

CORRESPONDENCE.

"A SLANDER REFUTED."

SIR,—*"The Montreal Gazette"* says that John Bright's remains could not be laid in Westminster Abbey because he had never been baptized into the state Church. The loss is the Abbey's not the man's. There can be no more hallowed resting place in broad England than that of the great Quaker, who, through his whole life, did his duty fearlessly, honestly and with his whole heart in the service of his country.—*Cowansville Observer.* The contortion of fact contained in the preceding is going the round of the secular papers, and inimical prejudiced sectarian advocates are not unlikely to add currency to the misrepresentation as it conveys an invidious imputation against the grand old Church of England—the mother of all English speaking Christians, and which is as Catholic as it is tolerant and comprehensive. It would have been historically correct to maintain that Puritan zeal and fanaticism had consigned poor peaceable Quakers to the gallows under Governor Endicott in 1759, and that after about 40 years further consideration in was their liberal ejaculation to Chalkley, the Quaker travelling in New England—"Oh what a pity that all your society were not hanged with the other four." But though deftly contrived to mislead popular opinion, when examined, we find no justification for an innuendo which could only be bred of the dregs of intolerance. Westminster Abbey is a Christian Temple, a bulwark of the Faith once delivered to the Saints and which as far as it is truly Catholic is still professed by 9 10ths. of those who acknowledge Christ. Christian Baptism has naught to do with a "State Church" but solely with the universal Church of Christ—wherever the Gospel commission is repeated (St. Mat. 28 v. 19). The Quakers formally reject Baptism with all outward ordinances and institutions of the Gospel. They have the fullest freedom of their choice. Does this freedom extend to the absolute denial of like freedom to the otherwise universal voice of Christendom—that "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven?"

Is it any intolerant reflection upon the character or excellence of John Bright's career, that *Christ's command* and the allegiance of His followers should not be dethroned in their very citadel before any human virtues however pure, and any personage however exalted? Dean Bradley had no other option as a Christian (not merely as a Churchman nor as a representative and accredited minister of Christ, nor as an official of a "state" church) than practically to maintain the unchangeable, unalterable features of that Body which Christ came to institute which have been unchallenged as to their general obligation except by the few hundreds of the respected sect of Quakers which arose in the 17th century.

The Christian Temple is *not* a mere state appendage; and the fact that its Christian character cannot be obliterated by the exigencies or urgencies of statecraft, or that it will not belie its ancient Catholic as well as significantly Protestant foundation before the loftiest exemplifications of moral worth, is the *one feature* to be noted in declining a resting place to the honoured remains of the great Quaker Statesman. It is no "loss to the Abbey," it is no reflection upon the conscientious adherents of self chosen religious theories, (so long as it remains, as it must ever, a Christian Temple, maintaining the Faith of Christendom), that it must in regard to the living, and the dead, uphold Baptism, not as the admission "to the state church" but the *primary and leading* "principle of the doctrine of Christ," Heb. 6. 1 and 2. It is an unworthy device of the times to raise an outcry of intolerance while exemplifying in the act its most signal indulgence. The *Magna Charta* voices the recognized claims of the Church of England from times long anterior to the usurpations of Rome, and stamps the character which no adventitious state concession can prejudice or destroy. This Charter of English liberties has for its introduction the clause, "The Church of England shall be free and enjoy her whole rights and liberties inviolable."

She must ever be ready to defend these "rights and liberties" against the additions of Rome and not less against the mutilations or the negotiations of those who fill the intervening scale between the theories of the dead but honoured and beloved John Bright of lasting memory, and the living scintillating eccentric flashes of Huxley. Instead of being used as a poisoned sectarian shaft it ought to have been a cause of congratulations to Christians of every name, that the Church of England is no respecter of persons, and that Christ and His commands cannot be supplanted within her enclosures by human virtue however eminent or "state" rewards and eulogies however worthily deserved and earned.—

CHURCHMAN.

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