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REV'DS. I. E. BILL & R. THOMSON, A. M.,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

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AT OUR LITTLE ONE'S GRAVE.

"The beautiful vanish, and return not."

I know I may not see thee here,
Thou art a cherub now,
With harp-tones swelling soft and clear,
And crown upon thy brow;
But oh! I love this hallowed earth,
Of all the world most dear—
When angels bore our jewel forth,
We laid the casket here.

I would not break thy rest, sweet boy,
Or cage thy spirit free—
Or call thee from thy home of joy,
To weep and toil with me;
The clouds which round my pathway roll,
Or burst in tempests wild,
Cast no dark shadows o'er the soul
Of my sweet angel child.

Much as I miss thy cheerful tone,
Thy soothing, fond caress—
Though none may tell since thou art gone,
My spirit's loneliness—
I would not win thee back, my boy,
Mid grief and wrong to stay;
I know thou'rt where no fears annoy
And tears are wiped away.

Rev. Robert Irvine, of Toronto, and the Baptists.

To the Editor of the Examiner.

MY DEAR SIR:—As the opponent of everything crooked in public men, will you have the kindness to lay before your readers, many of whom are Baptists, the following communication, which appeared in the *Banner of Ulster*, of Nov. 11th, a copy of which paper has been sent to me by a gentleman in Belfast. Of Mr. Irvine's character as a man and a Christian, I had formed a very high opinion, and it is painful to find myself so soon compelled to modify that opinion, and to regard him as the traducer of my brethren—of a denomination of Christians numbering on this continent over one million of souls—a denomination contributing annually for Missionary purposes and for Bible distribution, between four and five hundred thousand dollars. Sustaining at the same time twenty-five Colleges and ten Theological Institutions, for the endowment of which, over one million and a half of dollars have already been contributed,—a denomination having twenty-eight weekly periodicals, fourteen monthlies, and three quarterlies—a denomination sustaining over seven thousand Ministers of the Gospel, and Sabbath Schools innumerable: that Mr. Irvine should speak so contemptuously of such a body of fellow Christians, and that he should do so on the other side of the Atlantic, where he seems to have imagined that his remarks would injure our brethren in Belfast, without exposing him to merited contempt in this land, places him as a man of honour in a doubtful light. By inserting the following letter from Mr. Eccles, you will confer a personal favour upon your

Most obedient, &c.

JAMES PYPER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "BANNER OF ULSTER."

DEAR SIR:—In consequence of ill health, I was unable to be present at the address which the Rev. R. Irvine delivered on the 19th ult., "On the State of Evangelical Religion in British America." The same reason has hitherto prevented my taking any notice of it. The impartial will not deny that the spirit of that address, so far as Baptists are concerned, is deserving of strong rebuke. His evil-speaking of them, however, though so uncalled for and unprovoked, would have passed, with all my heart, into rapid oblivion, had it not been for the publication of it in your columns, your editorial commendation of the address, a similar commendation of it in the *Irish Presbyterian*, strengthened further by the apparent sympathy of the distinguished

Christian men upon the platform, and by all the credit which the Young Men's Christian Association could impart to it.

Gibbon, in his day, undertook to state "the secondary causes of the rapid growth of the Christian Church." Few now require to be told that of Christianity he knew mournfully little; whilst hatred of it, cautiously disguised, is continually apparent. I think there is evidence that Mr. Irvine's information respecting the Baptists is as defective as his feelings are unkind.

He says—"The Baptist Church in the lower provinces is numerically strong. For this he assigns three reasons. His first is, 'the inactivity of other Churches, as contrasted with the proselytism and active spirit of that body.' I need not point out here the offensive manner in which the idea of proselytism is associated with the acknowledged activity of the brethren in those parts. By a remarkable coincidence, 'intolerant zeal' is the first of Gibbon's 'secondary causes of the growth of Christianity.' Notwithstanding, however, the implied censure of these gentlemen, the Head of the Church may regard without disapprobation the zeal which is intolerant of error, and which, in accordance with His own commission, labours, by the preaching of the Gospel, to 'make disciples (or Christians), baptizing them, and teaching them all things whatsoever He has commanded.'"

His second reason for the prosperity of the Baptist Church is, their "camp and revival meetings, often held and protracted." Here a little explanation is desirable. Under the influence of what Mr. Irvine terms "our old and stereotyped institutions," the people in this country can but partially understand how, in a thinly peopled country, where the ministry of the Word is scarce, it becomes necessary for those who have assembled from distances, sometimes, of fifty miles, to remain, as it were, in camp, some time together, receiving the bread of life, which is broken to them by minister after minister, as opportunity permits. Meetings somewhat similar were at one period, on sacramental occasions, not unfrequent even among the Presbyterians of Scotland.

His third reason, which appears in lengthy prominence in your columns, is "the fact, that hitherto, among many of this sect, it was customary to decry an educated ministry, and hence the vulgar impression that the more ignorant the man the more efficient was his ministry, as learned men were supposed to preach what they learned at College, whilst these uneducated pretenders to inspiration professed to receive directly, by Divine inflation, the *ipsisima verba* of every discourse, no matter how incoherent, ungrammatical, and nonsensical." It is, indeed, a strange cause which is here alleged for the prosperity of a Christian Church. Did I not know the force of denominational prejudice, and what it is disposed to believe, in opposition to the "charity which thinketh no evil," I would leave these remarks, in their utter absurdity, to the contempt they merit. I shall merely state the facts. The character of the population in the British Provinces of America is known to be greatly influenced by the prejudices and early training of the old country.—The "old and stereotyped institutions" do not at once lose all hold upon our emigrants. Is it supposable, then, that among such a people, "the decrying of an educated ministry," and "the vulgar impression that the more ignorant the man the more efficient is his ministry," could be a source of "strength," to "a sect everywhere spoken against?"

A Baptist brother, good John Bunyan, the "preaching tinker," as he was called in his day, had much to bear from clerical tongues. But none who are familiar with his writings think now that it was degrading to the intel-

lect or the heart of the crowds who preferred his preaching to that of colledged drones and self-seekers. A similar reason may justify the abandonment of Mr. Irvine's "probationers of fifteen years' standing" for plain men, who though without college acquirements, yet, "having heard and learned of the Father," are "apt to teach," and who, "constrained by the love of Christ," consider it their meat and drink to win souls to Jesus.—That a population so strongly influenced by the habits of the old country, and as a matter of course, by the clamour about colleges, should attach themselves in "numerical strength" to the Baptist denomination, appears to me to prove that our ministers, instead of being the ignorant fanatics which Mr. Irvine affirms they are, know, under a teaching superior to what any college can impart, how to "commend themselves to every man's conscience," and to "watch for souls as those that must give account." The addresses which in opposition to their original prejudices, our emigrants prefer, as instructive to the mind and edifying to the soul, cannot be "nonsensical." The language of Mr. Irvine reveals his animus—what he has the heart to say. Happily he himself furnishes the facts which contradict his assertions.

When he speaks of these ministers as "pretenders to inspiration," as "professing to receive directly, by Divine inflation, the *ipsisima verba* of every discourse," &c., I shall only say, the charge is NOT TRUE. It is a calumny both base and foul. I challenge Mr. Irvine to the proof of it. I challenge any, or all, of his sympathisers to make it good. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

But does not Mr. Irvine make some exception? True; he tells us this applies "chiefly" to the itinerant preachers, and that now our denomination contains some respectable men. But this only makes the case worse. The darkness is all the more dreadful for the gleam of light. There is, in this admission, an appearance of care and candour in the statement, which adds tenfold weight to his charge. The apparent hesitation in the witness gives a crushing effect to his testimony. But this exception is so small as to be scarcely noticeable. The few respectable men are among us, it is not said how; but it is to ignorance and fanaticism he traces our prosperity. These, according to him, are the sinews of our system, in this, his third and concluding reason, and one dwelt upon at length, and with evident pleasure. Gibbon attacked Christianity, also, in a covert manner, in alleging "the causes of its rapid growth." The causes, as he stated them, were cunningly adapted to shake the heaven-laid structure; though, more than once, he makes exception for something truly excellent in it. A feebler than Gibbon has after the same fashion, attacked the Baptists now. As Gibbon did not, neither does he draw his conclusion in so many words. Mr. Irvine can trust all that denominational prejudice.

Mr. Irvine is fairly open to the charge either of extraordinary ignorance of our body in America, or of wicked suppression of truth. Does he know nothing of [Maclay College at Toronto, to endow the Theological Professor's chair of which \$20,000 has been raised by voluntary subscription]?—nothing of Acadia College, Nova Scotia?—nothing of the Seminary at Fredericton, New Brunswick? If he knew nothing of these, his incompetency to lecture on the state of the Baptist denomination is evident; and his assertions are stripped of all value. If our colleges could not attract his attention, is it likely that he observed with care our rural churches and itinerant ministers? Should we consult the man on the phases of Sirius, whose blindness prevents his seeing the sun?

But what shall we say if he knew of these

colleges, whose existence he conceals, whilst professing to give a truthful account of our denomination, and that, at the annual examination of their students, Presbyterian ministers frequently attend, in a brotherly manner, bearing, as I can prove, strong testimony to their literary attainments? Mr. Irvine is eloquent in charges of the most injurious nature, and carefully evades the facts by which those charges are flatly contradicted! He would fasten on our ministers and people, the accusation of ignorance and fanaticism, while the existence of three colleges, in those provinces, supported by voluntary contributions, is satisfactory evidence that perhaps nowhere else in the world is there a greater value attached to education upon a Scriptural basis! He represents the prosperity of the body as arising from contempt of literature and colleges, while, to secure educated pastors, they are making, in proportion to their numbers and wealth, such praiseworthy efforts!

When he says, "As every Romish child is indoctrinated in the infallibility of the Pope, every Baptist child is taught the infallibility of adult dipping," I am reminded of the language of another, quite as much a Presbyterian as Mr. Irvine. This old woman, discovering, during a call upon a female acquaintance, that she now worshipped with the Baptists in Academy Street, exclaimed, "The Baptists! the Baptists! why, they are worse than Papists." We understand, while we do not admire the spirit, either of this aged matron or of Mr. Irvine.

"The infallibility of adult dipping." I understand what is meant by the infallibility of a man, or of a council, but I do not see applicability of the term to adult dipping. Infallibility is, according to good authority, "the quality of not being able to be deceived." Can this be said of an action? An action incapable of being deceived! Is this the language of him who holds up to scorn the uneducated Baptists?

"Adult dipping." This single expression is of itself sufficient proof that Mr. Irvine knows but little of Baptists or their principles. He was emphatically ill qualified to speak of the state of religion in British America, at least, as regards them, for it is evident his intercourse with them must have been slight, as he would have known that they consider character, not age, as the qualification for baptism. As soon as we see in any one, however young, credible evidence of a change of heart, we gladly baptize him; but we baptize no one, however old, who does not seem to possess this blessing. It is the baptism of believers, not of adults, for which we plead.

Permit me to state the distinctive principles of our body in the following short propositions:—

1. We believe that all mankind are divided into but two classes—those who are still in the snare of the devil, and those who are "Christ's, having crucified the flesh with its affections and lust"—Gal. v: 24. Those who are Christ's, and they only, we think have a right to put Him on in baptism—Gal. iii: 26, 27—and to partake of all the blessings of His house.

2. Scriptural Christianity we believe to be a personal matter. "Each one must give account of himself to God. The just shall live by his (own) faith. As the parent is not saved for the faith of the child, the child is not saved for the faith of the parent. It is they who themselves 'gladly receive the word' who are accordingly to be baptized—Acts, ii: 41.

3. We think that Scriptural Christianity is a supernatural work. Carnal descent does not make a Christian. All are alike "shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin." The Christian is "born from above"—"born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God." As such, he is entitled