

The Christian.

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All questions and communications, business or otherwise, intended for publication, to be addressed:

"THE CHRISTIAN,"

P. O. Box 83,
St. John, N. B.

EDITOR:

DONALD CRAWFORD, - - - NEW GLASGOW, P. E. I.

CO-EDITOR:

T. H. CAPP, - - - - - St. John, N. B.

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EDITORIAL.

It seems due to the readers of THE CHRISTIAN and the cause of truth, to notice the communication of Robert Stewart, in the March number. I had invited criticism on my articles on the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit," in the December and January numbers, provided it were not too long, in a Christian spirit and addressed to the editor. Bro. Stewart fulfilled the first condition, it was not too long, but I cannot say so of the other two. Had he spoken or written to me, I think we could understand each other better.

I would here say that I wrote a long article on the same subject which was published in *Lard's Quarterly*, over 20 years ago, and has been before an intelligent brotherhood ever since. Neither the logical and discriminating Lard nor his numerous contributors ever wrote a word of dissent. Since then many have written of that article, but from no pen have I ever seen a demur to the sentiments till I read Brother Stewart's article.

Being anxious to hold and advocate only the truth, as it is in Jesus, on every scriptural subject and fully aware of my liability to err, I am more than pleased to have everything I may advance on which others do not agree with me, subjected to the most searching investigation. But I am just as anxious to avoid even the appearance of unfriendly strife, especially in the columns of THE CHRISTIAN. It was not got up for anything of the kind, and no pains on my part shall be spared to keep the like out of it. I can think of nothing fairer to all concerned, than to kindly look at the points in Brother Stewart's article, and ask the readers with an open Bible, to carefully and impartially read my articles in the December and January numbers along with Bro. Stewart's, and decide for themselves on which side truth and justice lie.

If I understand him, instead of reasoning on the matter, he prefers charges against me and tells the readers how he and they must be humiliated at my conduct, I shall as best I can gather up and answer these charges.

1st. It seems wrong in me to attempt to unsettle a matter which was ably discussed by Alex. Campbell and others forty or fifty years ago. I am confident that Alex. Campbell would not oppose a full and free examination of the points in hand, and I have no reason to think he would oppose what I have written. What he contended for all his life was to speak of every Bible subject as the Bible speaks. That any man in his day should take such a clear and comprehensive grasp of the Christian system as Alex. Campbell did and handle so correctly the many subjects which came before him, is to many a cause of wonder and gratitude to God who raised up and sustained such a man for

such a work. Still Mr. Campbell was not inspired, did not claim to be an oracle, and frankly admitted that he had at different times changed his views on subjects. He often used the aphorism, "Wise men change sometimes, fools never."

2nd charge. I "contradict a statement of Scripture which is as plain, both in prediction and fulfillment, as any in the Bible." He does not say what the statement is that I contradict, nor directly charge me with the crime, but assumes it as a conceded fact and deplores my reasons for it. To this grave charge I plead "not guilty." I contradict no statement of the Bible.

Next, my reasons which are so "humiliating" to him. I gave three reasons for my conviction that baptize was not a proper word to literally describe the gift the apostles received at Pentecost. He ignores two of my reasons, misquotes the third, and gathers two from other parts of my article to make up the trio. My third reason is this: "There was present on that occasion neither the literal element in which to baptize them, nor the personal administrator to do it. How then could they be literally baptized?" A man with less than Bro. Stewart's intelligence, knows very well that the Holy Spirit is not a literal element, and if called an element, it must be in figurative language. He knows also that Jesus was not personally present in Jerusalem at Pentecost. He was once personally present but must go away, or the Comforter would not come. Is that not plain enough? Bro. Stewart professes to quote my reason over and over, but leaves out the two words *literal* and *personal* every time and thus materially changes it.

Again, I said that Jesus on one occasion and only one, when predicting the miraculous gifts which the apostles would receive at Pentecost, said they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost and used baptized figuratively, that being the language of prophecy. But Luke in recording that event, did not use baptize, but said they were filled with the Holy Ghost, using literal language, the language of history. And that no New Testament historian said that they were baptized with the Spirit. To meet this, Bro. Stewart quotes Peter's language, Acts xi.—15, 16, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord how that he said John indeed immersed in water, but ye shall be immersed in the Holy Spirit." Well, what does this prove? Just what I said that Jesus, when prophesying of that event (or of the same) calls it immersion, but the historian does not. Peter records the events thus: "And as I began to speak the Holy Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning." After he had told what had happened, then he told what he had remembered the Lord to have said.

In chapter ii. John tells us literally what Jesus did and said in the temple. He drove out the sheep and oxen, overturned the tables of the money changers, &c., &c., &c., verses 15, 16. He next tells at verse 17, that his disciples remembered that it was written the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. No one would affirm that John here said in literal language that the zeal of God's house had eaten up the Saviour. But rather that John had told plainly how Jesus had cleared the Temple, and then that the disciples had remembered how David had foretold that event in figurative language. So in Peter's case.

Bro. Stewart says "People have been trying to imitate what they conceive to be the baptism of the Spirit by pouring water and sprinkling water and now we have filling as the true meaning of that wonderful figure."

Nothing can be truer. We have filling as the meaning of that figure. Had Jesus here used baptized literally, filling could not be its meaning; but filled is what he meant, hence he did not use it literally. With all who believe that Acts

ii.—4 records the fulfillment of Jesus' promise, Acts i.—5 this is a settled point. Our "imaginings" whether "disordered" or not, have nothing to do in the matter. We must either believe or disbelieve the word of God. I again urge the readers to treat the matter fairly and may the Lord be our Saviour and the Holy Ghost our comforter and guide, till we know as also we are known. D. C.

When circumstances allow, the Roman Catholic priests are not slow to excite and intensify in the hearts of their people the bitterest feelings toward Protestants. If space permitted, we would give copious notes of a sermon delivered March 8th, by Rev. Father McGivern, to the unmarried men in St. Ann's Church, McCard street, Montreal. From the extracts given below you will notice among other things that no objection is made to Catholic girls marrying Protestants, only, Catholic men must not marry Protestant girls. Why not? For the reason that the earliest impressions are the most lasting, and the mother's influence gives tone and direction to the whole course of life.

John Randolph, of Branoke, said: "I would have been a French atheist, were it not for the recollection of the time when my mother used to take my little hands in hers and make me say on my bended knee, 'Our Father who art in Heaven.'"

"I have found out what made you the man you are," said a gentleman one morning to President Adams, "I have been reading your mother's letters to her son."

Napoleon, when asked what is the great need of the French nation, replied, "Mothers."

Notwithstanding that Protestants are aware that such bitterness is engendered against them; that the priests control and direct the Catholic vote in the interests of their Church, which would pluck up and annihilate root and branch of Protestantism, which has given to us religious liberty; that their children are not even allowed to attend our schools, that our books, institutions and discourses are contemptuously spoken of, and that the young men cannot marry a Protestant girl, without having pronounced upon him the curse of the Church, &c. Yet, our politicians and people will frequently concede to them almost anything, (and they always want something) to get their vote. Our people will send their children to Catholic schools and convents and neglect our own. It is high time that we examine carefully what we are doing that the final results be not against us.

"Protestants erect large buildings and stock them with books whose object was the propagation of unbelief, and these were largely made use of by the adherents of their faith; Another danger was in reading of bad books, novels and Protestant sermons, also in going into Protestant churches and listening to Protestant discourses. . . . The fashion of a lavish expenditure upon horses and hearses, and the elaborate emblems of woe—which in many cases, were only for a hollow show—with the throwing of the corpse into the grave as though it were an animal, was unheard of until the introduction of Protestantism, and many Catholics, he was sorry to say, had not hesitated to copy the un-Christian method. Let them, instead of thus burying their parents, bring the remains into the church, in front of the altar, have the holy sacrifice of the mass said, and the blessing of the priest invoked; and instead of a large expenditure, let them give some of the money to the priests to offer up masses for the repose of their souls which may be in purgatory."

The curse of God, the curse of the church and the curse of the priest was upon the young man who married a Protestant girl. How, then, could he expect to prosper or be happy in such a marriage? Suppose such a marriage took place, and suppose the Almighty blessed the parents with children, the father might have them baptized in the Catholic Church, but while he was at his work the mother would pour into their young hearts the poison of bigotry. She would tell them that the priests were anti-Christians, Papists, and all manner of evil things would be said against them. Thus they saw the evil of such connections.

It is becoming more generally conceded that skating-rinks are a curse to any community where erected. School teachers complain that the children