

The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWSPAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

REV. T. E. BILL, Editor and Proprietor. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

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Correspondence

Spiritualism

After this was over we made advances to the stout lady whom we found to be a very interesting character. She was a famous medium as we have said, and her mission was to reform the world by explaining the laws of God properly. She informed us many things for we were neither starting nor conscientious in our questionings. As she may be considered a great authority among the spiritualists we will state a few of her doctrines, and general miscellaneous remarks. Considerable experience in spiritualism enables us to give them as the general belief of her co-religionists.

Trance.—This was the highest method of spirit communication. It had been known to the ancients both Jewish and Pagan. It was the only explanation of strange facts in connection with ancient magic and incantations. The priests at Delphi, Delos, etc., the Sybils, the prophets, all were trance-speaking mediums. So also in the Jewish nation, the patriarchs, prophets all were of this character, but these revelations were directed by the Almighty. Sometimes different spirits would speak through the same man as was the case with the Apostle John; this accounts for the difference between the simple and beautiful gospels, and the lofty and terrific Apocalypse, in fact, there was a proof of this in the Apocalypse where John wishes to worship his communicant spirit, but he replies "see thou do it not" &c.

Apparitions.—Sometimes the mediums rise so high in their peculiar state that they are able to see the spiritual forms. The stout lady could see them and did so often, sometimes her chamber was full of them. Their appearance was exactly as Swedenborg had described them. This is an enviable state but it is only open to a favored few of peculiar nervous organization.

Special Providence.—In the companionship of these unseen beings which the Spiritualists term "Guardian Angels," whom the Bible mentions under the name of "ministering spirits," "messengers," &c., they find the real doctrine of special providence. Viewed in this light this vexed question becomes settled—it is no longer something incredible but philosophical and reasonable.

The Mysteries of Religion.—These are all disposed of in a summary way. The great body of spiritualists disbelieve in the Divinity of Christ altogether, and do away with the Holy Spirit. When they speak of the Spirit of God it means only the Father—God the Spiritual being and not the "comforter" of the true believer. Predestination they do not regard at all. Hell is merely relative, being the lowest sphere in the Spirit world, but no more a place of torment than the earth itself; the inhabitants of this place are evil and comparatively miserable, but are capable of leaving it if they try hard. The Day of Judgment, the resurrection of the body, the complete destruction of the world all generally explained away. Baptism and the Sacrament are ignored by the majority. Our friend informed us though that there were numbers of spiritualists who did not forsake the old orthodox doctrines, but contenting themselves with their belief in the general truth of Spiritualism saw nothing in it which should change their old belief.

The Bible.—In general this is looked upon as the book of God. But the inspiration was by Spirits directed by Him, and not directly from Him. It is looked upon by many as now obsolete and superseded by the spiritual communication; but yet many of the higher mediums still revere its pages, and consider it as the principal source of wisdom. Like my informant they believed however that it needed explanation to be fully appreciated and they believed that the Spirits gave all that was needed.

Sabbath Day.—This is generally considered as a Jewish ordinance of no consequence now. They meet once a week and generally on the Sabbath for convenience sake.

Miscellaneous.—They believe that Spiritualism can be traced back to the days of our first parents when Adam and Eve talked with their creator. They see links of this spiritual chain through all history whether sacred or profane down to the present time. They explain every strange supernatural event in history with admirable competency. The Hungarian *campyris*—epidemic of the Salem witchcraft; and all kindred excitements were owing to the attempts of Spirits to communicate with man. But the world was not ready for the revelation. Part of the stout lady's conversation was as follows:—

"Perhaps you think that the opening of coal mines, the discovery of the steam engine, the invention of steamboats and locomotives, and the spread of steam-factories all over the earth, was the effect of human energy. Not so, the Spirits communicated the first ideas and afterwards developed them; and why? was it to elevate the human race or extend civilization? Bless you! not at all. I'll tell you the cause. You must know that when Carbon impregnates the atmosphere the spirits can more readily communicate with man. The more that coal is consumed, the more frequent and elevated will the spirit communications be. Therefore as these factories cover the land, and coal supplies the

place of other fuel, so will spirit communication be more perfect. In England, and America it has reached a high degree of perfection, but in the countries that do not use much coal like France, Italy, &c., they cannot readily have intercourse with man."

It was a singular feature in the conversation of the stout lady that one could not be certain whether she spoke as a spirit or as herself. To our surprise she gave us the startling information that Dr. Franklin had been talking with us. We felt honored, and when we stated that we were interested in the subject she informed us, in propria persona now, that she had trunks full of communications, pictures, &c. at her house, which she would be happy to show us if we called. We thanked her and promised to avail ourselves of her kind invitation, she said that she was impressed to ask this, and in this connection informed us that she rarely did anything to which the spirits did not prompt her. Owing to this supernatural influence she never committed an error, and went through life very pleasantly.

Leaving at length this venerable old lady, we turned toward a cluster of people who were conversing in the middle of the room. They were talking in a very lively and animated manner about various friends, one spoke of a father, another of a sister, another of a daughter. Struck by a singular statement of one respecting her daughter, we found that these relatives were all in the spirit world, but were in constant communication with their earthly friends. They spoke of them now as they would speak of one another, mentioned a few of their latest words, told a few good things which they had said, and various anecdotes of their peculiarities. The tall lady mentioned a fine *reparée* of one of her spirit friends in answer to a sceptic which was generally applauded. Another lady related a story about some apparitions, and a third had something to say about her general experience. The tall lady said that when in the trance she was always very happy, the stout lady said that she was very miserable, the lady of the house stated that she was conscious of no feeling. In this informal way the conversation was kept up until we departed. They bade us adieu very kindly and invited us to come again.

Thus ended one of the most interesting spiritual meetings which I had ever been out to attend. Having had experience among them, and having known much of their ways and practices, we confidently considered this meeting as affording an excellent specimen of their manners and doctrines. Moreover it was our lot afterwards to attend other similar gatherings. There we found a larger number of mediums, more spirits, more trances, more communicators; we heard the unknown tongue, and were addressed by undelivered, but we gathered from their little more concerning their manners or doctrines than we have stated above.

Donation Visit at Hantsport, N. S.

DEAR BROTHER BILL,—On the evening of the 12th inst., a very interesting Donation visit was made to the pastor of the Baptist Church at this place, the Rev. W. Burton. The company consisted of about one hundred, the donations in cash and valuable articles amounted to £30, the evening was spent in social conversation, prayer and singing. Everything passed off very pleasantly.

The accompanying address was read to Mr. Burton, on behalf of the friends assembled. As it contains some particulars, which may be interesting to your readers, together with the Reply; you will confer a favour by inserting it in the *Visitor*.

Yours respectfully,
S. T. RAND,
HANTSFORT, March 16.

ADDRESS.

DEAR BROTHER,—We have come to make you a "Donation Visit." To some of us this event is a novelty. We have read and heard much of such gatherings. This is the first one we have witnessed. We have read of them in books, newspapers, and also in the bible. Their avowed object is to promote the cause of God, to advance the interests of true religion, to assist in erecting the spiritual temple; to secure the blessings of public worship; by comforting and encouraging the heart of the ministers of God, by an exhibition of the attachment of the people, by friendly converse, and by voluntary offerings. A donation visit of this kind took place in the wilderness, among the Israelites, by divine direction, when the tabernacle worship was about to be established. Moses and Aaron were our precedents. Listen to an account of their Donation visit. "And they came both men and women, as many as were willing, and brought bracelets and earrings, and rings and tablets, all jewels of gold, and every man that offered, offered an offering of gold unto the Lord. And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun."—Read the whole story—Exodus, chap. 35.—John also had a Donation visit. We need not remind you that he was an eminent minister of God, a priest of Jehovah, who offered sacrifices, and interceded for the people before the Lord. His brethren and friends knew how welcome they would be to his house; how timely their kindness and sympathy would be, and how acceptable would be their

donations. They determined to express their high esteem for his character, their sympathy with his trials, and their real regard, by making him a "donation visit." This it reads: "Then came unto him his brethren and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and they did eat bread with him in his house, and they honored him, (sympathized with him) and comforted him over all the evil which the Lord had brought upon him. Every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold." That was an excellent donation visit. The hand of the Lord was in it. We have been copying after that ancient model this evening. Then we open the New Testament. On the first page of that blessed book, is an account of a donation visit. People came from afar, to show their regard for the sure word of prophecy, their regard for the Messiah, the king of Israel, whom they fell down and worshipped; and when they had presented their treasures, they presented unto him gold, frankincense and myrrh. "We felt satisfied those worshippers of the wilderness, those friends of Job, and those wise men from the east, were amply rewarded for their freewill offerings, and found that it was indeed "blessed to give" in such a cause, and in such a manner. And so do we. We trust, dear brother, that attachment to the same cause, and the same Redeemer, and to his ministers for his sake, and a deep interest in the comfort and welfare of yourself and family, have brought us together this evening, with our freewill offerings, our gold, frankincense and myrrh, the produce of our farms, our shops, and our borders, the fruits of our spinning, weaving, knitting and sewing, &c., &c. May our mutual attachment be continued and increased, and may we have a still deeper sense of our mutual privileges and responsibilities, as pastor and people; yours to watch for our souls as one "that must give an account," and ours to see to it, that you be able to render that account with joy and not with grief. May the relation be hence so harmonious belong continued to our mutual joy and edification, and to the glory of our God and Saviour.

Few places in this Province combine so many mutual and spiritual advantages to a young and enterprising community, as Hantsport. The broad Avon, with its safe and commodious harbors, open nine months in the year, rolls its ample waters by our door, opening up a high way for enterprise to every port and nation under heaven. An area of forest and cultivated lands, of many tens of thousand of acres in extent, with the basin of Minas and the streams that flow into it, visible from those hills that sweep around us, "as the mountains are round about Jerusalem," present a field where untold generations may live, labor and enjoy the good of their labors all the days of their life. Situate in the track of the iron horse, whose "sporting" is already heard in the distance, as he "raveth in the valley," collecting his strength for a rush to the "far west;" we shall soon be brought into close proximity with the fertile fields of Horton, Cornwallis, the Annapolis Valley, New Brunswick, Canada, the United States, and on to the distant Pacific.

The means of Education; too for our sons and our daughters, are at hand. In addition to our common schools, we have within an hour's drive, to our right hand and to our left, the Academies and Colleges of Windsor and Wolfville; and the demand for a Female Academy in the neighborhood, cannot long be resisted.

Then we must bless God for a healthy locality. Just opening into the Basin of Minas, with "a cloud capped Blomdon" in full view, we have the benefit of a sea breeze from the North, while the South wind sweeping over almost interminable forests, brings to us the perfumes of the woodlands and the music of the groves. Elevated more than 70 feet above the channel of the river, there is no opportunity for noxious vapours and unhealthy gases to settle and spread their pestilential influences among us. We may truly say, "The flies have fallen unto us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage." Would that our piety, industry, and zeal in every good work, might be commensurate with our opportunities!

Our religious privileges are great. The utmost harmony has long existed here among those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, of different denominations. We are happy to know that this harmony has been promoted by the Christian prudence of our ministrations, and the natural amiability of your character. May peace be still within our walls, and prosperity within our palaces!

Nothing can be of more importance to us than an evangelical earnest Ministry, and an evangelical earnest church. God grant that we may possess these blessings, and abound yet more and more!

Maddening drinks are scarcely known among us. May the time speedily come when every village in the world may be as free.

Father Holmes comes not to greet you this evening. But the fruits of his labors and prayers are here; his remembrance is here; his captured spirit may be here. We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses; our God and Saviour is here. May we be sensible of his presence; and may a holyunction from on high be upon us!

(This Address was accompanied by a purse, containing over one hundred pounds)

MR. BURTON'S REPLY.

BELOVED FRIENDS, AND BROTHERS.—It affords me unmingled pleasure to meet you here this evening, and more especially as I learn from your interesting address, that your object is to express in this public manner your regard for myself and family; to strengthen my hands, and to encourage my heart in the work of the Lord among you. The sincerity of which, on your part is demonstrated beyond what words can express, by the substantial benefits you have been pleased to confer. I feel happy in the fact that my lot has been cast in this delightful locality so well described, but not exaggerated in your address. It has been my study and inclination for the last thirty years, to promote religion and salvation among the people where I have labored, being persuaded that these tend to secure and promote the greatest amount of real happiness to man in this life, and that they are High Heaven's device to adopt and prepare him for the highest stage of his being, where moral and intellectual delight will be the very perfection of his condition forever.

It affords me high gratification to perceive a generous emulation stirring the sympathies and conversation of the people of this delightful village, respecting the establishment of a Female Academy, affording as it does, so far as the locality is concerned, facilities equalled by few, if any other places in the Province. To effect so desirable an object, I shall be ready to aid you to the utmost of my ability, both by word and deed; knowing as I do, that such an Institution established here would at once inspire the youth of this village with a new intellectual and moral element, so essential to valuable attainments. And for our encouragement in an undertaking of this kind, it would really seem as if the goodness and grace of God were so prompt to bestow his blessing on such an undertaking, that his omnipotent power is even employed to shew the breaking forth of his smiling face. Witness the continual outpouring of his Spirit at our Institutions at Horton from year to year. And look up to Bertwick, where a few friends to the cause of Female Education in Religious principles, had scarcely begun their work, when lo! the heavenly Saviour shines forth into their midst, and that to bless with salvation and eternal life! Then go on and prosper. I am satisfied that the enterprise will be amply sustained by the people here and elsewhere.

I have now, dear friends, spent a little more than two years among you. In some part of that time, I have mingled with you, as you have with me and my family, in the sorrows of death; and those who once greeted us with christian affection, are not here to enliven the pleasures of this moment. Theirs it is to enliven a holier assembly than this with their songs of praise.

Since I came among you, I have buried thirty-six persons, within the range of the field over which my labors have been extended; twenty couples I have united in marriage; and I have baptized and received into the churches nineteen.

And now, dear friends, please continue to pray that God may still further bless our union as pastor and people. I thank you most sincerely for the present tangible proof of your esteem and regard for myself and family; and may peace and prosperity crown the efforts of this thriving temperate and industrious village, and be assured

I am your sincere friend,
W. BURTON.

From the Colonial Presbyterian.

SUM OF THE ARGUMENT.

The whole of the argument against the Baptism of infants is comprised in the statement,

1. Infants, by that name, are not included in the Apostolic commission, nor under that name can it be proved that any infants were baptized.
2. Requirements of faith and repentance, &c., cannot be fulfilled by them.

We do not know that any Baptist can advance a single argument against the doctrine except what underlies these two.

Now it is plain that if these two arguments are destroyed, there remains no argument whatever against it.

As to the first argument it has been shown that its application would exclude women from the communion, would leave us without warrant for the christian Sabbath, &c., and that if this negative principle of reasoning were admitted, it might be used to exclude from many positive rights.

Admitting then that infants are not even referred to under the term nations, they are not excluded if it can be otherwise shown that they have a right to the ordinance by probable proof.

But 2nd. It is argued that infants cannot be disciples, cannot believe and repent, and consequently are not to be baptized.

In reply we have shown: 1st. That infants are disciples, and are so called; and the *Visitor* has not been able to show that they are not so called.

2. That belief and repentance are not parts of the Apostolic commission.

3. That belief and repentance are no more required of infants to entrance into the kingdom of God below, than into the church above.

4. That if we apply the argument that since what is required of one class who can perform the requirement is also required of another class who cannot perform it in order to their having a claim to any promise, it would prove that infants should not eat, that it was quite wrong for Moses to include them in the covenant, which they could not keep, and the oath which they could not take; quite wrong to circumcise them; and, in fact, that God's whole dealings with the children of Israel, which included infants, was vicious.

This argument has, therefore, been proved to be false also. There is, consequently, no argument to be urged against their admission, and if there be any even probable proof why they should be admitted, their claims are perfectly valid.

Having thus shown (and let it be remembered that the *Visitor* has not made the slightest impression upon one of these positions through the whole of this discussion) that there is nothing in either of these two arguments against infant baptism, we come now to vindicate our proofs in their favour.

1. To save space we merely refer to the argument advanced for the baptism of infants, from the fact that they were by God constituted members of the church, and that the right has not been taken away. The question might be allowed to be settled by this fact in favour of children.
2. There are four household baptisms; the only ones, known to be performed where infants are likely to be. Of course we cannot be absolutely certain that there were no infants in any of these families, but it is very unlikely that there was not one in any one of them.
3. Jesus affirms that of such as the little children whom he took in his arms and blessed, is the kingdom of God—which phraseology includes infants whom he blessed. The word translated such strictly signifies the nature and attributes of the thing to which it is applied, and not the resemblance of something else to it, and no instance can be produced which excludes the person or thing mentioned. It means then that of these children themselves, and not merely those like them were the subjects of the kingdom of Heaven.

We merely refer to the proof, derived from the fact that the Apostle Paul calls the children of the believer *Holy*. It remains for the Baptist to show in what sense they are holy.

We might urge many other arguments, but these are sufficient.

We ask our readers to look at the articles of the *Visitor*, and see whether he has got anything to say. Except 1st, that infants are not specially named in the commission, or as having been baptized; or 2nd, that they cannot believe and repent. This is the sum of all his shewing.

And since we have shown that a mere negative proves nothing, and since the *Visitor* cannot reply, he has no business going forward with an argument which he thus confesses to be fallacious.

And, further, since we have shown that God has required of infants that they be brought into covenant, and laid under responsibilities, which, while infants, they cannot fulfil; and the *Visitor* has not replied to this either, he has no right to use any passage or proof founded upon such requisitions. In doing so he is fighting against God and his whole procedure.

Until the *Visitor* shows, not merely asserts, that these arguments of ours are fallacious, he need not go a step farther. It will not do for him to slip over everything except some petty point, on which he can hope to make a small incision. Let him try to look our arguments in the face, and answer them if he can, and if not let him no longer hope to deceive himself and his readers by the production of a set of passages which prove nothing.

We did not suppose that the *Visitor* would publish the whole of our last, as one column per week was all that was stipulated for. We would publish both of his, but that other matter must go in which would be excluded were we to print both. We have, however, no objection to give it in some future number when we can find room.

Except the *Visitor* advances something more important than he has done yet, we do not know that we shall feel it necessary to make any further reply.

WHERE PERFECTION COMES FROM.—Two towns in St. Joseph county, Mich., produce large quantities of pepper from which the oil is extracted by manufacturers there. In 1855 25,000 pounds of the oil was produced, which brought in the New York market three dollars per pound. From eight to twelve pounds is produced from an acre of the plant. The first crop requires a good deal of care, but the next two years it yields without attention. After the third year the crop must rotate in order to rest the land. The mint is cut in August and the oil extracted by distillation, filtered through flannel and put up in tin cans for market.