The Westminster Confession.

Patter Brazen And Bean Problem Gran.

Sir,-As my first letter was a reply to pravious letters on the caron subject in your paper, and as another on the other ide has appeared times my hat was written, I claim the right of one more re ply, which will wind up toy shere of this introversy. In doing so, I must bog the forbour toes of your readers, if I cannot dismiss a subject to important in to brief a space as, on their account, I should like to do. I desire to say a few more words, which I honestly and excuestly believe to be "words of truth and scherness," congerning a matter important to the welfare of our charels—otherwise I should not de-

sire to sy them at all

Wedenstelly there were unreduced Pres-bytesians who find nothing to disagree with in the Westminster Confession, and who are, therefore, quite satisfied with it as it is. It is all very well for those, but what of all the rest? Will anyone assert that those who hold rigidly to all its dogous are anything like a majority, or, even a half of the adherents of the Presbyterian Church in Canada? How is it with the mass of our average congregationsparticularly of the younger generation? Of these by far the larger proportion know little and care less about the Confession; while, of the comparatively small class who do know and understand what it teaches, many feel as I do, that it contains much which is necessary neither to faith nor to edification; that it asserts what Scripture has loft doubtful; that it ignores clear Scrip-ture declarations where they oppose the inferences of human reason; and that it dogmatizes and defines, where Scripture, doubtless for wise reasons, has done nei-ther. It is, in fact, not a Confession of Faith properly so called, but a Profession of intellectual belief in much that concerns merely the science of theology, and a Profession of Belief, moreover, really representing the opinions of only a fraction of our people. Now, is it fair or true to call this complicated document, understood by few, and fully believed in by fewer, the "Confession" of our church? Even of our ministers, there are, I know, many who, in the words of the Globe, as quoted in my first letter, adhere to it, "only in its main scope," "not necessarily binding themselves to every minute detail as they understand them." If so, why should there be the appearance of binding them to every detail, even to the extent of holding the Confession in terrorem over them, if they conscientiously deviate from any of its details? Some of your correspondents appear to think that if a minister's opinions become modified in any point, he ought at once to leave the church. Such, however, hardly realize what they say. That a man should at once sever his connexion with the church to which he is bound by a thousand sacred ties—the congregation in which he is doing true work for God and man, and which looks to him as its spiritual leader

which looks to him as its spiritual leader and overseer—simply because in some productions of the state of th reason, is inflicting a heavy loss on our own. Why may not ministers on such points, have the freedom which laymen And as the opinions of a large number, both of our ministers and laymen, do, more or less, diverge from those of the Confession, why should we say to the world that we believe, as a church, anything which, as individuals, a large number of us do not believe? I have specified some of the points in which many of us think that the Confession takes ground unwarranted by Scripture. I might have specified others, such as chap. x. section 3, chap, xxx. sec. 2; but that I did not wish further to complicate my plea for Christian liberty of thought with minor controversies on special points. It is not -which is right on such matters, for both sides appeal to Scripture. But, the point is, since Scripture is so far from being absolutely clear on such points, why may not Presbyterians have the Christian liberty of differing in love, and without separating from each other? Why, on speculative and abstruce points, not affecting saving faith, should there be any aumurch declaration which must always act more or less as a bias in studying Scripture? Some, indeed, may prefer to draw their beliefs ready-made from a Confession, rather than take the trouble of searching the Scriptures for themselves, but whether such a resort is good even for these, I leave thoughtful readers to decide.

I recognize with pleasure the calm and temperate tone of the letter of "Presbuteres," and the excellence of the principles he lays down. But with all deference to an "Elder," I think the principles are misapplied in the present case. While "error," in other words, any divergence from the alegaly provided fundamental from the clearly revealed fundamental truths of the gospel, is to be jealously guarded against, lest we should come to receive "another gospel," there are minor differences of opinion, held by equally devout and reverent Christians, regarding things not distinctly revealed, and not connected with saving faith. In these matters, one Christian has not a right to atigmatize the view of his brother as "error." I quote some further remarks from Dr. Chalmer's lectures on the Romans, which seem to me to bear directly on this subject. "I am aware that, to a certain limit, there may be varieties of opinion, and all of them alike consistent with reverence for God and His communications, so far as the ability to understand them has been given, and such varieties on the much controverted topic of predestination appear to me within that limit. The apostle Paul, however strenuous and resolute in his assertion of certain doctrines, was in regard to certain others, the most indulgent and liberal of men. He admitted a certain lattitude of sentiment. even amorg his own converts. While there were truths respecting Jesus Christ and Him crucified, which be could not surrender, there were also truths in which he suffered a variety of conceptions on the

part of his fellow-Christians, and so far scowling excommunication upon because of it, he writed in hope and charity the progress of a more enlightened conviction luftheir minds, Phil. ni. 15, 16. The he would not have said This, for aught that is known, he might have said of the deetrine of predestination." Now, why should the Desired states Church be less indulgent and liberal than "the Apostle Caul?" What right has she, from her ultimate standard of Scripture, to decese that of such unner and unavoidable "varieties of conception," only one shall be tolerated among her officebearers, or to denounce as "error" among her own children that which she would not denounce as "error" in the preus and she recognizes as equally with herself branches of the Church of Christ? The minor differences already alluded to proceed chiefly, doubtless from differently constituted nunds, and these differences of mental constitution are found in every church. By what right, then, should any church refuse to accept as her ministers any but those whose mental constitution makes it possible for them to conform, in the most abstruce points, to the views which she favours? To say that she will authorize no man to preach the gospel who is not in all points a Calvin-ist, or a Wesley-an, as the case may be, scens to me to be very much like saylog, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," instead of, "I am of Christ."

It was surely never our Lord's intention that His Church should be cut up into sects, and there was a time when "schism" was considered a sin. But if the Church prescribes tests which, we may venture to say, the Lord would not have prescribed, and so excludes any of the Lord's "true servants," unless they will be false to their own convictions, is it not she who is guilty of "schism," not the men she com-pels to leave her? The spirit which would bid a man leave his church as lightly as he would leave an ordinary "society," is neither the spirit of Christ nor in accordance with the view which the Confession takes of the visible church.

The only true safe-guard against error lies in continually bringing our beliefs to the light of God's Word, and the teaching of His Holy Spirit, not in the stereotyping long and complicated expressions of human opinion, which, in the very nature of things, must be liable to the admixture of human mistake, otherwise "error.' This is expressly declared by the Confession its elf—chap. 31, section 7—and on its own principles, clearly laid down, it is "not to be made the rule" (or "standard") of faith and practice, but to be used as an help to both. And it should not be forgotten that the Church of Scotland first received the Westminster Confession, not as being true in every expression, but only as "to the truth of the matter of it." Through time a sort of semi-sacrodness has been attach ed to its propositions, very similar to that which Roman Catholies assault to the writwho were indoubted with the mistake the first and latified men. The mistake their diets authoritation in leading Romish dogma which Protestants believe to be un-Scriptural, I have been met, in precisely the same tone and spirit which some of your correspondents adopt, with a phalanx of these early authorities, from whose judgment it was presumptuous for "an errorist" to appeal. Clearly, then, the principle of human authority will not do. It is true that the truth of God always has been, and always will be, the same. But that human apprehension of it has not been always the same, the history of the church can tell. And while there have been times of darkness and retrogression, we believe that there has been, on the whole, a progression in the understanding of divine truth. If the general widening of the thought of men does not-other things being equal-oring wider views of Christian, as of other truth, then our desire for an educated ministry is a mistake. And if the apprehension of Scripture was perfect more than two centuries ago, every commentary and theological work since then has been superfluous and absurd. But, as a matter of fact, both science and Biblical criticism have altered our perceptions of the meaning of Script are. Have not the revelations of geology, which is God's truth, as well as theology, mater ally altered our conception of the meaning of the very first chapter of the Bible? And in an age when a revision of the Bible has been entered upon by the most pious and learned theologians of the time, why should we be asked to consider the interpretations which prevailed more than two centuries ago, as entirely perfect and utterly unmodifiable?

Moreover, we believe that the Holy Spirit has been leading pious men into fuller understanding of various portions of Christian truth. Why should we not be ready to accept whatever additional light we can receive from such?

And since no branch of the Christian Church can, with any show of reason, lay claim to possessing the whole truth of God in its human definitions, why should we not believe that from all branches of Evan-gelical Christians, "some good lesson might be learned, which could be added, for its advantage, to our common Presby-

Of course, a religious denomination, viowed solely as a human organization, has a right to impose what tests it pleases on its accredited teachers. The question. however, which cannot be ignored is:-What tests has it a right to impose as a portion of the Church of Christ, and taking Scriptures as its guide in all things Many of our people hold strange views on the subject of total abstinence as a Christran duty, and would like to see every minister a total abstaner. Nay, I have oven seen the suggestion in this paper, that total abstinence should be made a qualification for admission to the Lord's Table. But, even if the total abstainers were numerous enough to carry such a measure, would they have any Scriptural right to propose such a test, either for Church fellow-

that of rigid speculative adherence to a human system of philosophical the-ology, instead of the more simple and Apostoho test of love to Christ, and to Imgreat dootring of the Gespel-yastification by fa th, which has been truly called -the article of a standing or falling Church? there really my warrant for an weighting ouc min-ter with traditional tests which man have long telt to be bandens too henry to be borne, and freed from the pressure of which, I believe many of our mineters would preach with tar more power and force, feeling more free to scaroli the Scriptures for thomselves, and bring forth from its treasures "things new and old"--to feed their people with, as the Spirit of the Lord may guide them.

I know there are many who sympathere with much that I have said, who will yet teel as if the idea of an alteration in this respect, however destrable, were almost impracticable. And yet, it such alteration be right and Scriptural, as many of us solemnly believe it is, why should it be impracticable to Christian mon who have fa th that God will give them power to act according to their convictions? It is almost universally conceded that if the Confession were to be compiled now, much contains would be omitted. That is, in other words-that so complicated a Confession is unadvisable and in-expedient. If this is felt to be an evil why perpetuate it? I could eite the names of ome of our best ministers of the present and former times who have felt it to be an Professor Young in his recent letter to the Globe, spoke, as I know, for many of our most excellent ministers in regard to the Confession. And to go much further back, in the published correspondence of one of the most reverent and devoted of the early ministers of our Canadian Church -one noted for his Christian wisdom and sober-minded preaching—there occurs the following passage: "I think we have been wrong in the place we have given to our Confession as a Church. Where the true Church of Christ is, it will hold forth the truth—'the priests' lips will keep knowledge.' When that cannot be said of a Church, it will be destroyed at all events, and even a Confession will not long retard the evil day." And I know that some of the leading ministers of both the Scottish Churches are now auxious to have some change made, whenever it can convenient ly be done. As our new United Church is comparatively unfottered by the complications of long use and wont, we might the more easily set a good example to these instead of following them, as we shall assuredly have to do, before another genera

tion passes away. I write for those who are willing candid ly to consider the matter—not for those who have prejudged it and will listen to no arguments. It seems as if in the providence of God, without any pre-meditation, this question has been pressed upon our United Church at this early period of its existence-possibly in order that she may be filted for a deoper and wider usefulness -a fuller "possession of the land." The question before her is whether she is to make her tests for office-bearing as narrow as the too dogmatic human thelogy of the past has prescribed, or as comprehensive as Christian charity and apostolic warrant can make it? Is she to persevere in the exclusive policy, unwarranted by Scripture, of nominally at least, closing her pulpits against all who cannot endure every statement or theoretical opinion of those who lived when men had less sense of the incompetence of the human mind to deal with subjects on which few would care definitely to dogmatize now? Or is she-freeing herself from old preindices-to open the ministry to all who will preach the pure Gospel of Christ and Him crucified—all who, impelled by the constraining love of Christ, are sincerely anxious to turn souls from darkness to light-while willing faithfully to hold to the Presbyterian form of Church govern-ment. A LAY PRESBURIAN. ment.

Confession of Faith.

Editor British American Presbyterian.

Sir,-A good many years ago, two men differed upon a question of so much importance to themselves at least, that nothing would versy should be left to a jury, equally chosen by each of them. All arrangements having been duly made, at the time and place appointed, they presented themselves before a considerable audience, brought together by interest or curiosity. According to solemn agreement, each was to speak so many minutes, say fifteen. The first de-livered his oration, and his opponent followed with his reply, and so on alternately for a couple of hours. At last the jury deliberated, but their great difficulty was that there was nothing to decide; for the disputants did not even attempt to confute each other's statements.

The longthy communications of your correspondent, "A Lay Presbyterian," reminds me of this farce. He writes much about God's love, but he does not condescend to notice the statement in my last communication which in substance was (I have not the number of the PRESELTERIAN wherein it appeared at hand), that God leaves the finally impenitent to perish, and that this he resolves to do. As far as I recollect I said that a correct answer to the question, when does God form this re-solution, would settle the matter in dispute. I am glad your correspondent seems to con-ider the Shorter Catechism's teaching the same doctrine as the Confession does.

In answer to the question—"Did God leave all mankind to perish in the state of sin and misery?" it save—"God bear of the day I got twenty five, and in the sin and misery?" it save—"God bear of the day I got twenty five and in the sin and misery?" sufficiently sound. I believe he and I must soon agree; for the Catechism teaches the same doctrine as the Confession does. sin and misery?" it says-"God having out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life,' etc. If God elected some he did not elect others, and if he did not elect them, he resolved, or decreed to pass them by. It "A Lay Presbyterian" accepts "the Shorter Catechism," he necessarily accepts the dec-trine that so much troubles him. I hope

warm advocate of "the Confession of Faith. to it teaches the same concerning God's of et an the creation of man that the Confersion does. The fatter says that 'the man souls, and willingness to preach the chief end of near is to giority God, and to copy him for ever, and the former says cubstantially the same—"It pleased tied the Father, Son, and Holy Ghest, for the manifestation of the glory of his oternal power wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein, whether visible or in virthle, in the space of six days, and all very good." Con., Chap ix. 1.

I have letely glanced ever "the Contession, but I did not observe the obnexious word "reprobate in" in it, but soing I do not regard the book as inspired. I are not so intimately acquanted with it as "A lay Presbyterian" seems to be. Will be then be kind enough to into m as where to find the word in its pages? It may be there, but I have so neely time to read the book Perhaps he will also be so good as to tell as what is the meaning that he attaches to the word, for it seems to me that he does not understand it in the sense in which it has been generally used by orthodox the ologiaus.

He appears to see no impropriety in entering a particular Presbyterian Church. whose Contession of Faith he considers unscriptural, without making any femal objection to the error until the compactismade and ratified, and then beginning to lamour for a change of the articles of agreement to suit his own views. It does not in the slightest degree alter the case that he happened to be born and baptized in some other Presby terian Church. I stated distinctly in my termer communication that, if your correspondent did not notice the statements to he objects until he entered the United Church, he has a right to advocate a change; but if he is a member of the Church, he should bring the matter formally before the session, and thence to the Presbytery, and finally to the General Assembly. In this way he would at least better ascertain the general view of the church on this subject. If he entered the

them altered or removed. I must, however, conclude; for I do not wish to occupy too much of your space, and other duties deman I my attention.

of the principles which he now condemns,

dishonograble conduct in seeking to have

A PRESEVIERIAN.

SPEECH OF FATHER CHINIOUY ON FRENCH EVANGELIZATION, DE-LIVERED BEFORE 2500 PEOPLE IN MONTREAL.

Rev. C. Chiniquy said: Since a few

days my eyes have seen things and my

ears heard things which I cannot express. I see Rome tottering on its foundations.

Applause) I see the light coming in from

on high, and the dawn of the beautiful day when Our Saviour shall reign. On the first of January it was my privilege to send to Bishop Bourget the names of 206 of my dear countrymen who had signed a demission from his Church, as a Christmas gift. (Great applause and laughter) My heart was glad at this laughter) great work, the result of one month's labours. About fifteen days after it was my inexpressible joy to see the names of 450 of my countrymen sent to the Bishop to tell him that they had broken the fetters and had come to the feet of our dear Saviour. The work is so great that the Roman Catholics did not believe it. They said it could not be; this was on the 18th of January, but since then what have I seen? My 100ms thronged-crowded to suffocation from eight in the morning to ten at night. (Applause.) They could not sit, but had to stand up, so many were there. I wish you could have seen them as they cried, "What must we do to be sayed?" Tooday I counted the num. be saved?' To-day I counted the num. bers of those who have left the Romish Church since the 19th of January, and I find I have the names of 470 of my dear countrymen, (loud applause), who since only eight days have broken their fetters and are free in the love of Jesus. Oh my soul, bless the Lord for this! All told there are now some 2,000 converts; if all gathered together they would probably hardly be contained in the basement of to themselves at least, that nothing would do but to settle it by a public discussion.

They agreed that the decision of the controllar is a great work and Chiniquy is a great man"—yes, the work Chiniquy is a great man—yes, the work is very great, but Chiniquy is not a great man—it is the Lord's work. I come here to bless my God, whose hand is so visible. I could keep you here all night telling you the different circumstances of these conversions, but will give you only one day's experience. Tuesday of this week, at eight o'clock in the morning, I was called to visit a sick woman, whom I found in a damp cold house with no wood and no feod—her husband sick also. I prayed and read from the Bible, and gave her all and read from the Blofe, and gave her all the counsel I could. She had been a Roman Catholic, but didn't want to die one. Said she: "I wish to die in the re-ligion of Christ." I got a doctor to visit her, and procured bread and meat. On coming back to my house I could hardly enter. It was crammed. I asked, "What are you here for?" "We come," said they, "to hear you speak of Jesus." I began to speak and read to them, and continued for an hour and a half, and my heart was filled with joy at the manner in which they listened to and received the truth. It was then noon, and I now said: "Friends, do you wish to come to Jesus, who washes your robes in His blood? Now, my dear countrymen, who is ready to receive salvation, and reject the abom

100 TRAT DAY.

(Great applause.) Some people ask. What kind of men and women are these that came to you? I might put the same question to you, "What kind of people are you here?" (Laughter, Do not ace you here?" (Laughter., Do not some of you do badly? (Applause.) God alone knows the heart; I do not know much about the inside, but when a French ship or ordination? And yet, would such a cour discussion has not been altogether in much about the inside, but when a French as derected in lest a practical test be at all less Scriptural than vain, and that I shall see him by and by a Canadian comes torward and consents to

have his name published in the press, and that in the face of the Bishop and pricate in the face of his friends, of his father and mother, or sister or brother, he must be meannest. (App' m-s.) Whos the poor must comes to give his name that way; when he expects to be thrown out of his house because he is a Protestant, or to be afused, and insulted. I say that men does not come as a hypocrite, for he computes grand and noble dead (A) I tear many of you do understand the mandy acts a of the French Connection who comes to me and mys, " Sir, I um rouly to cut all the ties which unite me to ray father, ray nother or friends, and give up all that is dear to my beart and come to tollow Christ.' you do not understand that that is the work of (4-1, 1 have nothing to say. Only theother day while I was speaking to two coung ladies against confession and purgatery, a young man came in looking pale. I said "You are sick." "I have come to the conclusion," said he, "that my Church is not that of Christ, and I have come to give up the religion of Rome in order to follow Christ. My father has cursed me and my wife says she will desert my house if I would do it, but this morning I decided that to save my soul I would have to give un father, mother, and wife." I asked: "Are you quite ready to take up such a cross?" he answered: "With help of God Fam." I said, "I I asked: " Are you quite ready to hope your father and mother and wife will not desert you" and this afternoon he came again with the tears on his cheeks and said . "It is too bad; the priest came to my house when I was absent, and persuaded my wife to desert me, and she said at dinner she should leave my house, and my dear child is to go too." This is one This is one cage among hundreds. This afternoon I saw four young men pale and faint, they said: "We have been turned out from the house of our father; we have been cursed because we gave you our names." There they were on the highway without emrloyment and left to starve. I askel: you regret what you have done?" They replied no, they did not. Seeing they They church in last June with a full knowledge were starving, though it was late in the he cannot free himself from the charge of afternoon I gave them dinner, and sometimes Mrs. Chiniquy is not very well pleased with me about this. (Great laugher and applause.) What must these noble Go to beg? No. Will they mon do? starve !- Yes, unless help comes, unless von can employ them. I have more than 300 men who are starving-noble men who never beg, who prefer to faint than to ask for bread. Where will they go? They have lost their employment. The greater part of them had good positions, but the day they left the Church of Rome, they were turned out of them, and in some cases with wages unpaid. People, in the name of God I ask you to come to help. In the name of Christ do semething for these sufferers. (Applause.) In the name of Christ do I have no less than forty clerks and over 100 more of different trades who have no employment because they left the Church of Rome. This is a serious matter After speaking of how remarkably his health was sustained in his arduous labor, he referred Mr. Court and the noble band of friends who have stood by the cause, as well as the pioneer missionaries, Oliver, Tanner, Vernon, Amaron, Doudiet, Ressier, Char-bonnel, Latleur, etc., who had, as it were, prepared the way; they had sown the seed and he had come to reap.

A VISIT TO THE SMALL POX HOSPITAL.

He described the following episode very effectively. On the first of January he had visited a dying man at the Small-Pox Hospital. He was a converted Roman Catholic, who took sick soon after his change of religion, and was by mistake taken to the Roman Catholic hospital. On knocking at the door, it was opened by a nun, who asked was he a physician, "Yes," said Mr. Chiniquy, "I am a physician—" of souls," he mentally added as he stepped made. Great laughter.) The poor patient presented a horrible spectacle; eyes were entirely shut, and he was much again-t his will being given some medicine. The following is Mr. Chiniquy's story in lns own words: Do you recognize me?"

"Oh, yes, sir I do, and I thank God you came here to see me.

"Do you regret what you did a few days

ago in my house?" o, sir, I do not."

" Are you glad?"

"On, yes, yes.'

I put this question because I had heard
to receive the last he had been forced to receive the last sacraments. As I spoke to him the joy of his soul was visible on his poor swollen face. The nun near by said to me: "Vous parlez comme un Protestant?" "Oh yes madum," I said, "I must look like a Pro-testert when I speak of Jesus Christ." She said the man was a Catholic. I said: "Oh yes, he is a Catholic like ma, but not a Roman Catholic." She replied that he had received the last sacraments that morning. I said, "He couldn't help it; his hands are tied and his eyes are shut, so you did as you pleased with him. I suppose you gave him your communion; but I don't think his eating a wafer would ininre him. She did not know what to say, and I continued to speak of Jesus to the poor dying man. The nun said: "I find you are very bold to come and speak to me like this. I replied. "Yes, I am bold: you are not the first one in the world to think me a hold man, and perhaps you will know why I am called a hold man, when I tell you that my name is Chiniquy." This came like a thundarhalt This came like a thunderbolt on the nun; she left me and did not try to stop me again. After my exhorting the dying man and hearing him speak of Jesus, the good lady took me to the door, but did not invite me to come back again. (Applause.) In conclusion, I may state that in day's Witness there will be published the names of 500 converts from Roman Catholicism, who, since eight days, have given up the Church of Rome. (L. ud and prolonged applause.)

N.B .- All contributions in aid of Mr. Chimquy's work should be sent to the Treasure. A. B. Sewart, Eq. Official Assignee, Montreal. Contributions of clothing etc., for the poor should be sent as directed in list week's Bracish Ameni-