

which I must undergo? They answered, We can. Jesus said to them, Ye shall indeed drink such a cup as I am to drink, and undergo an immersion like that which I must undergo."

Another passage, Luke 12, 50., he translates in a like manner:—"I have an immersion to undergo, and how am I pained till it be accomplished!"

If the New York critic be correct, to be baptized, means, according to Dr. Campbell, to undergo. I need not stop to prove that the New York Observer has perpetrated a flagrant misrepresentation.

A friend has lent me a pamphlet entitled, "A Catechism of Baptism. By Rev. Duncan D. Currie, of the Conference of Eastern British America." This production contains many more misrepresentations than pages. For unscrupulous assertions—misstatements—suppressions, &c., &c., it unquestionably bears the palm. I never met with its equal. An "exposure" of its fifty pages would require a volume. I will give you a few instances.

1. Mr. Currie says that "Schrevelius, a great master of the Greek language, gives these definitions of baptizo: 'To immerse, to wash, to sprinkle, to moisten, to wet':—and that Schleusner, in his Lexicon of the New Testament, a work of the highest authority, defines baptizo as follows:—1. 'To immerse in water; 2. To wash, or sprinkle, or cleanse with water; 3. To baptize; 4. To pour out largely.'"

Neither Schrevelius nor Schleusner uses the word "sprinkle." Schleusner says that the word baptizo means, properly, to immerse; and he adds, "5. Metaphorically, to be overwhelmed by the waves of calamity, to be plunged in miseries, &c."

2. In quoting Numbers 19, 13-20, which contains directions for purifying a person who had touched a dead body, every part of the text which refers to "sprinkling" is carefully given, but the command to "bathe himself in water" is omitted. Why was this? Was Mr. C. afraid that his readers would think of immersion?

3. Mr. Currie says that "Naaman went and baptized himself seven times—that is he sprinkled himself seven times. He did not immerse himself." The sacred historian says that he did, and every scholar knows that the Hebrew word used by him is susceptible of no other meaning. So the Septuagint translators understood it, and accordingly they rendered the Hebrew word by the Greek word baptizo. Our English version—"dipped himself"—is exactly correct.

Mr. C. refers to the Jewish law for cleansing a leper, according to which the priest was to "sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times." But Naaman was not a Jew, and he was not sent to a priest; neither was his a legal cleansing; it was, so to speak, outside of the law. The prophet told him to "go and wash in Jordan seven times," and it is said that he "went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God." It is useless to say that "no law required him to be immersed." He was not cleansed according to the law, for he was not under it.

4. Mr. Currie writes as follows:—"In Mark 7, 4, it is stated that the Pharisees observe 'the baptisms, (it is 'washing' in the English translations, but 'baptisms' in the Greek) of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.' That the mode of baptism here was sprinkling will be apparent if we refer to the Levitical rite to which they allude. In Numbers 19, 18, the ritual requires that 'a clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels.' In these 'baptisms' there could not have been immersion."

Why not? There is no reference whatever to the "sprinkling" required by the law. The Evangelist is not referring to the law, but to the inventions of the Pharisees. "the tradition of the elders." Those who follow the "tradition" practise the observances alluded to even at the present day. In 1843 Dr. John Wilson was at Tiberias, in the neighbourhood of which place our Saviour was sojourning when he rebuked the Pharisees for preferring traditions to God's commands. "We saw many of the Jews," says Dr. W., "busy in cleaning the houses for the observance of the Passover, and, with the same object in view, washing their tables and other articles of furniture in the lake." ("Lands of the Bible," Vol. ii. p. 115). They could have sprinkled them at home. Taking them to the lake indicated that something more than sprinkling was deemed necessary.

5. Mr. Currie informs us that by his baptism our Lord "was inducted into the Jewish priesthood," and that "to follow Christ in baptism would be to follow him into a priestly office."

These are novelties in theology. If Mr.

C. will turn to Heb. 7, 14, and 8, 4, he will read these words:—"It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood"—"if he were on earth he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law."

6. It is stated by Mr. Currie that the writings of Irenaeus "show that infant baptism was an ordinance of the church in his day." It has been very clearly shown by learned Pædobaptists that the writings of Irenaeus contain no such statement, warrant no such inference.

7. Justin Martyr, according to Mr. Currie, "speaks of persons of seventy years of age who were made disciples in their infancy, and therefore received infant baptism."

Dr. Doddridge and other Pædobaptist authors confess that Justin Martyr's statements, which, by the way, make no reference to baptism, mean only that the persons in question "were early instructed in the Christian religion."

8. Tertullian, (who died about the year 220), says Mr. Currie, speaks of infant baptism "as having universally prevailed in the church from the apostles' day." So far from doing so, Tertullian hints at child-baptism (not infant baptism) as then beginning to be practised by some, and reproves the practice as inconsistent with that requirement of knowledge and faith which is essentially connected with baptism.

9. Mr. Currie affirms that "Jewish proselytes were baptized in the time of Christ, and long previous thereto."

I beg to inform Mr. Currie that Dr. Gill proved conclusively, a hundred years ago, that Jewish proselyte baptism was not known "in the time of Christ."

10. "The Catacombs of Rome," Mr. Currie says, "furnish evidence that infant baptism was practised by the Apostolic Church"; and he cites some epitaphs on the tombs of children, who were termed "neophytes," i. e. "newly baptized." In reply, I observe—

(1.) That as the Catacombs were in use for several centuries, the inscriptions may belong to the time when infant baptism had been already introduced. Unless the date is given, or from some other source the period of death can be ascertained, those inscriptions are valueless in argument.

(2.) Mr. Currie cites the following inscription:—"Flavia Jovina, who lived three years and thirty days—a neophyte." He omits to tell us, however, that over that inscription was the well-known monogram, which did not come into use till the time of Constantine, that is, the beginning of the fourth century. I acknowledge that infant baptism was then in existence.

Here is another inscription of the same kind, not mentioned by Mr. Currie:—"To the neophyte Romanus, the well deserving, who lived 8 years and 15 days; he rests in peace. The Lords F. Gratian Augustus, for the second time, and P. Probus, being consuls." This was the year 371. I may add, that "the neophyte Romanus" being eight years old, was not baptized in infancy. Children of eight years of age are capable of knowledge and faith.

(3.) Aringhi's "Roma Subterranea" is now before me. It is a huge folio, two volumes bound in one, of 1344 pages. It is profusely illustrated by engravings of the tombs in the Catacombs, and copies of inscriptions. There are many inscriptions copied from the tombs of children, which give only the name and age, without any reference to baptism. I notice two references to "neophytes":—the one, to Fl. Aur. Leo, "who lived 6 years, 8 months, 11 days"; the other, to Rufillus, "who lived two years and forty days." To the first, the year 348 is assigned as the date of death; the second probably belongs to the fifth century.

Whenever the date of death is given, or may be ascertained, in the epitaph on the tomb of a child described as a neophyte, it will be found, I believe, to be not earlier than the fourth century. Infant baptism was then advancing into general observance, having first appeared in Africa in the middle of the third century.

As I have said, I could furnish many more instances of the misrepresentations or suppressions with which Mr. Currie's "Catechism" abounds, but I fear to intrude further on the patience of your readers.

It were earnestly to be desired that our controversies could be conducted on fair and honourable principles.

Yours truly,  
J. M. ORAM.

Acadia College, Dec. 30, 1864.

THE Hon. Mr. Palmer, we understand, has been obliged to retire from the P. E. Island Cabinet, and the Hon. J. G. Pope is re-called and placed as President of the Executive Council.

## Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, JANUARY 11, 1865.

### CHRISTIAN PROGRESS.

The doctrines of the gospel embrace a wide range of thought—far wider than men are often disposed to allow. Christians are commonly satisfied with very imperfect views of the work of grace. The Divine plant in them thus becomes only partially developed, so that they present to the world but a stunted and imperfect representation of Christianity. Especially is this the case with those who have not formed habits of enquiry into Scripture truth during their early years. After becoming Christians, they fancy that filling up their places in the exercise of public worship, on the Lord's Day, and once or twice a week, comprises almost the whole duty of man, as far as the demands of religion are concerned. So long as they are guilty of no act flagrantly inconsistent with their profession, they take comfort in the thought that they are on the way to heaven, and need not be apprehensive of any danger of falling short in the race. Definite views on the person and character of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit are not sought after, although the Divine Word is open to them, and invites their examination. The usefulness of Christians is thus greatly diminished, and the church, as a whole, fails to fulfil the object for which its members have been brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light.

Let Christians go into an examination of the wide expanse of knowledge opened up in the great text-book of the church, and define their position, as they would on other great questions, and we think they will find that these statements are confirmed; and conclude that our deficiencies lie at the root of the want of progress of Christ's kingdom on Satan's empire. Truth is the great engine of power. Truth heard, truth believed, truth embraced, and truth spoken in love is more than a match for all the error and sin surrounding the kingdom of the Destroyer. Let it be our endeavour, respected Reader, during the year on which we have now entered, to secure, and then scatter, more of this "seed of the kingdom," and we shall see the plants of righteousness growing up around us, and flourishing in the courts of our God.

### FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The January number of the *Missionary Magazine* contains a letter from Dr. Kinsaid at Promé, Burmah, in which he gives the following respecting Native Preachers:

"A native ministry, well instructed in the doctrines and history of the Bible, will become pioneers over new and untravelled regions. Only a small part of the missionaries sent among the heathen have perfect adaptation for the work. They cannot travel among the heathen, and if they do, now and then, they do not always know how to get the attention of the heathen. They get discouraged. It seems a thankless, hopeless work, like pouring water on sand.

God is raising up a native ministry, and it is our duty to encourage them and lead them to see the grandeur of being labourers 'together with God.' But only some of these may turn out to be pains-taking laborers. Very true; but then no great expense has been incurred. We shall be certain of having a large proportion of competent men, and now and then a man of great power and mighty in the Scripture. Humanly speaking, I look on the Karen theological school at Rangoon, as the right arm of our mission.

*Spirit of Native Preachers.*—I am truly thankful for the additional appropriation for native preachers. I had dismissed five last January, so as not to go into debt. One I sent down to be Rose, and three I have put into the field again. These men, though dismissed and obliged to labor in the fields, do not abandon the work of preaching. On the Sabbath and at other seasons, so far as they can get a leisure day, they labor in the gospel. But while the churches are young and feeble, it is extremely important for these preachers to have all their time for studying the Scriptures, and for going from house to house and from village to village, to give 'line upon line, here a little and there a little.' It is only by pains-taking labor that light breaks in upon the heathen mind. There must be the planting and the watering, and then we may look for the increase which is promised."

Mrs. Bixby also in the same periodical gives a graphic and further account of the Mission to the Shans, a tribe on the borders of China. Her husband, Mr. Bixby, and several of his native assistants, with a number of guides, formed the company. After getting nearly to the part of the country they intended to go, a plot was discovered amongst the guides to rob and murder the missionaries. Mr. Bixby acted with great

wisdom and courage, and returned without accomplishing his object. He is not, however, cast down by these discouragements, but writes:—

"On this very day (May 22nd) I selected several young men to take home with me, to teach them the Scriptures with special reference to the work which I feel myself specially commissioned to undertake, viz: 'Evangelistic journeys towards and right into China, and perhaps Zimmai.' It is my fixed purpose to go soon, by the help of our God, right up to Yunnan, and there make known 'the truth as it is in Jesus.' I have spent nearly all my time now that the rains are upon us, and it is impossible to travel far, in teaching men the Scriptures, and fitting them out for an active, aggressive campaign at the opening of the dry season.

Like a faithful and skillful general massing his forces on a subtle, mighty enemy, watching for every opening, every chance to strike an effective blow, to weaken the foe and take the field, we shall do our best both by 'strategy' and 'hard pounding,' by 'defensive' and 'offensive' war, to subdue this vast Shan land, this hive of nations, in the name of our Sovereign, and to carry the war as speedily as possible into the Celestial empire."

"As to our forces, they are indeed small; but one with God is a majority. And as to fortifications, why our 'Dahlgrens,' and 'Parrotts,' and 'Armstrongs,' will riddle the Chinese wall to atoms. 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.'"

On to China, then! On to China! Let all the people echo, "On to China!" and all the hosts of heaven will say "Amen."

*Representatives of Five Races Baptized.*—This is the Lord's day (Aug. 7th.) In the early morning I baptized seven—all adults—the representatives of five races or tribes. Among them was the first convert from the Paloungs, an influential tribe living at the far north-east near China, who subsist by the cultivation of tea. They have a distinct language, which this man, Ko Paku, understands. He also speaks, reads and writes both Burman and Shan. He is fifty years of age. I hope the Lord has something for him to do. We are inquiring what and where. He is at present studying the Scriptures.

In the afternoon, after preaching, we had a special meeting of the church, at which seven young men were examined and approved, to go forth at the close of the rains, if the Lord will, as evangelists, on trial; after which I broke bread to the church. In the evening we had a prayer-meeting. The representatives of eight races or tribes were present, and prayer was offered in six languages. It was a charming sight. Races mingle in prayer and praise to our Father and Lord as brethren of one common family,—men who hitherto had lived in hatred of each other, and not unfrequently had imbrued their hands in each others' blood. Now they are of one heart and one mind—Christ's brethren!

This is a marked feature of the Shan Mission. It already embraces the representatives of ten tribes, and it will probably soon include many more. They all speak the Burman language more or less; but when they come to talk with God, every heart seems to think it will be understood best in its own language.

*Future Plans.*—I expect to go forth again at the close of the rains with a larger preaching force to the high places of the field, this pathway to the myriads of the Chinese empire."

THE MEETINGS FOR UNITED PRAYER in the city churches during last week were attended by large numbers, except on Saturday, when the weather was very stormy—the rain coming down in torrents and the streets being almost impassable. The morning meetings were presided over by laymen, and the evening meetings by Ministers, as follows:

On Monday, by Rev. Dr. Pryor.  
Tuesday, by Rev. Mr. Maxwell.  
Wednesday, by Rev. Mr. Lathern.  
Thursday, by Rev. P. G. McGregor.  
Friday, by Rev. J. J. Joplin.  
Saturday, by Rev. F. Uniacke.

At a meeting called to consider the propriety of continuing the meetings, it was decided to hold Union Meetings of a similar character, monthly, to commence on Tuesday the 17th Inst., in St. Andrews Church.

We are glad to learn that the Week of Prayer has been observed in many places throughout the Province. In some there are indications of religious revival. This is the case, we hear, in parts of Yarmouth County.

The *Presbyterian Witness*, after an omission of one number, has made its appearance in new type. The second head is also omitted, the editor states "in order to save space!" The *Ploton Standard* will doubtless make a note of this, and omit the term "bifurcated" in its future descriptions of our contemporary. We are pleased to notice that with its mechanical improvement it has also improved in its tone.

The *Morning Chronicle* of yesterday states that: "The Editorial Management of the *MORNING CHRONICLE* will be changed after the issue of this number. The Proprietor re-assumes the control of the Paper."