question of the Bible in Schools.

MR. EDITOR,

In your issue of the 18th inst. we find a letter over the signature of "Roger Williams," the writer of which has thought fit to assail us, to bring against us false charges, and to express a wish for our utter annihilation. We have therefore thought it only just and proper that some reply to his statements should reach your readers, by the same channel as that in which the charges have been brought; and with your known liberality and desire to do justice to all, we cannot but hope you will allow us to offer such vindication as the case appears to demand at our hands.

We might, perhaps, pass over the ridiculous charges altogether as having in their very nature their own refutation, if all by whom they were read were conversant with the pages of the *Christian Messenger*; as the readers of that paper do not need to be informed that a more determined foe to any withholding of the Bible from the freest use amongst the whole people, Catholic and Protestant, than the *Messenger* does not exist. But as there may be some others who, as they do not read its pages, really believe the bold but untrue statements of this unscrupulous writer, we think it may be better to offer a few brief comments on the remarks of this pretender, whose assumed name agrees with his sentiments about as well as the lion's skin when borrowed by an animal of much more ignoble position, served to deceive those he tried to alarm, when his protruding ears and his voice contributed to his own punishment.