

gratifying tokens of blessing, and the progress of the denomination is greatly furthered by the operation of the home mission. Zeal and liberality, it is believed, will soon make up the deficiency in the funds. The brethren are well versed in the Christian art of giving.

### The Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N. S., OCTOBER 6, 1875.

#### "THE VOICE OF HISTORY ON BAPTISM."

By a letter in the *Witness* of the 25th ult., on this subject, from the Rev. Mr. Sommerville, it appears that there is some fiction in his mind about some person having written in our pages in connection with an article which we quoted some time ago from one of our exchanges. It gave an account of Professor Paine's teachings, and what he, a Pedo-baptist, had learned from history, respecting primitive baptism. The examination of his students, it will be remembered, developed that the result of his extensive acquaintance with history was that baptism is essentially an immersion of the believer. We made a few introductory remarks, and added a few more. But what does Mr. S. mean by saying, "What a shame that the writer of the article on which I offered a few strictures should leave the burden of his defence on the Ed. M.?" What writer? In his first letter in the *Witness*, Aug. 21st, also he spoke of "the writer of an article expected to appear in the *Messenger* of July 28th." We neither had, nor expected, any article from any writer. He must have got hold of some notion which requires explanation. Will he rise and explain? And yet, after all, that is perhaps of but little moment, compared with the main question by which Mr. S. is so deeply stirred. We might perhaps take our friend "Hezekiah's" advice, and "Answer him not," but whilst we may not hope to succeed in removing his preconceived opinions, we may perhaps be of service in preventing him from doing injury in "the fearful risk" into which he appears willing to plunge (immerse) himself.

Mr. Sommerville pays the Baptists a compliment, yet not intentionally, in his little anecdote. Their task is to be accomplished by "keeping at it." We have "kept at it" for many centuries, and are as fresh as ever. We are not in haste, while God tarries. But so long as we have the Bible, may the God of the Bible, help all Christians "to cry aloud and spare not," "to lift up their voices like trumpets," against the soul-destroying figment—infant baptism and its appended delusion—sprinkling.

Mr. Sommerville states that he was informed by "the writer," of the appearance of Dr. Paine's teachings. The writer did not speak to Mr. S. on the subject, consequently Mr. Sommerville received no "sly challenge" from "the writer." But if this was the only mistake that Mr. S. had fallen into, we might pass it over in silence; but he proceeds to make some other guesses, touching the baptismal question, which he must not be permitted to do with impunity. He undertakes to guess how immersion originated! "Men arose under the eyes of the Apostles, who were dissatisfied with sprinklings, and demanded that the disciples should be dipped." The man who complains of the Baptists for following—that is what they actually do—pedobaptists through the history of the church, to ascertain the facts relating to baptism, sails right off, without any apology, upon the open sea of conjecture! Mr. Sommerville guesses that immersion had its origin in the mystery of iniquity that worked in Paul's day. It is bad, for that guess, that there was no disciple in that day, who had been sprinkled. If the guess should be inverted, and allowed a century or two of time for its field, then the fact might be reached. Let the guess be, that the mystery of iniquity was dissatisfied with immersion, because it was not convenient, in the case of invalids, to sustain the lie of baptismal regeneration, and then the guess, and sober history shake hands. Mr. S. should not guess that people were dissatisfied with a matter in the Christian church, although they were "the devil's ministers" when that matter was not in the Christian church. This is an injustice, even to "the devil's ministers." There is no necessity for conjecture here. God tells us where Christian baptism, by immersion, originated, and by whom it originated. Jesus was immersed in the Jordan by John—im-

mersed at his own request and by his own command.

"The whole of the Baptist system rests on the denial of two facts," dogmatizes Mr. Sommerville. His dicta here are like his guess above. Baptism is an ordinance of the former dispensation. Yes, Mr. S. we do deny it, and it is for you who affirm it to give the proof. You have not given one fact or sound inference yet in proof of your long ago exploded figment.

There were divers baptisms in the old dispensation! Just so. We "bring against the leader of a confiding people the heavy charge of" teaching what God's word does not teach. Let us strip away the flimsy fallacy from this assertion, that "Baptism was an ordinance of the former dispensation." What do you mean by Baptism Mr. Sommerville? You mean, or you would have the people to understand you that you mean, the Baptism of the New Testament—Christian Baptism! Was that an ordinance of the former dispensation? There were divers baptisms no doubt; but were they New Testament Christian baptism? Mr. S. ought to know they were not. Was the other ordinance—the Lord's Supper—an ordinance of the old dispensation? "Supper" was an ordinance, the supper of the paschal lamb, but was that the New Testament, the Christian's Lord's Supper? Mr. S. knows it was not. The Lord tells us when he instituted it. He ate the Supper himself, and thus it had its origin. John, his servant began baptism, Jesus the Master was baptized; thus he made it his own, and commands his followers to obey him. After Mr. S. has proved that the Lord's Supper was an ordinance of the old dispensation, because there were suppers in it, then he may try his hand at Baptism. "Once brought to accept the testimony—the plain and decisive testimony of the Spirit—we are near an end of the baseless and fanatical ceremony"—popish ceremony of sprinkling, and infant sprinkling.

The second fact—"the Baptists affirm that the design or form of an ordinance can be learned by the name given to it." No Baptist ever said that! Mr. S. should not construct these straw-men for antagonists, when the solid facts and arguments from God's word are before him.

We have the name of the Supper in the Word of God; we have the "design" of the Lord's Supper; we have also an account of the taking of the Lord's Supper by its Author, and those who first took it with him. We have the name—Baptism;—we have also the design of Baptism—we have different accounts, even to particulars of its administration. The bible tells us who the subjects are, their qualifications; it also tells us what the fluid is in which the person is baptized; it tells us, moreover, how the act was performed—the *modus operandi*. Why should Mr. S. try to defend his Romish figment with a figment of his own begetting? The Baptists do not say the "designs or form" of an ordinance can be learned from its name. Neither do their views rest upon this assumption. The Spirit does not give us, in the teachings respecting the ordinances of Christ, riddles and enigmas. He has told us plainly all that it is necessary for us to know of these matters.

Mr. Sommerville affirms, at "a fearful risk" "that the sea coast was not dipped or plunged or immersed in the ocean as often as the tide flows in upon it." Was it sprinkled? Heavy sprinkling!! Sprinkle babies as heavily and no Baptist will complain about an unscriptural paucity of water.

And here is the twin argument of the above. Sprinkling monopolizes the honour in Scripture of symbolizing "all the blessings." Does it? Was there no blessing connected with the dipping of the bird in blood and water? Was no blessing connected with the dipping of Naaman in Jordan? Alas one of the examples that Mr. S. gives to prove his assertion, is the blow from historical axe that cuts the branch off on which he stands, and down he comes, arguments and all. Here it is, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Mr. S. italicized *pour*, we italicise *floods*. *POUR FLOODS*. Heavy sprinkling again for Mr. S.

This is a bit of religious delusion that has taken possession of "poor" Mr. Sommerville's brain, and he having used it for years, as an argument, doubtless, he has come to think there is some weight in it. The counterpart is, that immersion is the universal symbol of judgement. Was

Asher's blessing Deut. xxxiii. 24 a judgment? because he was to "dip his foot in oil." Was it a curse to Naaman that he was commanded to dip himself seven times in Jordan. Seven curses, according to Mr. S., because there were seven dips!! Really it is unworthy of the intelligence and learning of Mr. S., to be dealing in such unsubstantial. "God sprinkles, Baptists dip." God did sprinkle, but now he is done with it. God did dip and still dips, and so do Baptists, and so do Pedobaptists. Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Lutherans, Congregationalists, and the Greek and Roman churches either practically or theoretically are dippers. Mr. Sommerville is a sprinkler and nothing but a sprinkler. Against him there is the Word of God, the Christian world, of the past and the present, but still he holds out. He will sprinkle the stray Baptist that asks admittance to his fold. Let every man have his due. Here is rare daring but praiseworthy consistency.

"What is baptism? How is baptism to be administered?" These are pointed fair questions, put by Mr. S. Alas, he begins to guess again? Again he would deal in hypotheses. Put aside the foolish conjecture, fancied by Mr. S., but no one else, that the "Devils ministers ridiculed baptism by sprinkling in Paul's day?" There were Devil's ministers then, no doubt, but alas for the guess, neither bible nor history tells us of any sprinkling for baptism as early as that. After getting himself through this tangle of guess-work, Mr. S. asks, "Does the editor of the *Christian Messenger* deny that Baptism is an ordinance of the former dispensation?" It was no more of the old dispensation, than the Lord's Supper was the Lord's Supper in the O. T. dispensation. Christian baptism was not in the Old dispensation. There were dippings "divers washings"—but they were not divers Christian baptisms—there was a supper, but it was not the Lord's Supper. There were meats, drinks, and divers dippings—yes eatings and sprinklings, but no Christian baptism, no Lord's Supper of the New Testament.

But to the question, "What is Baptism?" Let God answer. 1 Peter iii. 21. "The like figure whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Now, for the other question, "How is baptism to be administered?" Let God answer again. Rom. vi. 3, 4: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Col. ii. 12. "Buried with Him in Baptism," &c. What is done in baptism? An additional question! "For as many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have put on Christ. Another question! And let God answer that also. How many baptisms are there? Ephes. iv. 6. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." And still another question! Who are to receive baptism? Mark xvi. 11. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

The word of God answers all the questions on the subject that require replies. Here God tells us how the act is performed; what is meant by the act; that there is only one baptism, and who are qualified for it.

The subject is to be "buried." And still another question! Buried in what? Water. Acts viii. 36. "See here is water." No infants, no sprinkling. *Believers buried in water* and raised up to walk—infants don't walk in any sense—"in newness of life." God "dips" believers, Mr. Sommerville sprinkles unbelievers.

#### BURIAL GROUND CASES

are now becoming famous. In addition to those in England in which the Church of England rector claims to say what shall be and what shall not be on the tombstones, and the one in Montreal where the Roman Catholic Bishop pronounces a curse on a man's grave before his body is put into it; another one is about to appear prominently in the Courts in Bermuda. The present incumbent of the parish of Pembroke in the city of Hamilton, has instituted proceedings against the Rev. Mr. Cassidy, Methodist minister for conducting a funeral service in the common burying ground of the parish. It appears that the predecessor of the present Church of England rector had never made any objection to the burial service being conducted by ministers of other religious denominations; but

as soon as the Rev. Mark James became the incumbent, he forbade any other parties but himself performing the funeral rites within the boundaries of the burial ground.

If therefore any other parties wished their own minister to conduct the service they had to do it outside the gates. This was done in the case of a Roman Catholic funeral and caused no small amount of scandal—many parties questioning if the rector had any such exclusive right. At the last session of the Island Legislature, the Attorney General sought to obtain an enactment to confirm this claim, and render it an undisputed right. This was rejected by 19 votes against 12.

By the discussion of the question which ensued in and out of the Legislature, the Methodist minister, Rev. Mr. C. was emboldened to resist the rector's claims, and in June last he proceeded to the interment of a member of his congregation who had died. A formal protest was read by the rector, of which no notice was taken, and a suit-at-law is commenced charging Mr. Cassidy with trespass. The Attorney General, in hearty sympathy with the rector, is his counsel, and of course expects to get an easy verdict against Mr. C.

E. D. King, Esq., of this city is engaged to defend the Methodist minister, and is to leave in the steamer for Bermuda this week, and we do not doubt but that the result will be in favor of liberty. In the interest of civil and religious freedom we trust the lessons that have been taught of late years in other countries, regarding the evils of a state Church, will appear in the Bermudas, and will give the parishioners a right to the use of their own burial ground.

#### SECESSION FROM THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The *Presbyterian Witness* of last week contains an account of a large secession from the Roman Catholic Church in Pictou county. It will be remembered that a year or two ago, when the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, were ceded to Germany a company of Frenchmen immigrated to this country, and went to work in the Pictou mines, in and around Stellarton. A student from among Father Chiniquy's converts at Kankakee and another from Montreal, have been employed by the Pictou Presbytery among them as missionaries, and this has resulted in the open withdrawal of 125 persons from the church of their fathers.

The following is a translation of the Declaration to which their names are attached:

"We the undersigned, brought up Roman Catholics, having until now professed the religion of the Church of Rome and of being faithful to the doctrines which that church teaches; tired of the priesthood and of the yoke which has been long enough imposed upon us declare our intention to belong to no more."

We believe that auricular confession is an immoral institution which corrupts youth, and has been invented only to keep the people in slavery, that the word of God never breathes one word of command enjoining men in order to obtain the pardon of their sins to confess their sins to feeble men, ignorant and sinful as the rest of mortal beings.

We reject the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope which the French church has never been willing to accept, at the head of which were Pascal and Bossuet, the lights of France.

With the example of Father Hyacinthe and of so many other pious and eminent men we believe that this doctrine is a newly invented farce not sanctioned by the Word of God.

We believe that the Romish Church is not the Church of Jesus Christ. The Roman Catholic religion is only a religion of money. Many circumstances have demonstrated that salvation is bought in that church—notwithstanding that Jesus Christ has said—"Freely ye have received, freely give."

We believe that salvation is free,—that Jesus Christ by His death has opened the gates of heaven to us, and that He is the Saviour of all those who believe in Him. We believe that He is only the head of His Church, that He alone is infallible and that it is to Him, and to no other we must go to obtain pardon for our sins.

We take the word of God as the only guide of our faith and conduct. This Divine Word has been given to all, and no man has the right to prevent us from reading it. We place our hopes for the present life and for that which is to come in the promises which it contains.—Further, we pray you to send us some one who will explain to us the word of God, and encourage us to do well, shunning all that is evil before God and man."

Rev. Dr. Cramp informs us that: "The recognition of the Olivet Baptist Church at Montreal, took place on Friday, Sept. 24. The Church was formed some months ago, but the usual service of recognition was postponed till the Convention week. A Council of representatives from other Churches was held in the afternoon, when the recognition was unanimously agreed on. In the evening, a sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Lorimer, and the Rev. Dr. Castle of Toronto addressed the Church on the privileges and duties of Church membership."

The *Provincial Wesleyan* has changed its form and its title. It is now *The Wesleyan*, and instead of being a folio sheet, it has become a quarto, as it was formerly, but somewhat enlarged. The eight page form is found to be the most convenient for a weekly family paper. It has also a new and improved dress, creditable to the body of which it is the exponent.

The Editor of the *Wesleyan* is not willing to let the Rev. Mr. Sommerville enjoy his raid upon Baptist truth all alone. Perhaps he—the Ed. W.—thinks Mr. S. needs some help out of his dangerous position, and he therefore takes the opportunity to proffer his aid and comfort. He also indulges in a general fling at Baptist principles and Baptist churches. See, what he says:

"We cannot see that the question is settled as to the real meaning of baptism. This is equivalent to saying that the Baptist Church and press are still alive and hopeful. For what is the actual corner-stone of that body? In the spiritual sense, Christ of course; but the doctrinal—immersion. They have not another distinctive idea or principle upon which to hang an idea. Let the question of Baptism be settled—let it be seen beyond a peradventure that they are contending for a myth—and the whole fabric falls to pieces. In doctrine and discipline—save as to one or two matters of slight importance—the Baptist Church is a combination of Congregationalism, Presbyterianism and Methodism. Let baptism be disposed of and the entire ecclesiastical structure might as well resolve into its original elements."

Nevertheless he affirms:—"Our Baptist Brethren are doing good work." And adds: "It is only to be regretted, that a word whose meaning none regard as essential to salvation, will oblige them to exclude other Christians from their feasts, and incite them to keep the world in hot water."

A company of envious religionists once before (Acts xvii. 6) "took to themselves certain lewd fellows of the baser sort;" and with them sought to raise a prejudice against two good Baptist brethren, by crying out against them, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also," whereas they sought only to turn the world right side up. And so we in like manner have sought to keep the world out of hot water, or something worse. It is Infant Baptism, so called, that keeps the world in hot water. The attempt to make the sprinkling of an unconscious babe harmonize with New Testament teachings and take the place of the baptism of believers, as taught therein; that is what has produced the strife, wherever it is practiced, and will continue to do so as long as the New Testament lasts.

We have not space to say all that is in our heart on this subject, to our brother, this week; but will try and give him further attention next week.

### Notices.

RECEIVED FROM WOMEN'S MISSION AID SOCIETIES.

Truro.—Miss Layton. . . . . 33.00  
Halifax North Church.—Mrs. J. Steele. . . . . 19 77

M. R. SELDEN, Sec'y.  
Halifax, Oct. 5th, 1875

#### BAZAAR AND TEA!

The Ladies of the Baptist Church and Congregation, Shelburne, intend holding a Fancy Sale and Tea in Bower's Hall, Oct. 12th, to aid in lifting our debt on the new house of worship. As we greatly need all the aid possible we would be very thankful to our sympathizing sisters if they would send in their gifts to Mrs. E. D. TAYLOR, President of the Circle, or to the Pastor.

#### BAZAAR AND TEA MEETING.

The Ladies of the Chester Baptist Sewing Circle, propose holding a Bazaar on Wednesday, the 27th day of October next, for the sale of useful and Fancy Articles, to raise funds for finishing the New Baptist Meeting House in that place. Doors open at 10 A. M. Dinner at 1 P. M. Tea at 5 P. M.

Should the day prove unfavourable it will be held the first fine day after.

Contributions will be thankfully received by the following Committee:

Mrs. SOPHIA MELVIN.  
" HIRAN WALKER.  
" CHARLES CHURCH.  
" WM. WEBBER.  
" JAMES HUME.  
" GEORGE RICHARDSON.  
September 10th, 1875.