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Contributors and Correspondents.

(For the Presbyterian.)

GIVING.

The religion which only touches the heart and leaves the purse unopened, is a vain one. Giving is an act of worship as much as prayer or praise, and since a blessing or curse is held out to us, according as we shall give or withhold, it would be well that we should consider the subject.

In the time of Malachi the Church had neglected this duty, and we hear God asking the startling question, "Will a man rob God?" And what is the answer he gives? "Ye have robbed me, even this whole nation, and ye are cursed with a curse." But he is willing to remove the curse and give us a blessing, for in the next verses He says, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." In another place He says, "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst out with new wine."

In the days of Hezekiah, the people were roused from their neglect of this duty, and we see them pulling down the altars and bringing in the offerings, and the result was—as the chief priest informed the king—that "since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty, for the Lord hath blessed His people." In 1 Chron. xxix., we see what rejoicing there was when the people had been awakened to their duty, and had performed it. But many will say "I am too poor." Are you poorer than the widow who gave the last two mites she had? Christ holds her up to us as an example of faith and works. The rule given is, "Every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth the cheerful giver." Let us also remember that "He who soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; but he who soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully." If it could be said of the Church now, as in the days of the building of the Tabernacle, "the people bring much more than enough," then the glad time "When all shall know Him," would not be far off. May the Lord grant us all a more liberal spirit in carrying on His work.

Suggestions from an "Elder."

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—One of the first duties of the newly united Presbyterian Church in Canada will be to compile Rules and Forms of Procedure in the Church Courts. I beg to call your attention and that of the ministers and elders to the "Rules and Forms of Procedure of the late C. P. Church," which may be made to contribute much to the composition of the future new book. In chapter I., section I., and page 2 of that book it says:—"3. The minister, as teaching elder, is the perpetual moderator." Why should not the Session have the right to elect their Moderator, as Presbyteries and other higher courts elect theirs? Such a rule as that quoted is inconsistent with the fundamental principle of Presbyterian polity, of which all presbyters or elders are justly proud and jealous. The rule tends unduly to elate the "teaching elder," and to throw on the other members of Session a slight of distrust and inferiority. Doubtless, in almost every case, the "teaching elder" would be elected to the Moderator's chair, but the Session should not be denied the right to elect him. The following paragraph on same page is equally objectionable:—"In the absence of the minister, any other minister having authority from him presides. When the minister dies, or is removed, or is temporarily suspended from his charge, the Presbytery nominates one of its members to moderate in the Session. Without the presence of a minister no meeting of Session can be held." This is of the same arrogant and insulting character as the former rule. Why should not the Session have the right to meet and transact business, when a proper quorum is present, as well as any other body? When the "teaching elder" is sick, or suspended, or is removed, or is removed, the Session must be subjected to great disadvantage and inconvenience, in that they cannot meet until a Moderator is appointed over them by another court, and that Moderator may live miles distant. If the Session meet in the absence of the minister and committed any error, the record of their acts is reviewed by the Presbytery and the error would be rectified.

The natural and necessary tendency of the rules referred to is to belittle, dwarf and contract the office and spirit of the other elders, and to discourage and prevent the development and exercise of their gifts, in "taking heed" to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers, to feed the Church of God." I hope some of the ministers and elders will take up this matter in the General Assembly or elsewhere, and seek to guard against the admission of such obnoxious rules into the Procedure of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Yours truly,
Elders.
May 8, 1876.

INTELLIGENCE OF FEMALE MISSIONS.

The following descriptions of Zenana visiting is by Mrs. Ross, Scottish missionary at Poona. The item regarding the desire of the natives for educated wives, however is furnished by Mrs. Drury, now at Madras:—

The master I spoke of says there is even now growing up fast among the young educated men a desire for educated wives and comfortable homes; and he is sure the parents of many of our caste girls will gladly, thankfully, as they find an English lady willing to teach the children and visit their houses, pay good fees. He told me of a young friend of his that married an educated wife, who while her husband was studying for his examination, woke him up regularly early in the morning and helped him; he was not clever, but "passed," and felt it (in Eastern language) "proudly his duty to exalt his true wife by tending to his companions of her virtue," which made all his companions wish for educated wives also! Well, if a heathen wife only enlightened by education could gain such influence, what, by God's blessing, might not converted as well as educated wives do!

The principle on which Zenana visiting is carried on is this, that we are willing to give instructions in reading, work, English, anything they wish, but that, along with it, we read the Bible and explain the Christian religion. At first this had to be explained to every one, when we first visited or were asked to visit at the house. By-and-by, however, it came to be understood that these were our terms, and none asked us who were not prepared to accept these conditions.

At the house of one wealthy family, on our first visit, a whispered request was made not to read anything, as the master of the house was much opposed to Christianity, and the permission to receive us at all had been obtained with difficulty. I conceded the point for that time, but explained that, although willing in certain cases to proceed cautiously, so as not to give occasion for displeasure against the individual giving us the invitation, that we could not continue to visit on these terms. I cannot, in a brief sketch like the present enter into particulars; but the result was that before I had been a month acquainted with the family, the old man who was so unwilling to admit me to his house, was reading a book I gave him on the "Evidences of Christianity," and requested me to give a copy in Marathi of the New Testament to the young woman on whose account our visits had been solicited. In this case, the admission being granted, the prejudice was overcome; but in others the opportunity was never afforded.

That the Hindoos believe in transmigration—i. e., the passing of the soul into another body, thus to go through another state of existence—is pretty well known; and that these transigrations are sometimes multiplied, and long continued, before the consummation which every devout Hindoo looks forward to, of entire absorption into the essence of Deity, is reached. But it is not, I believe, so generally known, that they believe also that the individual has gone through previous states of existence; and of the consequence of this belief, I met with one very painful instance: A poor woman had been the mother of seven children, six of whom had died, each one in infancy before the birth of another. The baby she was nursing when I first visited her was sickly, and soon followed the others. Here was a case, where in any community of even nominal Christians, the unhappy woman would have met with the deepest sympathy, not merely from her family, but from her neighbors, especially the female portion of them. What was the case here? When I saw her, four days before its death, watching beside that little sufferer; she told me that her husband, instigated by his mother and the neighbors, had beaten her, and beaten the child—the dying infant!—because they said it was some crime committed by her in a former state of existence that had caused her thus to be deprived of her children, and brought all this misfortune on their house.

Some people are very anxious to hear what are the results of our missionary labors, and it is natural they should; only they must bear in mind that many of these will never be known until the last day. Still, such of them as are now made manifest to us, we may mention. Three Brahmin girls have been rescued from the evils of such marriages, and withdrawn from the baneful influence of heathenism. At the very time when it had been arranged by the mother and other relatives, that the eldest of the three, then under ten, was to be married to a Brahmin, she and her two little sisters were joining their father in singing Christian hymns after their baptism on the Sunday evening after their baptism into the Church of Christ. The result to themselves is, that the father is working in the Lord's vineyard, an earnest laborer in the blessed task of bringing others to Jesus; while they are receiving a Christian education, which it is hoped will fit them for the same work: and if this be so, who shall tell what may be the result of their labors? One woman with her three boys was baptized, and is living a most useful and consistent life, and, we doubt not, doing her utmost to train her children in the faith. Five other women have given up the worship of those heathen idols to whom they were taught to bow the knees, and are steadily worshipping in the Church of the living God, trusting in Christ as the Rock of their salvation; and one other man, besides the father of these three girls was the joy of my heart many a day, when I saw his hard features soften, and his eye light

up when he looked at me, and I knew that the peace of Christ was there.

Even now among these little Hindoo children some are learning under our present Zenana missionary to repeat verses of Scriptures, and sing hymns of praise to Jesus. Among the scattered remnants of Israel—to which many of the families visited in Poona belong—some are learning to pray in the name of Christ, whom their fathers crucified. The work is progressing, prejudices are being overcome, the knowledge of something better, holier, purer, and more loving, than their own traditions have ever taught them, is beginning to dawn upon their mind; and blessed shall they be for ever, who have helped with heart and hand in the glorious work.

The "Canadian Baptist"

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—The brethren who read my communication in your last issue (5th inst.) would see the very gross misrepresentations of myself, etc., by the Rev. P. McDonald, Baptist minister, published to his readers all over the province by the editor, of the *Canadian Baptist*, in his issue of the 23rd March; and how groundless was his reason for refusing that reply of mine a place in his columns, viz: that it did not refer to questions of fact, a reason which any reader who knows what an account of facts is, would at once perceive to be as untrue as his refusal to publish my statement in my own defence from odious vilification of what actually occurred in the meetings in question, was unjust and a gross violation on his as well as his correspondent's part of the ninth commandment—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." Meanwhile, his readers having seen no correction of Mr. McDonald's representations will, of course, regard them as unquestioned facts, being a minister of their own and I of another denomination, and the matters being of Baptist interest, will, from their natural and strong bias, strengthen that conviction.

I stated in my last communication to you that a former reply of mine to a previous anonymous communication in the *Canadian Baptist* was admitted, but under peculiar difficulties which I will thank you to allow me now to explain. I get several papers of different names weekly, and for years, without an issue not coming duly to hand. Since last fall I happen to be a subscriber to the *Canadian Baptist*, and always received my copy weekly at the usual time till that of March 2nd, which was not forwarded to me from the *Canadian Baptist* office. I was not aware then that the editor had received immediately before this a communication from a Baptist correspondent here, in which myself by name, etc., figured prominently, and so looked on the non-arrival of copy, though unusual, as accidental. The next issue, however, (of March 9) did not come to hand either, although on both occasions I learned the copies for the Baptist subscribers had come as usual. Considering that several communications from the Baptist side of things had recently been appearing in local papers at some distance from here, highly charged with gross misrepresentations to those who did not follow the matters, to relieve the unhappiness felt by that side at their ill-success in meetings here in January and December, I suspected there might be something of this nature at the bottom of the non-forwarding of my copies. I consequently sent a card to the editor, requesting him to rectify for the future, and to send me the two back numbers that had not come. A week afterwards I received these, when, lo, in the last one was an article of one and a half columns, full from beginning to end of the most unprincipled misrepresentations of facts, in which by name perpetually I was presented in a very odious light. Of these nine were direct, the things alleged having been neither said nor done by me, literally or virtually. Other six were gross misrepresentations, by concealments of facts well known to every body here, and by distortions in what is stated. The whole was prepared by no novice in the art, with much care to get in as much into the space as possible. The reception and publication of this, seemed now to have been the reason, in the circumstances, why the issue containing it was not sent me. If I did not see that issue, I would not see and so would not reply to that communication, and the Baptist readers would get the benefit of it in that case, as an account not called in question. Even when one of another denomination should reply to a Baptist's misstatements, they will be inclined to trust to the veracity of their own representative and his more agreeable affirmations, etc., than the others. How much more when there is no contrary account?

In rural districts in particular it is very rare if ever that any is a subscriber to that paper except Baptists. Of course this is nowhere better known than in the C. B. office. Such is the case here. Baptists would not holly inform me of it, and if I had not had my attention drawn to other local communications before (of which the *Canadian Baptist* office away in Toronto would know nothing), I would easily not have thought of caring so much for the copies that did not come as to send for the back numbers. In any case a delay of any reply was certain, and might be considerable, and in those matters, likely to render it useless as past date, though the misrepresentations would leave their impression.

Having seen the article on the 16th, I mailed a reply on the 18th; I also wrote a friend in Toronto the circumstances mentioned, expressing my apprehension of the editor's adopting a policy of delaying its publication as long as possible, and requesting him should it not appear in the first issue (on the 23rd), to call on and also the Editor when he intended to insert it. This he did and informed me that he said it was

not received in time for that week, and was afraid it would be crowded out of the next by matter in type so much in type (ten days before for a weekly paper!) but in the issue after that I was to expect it. He mentioned further that the Editor explained as the reason of my copies not being sent, that my name had accidentally fallen out of the printed mailing list of subscribers, but was re-inserted when I wrote him. Just fancy a subscriber's name falling out of a printed list, long before his subscription time terminated, accidentally too, and just at the time and no other when a vitriolic communication in Baptist interests had appeared against him.

Meanwhile on that same 23rd, the fourth day after my reply had come to his hand, he published a second series of vilifications of myself, etc., this time from the Rev. Mr. McDonald, which as it alluded to the communication of the 9th, could only have been a short time in his hands; while my reply to the first was apparently not to see the light before the 6th April, a month after the first one appeared. At the same tardy rate (different from the measure to the Baptist assailants, who as yet had it all their own way) should I next reply to Mr. McD's, as I intended, it would not be seen till about May, if at all. Honourable editors make room at once for defences from personal accusations made in their columns; but here the C. B. office first directly causes by its non-action delay in preparation of my reply (no thanks to it if it was not greater), and now that it is forwarded, means to take its time though the accusations were particularly flagrant in number and nature. In these circumstances I at once wrote a brief communication to the Editor, expressing my disappointment at the so long proposed postponement, referred to the copies not coming to me as singular and requesting him if he could not publish mine in next issue to publish this short one meanwhile. He sent me a card that this one was highly offensive, insinuating that my name was put out of the subscriber's list purposely, and referring me to 1 Cor. xiii., on charity. In the next issue, however, (the 30th) my first one appeared, not the short one. In reply to his card I sent him a private note stating that my copies might have been detained without his knowledge, but that in the nature of the case and all the circumstances I had the feeling that some one in the management had purposely done it; that I would be relieved and glad, however, if he would favour me with an explanation of it differently. This he has not answered. Three days after I saw mine in the *Canadian Baptist* of the 30th, I mailed my reply to the Rev. P. McDonald's, with what result your readers have been already informed, also the same day (20th April) that my friend called (the 20th April), to ask if he meant to publish it and was told, no. He published a third reflecting on me from another Baptist correspondent; to which of course it was useless to reply after the refusal of my last. My friend's words in note to me on that refusal are in full as follows:—(The Editor of the C. B.,) "Mr. Muir says that as there is now no question of fact, but merely of opinion, it is useless to continue the controversy. He inserted an acknowledgment of having received it, he says, in last issue, and thinks that is enough."

Here, besides stating it does not deal with facts! he refers to the length of time "the controversy" had been in his paper, and makes that an excuse for the suppression. So the policy of delaying my preparation of my first reply (if not preventing it altogether), and then of its publication, becomes a professed reason for not allowing me to defend myself from now and great misrepresentations. Only two days after I saw the first of 9th March, my reply to it was mailed, and the 3rd day after that was published I sent him my second. So the delaying has been all his, and I have got but one reply to one communication, and none to the others that followed.

Such are the Editor and Baptist correspondents of the *Canadian Baptist*, such the matter and manner in which their unsuspecting readers are confirmed, and bound to their distinctive Baptist ideas, and prejudiced to dislike and despise infant baptists and "baby sprinkling;" and such are examples of the way other denominations are vilified and gagged as far as may be. *Sed magna est veritas et prevalebit.* "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

Hoping the nature of the matters disclosed will excuse me for the lengthened occupation of your space, I am, dear sir, Yours respectfully,
JOHN BETHUNE.
Chesley, 8th May, 1876.

Confession of Faith.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—I observe in your last issue a criticism, and a parody (I) on a sonnet which appeared in the last number of the *Presbyterian Record*, and which I for one, was very glad to see, as expressing what I think the true Christian principle, in the matter to which it refers. Your correspondent, however, thinks it is not exactly in accordance with the "Confession of Faith," to say that we should not "flout with unsparing tongue" those who differ from us on a confessedly mysterious subject, though they may be our brethren in Christ, loving or serving with us our common Master. Will your correspondent kindly point out the passage which pronounces on this subject? If there is one, I humbly submit that it should be at once revised or removed on the "Confession's" own principle, see Chapter XX, 2nd section, first clause. For any such teaching would assuredly be "contrary to God's word, and beside it." I append the following passages of Scripture, which, I think are needed at present, and bear more directly on the matter than does his parody!

"Jesus said, Forbid him not, for there is

no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us, is on our part."

"If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, peevish one another, envying one another."

"Do all things without murmurings or disputings." "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated."

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassions one of another, love as brethren, be faithful, be courteous." "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."

"Beloved let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and loveth God." And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." "And the greatest of these is charity."

I fear that several of your correspondents, as well as the writer of the parody, have been under the impression that it is the duty of a Christian to "flout with unsparing tongue" those who differ from him. If all the writers in your paper would "walk by the rule" given above, would not many communications be much shorter as well as much more edifying? ONE WHO HOLDS SCRIPTURE TO BE THE ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE.

Intestine Division.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—The appearance in this month's *Presbyterian Record*, of a piece of poetry entitled "Duration of Future Punishment," must give surprise to most of its readers. The *Record* is published by authority of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada; and yet in the pages of that *Record* are the following lines, and without comment:—

"If some good-hearted man with language strong, Refuse the dogma of eternal woe, Saying that God will never treat men so: Let us not flout them with unsparing tongue. While they receive the Bible as their guide, And hold its leading doctrines as do we; Let us go on as Christians side by side, In hope of blessed immortality, etc."

Now in thorough harmony with the teachings of the Bible, our standards say, "the punishments of sin in the world to come, are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell fire forever." If, then, the doctrine expressed in this passage (and in other passages as well) was solemnly avowed by our General Assembly, when said Assembly was constituted, how comes it that the *Record*, published by authority of the same assembly, favours—in appearance at least—the teaching of "some good-hearted men" who "refuse the dogma of eternal woe." It is surely plain and obvious enough that our "house is divided against itself." And seeing that it is so, it is probably well in all respects, that the case which has come before two of our Church courts is soon to be brought up in our supreme court. I cannot imagine that the course adopted by the General Assembly will savour of ambiguity, or will countenance any man among us who "refuse the dogma of eternal woe." It is time, at any rate for a finding being issued on this point. If the notion obtain in certain minds that the question of the eternal punishment of the wicked should be left an open question among us, that those who have doubts on this matter should have full toleration extended to them, let such a notion be authoritatively met. The license wished for it were perilous to grant, so grave and awful are the interests at stake. Liberty of thought, and liberty of speech, are both good if employed properly. But what is the use of our public creed, or what is to be made of our solemn declarations, if liberty is to be given to utterances among us which question "the dogma of eternal woe." In one body of professing Christians there is said to be much of Broad Churchism, and other bodies have regretted that it is so. But hitherto it has scarcely asserted itself among Presbyterians, nor I hope will the coming assembly afford it any measure of countenance. The fact is abundantly well known, that the various Evangelical churches in the world hold the doctrine of "eternal woe," and most people would be more than astonished if our supreme court were to blink the question, or allow it to be treated as an open one. In short, Mr. Editor, we must have a distinct understanding on this matter. If some among us will treat it in one way, and others among us will treat it in another way, it were better at once to have a separation, sad though the prospect might be. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Yours truly,
C. P.
May 10th, 1876.

CRUCIFY your sins, that have crucified your Saviour.

The well-known hymn, "Rock of Ages," was written in March, 1776, by Augustin Montague Toplady.

The English New Testament Revision Company have reached the sixth verse of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

It was said by one of the martyrs when going to the stake, "Life is sweet and death is bitter, but eternal life is more sweet, and eternal death more bitter."