

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, DECEMBER 22, 1847.

THE BIBLE AND THE BIBLE ONLY.

As the near approach of Christmas would give greater interest to a discussion of the propriety of such an observance of the 25th of December, we have taken the liberty in this number to lay before our readers an essay, which does justice to the query of a Baptist in our last. It was written a few years since by a Congregational clergyman of Rhode Island, and though not the production of a Baptist, it is certainly worthy to emanate from the state and city of Roger Williams; and the principles upon which it is based, and which carry the author and the reader so inevitably to its conclusions, have only to be adopted and acted upon to make its able author and all his attentive readers Baptists. Yes, with all due deference do we say it, and most certainly with no ill will, to make them Baptists, and we would wish that all who read it, would not only become almost, as when they admit the principles in this case, but altogether Baptists, by simply applying them so sound as they are to all that relates to the constitution, ordinances, and discipline of the Church of Jesus Christ. "The Bible and the Bible only." How safe a principle, who can fear to be misled—the Bible, and God's assurance in it, that by it "the man of God may be perfect, and thoroughly furnished to all good works."

Multitudes seem to look upon Baptists as mere sticklers for a particular form, which, with other influences, make them specially exclusive and bigoted; and they hardly associate anything else with the name of the denomination, but Immersion and close communion, which by no means make a Baptist. There is no one thing which goes so far to distinguish Baptists from all other denominations as their fidelity to this great principle of Protestantism. "The Bible and the Bible only" is the rule of faith and practice for believers. One other principle, equally definite and sound, has perhaps separated them as far from the sympathies and charity of their contemporaries in every period of their history as this, and it bears a very close affinity to this, a principle which as far as it has been developed and adopted by civil governments, has laid a secure basis for our religious liberties: we refer to the rights of individual consciences, which rejects all civil interference and compulsion in religious things, leaving every man to follow his own conscience, enlightened by the Bible, and stand or fall to his own Master in Heaven, whose kingdom is not of this world, and the weapons of whose warfare are not carnal. It is particularly interesting to Baptists, and oftentimes exceedingly diverting, to see how bravely and nobly Pædo-Baptists will contend upon these grounds: how strong it makes them, and we have often thought what feats it would effect for them if like Samson they would take hold of the pillars upon which their structure rests, so far as it differs from the principles of the Baptists, and bow themselves with all their might; it might not kill such a multitude, but it would certainly be as ruinous to the structure. For instance:—At the last Annual Meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Bishop of Cashel spoke to the following effect:

"He considered the Bible Society in its principles and operations the first institution in the country. It was a Society in which all sects and denominations of Protestants could join without compromise of principle in circulating that word which they believed contained the whole truth. The Bible Society he considered the true Evangelical Alliance, for all could meet there without any compromise. They were all agreed in taking the word of God as their rule of faith, and giving up whatever was not found there. He remembered some years ago at an examination of Irish teachers at Kingscourt, an old man asked them something about *limbus patrum*; another of the teachers said 'Oh that is the old story, Paddy, but there is not a word about it in the Bible.' 'Oh then,' said Paddy, 'if it is not there, good bye to it.' They might disagree about some things, but whatever they believed was not found in the Bible, they would say with Paddy, 'Good bye to it.'"

We can hardly restrain the question, Does the Bishop mean what he says? Yes, we presume from his character, and from the occasion of his words he is conscientious; but how certainly has he failed to count the cost, and who can imagine him as an Episcopal Prelate, ready to abide the results; what a confused heap of rites and days, and ceremonies, when Infant Baptism,

Godfathers and Godmothers, Christmas and All Saints, Confirmation, kneeling at the Lord's Supper, &c. &c., shall be cast down as they must confessedly be, by the application of this simple principle. "What is not in the Bible, good bye to it!" in other words, the Bible and the Bible only the text book of religion. We present one more specimen, and the more weighty as coming from one of the brightest ornaments living of the Church of England—Archbishop Whately, whose conscientiousness in its avowal, will not be questioned by any who know the spirit of the writer, as evinced in all his excellent works. In his treatise upon the Sabbath, he holds the following remarkable language.—"Now surely it is presumptuous to say that we are at liberty to alter a divine command, whose authority we admit to be binding on us, on the ground that it matters not whether this day or that be set apart as a Sabbath, provided we observe the divine injunction to observe the Sabbath. One of the recorded offences of Jerobam the son of Nabal, who made Israel to sin, was his instituting a feast unto the Lord on the 15th day of the Tenth month. 'Even the day that he had devised of his own heart.' The Samaritans who worshipped they knew not what, perhaps acted on a similar principle, when they built a Temple on Mount Gerazim; though that was not the place which the Lord had chosen to put his name there; (so also I Samuel, 15th chap. 1-23d v.) and so perhaps did Naaman the Syrian, when he proposed to wash in the river of Damascus and be clean, instead of Jordan. 'One river is as good as another; one day is as good as another,' except when there is divine command which specifies one, and then it is our duty not to alter or question the divine command, but to consider whether it extends to us, and if it does, to obey it. Surely if we allow the tradition of the Church to be competent to change the express commands of God, we are falling into one of the most dangerous errors of the Romanists." Thus reasons the logical and truly learned and pious Archbishop Whately, and it is just this plain Scriptural reasoning applied to all that pertains to Christian and Church practice that makes men Baptists, and is drawing men continually from other denominations to join the sect which has every where been spoken against. Had this been followed by the Episcopal Church of England as is evident from her Prayer Book her original practice of Immersion would not have been exchanged for sprinkling and our good brethren who have separated from them to preserve a more spiritual worship, would not have taken with them this Romish substitution for the Lord's Ordinance of Baptism nor would the Presbyterians of the Westminster Assembly when deciding upon the rite of Baptism have been so divided 24 against 24 as to have required the moderator of that Assembly to decide upon sprinkling by his casting vote and thus entail it upon that great body of Christians. But with all the reproach and obloquy it may bring with it may the Baptists ever hold fast the Protestant motto: "The Bible and the Bible only is the religion of Protestants," until the Church of Christ comes again to have and acknowledge but "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism."

THE SAINT JOHN MAIL AND COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER.—Such is the name of a new Penny Paper which yesterday made its appearance, and a very fair face it wears; and gives abundant promise of making itself an agreeable and useful acquaintance. Knowing the liberal and extensive arrangements of the enterprising publishers we cannot doubt its success, and bespeak for it a generous patronage. The lively competition now to be maintained by the several Penny Papers will call forth of course the best exertions of the several publishers, we hope that each aware of the immense influence exerted by those who thus direct the public mind, and incorporate their sentiments with the every day busy thoughts of the multitudes, will carefully inculcate a pure morality, and thus deserve and win a substantial support.—Ed.

MILITARY CHANGE.—The 33rd Regt., now doing duty in this city and Fredricton, will proceed to Ireland early in the Spring, and their place will be supplied by a Battalion of the Royals, now in Antigua.

ERRATA.—In the introductory remarks to Dr. Stowe's charge for permission read *provision*; a few typographical mistakes will be found upon our outside, which escaped notice in the proof.

TEA MEETING.—The Portland Young Men's Total Abstinence Society assisted by the Sons of Rechab and Portland Divisions, gave a Soiree in the Vestry of the Wesleyan Meeting House, in Portland, on Thursday evening last. The attendance was very numerous and respectable; neat and appropriate addresses were delivered by the Rev. Mr. Harrison, Rev. Mr. Very, Rev. Sampson Bushy, Mr. Frederick Landgrave, and Mr. Thomas Ruddock, and the whole proceedings gave general pleasure and satisfaction. The proceeds, we understand, are to be appropriated to the finishing of the Temperance Hall, which has lately been erected in that place.

It gave us great pleasure, having been present at the festival above noticed, to witness the unanimity and zeal of the friends of Temperance in Portland. We have feared that the proceedings in Portland of late, which have so justly called forth the rebukes of the public press might lead to inferences abroad, so disparaging as to do serious injustice to the credit and influence of the orderly and law abiding citizens of that Parish. It gives us great pleasure therefore to state that the friends of Temperance have the entire influence in the active co-operation of all the Protestant Clergymen of the Parish, each of them sustaining the office of Chaplain to a Division of the Sons of Temperance; which probably cannot be said of another Parish in the Province with the same number of clergymen; and we doubt if there is another Parish in the Province where so great a proportion of the Protestant population stand publicly pledged to total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. They have now three Divisions of the Sons of Temperance, each in a flourishing condition and rapidly increasing, they are each alike composed of the several denominations, and work in peaceful harmony. We know of no better guarantee to cheer the hopes of those who deplore vice and its baleful consequences, that law, order, and sobriety will yet be triumphantly maintained in the Parish. On the occasion above noticed, and in the almost entire absence of aid from abroad, the friends of Temperance in Portland prove how fully competent they are of themselves for such an undertaking, and with such a spirit the ample accommodations of the spacious Temperance Hall now in course of building will soon be at their disposal.—Ed.

We would heartily acknowledge the receipt of letters from our Agents at St. George and St. Andrews since our last. Our thanks are due to them—also to the Rev. Mr. Hopkins, of St. David's from whom we hear by way of St. Andrew's Agent.

NEW POST OFFICE ARRANGEMENT.—An advertisement in another column informs us, that an important change is to be made in the sailing of the Atlantic Steamers. Instead of one steamer a month, during the winter, there will be two—one to New York, the other to Boston—both touching at Halifax.

PROSPECTUS FOR 1848.—We beg to call the attention of our Patrons and the public generally to this advertisement in another column. They will perceive that we are not unmindful of, nor unthankful for the liberal patronage they have bestowed upon us. It is our wish, and it will be our earnest endeavor, to make the Albion the best family Journal in the Province, and if our friends will only use a little exertion, and procure us a hundred or two additional Subscribers we have no fear for the result.

PUBLISHERS.
THE LATE REPORT ABOUT THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON AND MISS COUTTS.—A correspondent of the *Augsburg Gazette* writes from Berlin, Sept. 27, that Sir Robert Inglis, who stayed there a few days, flatly contradicted the report of the approaching marriage of the Duke of Wellington with Miss Burdett Coutts. The whole rumour, said he, originated in a mere joke. Miss Burdett having called upon the duke, with a large sum of money for the erection of churches in the colonies, the duke praised her generous liberality, adding playfully, "You deserve to be a duchess," to which the Marquis of Doro, who was present, remarked, "You see, Miss Burdett, my father makes you an offer."—*English Paper.*

The Hibernia was to sail from Liverpool on the 4th Dec. for Halifax and Boston, after landing her passengers and freight at Boston she will proceed to New York, and return from New York to Halifax and Liverpool, on Saturday the 1st of January, on which day the Cambria will sail from Liverpool for Halifax and New York.

The Caledonia will sail from Liverpool, for Halifax and Boston on the 19th Dec., and will return from Boston to Halifax and Liverpool, on Saturday the 15th January.

The Cambria will sail from New York, on Saturday the 29th January.—*New York Albion.*

MR. SIMONDS' RESIGNATION.—On Tuesday last, Mr. Simonds, after informing the Sessions that he had resigned his commission as Justice of the Peace, retired from the Magisterial bench. We understand that the cause of this resignation was the dissatisfaction of Mr. Simonds with his Excellency's instructions to the Portland Magistrates, to select and arm, without respect to persons, one hundred and fifty special Constables, to be ready, in case of need, to assist the Watch in protecting the peace of that turbulent portion of our suburbs. We trust Mr. Simonds will consider it due to himself to make such a statement of his motives for this step, as will satisfy the public that he has not acted without sufficient cause.—*Albion.*

THE LEGISLATURE.—By a Proclamation in the last *Royal Gazette*, the General Assembly of the Province is called to meet for the dispatch of business on Wednesday the 19th day of January next. By thus calling the House together at a somewhat earlier period than usual, His Excellency, doubtless, contemplates bringing the business of the Session to a close previous to the arrival of Sir Edmund Head, who is expected in March next. The *New Brunswick*, of last week, states that the Executive Council has been summoned to meet at Fredericton on the 12th January.

MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT.—On Thursday the 2d inst., Mr. William Taylor, Junr., and Mr. David Gougar, residents in the parish of Sheffield, while returning from the house of Mr. Henry Treadwell, on the river St. John, skated into an air-hole in the French Lake, and were both drowned in sight of their homes. They were seen from the shore, and immediate search was made for their bodies, which were recovered in about an hour after the accident occurred. They were both members of the Methodist Church, and have each left a widow and several children. An inquest was held before Enoch Barker, Esq., Coroner. Verdict—"Accidental death." Their remains were buried in Sheffield on the following Sunday.

NEW BRUNSWICK DIVISIONS OF T.—On Wednesday evening last, this Division was opened by R. Seeley, W. P., of Portland Division, D. V. Roberts, W. P., of Rechab, and John Hawes, C. of Rechab. Twenty-eight members were initiated, and the following officers elected:—Samuel Dalton, W. P.; David Tapley, Jr., W. A.; Bartlett Lingley, R. S.; Robert Tapley, A. R. S.; Henry Dalton, F. S.; John Tapley, T.; John D. Robertson, C.; Thomas A. Barker, A. C.; Wm. Logan, I. S.; Charles Langan, O. S.; Robert Cunnard, P. W. P.; Rev. Wm. Harrison, Chaplain.

COUNTERFEIT COIN.—Halifax papers state that a quantity of counterfeit sovereigns are in circulation in that city. A man arrested in the act of passing one of these imitations had been committed to prison. It would be well for our citizens to keep a sharp eye on our own currency, for the parties finding themselves detected there, may try the same game in our city. The imitation is said to be remarkably accurate, and the probability is that a large number are afloat.

DOWNING STREET, NOV. 16.—The Queen has been pleased to appoint Charles Zachary Mordaunt, Esq., to be Manager of the currency for the island of Mauritius.

Her Majesty has also been pleased to appoint Hougham Hudson, Junr., Esq., to be Civil Commissioner and resident Magistrate of Somerset, in the Cape of Good Hope.

Her Majesty has also been pleased to appoint P. A. Ganteaume, Esq., to be Registrar General for the island of Trinidad.

Her Majesty has further been pleased to appoint W. Gillam, Esq., to be Registrar and Secretary, Clerk of the Enrolments, and Clerk of the Council for the island of Dominica.

FROM THE SOUTH.—The New Orleans Mail of the 18th states that the steamship Galveston had arrived from Galveston bringing dates from that place to the 16th inst. Yellow fever was prevailing at Galveston to an alarming extent, thirty-eight interments having taken place for the week ending 14th. This epidemic was also on the increase in Matamoros and Mobile.

The Emperor of Russia has issued a decree ordering all Jews in the empire either to become members of one of the guilds of commerce, or cultivate the soil. Those who refuse to comply with this order are to be subjected to all the measures of repression which the Government think proper to adopt.

The flour shipped from Rochester the present year, through the Erie Canal, amounted to 588,080 bbls.; in 1846, 540,232; in 1845, 513,318. The receipts of wheat at Rochester were 1,879,110 bushels; in 1846, 1,034,096; in 1846, 1,042,426.

BRITISH STEAMSHIPS.—It is stated that in consequence of the rupture of the mail arrangements between this country and England, the ships to and from New York, as well as those to and from Boston, will have to stop at Halifax.—*Boston Star.*