

## Communications.

### RULES TO BE OBSERVED

*By Applicants to the Regular Baptist Missionary Society of Canada for Aid.*

I. Ministers applying to the Society for aid to enable them to supply destitute churches, must in their applications inform the Board:—

1st. Whether they are married or single.

2nd. State the number of their family dependent on them for support.

3rd. What salary they will require to sustain them, while giving themselves entirely to the work of the ministry.

4th. What proportion of the requisite amount can be raised on the field in which they intend to labour.

5th. What will be the lowest sum that will secure their services to the Society.

II. Individuals applying for aid, must forward with their applications, a resolution of the church or churches which they intend supplying, concurring in the application.

III. Churches applying, must state the number of their communicants, and the amount which they can raise amongst themselves, towards a missionary's salary.

IV. General remarks from applicants on the destitution of the field, will be serviceable to the Board.

V. Missionaries employed by the Society will be expected to report quarterly to the Board.

VI. All applications and reports must be addressed to the Corresponding Secretary, at least one week before a quarterly meeting of the Board.

By order of the Board,

JAMES FYFE,  
Corresponding Secretary.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

TORONTO, February 24, 1852.

DEAR BROTHER,—I have received the enclosed letter from Brother Fyfe. It was not intended by the writer for publication; but as it contains so much information and so many valuable suggestions suited to our denomination in our present circumstances, I trust you will find a place for it in the next issue of the *Observer*.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

A. T. McCORD.

WARREN, R. I., December, 1851.

A. T. McCORD, Esq.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I was glad to learn, from a recent number of the *Observer*, that a Regular Baptist Missionary Society has been formed in Canada. I have long been satisfied that nothing but a Canadian Society can effectively carry on the work of ministerial education and of domestic missions in the Province. None but Canadians or

those who have lived in the country some time with their eyes open, can understand the wants of the people. The peculiar affliction of the Baptists in Canada, has been foreign interference and influence—at one end, too English—at the other, too American. Society in Canada is neither like that of England, nor that of America: and it is absurd to insist upon conforming it in every respect to either; as it would be, upon making Corinthian metal, pure silver or pure brass.

The Baptists of Canada ought to be the sole judges in regard to the proper location for their Educational Institutions: and in regard to the basis or platform on which the energy and the intelligence of the denomination can be made to cooperate in missionary work. I am glad to see that you have taken both these points into your own hand. Let your present platform receive a liberal interpretation. Let it be carried out fairly, firmly, and kindly; and there is yet hope for the Baptists in Canada. It will require patience and persevering kindness to secure the cooperation of those whose origin, views and sympathies are so varied. But I am persuaded it can be secured on a liberal basis. "Be of good courage and do it." There is too much intelligence and piety among the body of the denomination to be long influenced by the arts of the demagogue, especially when practised by men who have themselves hoaxed the compass on the chief points in debate. My old friend and fellow student of the *Recorder*, is the last man who would obtrude his advice where it is not wanted, or who would continue to fight the battles of faction. And he is too shrewd a man not to find out in a short time the height, depth, and breadth, of those who are at present his "Canadian Correspondents."

It is high time the Baptists should learn to rely fully upon their own Church polity. And the brethren in Canada, if fairly dealt with at home and abroad, will soon earn that cooperation with any society for a given end does not imply church fellowship, nor the approbation of all the sentiments which may be held by the various members of that society. The venerated Dr. Cone, who has always been the strictest of the strict—a regular of the Regular Baptists—who has written and preached long and ably in defence of his practice, actually now cooperates with *bona-fide* Campbellites, for the purpose of securing a new translation of the English Bible. He does not agree with them on all points, he does not commune with them: but he cooperates vigorously with them to secure the object on which they are agreed. No man living understands better than Dr. Cone, what Society connections involve. He knows well that each Baptist Church is an independent body, which no society nor association can meddle with. It has not only the right, but it is bound to guard its own communion, making it just what the New Testament requires. And this obligation is neither increased nor diminished by the breadth or the narrowness of the platform on which any general society or association may be based. Still each particular church is responsible for the purity of its own communion and for that only. This is the first principle of independency, as it is the first principle of liberty. Canada, of all places under the heavens,

should be familiar with these first principles; for there is no country where cooperation is more essential to success—and no country where greater forbearance is required in order to secure it. A missionary society is not a church, nor a synod of churches. It is a company of individuals who are agreed to cooperate for one object, and it may be for no more.

Strict communion has been carried on in Canada beyond anything that is known here. I know there is not a church reported on the minutes of the Hamilton Convention, (except it may be Peterboro, and I know not but that is practically strict,) which is not as strict so far as receiving unbaptized communicants as the churches in New England. Some of the strongest churches in this country have for many years communed with the baptized members of pædo-baptist churches.

The correspondents of Dr. Williams and Brother Lathrop, and also those of the *New York Recorder*, have practised, (it may be unconsciously to themselves,) a mystification on these esteemed brethren, as to the open communionism of the Canadian churches. The words should have been defined by the accusers of the Canadian brethren. For the sake of stating my meaning in few words, I shall give a definite case. The first Baptist church in Providence, the oldest in America, has always since the days of Roger Williams, *communed with baptized believers, restricting the ordinance only thus far*. None need be told of the ability and intelligence of this church. The faculty of Brown University have been members of it successively for three-quarters of a century. Now some Canadians would call this church "open communion," but it has never occurred to the brethren on this side to do so.

I mention the above things simply as facts. Now if less strictness is insisted upon in this country where it is much easier to be rigid than it is among such a diversified population as that of Canada, we cannot fail to see that the rule attempted to be enforced by some in the western section of the Province, must scatter the Baptist forces. I am persuaded that the narrow interpretation given by many to the word "regular," and the harsh spirit in which unhappily sometimes their interpretation has been enforced, have made more irregular Baptists, than all the open communion preachers and semi-Campbellite teachers put together. Whatever is overdone will produce a reaction.

When the first principle of Baptist Church polity is fully guaranteed, viz., that each church is the exclusive guardian of its own discipline and ordinances, surely no church can fear contamination by aiding an object of which it heartily approves. If the society that asks the assistance of a church, should directly or indirectly claim any power over its affairs, it should say *No*, in tones of thunder. But this can never be the case in a society of individuals and not of churches.

Surely all the Baptists in the Province must be agreed in the important work of sending the gospel to their destitute fellow countrymen. O, were the whole denomination in Canada to unite, shoulder to shoulder, in this, leaving all those points which no society has the right or the power