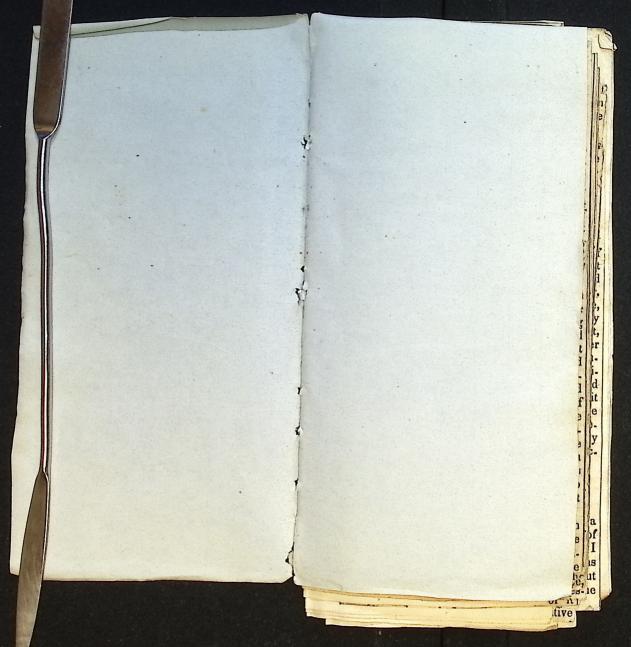
Vinton's Letter in the Secretary Nov 23/85-



For the Christian Secretary Publico THE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN CONNECTION

Nov 23/55

My Dear Brethren and Sisters:

And is it true that men whom you have sent out to fight the battles of the Lord, who have their colors nailed to the mast, who will never allow them to be struck by friend or foe, and who will never consent to survive a defeat; are such men, in such circumstances, to be accused in their absence, tried in their absence, and condemned in their absence? condemned without a hearing -- the sacred, the inalienable right of self-defense, never denied by any decent court, Christian, Mahomedan, or Pagan, even to the vilest criminals, refused them? Is this Baptist polity? If so, whither are we tending?

In place of continuing my narrative in regard to the wonderful work of grace that God is still carrying on here among the heathen, I must, the present mail, send you a few facts in regard to the statement made before the late meeting of the Board in New York, in reference to the Maulmain councils. I shall with this also send of for publication in the Secretary a copy of a letter I sent to the Executive Committee on the subject of the charge of insubordination, after which I shall hope to write you on more congenial topics. If you think me wrong in noticing these charges at all, pray forgive me, and ask God to torgive me, and give me more of the spirit of patient endurance under suffering.

I did then unite with my brethren in calling for an investigation in regard to the moral deliuquencies of a missionary brother. Before doing this, however, a large the exertions of the other as ms own.

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number of facts came to my knowled which forced upon me the painful conclusion that fidelity to the cause of Christ made the call an imperative duty, nor have I changed my opinion. When the facts shall be made public, these facts will be my justification. Till then I content myself with the simple statement of what I have done.

As to my motives in calling for the investigation, I can only say, that the efforts of the Deputation to represent me as owing the fallen brother an old grudge, are without the shadow of a foundation to rest upon. True, they did "search for iniquity, and accomplished a diligent search," and thought that they had found it, but every thing was explained, and they knew, or at least had the means of know ing, that there was no bone of contention between us-that our views of Missionarypolity were nearly identical-that in our intercourse with the Karens and mode of treating them, there were no other two | missionaries whose course was so nearly the same as ours-that he, in every way possible, sought to retain me at one of the most honorable posts in the Mission, the Karen Theological Seminary-that, up to the time of the Sandoway disclosures, I sought his co-operation in every waythat our fields of labor were entirely distinct, so that in no sense could either regard the other as a rival-that our position and relations were analogus to the position of two generals in command of two wings of a great army in deadly contact with a powerful enemy, each having confidence in the ability and integrity of the other, and each feeling that his own safety and success as much depended on the exertions of the other as his own.

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fact is that when he fell I felt that my own right arm was broken.

All this this the Deputation knew, for I explained to them particularly. With all this knowledge, how they could make the statements they have, and in the language of another, "followed me with a pertinaciousness never surpassed," I will not attempt to explain. Nor will I agitate the question if whether men who have made such statements under such circumstances in regard to an absent brother, are entitled to the confidence of the denomination. I only state the facts, and leave you to draw

your own inferences.

This then is the head and front of my offending. I called for an investigation, but I took no part in the investigation. I have had no opportunity of doing so; nor have I been asked by the Deputation or the Executive Committee for an opinion, or a fact, or a witness, in regard to any point connected with the investigation called for. The Deputation, unsolicited either by the accused or the accusers. called a council at a time and place at which they knew that neither the accused nor the accusers could be present. I told the Deputation expressly that I objected in toto to proceeding with the investigation in the brother's absence—that his having declined the called for the investigation and gone to America made it impossible to proceed with the case till his return without involving ourselves in a charge of trying a man in his absence, (he had appointed no one to take charge of his case,) which I held to be morally wrong, and alike opposed to the dictates of common justice and the The council was teachings of the Bible. held, but no evidence was presented except such as was floating on the surface,

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and which might be known to every one, for the man of all others (Bro. Beecher) who knows all the facts was not even notified that there was to be a council, although there was abundance of time to do

Few, in comparison with many, as were the facts that came before the Council, still the Council felt itself called upon to express its opinion in regard to the moral delinquencies of the brethren, and that expression was staved off by the Deputation only by the assurance that the investigation was not finished and would be continued at Rangoon and Bassein, (see letters of Rev. D. L. Brayton to me of Feb. 16, 1854, and of Rev. T. Simons to Rev. N. Brown of June, 1855,) this pledge was not redeemed, for there was no investigation held either in Rangoon or Bassein on the subject. No questions even y were put in regard to this case, either to t, Mr. Kincaid, or Mr. Beecher, or myself. Still I am represented as pursuing the fal- !len man; but from the foregoing you will see that I have not done anything of the d kind-that in fact I have had no time, in it connection with my other work, to do e more than defend myself against the cruel !attacks that have been made upon me for y calling for this investigation. To begin !with and to end with, I said to the Executive Committee, NOT TO THE PUBLIC, that in view of all that had passed I could not recognize him as a minister of Christ in good standing; and in saying this, I a only expressed the opinion of a large of number of missionaries that composed the I Council that tried him. I have from the is first deeply deplored the fact of, and ear-at nestly remonstrated against the unneces-le

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## A LETTER FROM BURMAH.

sary publicity that has been given to this case. I regard it as injustice to those who called for this investigation, and downright cruelty to the erring and now departed brother and his friends.

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For calling for this investigation I was called away from my work in the midst is of a powerful revival of religion, and ar- le raigned before an Ecclesiastical Council. i-I attended the Council three days and was ir then taken ili and unable to finish my de- ln fense, or even to attend the Council; and le vet the Council under the direction of the v Deputation proceeded with the work of trying me in my absence, and censuring of me in my absence, and then refused me a copy of their doings, (the doings spoken of by Mr. Yodd were the doings of the first Council, and not of the second, as he himself will testify,) nor have I to the present hour been able to obtain, either from the Deputation or Executive Committee, a copy of these doings, and therefore know next to nothing of what was done upon the Council, except that I am censured, but for what, and upon the strength of what testimony, I do not know. The Home Secretary now says it was for "reviving difficulties as far back as 1838," and thus inflicting a "needless wound on the reputation of a brother." But this is not true, for this case was brought before the Council not by me, but by the Deputation, and had I been present I should have earnestly and solemnly remonstrated against the introduction of the subject, as calculated, in the language of the Home Secretary, to inflict a needless wound upon the reputation of a brother. Nor had the but Deputation the slightest pretext for bringing up the subject, for they knew, for it tive

## A LETTER FROM BURMAH.

was in evidence before the Council, in I had said that I had no intention of bringing up that subject in connection with any investigation that might be held.

What next? The Deputation sent of these doings to the Executive Committee in Boston, refusing me three written applications for a copy, accompanied by their own remarks, which I have not yet been allowed to see. July 8th, 1853, I wrote to the Executive Committee, earnestly and solemnly remonstrating against being censured till I had had an opportunity of f completing my defense, and they them-t selves had heard what I had to say. I said in substance, "strike, but hear me." The hearing was denied, but the blow came. I was a second time tried in my absence, and censured in my absence. - it, The Committee would not even stay the er proceedings till they could hear from me 1. by writing. Again and again have I turned away from the contemplation of id these painful facts to think of Paul in hit Cæsarea. The cruel Jews demanded be that he should be tried at Jerusalem in his e. absence, condemned in his absence, and hy then executed, but the noble Festns re- c. plied, "It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crime alleged against him." The right of self-defence, unsolicited, is here conceded to Paul by a heathen Roman. I demanded it of my ons Christian brethren, the Executive Committee, and am refused; and yet my brethren in my native State, members of

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## A LETTER FROM BURMAH.

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the Board, "in the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, protest against anything which would weaken the Executive Committee," and prevent them from pushing through such unexampled proceedings!!! (See New York Recorder for April 21st, 1855.)

I made one more effort to convince the Executive Committee that all this was wrong in principle—that they had no right to try a missionary in his absence, and censure him in his absence, and in regard to my own case I said, "In every instance in which the Committee have censured my acts, that censure is based in a misconception of the essential facts of the case, and it is my firm conviction that could the facts be known, instead of censure I should have awarded me a high meed of praise for what I have done." then added in regard to the report that er censured us, "Was it right for the Execu- utive Committee, without first giving us a hearing, to accept of such a report? What id is this but to be less Christian than the hit Jewish Nicodemus (John 7:51), and the be Heathen Roman Festus (Acts 25:17)? e. Will the Missionary Union allow its mis- ny sionaries to be condemned without a hear- icing? I do not believe it." But did the Executive Committee stay proceedings and give us a hearing? Instead of this, the Committee call together the Board of Managers, and without our knowledge or consent give the Board their own version, of of the matter, and without any one to an-it I swer for us even by proxy, we are a third ons time tried in our absence and censured in but our absence, not by the Board of Mana-The gers, for that body made exception expressly in our favor, but by the Executive

Committee in a communication dateur April 3d, 1855, thus overriding the action of the Board of Managers, for Dr. Williams said, "to avoid anything which would reflect on the character of Bro. Vinton, he wished to make an alteration in his resolution, by inserting general course," thus refusing, as he himself said, "a complete endorsement." But as the Executive Committee, as though fully authorized to do so, renew their act of censure; and though I cannot understand their mo. tives for all these strong proceedings, any more than David could in the case of Shimei, still I feel as he did, for I do not know but the Lord has, for my good, bid them pursue me. Of one thing, however, they themselves are undoubtedly aware, that my work is too pressing to justify my coming down to call them to an account, and that therefore they may do whatever they may choose, with comparative impunity, and if my brethren in old Connecticut, members of the Board, choose to aid them in crushing me, and the Lord permit it, I can only say, "the will of the Lord be done;" for I cannot leave my post to defend myself, but must work on "till I my work have done and rendered up ac. count."

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he hrYour stricken fellow-laborer, J. H. VINTON.

Rangoon, July 20, 1855.

P. S .- I subjoin an extract from a communication written by a member of the Maulmain Council, premising that I have five other similar communications from other members of the Council, but have not time now to copy them. The extract is as follows:

MESSES. EDITORS:-I have just received a letter from Br. Kincaid, which, although it has been nearly six months on the way, contains several items of so much importance, that I have concluded to send you a few extracts for insertion in the Christian Times. Amid the discouragements which our beloved brethren have been called to meet, in consequence of the efforts to remove them from their fields, it is cheering to hear of the success which has attended their labors, and to witness the deep attachment and sympathy of their native flocks in this season of trial. The letter was written some time after the news of the resolution to remove Messrs. Vinton, Beecher and Ranney had been received in Burmah.

Affectionately your brother,

N. BROWN.

Brn. Ranney and Beecher are recalled, and Br. Vinton is ordered away from Rangoon, which is the same as to be recalled. Br. Vinton is not a hireling; he does not work for pay; and of course will not leave the more than 2,000 sheep in the wilderness, and a Karen Christian population of near 10,000, who look up to him for instruction. Can an organization that claims to sever such a relation, claim also to have the favor God? Can it claim to be a worker together with God? I have no unkind feelings towards the men, but I loathe the system, that can ignore the Providence of God and the coming down of the Holy Ghost.

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I have just obtained the statistics of all our missions; they are the best commentary on the work of the Holy Spirit in turning the wilderness to a fruitful field. Rangoon, Karen churches, 36 with 2,044 members; 36 village schools with 600 pupils, self-supporting; 17 old church. es support their own pastors, and 19 new churches support their pastors in part. Daring the past year these churches have paid into the treasury of the Home Mission Society 600 rupees; also, to aid the High School, 200 rupees; also, towards a brick chapel, 2,887 rupees; that is 3,687 rupees for benevolent purposes. At the end of 1852 there were about 1,000 members; since then 1,200 have been baptized, and 19 new churches forned. In three years famine and pestilence have taken off about 150, so that last September there were 2,044 members. The fear of losing their teacher has aroused them to unwonted energy, and God has wonderfully blessed them. Last year, by the request of Major Phayre, the Commissioner, they sent six young preachers to a body of about 8,000 Karens north of Shwavgyen, where they had petitioned the English authorities for men to teach them the worship of the eternal God, and some thirty Zayats were put up for schools and religious worship.

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Some time since, when the circular came from the Rooms, that such was the state of the treasury that nothing could be furnished for land or buildings; nothing for schools, and almost nothing for traveling and native assistants, the Karen Home Mission came forward

and proposed to pay for the land and all the buildings, and relieve the Missionary Union, and save the property. Br. Vinton's house, a large school house, two dormitories, each over 70 feet long, to accommodate 200 pupils in rainy season, all the out-buildings, and all built of teak, in the most substantial manner; then the clearing of the ground, the fencing, the digging of wells, the making of roads; land, buildings, and all the improvements remained unpaid for, a debt of more than 5,000 rupees, and on much of it interest being paid. The Karens themselves had loaned between one and two thousand rupees. As the property was for their benefit and the benefit of their children, and as about one third of the money was due them, they proposed paying for the whole, and then to hold it for the use of their teachers in laboring for the religious interests of the Karens. This is a most noble and praiseworthy effort, and indicates an amount of energy and enteprise and maturity beyond any former example in Burmah. It relieves Br. Vinton of a crushing debt on property liable to be burnt up, and for which he was paying interest.

Had you seen these Karens three years ago, when all their villages were burnt for 50 miles around Rangoon; when for months, all the men who could hold a musket or a spear were night and day resisting the advanced posts of the Burman army; their wives and children living in the jungles, and this too through the entire rainy season; then came famine and pestilence; and could you have seen what we saw, some

thousands, of men, women and children, living on roots, bark, and the buds of trees; even females with new born infants and no nourishment; large numbers of the disciples of Christ and their children living in carts and under the trees; you would know the reason why Br. Vinton was in Rangoon, looking after the dying and scattered flock in the wilderness. The angels of God were there; the Son of God was there, in that wilderness. I went with Br. Vinton to visit them. At that time no English officer or soldier was allowed to go a mile beyond the stockade; and often 3,000 troops were under arms all night. Still we pushed our way through the jungles, and went among the sufferers. Rice was brought from Bengal and a few could buy, but the larger number had no means. Br. Vinton became responsible for over 4,000 rupees worth of rice to merchants, and distributed it to these starving Karens, with no security but their word. I distributed over 1,000 rupees worth in the same way.-Many were saved from starving. Have they been ungrateful? All has been paid. Every week, too, souls were turned to God; the Holy Spirit was poured out; and yet Br. Vinton did wrong in coming to Rangoon. It is a crime too great to be forgiven. He should have sat still in Manlmain, were there were already two Karea missionaries, and let this flock in the wilderness perish. He should have closed his ears against this Macedonian cry for help; he should have hardened himself against their tears and cries and sufferings; he should have

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given evidence that he was an "employee," that he was a hireling, and had no care for the flock. This is virtually the doctrine taught. "Your ways are not as my ways, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Br. Beecher, in Sandoway, was 200 miles from the Karens, and could do nothing. He went among the Karens, and to the very field he was appointed to occupy; and in doing so he committed an unpardonable offence. His superior talents, his perfect knowledge of the language and the people, and the suffering condition of that great field, are all accounted as nothing; more than 5,000 members, with a Christian population of 25,000 souls, must be left in the wilderness uncared for. What has Br. Beecher done? He went into his own field of labor, instead of remaining idle in Sandoway, more than 200 miles off. This is his crime; nothing more nor less.

There are 56 native pastors in the 56 Sagau Karen churches but with five or six exceptions, you have no idea of the ignorance of these pastors. They are just able to read, but have almost no Biblical instruction. I have seen a dozen letters written by some of the most efficient pastors, inquiring if the report they hear is true, that their teacher is not coming back? The greatest distress and confusion prevails; they compare themselves to orphans cast out to perish. Br. Beecher should lose no time in getting back to instruct these native pastors and comfort the churches. He knows the Karens too well to feel any anxiety about support.

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He should come back, trusting in God and in the Karens. The God of Missions will take care of him.

We have baptized about 150, \* and we have now many candidates for baptism. I write in a great hurry, for to-morrow morning I am to leave home for some villages in the interior, where we have two small churches, and several candidates for baptism.

Yours affectionately,

E. KINCAID.

\* At Prome & vicinity

"While speaking of the school at Kemendine, allow me to say a word about brother Vinton. I look upon him as a persecuted man, and I much regret that I ever held a position by which my name might be quoted as one of his persecutors. I confess that I entered the Maulmain Councils prejudiced against him. At the time Dr. Peck arrived in Maulmain, I thought highly of him as a man of fairness and candor. He was a guest at my house for a month or so, and in the privacy of social intercourse he related to me and my wife his troubles with and triumph over Br. Vinton in America, and such was the effect upon my mind that I can now see that I was not unbiased. Moreover, I was in entire ignorance of the matters at issue between Abbott and Beecher, until a short time before the Convention, and was not prepared to believe the reports then current about Abbott, and the conviction got hold of my mind that brethren Vinton, Beecher and Kincaid had combined to destroy him. The paper which the brethren drew up, which they declare was only a call for investigation, was so worded as to admit of a very different interpretation, and was thus used to their disadvantage. There were a great many other matters also tending to a prejudgment of the case before the Council opened. Then, too, when the Councils were in session they were not left to take their own course in prosecuting inquiry. Mr. Granger stood there precisely like a prosecuting attorney, whose whole course proved that Mr. Abbott was to him as a client. There was proof to convict Mr. A. of all that had been said of him-abundant proof to warrant the withdrawal of fellowship-but this proof was ruled out by the adroitness

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of the attorney, and the result you know. You will ask, why did not the Council assert its independence, and declare a verdict upon all the testimony elicited? I cannot answer, unless by saying that the spell of prejudice had not yet been removed from the minds of some, and there were others. who, I am afraid, were influenced by other motives. As it was, an attempt was once made to pass upon Abbott's character, but before it was put to vote it was suppressed by a rule of order. The Deputation carried their report of the proceedings of the Council to the Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee adopted a report of censure and admonition. In the progress of events, the Executive Committee. ask to be sustained by the Board of Managers, before whom they spread out the report of the Deputation. After a full dis cussion, resolutions are passed, which, as I understand them, neither sustain nor condemn their action, but are intended as a sort of compromise. Thus the Executive Committee do not understand them. They assume that they are fully sustained in their first action, and forthwith censure these brethren a second time with severity. Now where is this to end? Nothing is more certain than that confidence and mutuality can never be regained between the Executive Committee and a majority of the Missionaries now in the field."

I would like the Watchman and Reflector, the New York Baptist Recorder and Register, and the Christian Chronicle of Philadelphia to publish the above.

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For the Christian Secretary.

My Dear Bro. Burn:—I send you a copy of my letter to the Committee, as I have little expectation that it will appear in the Macidonian. Yours, &c.,
J. H. Vinton.

To the Executive Committee-

My DEAR BRETHREN :- I am pained to know that statements prejudicial to my missionary character should have been made before the late meeting of the Board of Managers without first communicating with me on the sociect. The charge is without the shadow of a foundation to rest upon. Of whatever other sins I may be guilty, I am not guilty of the sin of insubordination. On three several occasions while in Maulmain, and when your or- n ders, in my judgment, involved disaster to the Mission, if executed, I became per- st sonally responsible for large amounts of at money, and thus kept the machinery of m the Mission in operation without violating le your orders.

Before the establishment of the Rangon Mission, it was an appendage of the Maulmain Mission, and I was in charge a of the Karen department, and might theresfore have come here without consulting depoint, and yet should not have been open to the charge of breaking rules. But did I ray to it? I chose to give myself a wide, I margin, and therefore wrote you nine the months before leaving Maulmain in regard, it to my intentions, and then wrote you near-the ly every intervening month on the subject, to nor did I then move till I had been relieved of the charge of the Karen Theological of Seminary with express reference to my

, san all the gone of California, for God gave me more than 400 precious souls di and helped me to constitute six new churches)-besides more than 3000 rupees to the Mission, and yet I am accused 11 of insubordination! It is monstrous injustice, but the day will declare it, and I E am content to wait. Still it does grieve me that I must lie under this cruel implication in the estimation of such men as בו de my dear old father Webb. The Lord bless in him. I shall never cease to love him. whatever he may think of me. to What else have I done? The Deputag tion ordered that but fifty pupils should be n taught at the expense of the Mission in 11 10 each of our schools. I have ever regarded of 8 e this order as a standing monument of folly ıt that will be sure to mantle the cheek of the future historian of our Mission with 0 shame, as calculated to promote narrow 0 S of views and idle habits among missionaries, S and wholly inadequate to meet the existh us ing (not to say prospective) wants of the ho Mission. But have I ever disobeyed the B order? I asked the Deputation if there go was any objection to the Karens or their fo hi friends supporting other children in the school as day scholars. They said no, T up and from that hour I resolved to look up to God for what the Deputation refused me, nor have I looked in vain. We have sp now more than 180 pupils, and hope soon gr to have 200, nor do I expect to want the first rupee to carry on our work. Buildtoings are in process of erection for their tis accommodation, nor have we any appropriation from you to meet the expense. mo But the Lord will provide, and blessed be in pa his glorious name forever. Were your ief ia remittances wholly to fail, I should feel Ly little anxiety as to the result here.

Karens alone, if need be, would supply us with the means to go on with the work. True, I am distressed that you do not supply us with the means for planting the standard of the cross in every village and hamlet in the whole Karen world. Still I have no cause of difficulty with you because you do not do what I think you ought. No, dear brethren, I can live on rice and salt to save money to carry on this blessed work, but I cannot transgress your rules because it is opposed to my conscience. When I have spread out the facts and plead with you for the means to take possession of this whole country in the name of the Lord, there my responsibility ends, and yours begins, and there I leave it. Nor would I even intimate that you do not as conscientiously act up to your convictions as I do to mine. The Deputation also forbade my teaching the heathen at the expense of the Mission, and I said very well, then I will teach them at my own expense, nor have I been obliged to turn any away-nor am I the poorer-I am even richer, for God has thus enabled me to gather fruit unto life eternal, and to prepare gems for the diadem of my Redeemer.

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> As to my "teaching the year round, and teaching English," who made the statement does not appear from the report in the Recorder, but this I will say, that the man who made that statement, if he knew anything on the subject, knew that he was stating what was not true, and I am truly surprised that with all your knowledge on the subject no one of your number was found to correct so gross a misstatement. You knew that no missionary in the field

has traveled more extensively than I have the past two years, and that therefore the statement in regard to my teaching the year round could not be true. You knew too that I resigned the charge of the Theo. Sem. because I could not leave the work of preaching for any other work. Even Mrs. Vinton has traveled extensively and has not been surpassed by any of her sisters in doing missionary work in the jungle.

As to teaching English even if I had done it, I should have broken no rules, for that in certain cases is allowed, (see Fourth Annual Report, page 35,) and yet I have not taught in English an hour in India. The little instruction that I have given even to my own children, has been given almost exclusively in Karen. And yet I am accused of teaching English!! Of what shall I not be accused next?

In conclusion, dear brethren, permit me to say that I am not aware of having bro. ken any of your rules, but that if you think differently, I must beg it as a special favor that before spreading the whole subject before the public in my absence, you will kindly inform me, that, should you prove to have been misinformed as to the facts, I may correct your misapprehensions, and if not, that I may see and confess my faults and reform my ways. this you may be assured that should the time ever come that I cannot in all good conscience obey your orders, I shall either appeal to the Board of Managers or resign your service, for I will not, even though the rules should be arbitrary and injurious, lay myself open to the charge of insubordination.

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JE DV-As this charge has been spread abroad in the public prints, I wish this correction published in the Macedonian. ach Your fellow laborer, J. H. VINTON. frge RANGOON, June 27, 1855. P. S .- I would like the Watchman dvai of and Reflector, the N.Y. Baptist Recorder ere and Register, and the Philadelphia Christian Chronicle to publish the above. r. aind J. H. V. Eity The nress -o he sieon e ajur els eral lies o nch S leis-S ncoh Ce s is he etigIr. iacist Liaipt ssrar oren ošle teche ele ur lov.ty BOTH SIDES .-- A communication the Rev. J. H. Vinton, missionary to Ba mah will be found on the first name of all ief

paper, in which he speaks in regard obv-nd ps misunderstanding between himself ; Delegation, and through them, of t ecutive Committee. We regard it of an act of justice to our brother Vin rge ea allow him to present his side of the Wa-8 tion to his friends in Connecticut. of It ere ha md ! ity the he on ur e a re-8 ral ies 0 ch isnlos h t ce he Ir. siar oen gle toeleur ief

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