







**THE  
CHRISTIAN BAPTIST,**  
PUBLISHED MONTHLY;

EDITED BY  
ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.

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Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your Father who is in Heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one Teacher;—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one Leader—the MESSIAH.

*Matthew xxiii. 8-10.*

Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.

*Paul the Apostle.*

What a glorious freedom of thought do the apostles recommend! And how contemptible in their account is a blind and implicit faith? May all christians use this liberty of judging for themselves in matters of religion, and allow it to one another and to all mankind.

*Benson.*

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VOLUME IV.

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**ERRATUM**

Page 138, 4th line from bottom, after "righteousness," read,  
*to extend pardon.*

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[Mat. xxiii. 8—10—Campbell's Translation.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

### PREFATORY REMARKS.

ON the subject of religion I am fully persuaded that nothing but the inspired scriptures ought ever to have been published. On all sciences and arts merely human, and pertaining to the things of this life, author may succeed author, and volume be added to volume, keeping pace with the expansion of human intellect and the accumulations of human experience—But what is the reason? The answer is ready. No author is perfect; and no volume absolutely complete; no science has arrived to absolute perfection, and no art has been carried to a consummation beyond which ingenuity cannot reach. Hence we conclude that authors and their works on all subjects merely human may with propriety and advantage be multiplied manifold. And because God is the author of the sacred volume, a perfect teacher of one science and of one art; that science and that art, incapable of any improvement from human intellect, requires not another author than himself, nor another volume than the Bible—The great God has condescended to teach but *one science*, and that is the science of religion, or the knowledge of himself, and of man in all his relations, as his creature. He has taught but *one art*, and that is the *art of living well* in relation to all the high ends and destinies of man.—Now the Bible contains this *science* and teaches this art in the same perfection which its author exhibits in all his works. From this I infer that no treatise on religion, that no rules of practice can be introduced, but at the expense of impeaching the character of the author of this volume.—Such efforts say—in language loud and daring;—Indeed their proper title is, “A new improvement on the science of religion and the art of living well, in which this science and art are exhibited, in relation to some, if not to all the divine ends, to much better advantage than they are by God in his writings; by the public's most wise and benevolent friend—*A Fellow Erring Mortal.*” I say this is the language, meaning, and the proper title of every volume, and its author.

No tongue could express, no heart conceive, no power of numbers calculate the advantages which the world would this day have enjoyed had not one volume, on the science and art before mentioned, been announced to the world save the oracles of God.

For such a globe as that which we inhabit there is no occasion for two *suns* even of Divine architecture; and much less for one of human formation. As little need is there for another treatise on this subject than God's own volume.

"Why then do you, Mr. Editor propose and commence another volume?" I was anticipating this from the first sentence, and am prepared to answer your question—So many systems other than God's own system, and so many rules besides his, have appeared, confounding, dividing, and distracting the human family, that to call men off from these appears just as necessary as when men have perverted and abused any gift of heaven, it becomes the duty of every philanthropist and faithful subject of the Great King to apprise men of the consequences, and to call them off from what may prove their utter ruin. There was no occasion to denounce drunkenness before men had discovered the art of making, and a taste for using to excess, fermented liquors. But now that drunkenness has become the common, or a common sin of the community, there is need for dehortations against this horrid abuse of God's bounty.

"God made man upright; but he has sought out many inventions." To restore man to uprightness and happiness is the grand end of the whole remedial government of God. To be instrumental in introducing that state of things which God instituted, and which was once exhibited; of leading the disciples to see that they need but one bond of union, one prophet, priest and king, one Bible, one book on the science of religion, and one treatise on the art of living well, is the supreme object of all our efforts.

That such has been our design I hope has been already gathered from the preceding volumes, and we are thankful that we are not without witness that our labour has not been in vain. The sphere of usefulness allotted to this work has increased and been enlarged with every volume. The present volume is commenced with incomparably more sanguine anticipations than those which animated our first efforts. We are assured that the religious mind is marching forward with strides geometrically proportioned to its progress not many years back.

The opposition made to our course has only stimulated our speed, and affords fresh evidence of the goodness of the cause to which we are indissolubly wedded.—The pusillanimity of our opponents, the imbecility of their attacks—and the manifest management of their resources, while they exhibit the true foundation of their standing in public estimation, have confirmed our hopes, and given the assurance that not only the decline, but the overthrow of human religious establishments, and of a religion founded upon tradition and upheld by prejudice is at hand.

Had they never been employed in an effort to defeat our attempts, we could have known nothing of their disposition and could have argued nothing from their silence; but their exertions

have shown, that to will is ready with them; but how to perform they find not.

We boast not of ourselves; but of the excellency of those principles which we have been led to espouse: and our unfeigned desire is that our opponents would either manfully, argumentatively, and affectionately produce their strongest reasons; or come over and help us.

While the press is labouring every day and pours forth upon the public eye volumes of declamation, of commendation, of eulogy upon the toys of childhood, and the trifles of old age; upon the glorious fruits of *tracts*, the exploits of the heroes of modern invention; while holy romances, fictitious travels, and religious novels are gravely recommended by the pulpit and the press, methinks there is room and need for a few faithful advocates to plead the cause of the Bible, and to argue its superiority over all human expedients to convert the world.

The great majority of papers called religious, are as much political, commercial, and facetious as they are religious—The Luminaries, Stars, Suns, Registers, Recorders, Secretaries, &c. &c. in one column tell us the way to heaven; and in the next how to engraft trees, make canals, raise revenue: and some advertise strayed or stolen horses, hogs, and negroes. In the same column I lately saw the way to escape the wrath to come, and to clean black silk separated by a single line. —In another a direction to devotion followed by a direction to find the residence of the barber. A famous conversation is, in another, followed by a brokers list of the rates of exchange. The necessity of humility and temperance is argued in one paragraph—Fancy goods, gewgaws, and sweetmeats announced in the next. In a word they are a heterogeneous mass of the

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“*Congestaque eodem,*”  
“*Non bene-junctarum discordia semina rerum*”

“Any thing to please every body and any body, for the sake of two dollars a year,” is their motto. If not the letter or design, it *appears* to be the only appropriate motto. We might as well call Thomas Paine a christian apostle, as call any one of them the only religious paper in seven states and three territories.—Now and then, in splendid capitals, is hung up the glorious fruit of a “TRACT OF FOUR PAGES;” of the conversion of a whole neighborhood by one single prayer of a pious beneficiary fresh from some theological school; of the brilliant success of a religious beggar; and of a new batch of presidents, secretaries, managers, and trustees—of what——? I say of what?—The dictionary affords not words to designate of what.

In this state of things I sincerely think that there is need for somebody to attempt to serve *one master*—to plead one cause—to contend for one system which can boast of a divine and infallible origin. And such may we be found, is the prayer of the

EDITOR.



**A RESTORATION  
OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF THINGS.—No. XIV.  
THE BISHOP'S OFFICE.—No. III.**

IT is admitted by the apostle Paul that a person not invested with the office of a bishop may *desire* the office. "If a man earnestly seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth an excellent work." He then proceeds to lay down the indispensable *moral* and *intellectual* qualifications which he must possess. In doing which he plainly supposes that one may *earnestly desire* this work who is not eligible to it. Experience, also, a good teacher, teaches, the same thing.

But having already glanced at the moral and intellectual endowments of a bishop in a previous number, we proceed to his call and appointment to office.

In the first place, then, the *call* is predicated upon the qualifications—without these he is not eligible; with them he is eligible. Consequently a due estimate of his endowments must be formed by somebody; and most certainly not by himself, nor by those who belong not to the flock to be instructed and presided over. By whom then? Assuredly by those amongst whom he is to labour, and over whom he is to preside. His qualifications in the intellectual department must then be viewed in relation to the capacity and attainments of the flock; for a man may be fit to teach, and to preside over one flock, who would not be qualified to teach or preside over another. The flock then in calling or electing a person to this office will turn their attention to themselves as well as to the candidate. They will consider his intellectual attainments with a reference to their own, and will conclude whether his aptitude to teach and his capacity to preside is of such a degree as will correspond to their circumstances. If so, he is apt to teach them, and eligible to preside over them. His election or call is from them and must be audibly, distinctly, and emphatically expressed. They are constituted the judges in this case. For no matter how eagerly he may desire or seek the office, he can make no pretension to it from such consideration. He cannot make himself an overseer. This the flock must do.

On the mode or manner of expressing this call or election we have only to remark that the inspired writers use the term which the Greeks were wont to use in their elections of officers. The inference is, that in using or adopting the same term, they attached to it the current ideas; which were, that the person to be appointed should be publicly announced and that by the voice or stretched out hand of the members entitled to choose, he was to be elected. The *consent* of the people or their wish unequivocally expressed, was all that ever was, amongst Jews or Greeks, deemed *essential* to the *election* or appointment of any officer. Whether the hand should be stretched forward, or elevated; whether the electors sat or stood, or whether they spoke aloud, each one separately or with one consent arose and simply an-

swered in the affirmative, the election was always good and valid;—provided always the desire of the people was clearly and fully expressed.

As to the act called ordination or inauguration, if ever there was such an act, peculiarly so called, it consisted in the imposition of the hands of the seniors or elders of the congregation. The apostles did express their concurrence with the people's choice by an act of this sort, and when congregations were fully set in order there was always a plurality of elders or a presbytery instituted in each congregation, who always did express their concurrence with the brethren's call by inducting the elected into office by the joint imposition of their hands. But this eldership was not a collection of elders from different congregations assembled; but those of one congregation.—The history of this institution stands thus, and would have continued thus but for the man of sin;—Every thing essential to appointment, call, or ordination was vested in the minds of the brethren. Their desires, however expressed, gave the office to the candidate, however he was announced. The apostles so taught them. They, in the first instance, took a part, not in the call or appointment; but in the introduction and inauguration of the bishops elect. This was done in conformity to the Jewish custom of imposing their hands upon the head of the person or animal devoted. This being done, a plurality of bishops being thus introduced into any particular congregation when, either the death of one of the eldership, or the increased demands of the congregation required another, the brethren called or elected and the eldership expressed their concurrence, and the brethren's desire, by a formal sign expressive of the devotion of the person to the work. I say this is all that can be legitimately gathered from the volume, as to *the forms of investiture*; but as to the *right* of the brethren so to choose, and of the bishop, *on this choice* to officiate, there is the most ample evidence.

Here I would take the liberty to remark that in process of time, as corruption and defection progressed, it came to pass that what was, with the apostles, but the mere sign or mark expressive of their concurrence with the brethren's election and appointment, came by degrees to be considered as the ordination itself, independent of the brethren's voice—Now no instance can be found in the inspired writings, where the circumstances are detailed, of the call and appointment of any brother to any office, where the call and appointment is not distinctly represented as the act of the brethren, and in no case is an ordination or appointment made without them. But their call is what, in all cases, gives the right to officiate. This is the *essential* thing, and the other accompaniments are the *accidental* properties of this thing.

The analogy between such an appointment and that of a presiding officer in a free community is as exact as any other analogy. For example, what gives any man a *right to officiate* as a

governor or a president in a free community—Is it not the call and appointment of the people composing the community. Whether is it the *voice of the people*, or *the form of inauguration* after the people have made the appointment, which constitutes the essential consideration in creating such officers? The application is easy.—

The Grecian and Roman republics, the commonwealth of Israel in its primitive integrity, the republics of America, and the congregations of christians in this one instance are essentially the same. In *their first origin the people did every thing, both elect and ordain*. No republic ever sent to another republic for their officers to come and make ordinations for them. No kingdom or monarchical empire ever sent for a foreign king or potentate to come and make a king for them. No christian congregation, in the age of primitive propriety, ever sent to another for their officers to come and ordain officers for them. The imposition of hands, when first instituted among the Jews, was practised by the laity.

In process of time persons were set apart in every community under every form of government for the purpose of inaugurating those constitutionally made officers. It was so in the Jewish, it was so in the Grecian, the Roman and the American republics. It was so in the christian, and it will be so again.

With the history of the world, with the pages of Jewish and christian history before me, I would contend that any congregation has a right to call, appoint, or ordain any person to any office laid down in the volume, and to do all the acts and deeds thereunto appertaining, without calling to their aid the assistance of any foreign deacon, bishop or officer.—*Ed.*

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C——, Ohio, May 17, 1826.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

Sir,

THE dissemination of liberal principles and putting down priestcraft has been (so far as I am able to judge) your principal business for some years. A knowledge of this has induced me to forward the enclosed address, which needs dissection, and which accompanied with a relation of facts which I shall now give, may, I think, be wielded to great advantage. If such should be your opinion you will act accordingly—The Bill for incorporating the Theological Seminary, alias Priest Factory, in Portage County, passed in our house of Assembly, reserving to the Legislature the power of filling all vacancies in the board of trustees. Against this the petitioners objected, and alleged that unless they could have the full and entire control of the institution they wanted none. It was then moved in the Senate that if an act was required which incorporate an institution which must be sectarial and exclusive, it should be entitled accordingly, in order that it might be unmasked and people understand it. At this they were

greatly alarmed, and set so many wheels in motion, that by some unaccountable legerdemain they have procured the act as suited them, and preserved their sheep's clothing.—This institution must depend for funds on the credulity of a misguided community, and no doubt a copy of the address will accompany every subscription paper, although the cloven foot and hind quarters of the beast appear in every line. Whether the different denominations will see through the flimsy veil or not I cannot say; but if they can be thus caught, the naked hook is sufficient. We may shortly expect to see their labourers diligently gathering the harvest, and we wish them a seasonable mildew.

We have reason to believe that an effort will be made at the next session of our Legislature for a part at least of our schools funds.—How our Baptists and Methodists will relish this I know not, but am of opinion that you can, at this time do something to give a proper direction to public opinion, and give a check to the progress of corruption.—I ought to state that the act above alluded to is entitled as follows, “An Act to incorporate the Trustees of the Western Reserve College.”— And also to say that the funds as yet are nominal.

Very respectfully, yours, &c.

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## CHARTERED COLLEGE & LEGALIZED PRIESTCRAFT;

*Or,*

### NOTES ON AN ORATION

*On laying the corner stone of a sectarian college.*

I HAVE always thought that the granting of charters by the legislative assemblies of these United States is incompatible with the nature of a republican government, and at war with the grand principles recognized and embraced in the federal and state constitutions. In this instance we are the humble servants and servile imitators of the rotten monarchies of the old world. And were it not for the counteracting principles of some of our laws, particularly those for the partition of estates upon equal principles amongst the legitimate heirs, this one practice of giving exclusive privileges to the few against the many, would, already, have established firm and deep the basis of aristocracy, and of ultimate monarchy in the new world. I am not so sure but these legalized monopolies may yet triumph over those laws and restraints which now exists, as I am that this practice is anti-republican and unjust. But I leave the discussion of such questions to those more devoted to the science of civil government, and would simply notice the bearings of these charters upon the religious character and rights of the community. I do not mean those charters which erect monied monopolies, and give to a few the right and privilege of cheating the many with an exemption from any penalty for such offences; but I allude to those charters which are more religious than political, which are sought under the pretence of literary institutions, and claimed upon the ground

of national utility; but which are in fact, and in effect, religious establishments panoplied with all the arts and sciences, and directly leading to the establishment of a sectarian creed.

Of this sort is the charter granted by the legislature of Ohio for the erection of the Western Reserve College. A more decided proof I do not want that such is its character and tendency, than the oration pronounced by the Rev. *Stephen J. Bradstreet* on laying the corner stone of the college edifice at Hudson, Ohio, on the 26th of April last.

This reverend orator of the church triumphant says of the founders of this politico-ecclesiastico literary institution, that, "they design to lay the foundation so broad and deep that a glorious superstructure may be raised upon it hereafter." Now when a Presbyterian Divine so speaks, we are at no loss to comprehend his meaning. What he calls a glorious superstructure is one which gives such a preference to his creed as it had in the mother country. I repeat it again, no Presbyterian Divine can call a literary institution a "glorious superstructure" that does not recognize and support his creed with chartered privileges. But of the charter he says, "A charter in almost every respect such as was desired has been obtained from the legislature of the state." This is, in effect, saying that we have almost gained the desire of our hearts in every respect. This is just the foundation of such a glorious superstructure as would gladden the heart of the pious Covenanters in the reign of Scotch terror. I am much mistaken if posterity does not weep over the simplicity and prodigality of those statesmen who for a morsel of meat sell their birthright.

"Knowledge is power," says the orator, and he says the truth; and Presbyterian or Congregational knowledge backed with a charter, is Presbyterian and Congregational power to oppress the unchartered ignoramuses which constitute the fearful majority.

He says, "What mighty effects have been produced by men of learning!" Yes, indeed—And so I say, and call upon the Jesuits for proof. He adds, "With how much ease they direct and *govern* the public will." Alas! too true, in the present shape of things. And see how Cotton Mathers and those of that learned fraternity governed and directed the public will, even to burning witches, imprisoning and whipping Baptists and Quakers. Of the learned of other times he says, "Like a mighty hurricane they bore away the untaught multitude in whatever direction they pleased."—"The profound Divine has an immense control over the minds of others." Yes, like a tornado they have swept and desolated whole countries, and borne to their own bourne the wealth and power of nations. Let France and Spain here tell their tales of woe.

"None of the poor can educate their children at college." This is another truth, except as respects the beneficiary system, Hence a learned and wealthy aristocracy, a union of powers—the power of knowledge and the power of wealth, has been the bane of every community on the page of history.

Now let it be noticed once for all, that I do not decry the immense advantages of education. No, I prize it above all earthly price. But I do deprecate such a state of things as this orator desires. And I appeal to universal history to prove that the granting of such charters and the erection of such colleges have ultimately where every sound politician has anticipated—in the general they have made the wealthy more powerful, and the poor more miserable. They have put into the hands of the few the most powerful means of tyrannizing over the many. And as it is within forty miles of Princeton, so it has been with the majority of them. A state of society little better than sheer paganism in religion, little better than Vandalism in education has been found in their immediate vicinities. Now if the public money is to be appropriated, and if literature is to be patronized by our legislative bodies let it be in giving equal chances to all; let it be the way of public schools in every vicinity; let it be in the way of giving education to those who cannot otherwise obtain it; but let it not be in robbing the poor and the ignorant to make a few knaves and tyrants to tyrannize over the “untaught multitude.”

In the oration before me there are a few boasts of the liberality of the founders of this institution. But we have too much reason and too much experience to view them in any other light than mere oratorical puffs. For the conclusion of this whole matter is found in one sentence; viz. “the interests both of the seminary and of community at large require that the instructors should be men of correct religious sentiments, and good moral deportment.” Now this in *terms* is reasonable enough; but in the authorized sense of these words by the orator, the terms “*correct religious sentiments*,” mean the sentiments and views of classic presbytery exhibited in the dogmas of the Westminster Confession; the whole dogmas of Scotchified Calvinism. That this is the authorized sense of the terms “*correct religious sentiments*,” is proven from the fact that the orator alluding to those institutions in the north and south points to those under Presbyterial control as models of perfection in comparison of those under any other control. The others are marching down the hill of degeneracy, while these are ascending mountains of glory. It is the prayer of the orator that this college may send out a proportionate number of “Calvins and Knoxes” in the theological department, and of “Washingtons and Bolivars” in the field. Orthodoxy and war!—holy and happy alliance!

In extolling college institutions the speaker is long and loud. He details a list of distinguished men who have been graduates in chartered edifices. This sounds well; but it ought to be remembered for the sake of truth, that for every Newton that has grown out of these nurseries, there have been thousand chartered and graduated blockheads; and for every Paul there has been ten thousand Neroes. I am of the opinion that a wise legislature will put the means of a useful satisfactory education within the means of the poor; that if appropriations of public money, or public

property are to be made for education, they will rather tax the rich to educate the poor, than the poor to educate the rich.

The system of chartering and endowing colleges is in truth a legal way of making the poor educate the rich, and of depriving themselves of the means of educating their own offspring. And when one religious party has the preference in the control of a chartered institution, it is in effect not only making the poor educate the children of the rich, but it is making all sects pay tribute to the favorite of the court, or to that which obtains the monopoly. In one word, who does not know, who is so short-sighted as not to see, that if the legislature of Ohio appropriate twenty thousand dollars in cash or public land for such an institution, they make every poor man pay his quota to furnish a splendid system for the rich man's son to be educated; and when this is given to be controlled by an aspiring sect, it is making the Baptist, the Methodist, and the Quaker pay for making Presbyterian or some other sectarian Divines.—*Ed.*

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IN looking over the Baptist Confession of Faith in order to find out the nature, design, and authority of the annual associations of messengers, I find the following paragraph, which contains the whole law and testimony on this subject. It is not a part of the good old confession of the English churches in 1689, but it is a part of the "Treatise of Church Discipline" drawn up by Benjamin Griffith at the request of the association which met in Philadelphia, September 25, 1742, and added, it is presumed, by the authority of said association, to the Confession, and made an essential part of the canons of the associated churches.

As this document contains the nature, design, and the authority of such meetings, we shall lay it before the public in full, accompanied with a few

### REMARKS ON THE COMMUNION OF CHURCHES.

[*Last Section.*]

"And forasmuch as it falls out many times that particular churches have to do with doubtful and difficult matters, or differences in point of doctrine or administration, like the church of Antioch of old, wherein either the churches in general are concerned, or any one church, in their peace, union, or edification; or any member or members of a church are injured, in or by proceeding in censures not agreeable to gospel rule and order; it is according to the mind of Christ, that many churches holding communion together should meet by their messengers and delegates, to consider of, and to give advice in and about such matters in difference; and their sentiments to be reported to all the churches concerned: and such messengers and delegates, convened in the name of Christ, by the voluntary consent of the several churches in such mutual communion, may declare and determine of the mind of the Holy Ghost, revealed in the scripture, concerning things in difference; and may decree the

“observation of things that are true and necessary, because revealed and appointed in the scripture, And the churches will do well to receive, own, and observe such determinations, on the evidence and authority of the mind of the Holy Ghost in them, as in Acts xv. 29. Yet such delegates thus assembled, are not intrusted or armed with any coercive power, or any superior jurisdiction over the churches concerned so as to impose their determinations on them and their officers, under the penalty of excommunication, or the like. See the Confession, chap. xxvii. sect. 14, 15. See also Dr. Owen, *On the Nature of the Gospel Church*, chap. xi. and Dr. Goodwin, vol. iv. book v. chap. viii, ix, x. &c. *Of the Government of the Churches of Christ.*”

As reference is had in this paragraph to the English part of the Confession, that both the American and English views may appear in full, we shall here insert the two sections of chap. xxvii. above referred to:—

“14. As each church, and all the members of it, are bound to pray continually for the good and prosperity of all the churches of Christ, in all places, and upon all occasions to further it, every one within the bounds of their places and callings, in the exercise of their gifts and graces, so the churches, when planted by the providence of God, so as they may enjoy opportunity and advantage for it, ought to hold communion among themselves, for their peace, increase of love, and mutual edification.”

“15. Cases of difficulty or differences, either in point of doctrine or administration, wherein either the churches in general are concerned, or any one church, in their peace, union, and edification; or any member or members of any church are injured, in or by any proceedings in censures not agreeable to truth and order; it is according to the mind of Christ, that many churches holding communion together, do by their messenger meet to consider and give their advice in or about the matter in difference, to be reported to all the churches concerned; howbeit these messengers assembled, are not intrusted with any church power properly so called; or with any jurisdiction over the churches themselves, to exercise any censures either over any churches or persons, or to impose their determination on the churches or officers.”

The grand points embraced in the sections here exhibited, are,  
1st. That cases of difficulty and difference, either in point of doctrine or administration, affecting one particular congregation or others with them, may occur.

2d. That in cases of either sort, particularly of mal-administration, individual members may be injured by the censures or proceedings of the particular congregation to which they belong.

3d. That because of such things, it is the mind of Christ that the particular congregations should, by messengers or delegates, meet to consider of such cases, and to give advice to the congregations.



4th. These delegates in association assembled may "*decree the observation of things that are necessary*, because revealed and appointed in the scripture. And the churches will do well to receive, own, and observe such determinations, on the evidence and authority of the mind of the Holy Spirit in them."

5th. That these messengers when assembled have no power to oblige the congregations or individuals to take their advice, by inflicting any penalty whatever. They are neither to "impose their determinations on the congregations nor their officers under the penalty of excommunication or the like."

Such are the prominent items in the preceding extracts, and they contain the whole law and testimony on this subject.

Now there are some things here on which I want more light; and first on the subject of these delegates. Are they the representatives of the churches? If so, what do they represent? Do they represent the wish, desire, conscience, and interest of those at home? I can see how a person may be my representative in the national councils, in matters and things pertaining to this life; but I cannot see how any person can be my representative in any thing belonging to my conscience in the things pertaining to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. If viewed simply as delegates, what is delegated to them? Is any thing pertaining to the doctrine, worship, or discipline of the congregation which sends them? If so, what is it, or what may it be? If not the doctrine, worship, or discipline of the church, what is delegated to them? As messengers going to a general meeting to carry intelligence to that meeting, and to bear home intelligence from it. I can understand the nature and utility of their mission; but I do not understand them when viewed in the light of delegates or representatives. I will thank any person to afford me some information on this subject.

In the next place, I am at a loss to understand how it comes to pass that these delegates may *decree things that are necessary*, and yet the congregations be absolved from regarding these decrees any more than the advice of an infant which may be taken or rejected with perfect impunity. And it may be *well* for the congregation to take the advice of the counsel, and yet they cannot and must not be censored for not taking it! On this subject I earnestly solicit information.

Again, I cannot see how these associations can have the authority of Christ so to decree or advise, and that congregation be guiltless who refuses or rejects their decrees. For I can find no parallel case where the Great King authorizes any agents to act for him, and yet holds those guiltless who disobey his own institution.

There is another difficulty here. The English and American Baptists in times past have quoted Acts xv. in support of their meetings and of their authority so to decree. Yet they will not allow that their decisions are to be received as the decisions of the "association that met in Jerusalem." They do not consider their decisions as the decisions of the Holy Spirit, and cannot even say

that they are *infallibly* according to the decisions of that Spirit, and therefore they very prudently say their people may receive or reject their decisions, as they deem them agreeable or otherwise to the Divine Word, of which they are supposed to judge with the same authority at home, as their delegates do abroad or in council assembled.

But that difficulty which is to be the greatest and most incomprehensible is this. Seeing that the associated Baptists do view associations in the light before given, and withhold all authority from the decisions of their delegates—Seeing they deny that associations have any right “to impose their determinations on the congregations or other officers, *under the penalty of excommunication OR THE LIKE;*” how in the name of all consistency, do they sometimes excommunicate congregations, or churches, and cast them out of the association, as the penalty for refusing to take their advice or receive their decrees. This is the most inexplicable thing of the whole, and I do earnestly solicit light on this subject, if it should be refused on every other.

As the time of associations for the year 1826 is fast approaching, it seemed good unto me to propose those embarrassments to such brethren as have paid more attention to such things than I have. For on reading the Confession of Faith and the Treatise on Discipline thereunto affixed by Benjamin Griffith at the request of the Philadelphia association, I thought that all jurisdiction and authority over churches was disclaimed and that no penalty was attached to any refusal on the part of any congregation to conform to the decisions of their delegates in council assembled.

The power of an association is declared in fact to be inferior to the power of a single congregation. The association is not even co-ordinate with, but subordinate to, a single congregation. Except as a meeting for mutual intelligence, exhortation, and comfort, they have nothing to do which cannot be undone by a single congregation. If then they attempt to imitate the ecclesiastic courts of other denominations, they become more awkward than the ass covered with the skin of the lion. They appear like a lion, but bray like an ass. At least such is the construction, and the only construction I can put upon the words quoted until better informed, till which time I must think and speak as I do.—*Ed.*

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AN association once on a time advised a church to put away its teacher. The congregation at home examined the *advice* of the association, and on comparing it with the decisions of the Holy Spirit, as they understood them, refused to take the advice of the delegates assembled; for which cause they were excommunicated from the communion of the association for their contumacy. Now the question is, Did this association act according to the law and testimony contained in the little book? and if they did, where then is the difference between the decrees of an association and those of a college of cardinals, or a bench of English prelates? This query is respectfully submitted.—*Ed.*

## ACTS OF INCORPORATION.

Mr. Editor,

ARE we to consider congregations of christians acting conformably to either the letter or spirit of the religion which they profess, when they solicit acts of incorporation from the civil authority; and having obtained them, proceed to exercise the new powers with which they are invested? As you say so much, and propose to say more on the subject of christian morality, would you oblige a few of your Virginia friends with a few remarks in reply to the above query? OLD VIRGINIA.

LET me answer one query by proposing another. Why do christian congregations solicit such acts of incorporation? The chief and substantial reason is, that they may be able to compel, *by the arm of flesh*, those who do not willingly contribute to the "Lord's treasury." The naked truth is this; an unincorporated congregation is no party in law: consequently the trustees thereof are like their creators, not recognized in law. They cannot raise or collect funds from those who promise, and afterwards repent, by any legal process. But when incorporated or invested with such privileges as make them a party, they can levy, distrain; in a word, they can compel every man to pay whatever he once promised; they can receive legacies; they can raise, and husband, and appropriate funds, as any other company, for building roads, canals, or bridges.

Acts of incorporation are therefore solicited and obtained for the self-same reasons which induce canal, road, and bridge-builders to solicit them. They are of the same use and advantage to both. When, then, a christian congregation solicits from the state legislature an act of incorporation, in plain English it says, "Give us the right to compel, by all the civil pains and penalties which are allowed to all corporate bodies of this world, such as fail in making good their promises. We say, give us the power to compel them, against their own inclination, to contribute the sums which they once promised. For we have found all other means, all arguments and inducements drawn from the christian religion, unavailing. We do not like such christians, it is true; but we want their money. They once subscribed, and they ought to pay; but they will not be induced by any other argument than those eloquent appeals which the constable or sheriff can make to their *feelings*. Grant us then, *O ye powers that be!* the right of compulsion—that glorious right, by which we can move the widow's soul and the orphan's guardian to do what is right in its own nature and profitable for us to enjoy; and we will, as in duty bound, ever pray that ye may share liberally in our tender mercies. If any one has a bequest to make us, we cannot receive it. Many a well disposed old maid, and childless old bachelor would, in their last moments, will and bequeath to us the remnants of their fortune; but we have no power to receive it or to retain it against the legal heirs. Grant us then, we humbly beseech you, the right of receiving and retaining such legacies, if the natural or

legitimate heirs should mourn all their days in sorrow for it. Make our plea stronger than their plea, and we shall doubly pray." I say, this is in plain English the spirit, and meaning, and language of all such solicitations. Whether, then, such requests are compatible with the Christian spirit, I leave you to judge. I make no comment, as the text is plain enough already.

This is the best substitute for a religious establishment in this country, and in a certain degree has answered all the purposes. I do not here inquire into the policy of granting such petitions—I do not inquire into the constitutional right which any assembly has to grant such favors. But I am willing to show by many arguments, (if this is not satisfactory,) that in asking for such immunities, every grand principle of christianity is lost sight of, all dependence upon Jesus Christ is renounced, all faith in his promises and all regard to christian character is abandoned.

Many preachers and ministers of such congregations contend that they have a right to live on the gospel. For the sake of argument let it be admitted. Let us then suppose a case which has within our own knowledge actually occurred. A clergyman preaches the gospel; he has an incorporated congregation. Forty-five dollars of one year's subscription were collected by the arm of flesh. The money was brought by the trustees to the priest. His bread and his meat for a certain time were purchased with it. He and his family eat it. Now the question is, When he eats this bread and meat, whether does he live on the law or on the gospel? Whether does he eat the free-will offering of devotion, or the exacted tribute of sordid poverty, or the constrained oblation of covenant breakers? Can he return thanks to Heaven for his food, as the bounty of God, or must he thank the "*the powers that be*" for it? An infant becomes an Aristotle here. The case is a plain one. And many such there are, who "*preach the gospel*" and live upon the law.

Every attempt to hold in subjection either conscience or the purse of any people by legal restraints on religious grounds ultimately in an inquisition; and if it stop short of fire and sword it is owing to the mildness of the people, and not to the spirit of the system.

We have no doubt but many unsuspecting souls, without evil motives or designs enter into such measures; but still the thing itself is a great evil, and has already in some instances, and may yet in many more, become a source of sorrow and of suffering to those who have been caught unawares in an evil net.

That we are not singular in this view of the tendency of those measures, the following extracts from a correspondent in Amelia county, Va. will shew.—

"At a meeting of the Presbyterians some time since, not far from this place, among other things it was proposed to petition the next session of the Virginia legislature for a charter of incorporation; but the motion was opposed by some upon the ground that it would not go down well with the people *yet*. It was

consequently postponed to a more convenient season, while they in the mean time intend to use their best endeavors to prepare the minds of the people for this measure. This, dear sir, is regarded by us as a bold stride towards an establishment. We would like to hear you upon this important point.”—

“By demonstrating to an enlightened public that religious incorporation is the foster mother of establishments; that death-like inquisition is her legitimate offspring; imprisonment her only process; the stake her only tribunal; and death the only anodyne of her opponents; the evil day may be delayed in its coming; nay, the impending danger may be entirely averted. If so, happy for us who oppose the measure! thrice happy for those who urge its rejection! happy for all our fellow-citizens!”

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### CHRISTIAN MORALITY.—No. III

MY text will be found in the *Baptist Recorder*, vol. 1 No. 13. It reads thus: “In our next number we shall give his criticism in full (that is on the two positions which appeared in the 10th No. of the Recorder. See C. B. vol. 3. page 258.) that our readers, whom brother C. represents as persons with whom sound is infinitely more important than sense, may judge for themselves.” Now, courteous reader, you see the Recorder represents me as having stigmatized its readers as persons “*with whom sound is infinitely more important than sense.*” Let us turn over to vol. 3, page 257. Here we find these words: Great efforts are made to enlist the feelings and prejudices of those with whom sound is infinitely more important than sense, against my endeavors,” &c. These words the genius of controversy converts into a direct and formal imputation of one particular class of readers. Let us now for example take a parallel case. Suppose that the National Intelligencer had said of the *efforts* of the United States Gazette that great efforts were made to enlist the feelings and prejudices of those who are tories against the present administration; would it be a truth or a falsehood to say that the National Intelligencer had represented the readers of the United States Gazette as tories? To what should we attribute such a misrepresentation? Should we call it an error of the *head*, or of the *heart*? If of the *head* should we attempt to reason with a person of such intellectual powers? If of the *heart*, could we suppose it to be under the influence of the Holy Spirit? From an intellectual or moral defect such perversions and misrepresentations must proceed. The above is the only notice which the editors of the Recorder have yet taken of my remarks on experimental religion. The 11th and 12th Nos. which have been issued since our first notice of them was written, have not been received; but it appears from the 13th that they have not in these Nos. published any thing upon the subject. I do hope these gentlemen will make reparation for the injury they have done me in the apprehension of their readers. It was for their benefit I wished my remarks inserted in the Recorder, consequently could not suppose them persons of this

stamp; but if my remarks are to be thus perverted, and if I must be brought before them in such disadvantageous circumstances, I could not wish to appear before them. They might as *truly* tell their readers that I had represented them as men-stealers or homicides; for if my saying that *some* persons are of such character, implies that I represent all the world of this character, they might with a good grace tell their readers, in particular, that I had thus represented them. But from this unpleasant topic I turn to one of the exalted items of christian morality.

With most men of refined moral sensibility *reputation* is next to life—with some it is dearer than life. The christian religion cherishes this feeling, and while it guides and stimulates our pursuits after good fame, it teaches us by the broadest precepts, and the most powerful examples to take care of the reputation of others. “A good name is better than great riches,” was an axiom of the wisest man. Philosophers and poets have dwelt upon this theme with more than usual pathos. How often do the apostles exhort the christians to seek the reputation of those who in former times had obtained an illustrious fame? With how many arguments and exhortations do they induce them to shine amongst the excellent.

It is no inconsiderable evidence of the Divine excellency of this religion, that it teaches its disciples to pay a due regard to that in others which they appreciate most in themselves. Hence what is dearest in the christian’s estimation is to be guarded in another in exact proportion to the importance which he himself attaches to it. Thus a man to whom the reputation of virtue and wisdom is dearer than any earthly acquisition, is taught from the golden rule itself, to pay the highest regard to the reputed virtue and wisdom of others. But there is this peculiarity in the christian system, it does not allow any of its disciples to derive any satisfaction from a comparison of themselves with others. All human systems are predicated upon false principles as respects the satisfaction to be derived from reputation. They allow their admirers to be pleased in excelling others; not seeing *that if it afford pleasure to excel others, it must inevitably afford pleasure not to see others as commendable as one’s self*. But the christian system, as the heavens are higher than the earth, excels that which is based upon such principles. It teaches us while eagerly bent upon the reputation of christian wisdom and virtue, to derive pleasure from the superior displays in others of that which we would admire in ourselves, and inciting us rather to look with pity and regret on those in our rear. There is a delicate distinction here which we regret to see so seldom noticed.

Slander, revilings, backbitings, whisperings, evil speaking, and every species of *detraction* is reprobated in the most forcible terms which human language affords, by all the inspired writers who touch upon this topic. And amongst the essential characteristics of the man who shall inhabit the heavenly mansions, this has a chief place—“*He doth not take up an evil report against his*

*neighbor.*” “He despiseth a vile person, also, and honoreth them that honor the Lord.”

What a massacre of character does the public prints, the public places of resort, and even the social hearth in this day exhibit. When commendation is volunteered or extorted, how often is it circumscribed, and what immense subtractions are made, by one or two of those terrific *but*s! ! The very thing of which all are so covetous, viz. *a good name*, they bestow with the greatest frugality upon others; and too many, like the *shamble fly*, seem to feast upon the putrid spots in human character.

The sycophant too and the detracter are nearer akin than a cousin-germain. But we are digressing. Paul exhorts, “Render to all their dues: *honor* to whom honor is due, and respect to whom respect is due.” No toleration is granted, no allowance is made in the treatment of any person, whether viewed in the light of a friend or a foe.

It has been a thousand times lamented, that religious controversialists pay the least regard to the reputation of those from whom differ in opinion. As charity hides a multitude of sins, so a difference in opinion covers a multitude of virtues. Reformation in this respect should be every where preached and practised.

—Ed.

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#### FROM THE CHRISTIAN INQUIRER.

*Sir*—I BEG leave to call your attention to a subject which belongs to a religious newspaper and which is gradually drawing the attention of the public. I refer to the practice of conferring the degree of Doctor of Divinity. The intention of this degree is to mark out those of the profession who have become eminent in it. Now I doubt the wisdom of this contrivance, even on the supposition of its original object being adhered to, for eminent men mark themselves out, and I know no person in the community fit to be trusted with the office of putting the seal of merit on their cotemporaries. Even in good old times I suppose partiality often gave or withheld this distinction to the prejudice of merit and the disturbance of that calm which reigns so remarkably in every learned breast. But at present the institution is lost sight of. In this, as in most other cases, the sign has been gradually divorced from the thing signified, so that your simplicity and your logic would be laughed at should you infer a man’s merit from his doctorship. In days of yore this degree was figuratively called a laurel wreath. A poppy branch would now be as appropriate an emblem. When we had but two or three colleges, doctorships derived some value from their rarity. But so multiplied and copious are the fountains of this honour now that the land is flooded with it. The torrent, scorning the law of gravitation, bounds over the Alleghanies from Meadville and other classical spots in the wilderness, and any man who will, may divert a rill of honorary stream into his own grounds. Formerly the head of theological doctors peeped out from beneath a vener-

able far shadowing wig, and was marked with the furrows of time. Now the laurel or poppy wreath which you will, lights on young brows, and soon the diploma instead of being as formerly, a death warrant to the veteran divine, will be a prophetic roll announcing talents not yet disclosed. The truth is, that a doctorship is no honour to him who receives it, while every man from whom it is withheld feels, and justly feels, that he sustains a wrong. To want it is to be denied the average talent of the profession, to be put below mediocrity, and no man bears this patiently. This honour has become impotent as to good, and only powerful to mortify and give pain. Why then is it continued? I have a strong persuasion that were the question left to the ministers through the country, a vast majority, especially of the most distinguished, would vote for its abolition. And is a usage which we have out grown, or which has sunk into mockery or an abuse, to be perpetuated in opposition to the judgement and feeling of most who are interested in it. At least I would beg that if doctorships cannot be abolished, they may cease to be brought into society or mingle with common conversation. Let the doctor insert his D. D. into the title page of his published sermons, or of his body or corpse of divinity; but let him not be doctored in common discourse. Ministers, though bound to singular simplicity and unostentatiousness, are the only men in the community addressed by a title implying superiority. This ought not to be. We have other men addressed as judges, captains and generals; but these titles express offices which the individuals bear, and carry no intimation of eminence in his profession. But doctor, when applied to a minister, means that he is a wiser man than his brethren. Now I hold this to be inconsistent with the modesty of religion and the courtesy of refined life: the fundamental law of politeness is to waive distinctions and to relieve others from a sense of inferiority. The custom of bedoctoring men in common conversation is, in some circumstances, very offensive. It has been my lot to see a minister, with the glossy cheek of youth, sitting next to an apostolic man, who was fighting the battles of religion, while the youth by his side, was riding sticks in the nursery, and I have heard the young divine bedoctored and bedoctored till I was tired of the sound, whilst the white headed veteran was accosted the plain mister. Now this is not harmony in our boasted refinement and civility. If we must have the doctorship let it be reserved for the college catalogue and for books, and I suspect that the honour, like other pageantry, will be worth more by being kept more out of sight.

I beg, Mr Editor, that I may not be considered as heated by subject. I throw in this caution because a gentleman of the south has recently attacked theological doctorships with what has been thought an unseemly violence, and this cold hearted age which can tolerate any thing but enthusiasm, is disposed to shield the doctors from the hard words and resounding weapons of this chivalrous assailant. I am indeed earnest; but perfectly calm. A



diploma never disturbed my dreams, never swelled under my magnifying vision into a gigantic spectre. I smile rather than tremble at this honorary phantom. I never thought of getting up a society for the suppressing of doctorships. I never saw, in this institution, the ruin of church and state; I see much more of comedy and farce than tragedy in it. My judgement, therefore, is not to be set aside under the pretence of undue heat. But, as I said, though calm I am earnest. The usage, though not bad enough to shake our nerves, is one of which we shall do well to rid ourselves. It does no good—It does some harm. It is not very consistent with the spirit of christianity or politeness. Let it go down with other Gothic usages. We have weaknesses enough of our own, without perpetuating those of our fathers.

ANTI-DOCTOR.

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#### SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS.

WE have often had occasion to notice the pernicious influence of the text system of expounding scripture—No practice has done more to obscure the meaning of scripture, and to originate the most romantic and enthusiastic tenets. The thoughtless manner in which the multitudes of textuaries follow each other, not merely in their sermons, but in their *quotations* of scripture, only affords another instances that not one in a thousand dares to think for himself, and to exercise his own faculties on the scriptures. I have found myself, in countless instances, quoting scriptures in a sense which I had heedlessly attached to them because I always heard them quoted in this manner. Nothing but my own experience and observation has taught me that the great mass of mankind are but mere imitators, and the disciples of men. I have found too, that many sentences are, I may say, universally quoted in a sense which not one sentence of scripture will justify, and that too, on some of the most common topics. I will exhibit a few specimens:—

Psalms cxlv. 9—“The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his other works.” The last clause I never once heard quoted right, or in its true sense. If I have not been greatly deceived, I have, in every instance, heard it quoted thus: “His tender mercies are superior to all his other perfections, over them all in greatness and glory, transcending every other attribute of his nature.” This is the sense universally attached to the words in their frequent application. Now let the whole context be considered and this application of them must be discarded—The sense in which the Psalmist evidently uses these words is—“The Lord is good to all *men*, and his tender mercies are over all his other creatures upon the earth.” He feeds the raven, the young lion, and the eyes of all things wait upon him, and he upholds and feeds them.” God’s perfections are never in scripture called his *works*, and David often exhibits his goodness and mercy manifested to the meanest of his creatures.

David is often called “*the man after God’s own heart,*” from

the *sound* of a passage frequently quoted—He is said to have been a man such as God's heart or mind exactly approved. Thus the populars always apply these words: And of all the men that ever lived David is represented by them as "THE *man after God's own heart.*" Now let 1 Samuel xiii 14 be examined and this sense will totally vanish. Here it is—"Saul has not answered my purpose, mind, or will in governing my people; but I have found a man that *will just suit my purpose, viz. David the son of Jesse.*" That this is the true sense of the words in sacred scripture, methinks is evident when declared without further exposure.

At a certain crisis in the vision of John, long before the end of the world comes in his view, a heavenly messenger is introduced who solemnly declares "*time shall be no more.*" Hence in the numerous allusions to the period here spoken of, all speak of a period when time ceases to exist. Sermons are spoken and even published on the text "*time shall be no more;*" whereas the sense, and, indeed, the true translation, says, "*there shall be no longer delay, the judgement spoken of shall be immediately executed*"—that other things which require the continuance of time may regularly be introduced.

In these examples I prefer those on which no sectarian tenet depends, to illustrate what egregious blunders, and how universally followed, are passing current, as the sense of the sacred writings, under the popular system of text preaching and text quoting.—*Ed.*

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### Notice to New Subscribers.

THE first edition of the three preceding volumes of this work is almost (if not altogether) sold or subscribed for. It is in contemplation to publish a second edition of these volumes in an improved form, should the order for complete sets be continued or increased. Those who are desirous of having the preceding volumes will please signify their intentions to the agents at the time of subscribing. It was our design at our first commencement to give to the public a number of volumes, making one complete work, *suigeneris*, embracing all the items in our prospectus. So that the volumes going before are necessary to those that follow, and those that follow so intimately connected with the preceding as to render each volume more interesting and essential to the execution of our grand design. It was also expected that many of our readers, either from the prejudices of education, the current of opposition, or their own versatility, would be satisfied with a single volume. It was difficult to arrange matters, even with this anticipation, so as to preserve complete sets, except at very great expense. Besides, hundreds of volumes have been lost through the negligence of postmasters and the remissness of subscribers in notifying our agents.

The contents of this work are in a great measure original, consequently the editorial labor is much greater than falls to the lot of those who are, in a great measure, gleaners and retailers of the

fruits of others' labors. Though not fond of making apologies, it is nevertheless due to our intelligent readers to say, that so numerous have been our avocations and so responsible some of our undertakings that we have never had that leisure to bestow on this work which we at first expected and always desired. Had we had leisure to have even transcribed our essays, the style would have been considerably improved, and in some instances the sentiment and even asperities (as they are called) might have been softened. "*What is Truth?*" has so much engrossed of our attention, that the looseness and negligences of our style have been suffered, without being filed off, to meet the public eye. Not being much conversant with courtiers, we do not attempt to dress ourselves in country style.

We have been so much engaged too with the subject itself on which we write, as not to avail ourselves of the usual means of obtaining subscribers to this work. I need not to say the *usual means*, for if we had a year to think of this subject, to the exclusion of every other, we could not resort to presbyteries and synods, to associations and councils, to every itinerant preacher to publish decrees and recommendations to urge the people to take this paper as one of the "*means of grace*," as essential to their salvation. If its own merits cannot keep it afloat, let it sink I say, as the Egyptians, like lead in the mighty waters. At the same time, I confess it would give me pleasure to increase the number of our readers many fold. And it would not be very difficult for those who can conscientiously recommend the work, to double the number of our readers. For example, how easy would it be for every one who likes this work, to obtain one subscriber from amongst his acquaintance, who would find it to be his own interest and that of his circle to take the work. "A word to the wise is sufficient for them;" and we dislike importunity when it may be interpreted to our interest. In Solomon's time the horse-leach had but *two* daughters which cried "*give, give*," but she now gives birth to a nation at a single throe. We do not wish to come even into the confines of her territory. We have *in cumulo* immense resources as respects subject matter; and were our subscribers to say, Give us as much more once in a month, we should become their humble servant. But we shall in this work continue to confine ourselves to those topics which regard man as a religious being.

Should we republish the back volumes, such arrangements can be made as to issue the whole of them in the current year. We shall thank our agents who have any advice to give us on this subject, to do so as opportunities may serve.—*Ed.*

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No. 2—Vol. IV] BUFFALOE, Sept. 7, 1826. [Whole No. 38

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*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi, for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat.xxiii. 8—10.—Campbell's Translation.]

*Prove all things hold fast which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

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### ON THE MILLENNIUM.—No. II.

THE division of the history of our world into the physical, secular, and millennial ages, besides spreading before the mind the beginning and end of things, has also this great and desirable advantage, that the enquirer after truth, having once ascertained the distinguishing characteristics of each age, it enables him to distribute the prophecies accordingly, and to acquire a correct general knowledge, not only of his own age; but also of that which has preceded or may follow it.

To understand the course of human events as glanced at in the rapid sketches of the prophets, and to know the relation which our own times and labours bear to what has actually gone before or may be reasonably and scripturally hoped to follow after, is, of all things, the best calculated to inspire the christian with resignation and to endow him those qualities of reasonableness and sobriety which his high profession so imperiously demands.

To hear the servant in the house of Christ confounding all *times* and *events* and ignorantly setting forth the *secular* church and authorities, in the terms of the splendid but unaccomplished prophecies which relate to the millennial church and authorities, is very unbecoming, and it may be highly criminal and dangerous—criminal, because it flatters secular and opposing institutions which God has largely condemned; and dangerous, because it tends to mislead the public mind, and consequently to retard general improvement.

It is a crime, however, of which the ecclesiastical dignitaries are exceedingly guilty. Where a complimentary sermon is to be delivered, I speak of the European world, the preacher seldom fails to select a text which affords him a fair opportunity of flattering the prince; the scriptures which relate to the millennium are generally resorted to, and the prince whom God has set forth in the scriptures as a wild beast, or the horn, which is the very instrument of terror or rage in a wild beast, is thus painted by the preacher as an inimitable diadem in the hand of Jehovah and a nursing father in the church. The prince is flattered. The priest is rewarded—and so the way of thus confounding things proves a chief art by which the abettors of bad government and false religion mutually encourage and deceive one another.

We ourselves are not behind in the practice of this art, and were we not kept humble by the manifest prevalence of the secular plagues, debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults, we should seldom fail to flatter ourselves that among us, and among us alone, Christ was enthroned in his Mellennial glory.—But alas! the thrones are not yet cast down, the secular age has not yet expired, war, commerce, and ambition, with the rival passions created by them, pride, envy, and emulation every where prevail.

It has been observed, in a former paper, that the physical, secular, and millennial ages are marked out on the face of scripture by three attendant judgments—the *Flood*, the *extinction of immoral government*, and the *resurrection of the dead*—The remainder of this paper I devote to remarks rather on these judgments than the ages to which they severally belong.

The flood, an amazing catastrophe drawn from the resources of the material world, constituted the judgment of the first age. The gratification of the sexual and other appetites formed the chief guilt with which the age was chargeable, “until Noah entered the ark, says the Redeemer, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,” &c. it was with great propriety, therefore, that God swept away the animal crimes of a race so sensual by the judgment of the flood.

The corruption of the secular or middle age being of a higher and more refined nature, i. e., of those political and social relations which subsist in large communities, the judgment which shall wipe it away, the scriptures describe to us as being of a more artificial and complex nature. It consists in the extinction of immoral government and false religion, by means of war, conducted under the united aid and upheld by the united lights of revelation and general science.

Still more extraordinary, however, will be the final judgment, the resurrection of the dead, sudden, general, and conclusive, it will be affected by an immediate effort of the strong hand of Jehovah—when all the men of all the ages physical, secular, and millennial, shall stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and give to him an account of the deeds done in this body, whether they be good or evil.

The first judgment, then was effected by natural means—the second will be by artificial means—and the third and last by super-natural means, when the human family, which has so apostatized from God, shall be judged and the material world shall be dissolved.

PHILIP.

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THERE is a great advantage resulting to the community from the art of letter writing of which all are sensible.—The letters I receive, and frequently lay before the public in this work, I consider of great interest and advantage to myself, and to my readers. These communications bring before the reader the senti-

ments and views of many persons of great intelligence and unfeigned piety on the grand subjects on which we treat. I have read some works a century or two old, in reference to which I should have been much edified and delighted, had the authors of those works possessed and given to their readers the sentiments of the distinguished men of their own times. What I have often regretted in works of considerable merit, as a defect, I have always wished to supply in this. I am peculiarly happy in having a number of correspondents of the first order in the literary and religious world, and on the present occasion have more than ordinary satisfaction in introducing, to the acquaintance of my readers, the sentiments of a new correspondent, whose intelligence, piety, and high standing among the churches of Virginia, require no eulogy nor notification from me. The letter itself is sufficient recommendation. I have only to solicit, on my behalf and that of my readers, a continuance or repetition of such favours, both from himself and some others, particularly from a correspondent in King and Queen county, from whom we have not heard for some time. I would delight in a private correspondence with many of my brethren in the east and in the west on all the topics which appear in this work, but the immense labor of my fingers and mind for some time past has prevented me of that pleasure, and therefore, I have, in some instances, where matters of great moment present themselves, preferred, even when the writer did not intend it, to publish his letters and my answers, for the public good. I have no idea of suppressing any thing of consequence because the writer and I may differ in some points. And while I edit this work it shall be open to every decent passenger of whatever creed, who holds the Head.

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### PAULINUS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "CHRISTIAN BAPTIST," WISHEETH GRACE,  
MERCY, AND PEACE.

*Dear Sir,*

FINDING the Christian Baptist to be a vehicle, free for all passengers who behave with tolerable decency, and considering myself to be one of that description, I have a mind, if there should be room, to take a seat and try a little trip. By the way, I doubt you will find it necessary to enlarge your vehicle, or submit too often to see yourself and some of your passengers crowded out. But let me drop the figure: I am fond of figures, and therefore would not wish to chase them out of breath. I feel a desire to offer you some thoughts, which, however you may estimate them, will be received, I am confident, in that spirit of friendship and good will in which they are communicated. This confidence I am disposed to cherish, not only from the impression produced by a slight personal acquaintance with you, but from the candid manner in which, (as far as I have observed,) you

have replied to your correspondents—those who have censured, as well as those who have approved.

With regard to the Christian Baptist, (the object in view in this communication,) or rather, with regard to the principles and sentiments you maintain in that publication, my letter, as you will see, will wear a sort of mixed aspect. I have not yet had the opportunity of perusing all the numbers, from the commencement of this work; but as far as I have seen, I find much to *approve*, something to *doubt*, and something too from which I must *dissent*. Possibly, however, my dissention may be owing, (in part at least,) to the want of a full and correct understanding of your sentiments.

I said, “much to *approve*;”—I might use a stronger term and say, much to *admire*. With several of your essays, I have been not only pleased but delighted. Many of your remarks too, in opposition to the errors and follies, too prevalent in the religious world, meet my own views and receive my warm and hearty commendation. In a word, I am greatly pleased with what appears to be your drift and aim, viz to clear the religion of Jesus of all the adventitious lumber with which it has been encumbered, and bring back the christian church to its primitive simplicity and beauty.

After these general remarks, it will of course be expected, that I should notice some particulars.

In the, first place then, your views of the christian religion, considered as a *dispensation*, appears to me to accord, in general, with the spirit of the New Testament. I recollect, particularly, an essay on Christianity, which I had the opportunity of reading in the first Vol. which, in the main, I thought superlatively excellent; as well as that also on the Jewish Sabbath and the christian Lord’s day. In the same volume I think too, was an essay, the subject of which was, the cessation of Old testament obligations under the Gospel dispensation. Some things, according to my present impression, were there advanced, to which I am not prepared to assent, without a re-perusal of the piece; but the leading sentiment appeared to me to be perfectly defensible on scriptural grounds.

That we are not under the *old* dispensation, but under the new, is admitted by all christians: and that the obligations imposed upon us, by the revelation of God’s will, do not arise from the Old Testament, but from the New, seems not only to follow as a consequence, but to be abundantly manifested in the christian scriptures. If this, therefore, is all you mean by denying the perpetual obligation of the Old Testament, then, as far as I can see, you are right in this point. That the old testament is of divine authority;—that it is a fund of sacred instruction—calculated, by divine wisdom, as a proper rule for the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, and an aid to christians in the present day, are facts not to be called in question. A great proportion too of the prohibitions, injunctions, and precepts, found there,

(all those indeed of the nature called *moral*,) are, doubtless, of perpetual obligation: but then they are such as are substantially introduced into the New Testament, and incorporated with its glorious truths. Or else, how, (I would ask,) are we to distinguish these *moral* matters, from those of a different character? from *ceremonial* and *judicial* ordinances? Is the light of nature to sit in judgment, in this case, in order to discriminate and decide? I should think not;—at any rate, while we have the light of the New Testament to guide us.

Thus then it would seem that we may correctly and safely take this position:—that the old dispensation has passed away, and with it, all institutions, ordinances, and obligations, not re-sanctioned by the New Testament. This is a position which presented itself to my notice several years ago, and appeared then, as it does now, not as a mere speculation, but as an instrument the most effectual, for sweeping off all that rubbish which has been gathered from the *old ruins* of former establishments, to build withal on christian grounds. But to take the position, that all Old Testament requisitions and laws, not *specially* repealed in the New, are now binding on christians, appears to be placing us among the tents of the patriarchs and the tabernacles of the Israelites, in the midst of bewildering researches that can have no end.

It is, as you will observe, with your views of the christian religion, considered as a *dispensation*, that I have thus the pleasure of expressing my concurrence: and I do hope that upon a more explicit declaration of your sentiments, I may find no cause to disagree with you, as to what more nearly concerns the *nature* of that religion:—the *agency*, I will say, which produces it in us. I do not wish you to consider me, at this time, as really differing from you on this point: I only desire to be better satisfied. Let me explain myself.

There are some among us possessed of strong apprehensions, that you are disposed to deny the existence of the regenerating and sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit on the spirit or the heart of man; and that you would ascribe all the religious effects produced in us, solely to the influence of the written word or the external revelation of God. And these apprehensions, permit me to add, are not, in all cases, the effect of any prejudice against you. For myself, I have said to others, as I now say to you, that I cannot think this of you. I have seen indeed many things in your writings which appear inconsistent with such a sentiment;—a sentiment which obviously goes to the annihilation of all hope for gracious aid in the christian warfare, and of course, to the annihilation of prayer for any such aid. A sentiment which would thus cut off communion with God, and let out, (as I may say,) the very life's blood of religion, I cannot think you would maintain. Still, however, I would fain see you more explicit on this point: it appears to be due to yourself, as well



as to others; and to compliance with this wish, I should, suppose you can have no objection.

That the word of God is the instrument of our regeneration and sanctification, I have no doubt; nor would I think of saying it is his usual method, (whatever he may in some cases choose to do,) to operate on the soul, *independent of the word*. But that there is a living, divine agent, giving life and energy to the word, and actually operating on the soul, is, in my view, a truth which forms one of the glorious peculiarities of the religion of Jesus: and thus I would say, in the language of the apostle, we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." You will not place this matter, I am persuaded, among those unprofitable disquisitions about *causation*, of which you complain in your answer to Amicus, in the last number of the C. B.

In commencing my letter I had several other matters in view; but the room I have already occupied forbids any thing more than a passing notice of them, in the present communication.

It was my wish, not only to express my hearty approbation of your avowed hostility to certain abuses and follies, prevalent in the religious world; but to lend any little aid in my power, towards a correction of these evils. Among the objects here alluded to, let me just mention—the adoption of Creeds and Confessions of Faith;—those fruitful sources of dissention, and stubborn barriers against the admission of divine light from the word of God, and the high pretensions of many amongst the clergy, (so called) together with their pompous human titles;—the food of spiritual pride, and the fetters of free enquiry and decision amongst christians. Here, however, it was my intention to state to you, how I considered you as having suffered yourself to be carried to an extreme, in discarding the office of *preacher*, and the practice of public *preaching*, and confining your views of public ministration wholly to teaching and admonition in the church. On this point I can at present only express my wish that you would re-consider the matter, and see whether there be not room for qualifying your sentiments;—whether the work of an evangelist (or gospel preacher) be not proper and requisite, as well as the office of a bishop;—requisite, I will say, not to the order of a gospel church, but to the present state of the new dispensation.

Another matter (perhaps the most interesting) yet remains to be mentioned: I mean such a reformation in the church, as shall restore what you term "the ancient order of things" That some reformation is requisite, I think there can be no doubt: to what extent I do not yet feel myself prepared to say. Some of the things which you insist on are with me (like a certain point with you) matters as yet *sub judice*. May the great Head of the church direct his people, by whatever means he may see proper!

Before I conclude, permit me to suggest a query, whether, in opposing what you deem the errors of the day, you ought not to be cautious to preserve a due degree of moderation in your language. In this opposition I do not wish to see you abate "one jot or tittle" of the firmness with which you take your stand, or the keenness with which you make the attack. I am only apprehensive, that the occasional asperity of your language may afford a pretext to your adversaries, to represent you as one of those censorious spirits, who take pleasure in dealing out invectives: and thus your arguments and remarks, though well directed, may in some degree fail of their effect. In some cases, you know, the opposers of truth find a convenient assylum from its shafts, in an affected contempt for their assailant: and when they dare not treat his *talents* in this way, they will sometimes affect to despise the *spirit* by which he is actuated: and thus, dreading his weapon, and the skill with which he wields them, they cover themselves with this pretext in order to avoid the battle. Indeed I cannot help suspecting, that there are Editors of religious journals, who, in regard to the Christian Baptist, have betaken themselves to this convenient refuge. But though I would wish to see you "cut off occasion from those who desire occasion," pray observe, I would not wish you to cut off the points of your arrows, whenever they are directed at error or folly.

That you may steer a straight-forward course, alike unawed by custom—unprovoked by opposition—unseduced by novelty, is the prayer of

Yours in the gospel,  
PAULINUS.

Virginia, July 25th, 1826.

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### TO PAULINUS

Dear Sir,

SINCE the commencement of this work I have not received a letter from any correspondent with more pleasure than that produced by the reception of thine. And there has not, in my judgment, appeared in this work, a letter from any correspondent more evangelical in its scope, more clear and luminous in its object, more unexceptionable in its style, more perfect in its soul, body, and spirit. I am not conscious that there is one point of controversy between us in all the items of practical truth embraced in your letter. Whatever diversity of opinion might possibly exist between us in carrying out some principles to their legitimate issue, I am conscious of none in the premises. We know, owing to causes quite familiar to us both, that it is possible for persons of unquestionable honesty to agree in the premises and differ in the conclusions. I do not, however, make this observation, from a surmise that this would be the fact, or that it is the fact in our case, respecting the premises in your epistle. Permit me then to glance at the items which it presents to my reflection.

And first of the Old and New Dispensation. The position which you may be "safely taken" embraces every thing for which I contend; viz—"That the Old Dispensation has passed away, and with it all institutions, ordinances, and obligations, not re-sanctioned by the New Testament," or in the New Dispensation. You will see this position contended for at considerable length in a discourse which I pronounced ten years ago, ( a copy of which I herewith transmit you) before an association in the western part of this state. For the *heresy* of which, I have been persecuted ever since by a small banditti of the orthodox. You will see that I was but a stripling at the time this discourse was delivered; and that I was quite metaphysical upon the atonement. The mists of the river Nile had not then ascended to the tops of the mountains; but were thinly spread and gently reclining upon the sides of the hills. In a series of essays on the Patriarchal, Jewish, and the Christian states or ages, now in contemplation, the Divine authority, incalculable importance, and practical use of the Old Testament, will, I hope, be fully developed to all inquisitive minds.

But to proceed to the next and more interesting item, "*the nature*" of the christian religion, or what you call the "agency" which produces it in us. Were it not for the pernicious influence of the theories afloat on this subject, I would assert my concurrence in opinion with you. This may appear a strange saying; but it is in accordance with the genius of this work. I have taken a stand which I am determined, by the grace of God, not to abandon. I will lay down no new *theories* in religion, contend for no old theories, nor aid any theory now in existence. For why? Because no theory is the gospel of Jesus the Messiahs. Nor can the preaching or teaching of any theory, be the preaching or teaching of the gospel. And, please mark it well, NO MAN CAN BE SAVED BY THE BELIEF OF ANY THEORY, TRUE OR FALSE NO MAN WILL BE DAMNED FOR THE DISBELIEF OF ANY THEORY. This position I hold worthy to be printed in majestic capitals. No consumptive body, no chronic disease, not even the dispepsia, can be cured by adopting any theory of disease or of the *modus medendi*; else I should have been cured of the latter malady long since.

Those who ascend in balloons have proved that the higher they approach the thin blue ether, the air becomes clearer, and as it becomes clearer it becomes cooler. They have found that there is a region a good way on this side too, of the azure fields, where mercury itself would freeze on mid-summer day at noon. Man could not live in those pure, clear, and lofty regions. He requires an atmosphere highly impregnated with terrene, qualities; and it has been long known that the sun's rays give no heat to the ethereal regions through which they pass. They must come in contact with the matter or the effluvia of this globe before they possess any vitality, or power to support live. There is a good analogy here. Man has so much of the animal in him and about him that he cannot now mentally, any more than

corporally live upon abstract views. Hence, as you have, my dear sir, no doubt frequently observed, *the Bible teaches every thing in the CONCRETE, and nothing in the ABSTRACT.* This is the radical, distinguishing, or most essential differential quality of this book in comparison of all others in the world, and especially of all systems of religion.

On this point I would wish to be well understood: for if well understood on this point, I cannot be easily misunderstood on many others. I will, therefore, impose on your patience a little longer. And as I sometimes prefer to present a whole broadside of assertions to arrest attention, I now assert, that there is not one abstract truth propounded in all the Bible. Where is the position lain down, *that the spirit of God, independent of the word, regenerates an unbeliever?* And which of the prophets or apostles inculcates, *that the word of God, independent of the spirit, regenerates an unbeliever?* Again, where is the position found in the sacred volume, *that the spirit, accompanying the word, regenerates a man?* Once more, where does it assert, *that men can, without the Holy Spirit, or that they cannot?* Some, no doubt, view some of these positions as Bible truths, and fancy that they are abstractly taught in the sacred volume. I ask them, *where?* For I have never found them there. They are all abstract views, or mere speculative conclusions drawn from the scriptures by each speculator according to his logical implements and prowess.

There can be no doubt, either, but that there are abstract or speculative views which can be drawn from, or pressed out of the Bible. If alcohol was not in corn no process of distillation could bring it out. If croton oil was not in in the croton bean, no press could abstract it from it. But who can live on alcohol!—And who can be saved by abstract views!

Believe me, my dear sir, that the art of making sermons after the fashion, is the art of making fermented liquors out of the streams of the waters of eternal life. Our great theological writers are gigantic elaborators, their works are immense distilleries, and the systems which they *rectify*, especially when mellowed with age, like good old cogniac, are sought after and swallowed down with a zest peculiar to tiplers. I know some theological tiplers that in all probability have not gone to bed duly sober once in forty years. There is amongst them, too, some rare instances of longevity. They are, however generally bloated in youth, and shrivelled in old age. There are, too, some awfully alarming apoplectic explosions; but still *ardent spirits* are in demand, and the religious retailers are enriched—Oh when shall men relish the ailment of nature, and learn to live upon the simple bread of God, and the pure water of life!

But who can live on essential oils? Or will the act of speculating or inferring: or will the inferences when drawn—that the spirit without the word; or the word without the spirit, or the spirit and word in conjunction regenerates the human soul; I

ask, will the act of drawing these inferences, or these inferences when drawn, save the soul? If they will not, why make them essential to christianity, beneficial to be taught. And why, Oh why, condemn him as a heretic whose head is too weak to *draw* or *drink* them!!

Some boisterous spirits who have more sail than ballast, who have become confirmed theological tiplers are ever and anon teaching and preaching up their theory of regeneration. Without it they could not make a sermon any more than a cordwainer could make a shoe without a last. Some of this class say of me—"He is not sound in the faith; see how ambiguously he talks about regeneration; if his views are consistent with *ours* why does he not come out flat footed; why all this reserve; why does he not roundly assert in so many words that his theory is."—Yes; says the drunkard; you must *drink*, "tell me whether you will have cider, strong beer, wine, or brandy, you must drink *something*, or you are no company for me." But to lay aside an excellent metaphor lest I should allegorize; I will say in plain English; if I were to act politically and dishonestly, I would adopt one theory and impugn every other. But what then? I would have to be swept off with all my predecessors in Babylon, before the millennium appears; before the temple of the Lord appears in its glory. It is, therefore that I am at war with all theories both true and false. Because, in addition to what has been said of their inutility, the world is intoxicated with them; men are loving and hating one another on *theoretic grounds*, they are fighting about their theories, either making them the bond of union or the signal of war. Yes, men hate one another for God's sake, if we may believe them in earnest, or acting consistent with their feelings.

I have, in the second volume of this work, written a series of essays on the work of the Holy spirit in the salvation of men, without laying down any theory or terminating in any speculative conclusions. At least, I studiously avoided such a speculative result. My aim was to understand and exhibit what the scripture saith on this subject, regardless of those theories. But because I would not exclaim shibboleth, I have been reprimanded as heterodox.

To most of us it is impossible to think upon religion, or to talk upon it without running into mere speculation. For this reason:—Ninety-nine books, and nine-nine preachers in every hundred are wont to treat religion as a speculative science, in which every thing depends upon having right theories. Whereas the Bible always represents faith in Jesus, as the Lord Messiahs, and obedience thence resulting, as the all in all.—"As the twig is bent the tree's inclined."—Hence we have churches of religious speculators. Our congregations are large juries empaneled to sit in judgment on the preachers orthodoxy: and if theoretically right, he is a brother, a saint, and sound in the faith. Hence, say the people, we go to *hear* the Rev. Mr Such-a-one, not to *worship*

God. They are assemblies of critics, from whose tribunal there is no appeal—no Cesar; no Areopagus.

The preceding remarks will, I hope, my dear brother, afford some satisfaction as far as respects the *reason why* I do not contend for any one theory of regeneration. But if any man accustomed to speculate on religion as a mere science, should infer from any thing that I have said on these theories that I contend for a religion in which the Holy Spirit has nothing to do; in which there is no need of prayer for the Holy Spirit; in which there is no communion of the Holy Spirit; in which there is no peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, he does me the greatest injustice:—he is ignorant, doting about questions, and strifes of words, from which proceed envy and contention.

All whom I baptize, I baptize into the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. I pray for the love of the Father, the grace of the son, and the communion of the Holy Spirit to remain with all the saints. A religion of which the Holy Spirit is not the author, the subject matter, and the perfecter, is sheer Deism. To a man who teaches otherwise, I would say, “art thou a teacher of Israel and knowest not these things?” And to the speculators I rejoin, “the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but canst not tell whence it goeth.” If he will yet contend, I add, tell me how the human spirit is first formed in the infant man, or how the bones of the human body are first fashioned, and I will tell him how his theory is wrong. One thing we know, that except a child be born it cannot come into this world, and unless a man be born of spirit and water he cannot enter the kingdom of Jesus. When an infant is born into the world it feeds upon no theory, nor does it come into the world by the efficacy of theory. And were we to philosophize till the last trumpet is heard children will be born into the world in the same old-fashioned way, and so will they enter the kingdom of Jesus in the way ordained and framed of God, the Father of our spirits. The incontrovertible fact is, men must be born from above; and for this purpose the glad tidings are announced. Let us simply promulgate them in all their simplicity and force, unmixed with theory, uncorrupted with philosophy, unsophisticated with speculation, and unfettered by system, and mark the issue. Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here let all the waves and billows of human passion and human feeling be stayed!

Whatever the scriptures say, I say, The only question with me is to understand each sentence in the light of its own context. And I will not refrain from any enquirer my views of any passage, without either theorizing or dogmatizing. To make *new* theories is the way to make *new divisions*. To contend for the old is to keep up the *old divisions* either of which would be in direct opposition to all my efforts, and, what is still worse, in direct opposition to the decisions of the Holy Spirit.

“That the work of an evangelist or a preacher is requisite, not to the order of a christian church; but to the *present state* of the new dispensation,” is a position which I will not contend with you. The Holy Spirit saith, “*let him that heareth SAY COME;*” and why should I say to him that heareth, do not *say come*; hold your tongue. No; forbid it heaven! “*Let him that heareth say come,*” is a license which the Holy One gave when he was closing the canon, sealing up the law and the testimony. And thanks be to his name, he left no tribunal on earth to controvence this decision. While then there are any who have not come to the fountain of life, and when any one who has heard, and come, and tasted, findeth such an opportunity to say come, let him say it in word and deed.

I thank you most cordially for your hints on moderation I will attend to them. ‘Tis hard, indeed, for any one to have a quiver full of sharp arrows, well pointed, and well bearded, and not to draw blood. And there is still so much sympathy in human nature, that it will sometimes drop a tear on witnessing the last throes of an expiring foe. Hence when the enemies of truth are sorely wounded, its friends exclaim refrain a little.

I appreciate very much, indeed, your christian exhortation; and will always be glad to hear from you. Pray lend a helping hand. It is neither *my* cause nor *thine*, but *our* cause. I have only room to express my unfeigned prayer that thy kind wishes for me may be returned manifold into thine own bosom.

Your brother in the hope of immortality,

EDITOR.

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Ohio, July 26, 1826.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

Dear Sir,

YOU will, no doubt, be surprised at receiving a letter from a boy; and one who is entirely unknown to you;—nothing but considerations of the deepest interest to myself, could have induced me to address you in this manner: I do it to obtain information from you, on the subject of *christianity*; and I anxiously hope, if time will permit you, that you will have the kindness to comply with my request. That you may understand my case rightly, I will state it as fully and clearly as I can.

Impelled by the death-bed injunctions of a beloved mother, and the necessity I seen for living a religious life, I seriously determined on leaving my evil habits, while young, and endeavoring to have religion firmly seated in my heart—fearful, that if I deferred it until a later period of life, vice might attract my affections, and I would end my life in sorrow, I, therefore, strove against any improper desires; avoided bad company and bad books; read my Bible and such books as I thought beneficial; attended public worship; and sought for divine aid in private devotion. I had been irresistably led on, by the importance of religion, in my endeavors to attain it, although I had never ex-

perienced one feeling of repentance. This made me unhappy. I saw some rejoicing in religion, who had once trembled in despair; I envied their feelings: but could not enjoy them—a coldness and apathy made me insensible to both the threatenings and promises of the gospel; all my endeavors to shake off this lethargy from my mind, were either unavailing, or if successful, it was but for the moment—despair, or any thing to have excited my feelings, would have been a relief from this unhappy situation of minds. I at last concluded to avail myself of the advice and encouragement of the pious. I had examined the principles of several sects, and settled in a preference of the Methodist church, of which I became a member. I had continued in that for nearly a year, seeking the Divine favor and anxiously desiring that my stubborn heart might be changed; but still I remained unrelieved. I was not alarmed for my safety—nor was I panting for the river of life; but yet, was most anxious that I should be. I now began to conclude there was some radical defect in the grounds of my faith, and determined to look again at the evidences by which the bible was supported as a revelation from heaven. While reflecting, one day, on the subject of the truth of revealed religion, a thought occurred to me with peculiar force, it was: Whether the Deity would have created any being and placed him in such a situation in which it was possible for him to make himself deserving of *eternal* torment. My view of the character of Deity induced me to believe he would not—and from this I was led strongly to doubt the divinity of the Bible. From further reflections on the prescience of Deity, many considerations of like nature were urged upon my mind. I thought that as the greatest degree of happiness, was the only object of creation, the design of the Almighty would have failed, if as the scripture authorize us to believe, a majority of mankind will be forever damned: that his goodness would not have rested the decision of such an inconceivably important question, with so weak and corrupt a being as man, and who was, moreover, placed in circumstances which so strangely nourished a distaste for the duties which the Bible enjoins. I thought that as the Deity was the *first cause* of all things, he was responsible for all things, especially for *evil* as he possessed a greater power to prevent it than the *immediate cause*, and if so, he could not punish any of his creatures with *eternal* misery; that if man was accountable for his actions to the awful extent mentioned in the Bible, *free will* would be a curse instead of a blessing; that if our maker was ALMIGHTY he could have created *universal* happiness, and to this end I conceived every thing in nature had a direct tendency—I could reconcile the evils we felt here, as necessary to our peculiar state of existence: but could not satisfy myself of the necessity or justice of God's punishing a being, eternally, for the effects of a weakness in which he was born. Punishment, I thought, should be proportioned to criminality; but in inflicting eternal punishment for temporal crimes, this principle of justice violated. Could the God of com-



passion have sat on his throne of untroubled felicity, whilst a being whom he had called into existence, who would have never been *liable* to pain but for *him*, was enduring the pains of hell fire! And besides these it appeared to me inconsistent with the Deity to require from us, *on pain of damnation* if we failed, implicit belief in an account of transactions which occurred several thousand years ago, (and considering the imperfect medium through which information was communicated from one age to another,) and of which it required the utmost stretch of intelligence to comprehend even the probability. I have thought that if there is a place of reward and punishment, my destiny is foreseen by the Omniscient eye, and nothing which I can do, will alter it.

If these thoughts are correct, I will be obliged to abandon the book I was learned to love, and the profession I felt bound to make; I must draw down upon my head both the pity and the censure of society, and the tears of afflicted friends. If they are erroneous, I beg you to explain them, for my satisfaction, as soon as it is convenient for you to attend to it. If convinced of the truth of the Bible, I feel desirous to take up the cross and bear the burden and heat of the day. More than myself may be benefitted by an answer to this— and I shall ever remain

Your grateful friend,

D.

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#### REPLICATION—No. I.

Dear Sir,

ALTHOUGH I saw the word "*private*" at the head of your communication, I have made it *public* in one sense. I shall, however, keep it *private* as far as respects the author until the injunction is removed. The reason why I give publicity to a private letter is, because it may be of much use to others, and can be of no injury to the author, while the injunction is virtually regarded by me. I conceive the difficulties, however you may have been entrammelled with them, as not peculiarly your own, and whether I may succeed in removing them, I doubt not but the very effort may be of general use. I can easily conceive of your difficulties before you joined, and while you were in connexion with the Methodist society. You were too *rational* to become a downright enthusiast, and not *rational* enough to begin at the right place in examining the evidences of the christian religion. You are not to imagine that I suppose that all Methodists are enthusiasts, very far from it. I would be glad, however, that there were no Calvinistic enthusiasts. But I know that there are many "seeking for religion" who find a sort of religion that does not wear well; a whole suit of it will become thread-bare in a few months. I have seen the elbows looking out of some new suits in less than the regular wear of seven days. I know also that there is a possibility of keeping a suit of this sort *decent* for a good while; but then it must be worn only on Sundays, and

only while at meeting. It must be hung up in the ward robe all week and brushed on Sunday morning in time for meeting.

But I have said that you were too *rational* to become an enthusiast. Weak minds, like gun powder, are easily blown up. And like phosphorus some of them take fire without a single spark. Animal heat alone has set a house full all in a blaze: but it was an innocent sort of a flame, it did not singe a single hair—The smell of fire was not felt on them.

The method of teaching those “who seek for religion” among the Methodists is no better than that practised by other religious sectaries. The New Testament is not, neither can it be developed on any such a system. The divine attestations to the truth of christianity, the miracles and the prophecies, with all the thousands of internal evidences are not opened to the minds of the hearers. Hence there is more religion in the *blood* than in the heart or head of those who begin in the flesh and think to end in the spirit.

But I cannot see how your difficulties could make you a Deist. This would be a most *irrational* conclusion. I can easily see how you might become an *Universalist*; but there is no connexion between your difficulties and Deism. Do you ask me, for why? I will tell you: your difficulties never could have existed but for the belief of the truths revealed in the Bible—Do you say, *what truths?* I answer, you believe

1st. That there is one self existent independent eternal God.

2d. That the world was *created by Him*.

3d. That you have within you an immortal spirit.

4th. That there will be an end or termination of this present state of things.

5th. That there will be a future state of rewards, if not of punishments.

You admit all these to be unquestionable truths. I ask; upon what evidence? Not by the testimony of your five senses—for they give no revelation of this kind; all they can tell you is that all nature concurs in attesting these truths. But, remember well, they do not *originate* in your mind these truths—else all nations, all tribes and tongues would be in possession of them, which you know, if you know any thing of history, is not at all the fact. All the ideas you have by the five senses are the mere images of *sensible* objects, or objects of sense: but on subjects that are not objects of sense they give you no information. Hence the deaf know nothing of sounds—Hence the blind know nothing of colors. The reason is, the other senses give no information of any kind but what belongs to them, consequently all the senses are limited by things material and mundane; consequently can give no information on things spiritual, such as God, human spirits, heaven, &c. These truths then, however Deists may boast, are all borrowed from the Bible. Hence there is not a *rational* Deist in the universe. Of this subject I am master; if of no other. I have, therefore, found them skulking off into Egypt or Hindostan and

calling upon the mountains and hills to cover them, when they have been sensibly attacked upon the principles of reason which they so unmeritoriously glory in. They are the poorest drivelling philosophers that ever assumed the name. And, like lord Herbert, while they declaim against enthusiasm, they are the veriest enthusiasts. For they pretend to hold principles which have no foundation at all, which is sublimated enthusiasm. They boast in the belief of one God, of the immortality of the soul, and a future state—but ask them, how they came by it, they will tell you, *by the use of their reason!* Reasoning on what? the things that are made—but who made them? Thus it goes in a circle: they prove that there is a creator, from the things created; and they prove that things are created, because there is a creator. Sagacious doctors! But pray, good doctors, where is the archetype or original of a human spirit from which you were put in possession of the idea, where did you see any thing created by a mere exertion of Almighty power? Tell me, why cannot the dumb speak who have tongues: because they have no archetype of sounds! Are not all our simple ideas the result of sensation and reflection? And how is it that you can see things which are invisible, and sounds which are made beyond the regions of air!!

But I have not to do with a sceptic in the truth of revelation: for you, my friend, do admit of many revealed truths—Truths too which are *supernatural*, which are *spiritual*; truths which no man without a revelation, either oral or written, ever knew. Either Atheism, unqualified Atheism, or faith in Jesus as the Son of God are the legitimate stopping places on the principles of sound reason and good logic. All that halt between these extremes, are besotted with a brutish stupidity. The ox and the ass are their reprovers.

Nor can you rationally, from your statement of difficulties, become an Universalist. If one point were conceded to you perhaps you might. But then this is a point which no man can ever concede as a man. I can sympathize with you here, because I was once embarrassed between this Scylla and Charibdas. I shall first state your capital difficulty, and then this point. Your capital difficulty is, “Whether the Deity would have created any being, and placed him in such a situation, in which it was possible for him to make himself deserving of eternal torment.” This difficulty arose in your mind, as you state, from your views of the character of Deity. Now the question is, whether a being perfectly righteous himself; suppose for example a seraph of greater capacity than you, and of uncontaminated purity, might not, from *his view of the Divine character*, find a greater difficulty to reconcile than yours, upon the hypothesis that God rewarded the wicked with endless felicity: or in other words, that *he should originate a system in which it was possible for any rational creature to become corrupt, and yet this corruption be no barrier in the way of his rising to eternal glory and felicity.* You will readily perceive that this supposed difficulty of a seraph, and

your *real* difficulty, have to encounter one and the same fact, viz. that God has created rational beings which some way or another have become corrupt. This you must admit or identify virtue and vice, truth and falsehood, benevolence and malevolence, in one word, moral good and moral evil—We all know that, to a *criminal*, mercy is the most darling attribute in his judge: but to a sinless being, justice, inflexible justice, is the most delightful perfection. And here another question arises, whether the government of God (for God is a *governor* as well as a *creator*) should be conducted on such principles as to meet the difficulties of those creatures lowest in intellect and immersed in crime; or the difficulties of those most exalted in capacity and of unsullied purity.

But this question is out of my way for this is not the point to which I had reference. We all know from experience that a system of government which is based upon *rewards* and *punishments* is the most beneficial to the *present state of society*. Now it must be decided, before we proceed to your difficulty as a real one; whether future rewards and punishments may not be most *beneficial to the future state of society*. But if this question is to be decided without our observation and experience it must be decided upon mere theory, and such a decision, we know from experience, is, until tested by experience, unsafe. but your difficulty rests upon what is not proved to be a fact, and which cannot by any mortal man be proved to be a fact, viz. that *punishment will not be beneficial to society in a future state*. Your difficulty then is a purely theoretic one, and not one predicated upon any known fact. Consequently can be of no real importance in deciding either upon the evidences of revelation nor upon its meaning.

But still I am not come to the point which I had proposed. I will now state it. For the sake of argument, then, I will admit that before any creature was made, the result, or final termination of all things, on the present plan of things, was as perfectly well known to the creator as it will be in any future period, and also that any other possible result on any other plan, was just as well known. The question then was with the Creator, if we dare suppose him either in deliberation, or in suspense on the question, which plan was best to adopt; which plan of creation shall I adopt. If any, the plan which was actually adopted, as the fact proves. But it might have been proposed as a difficulty, if the plan adopted, with perfect prescience, was the best which possibly could be adopted, then a final question might occur, whether it was better to create or not to create, admitting the result to have been clearly foreseen? The fact proves that to the OMNISCIENT ONE it appeared most advisable to create. Now you will observe upon the premises before us that it is conceded that the actual state of things now existing was the best possible state in which they could exist *with a reference to all final results*. It may, then in the spirit of true devotion, and gen-

uine humility be affirmed that God COULD NOT *with a reference to all final results*, give birth to a more perfect system of things than the present. In other words, God could not make an *infallible fallible* creature. Now before your difficulty becomes too heavy for the strength of an ordinary mind, it must be proved that God could have given birth to a system in which moral evil could find no place, in which there would be *no need of a governor*, and that he did not. But no living man can show that this is the fact, consequently your difficulty is one in which imagination is solely or chiefly concerned and not reason nor fact. It must then be conceded that God could, in reference to all results, have given birth to a better system, or to one in which moral evil could have no place, and that he did not, before you have any grounds on which to constitute a plea. Again such a system would have precluded the possibility of any creature being happy: because the knowledge of God is essential to the happiness of a rational creature, and if God had given birth to a system which in its very nature excluded the possibility of evil, it would have also excluded the possibility of his being a governor, a creator he might have been; but a governor he could not have been; and unless exhibited as a governor, no rational creature ever could have known him in that way essential to happiness. These principles being apprehended: it follows, that if God had not given birth to a system in which it was possible for some to be miserable hereafter, it would have been impossible to have given birth to a system in which any could have been eternally and perfectly happy.

I am decidedly of the opinion that there is not one rational objection can be adduced against any thing in the Bible. All those objections which have a show of reason are but evidences of the weakness of the objector, and of the influence of prejudice and evil habits. It is very hard to convince a person against his will, and it requires no great ingenuity to propose such difficulties upon any subject as no wise man could answer. Yet this will not prove that the difficulties or objections are reasonable. It only shows that no man knows every thing—It may be necessary for men to state that I do not conceive that you are actuated by any other than the most sincere intentions in your communication, and that I feel a sanguine hope of being able to remove your objections; for I feel as able to prove that the Bible is from God, as that the sun is the workmanship of his hands: A sceptic might as successfully attempt to convince me that men made the sun, as that they invented the Bible.

I will hear any other difficulties you have to propose, when I shall have finished my reply to your communication before me, which I intend to prosecute farther in my text.

Your obedient servant,

EDITOR.

**THE BALTIMORE ASSOCIATION.**

IN the minutes of this association for the present year, we observe the following query from the second church in Baltimore:—"Can this association sit in council with the Ebenezer church (in Baltimore) whose pastor lies under strong imputations of gross immorality?"

To this query the committee reported and the report was accepted:—"That after a painful investigation of all the testimony exhibited to us, we are of opinion, that, although our brother Reis has been guilty of some imprudence, yet it does not, in our estimation, amount to gross immorality, or to that degree of immorality, which should prevent us from sitting in council with the Ebenezer church in Baltimore. Signed in behalf of the committee.

STEPHEN RIGDON—*Chairman*"

Without prying into the nature of the charges or the method of investigation, or the reasons of acquittal, we have only to express our astonishment in finding it stated to the public—that there are certain degrees of immorality tolerable in members of said association. That there is a certain quantum or degree of immorality provided it does not amount to what some body may call *gross*, which a "*minister of religion*" may be guilty of, that ought not to debar him from the fellowship of christians. I say nothing of the stretch of power grasped at in the proceedings of this association in this case; but most unquestionably it is one of the most singular and self slanderous decisions which any religious meeting could give to the world of its own character. Nothing short of *gross immorality* shall deprive a "*minister of religion*" from all ecclesiastical privileges. And who is to decide on the question *what is gross immorality*? I do hope the association has committed some verbal blunders in this document, and it is not the law or principle of procedure with them thus to decide on questions involving moral character. If it be a blunder of this sort, I think it is due to themselves and the whole Baptist community, immediately to correct it. For my individual part, I do renounce, with all my heart, all religious fellowship with them, that will fellowship a certain degree of immorality in the teachers of the christian religion.—*Ed.*

**A Few Queries on This Case**

1. ON the hypothesis that the Ebenezer church in Baltimore had examined and decided on this case, what constitutional principle could have authorized the association to take it up?

2. On the hypothesis that after the case had been examined by the association and the decisions of the Ebenezer church had been condemned, and an advice given to the church to re-examine the case, and it had refused—what would have been the course then to be pursued by the association?

3. On the hypothesis that certain degrees of immorality had been found in the person impeached, ought he to have confessed and exhibited repentance to the committee, before he and the

church of which he was pastor were approved by the associated churches?

4. Ought the association to have been assured that the accused had given unquestionable evidence of repentance to the church before they declared him and the church as worthy of christian fellowship; or ought it to have decided that those immoralities not gross were to be overlooked without any such assurance from the congregation in question?

A solution of these problems in ecclesiastical policy would be of some consequence in furnishing data, to arrive at proper views of the authority and utility of said meetings.—*Ed.*

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IN a straggling number of the *Baptist Recorder*, which is dated May 27; but came to hands only a few days ago—I perceive the editors of that Journal have *virtually* declined the discussion proposed on the subject of “experimental religion.” It appears their papers are either missent to me, directed to Buffaloe, Mason Co. Va. instead of Brooke Co. or else not regularly mailed at the time of publication. The following remarks, in the aforesaid number, show how the subject is evaded.

“As to the proposed plan for a discussion of this subject we would say to the Editor—Dear Sir, what need is there for the discussion of this subject? Is it not as yet understood? Has not God taught every christian by his spirit to know the import of the *thing* signified by the term? But if the discussion be deemed necessary, will it not be best in the first place, to ascertain wherein we differ, and in what we agree? In order to this we will propose a few questions—we do it in the spirit of christian love, not with the intention to produce debate and altercation.

“1. Will you be so kind as to tell us your own experience? You have read Bunyan—you have heard experiences related in the church, by candidates for admission—you know our meaning.

“2. Do you not hear the experiences of persons before you baptise them.

“3. And since you know what the Baptists mean when they speak of experimental religion, will you be so kind as to tell us, whether according to the known and common acceptation of the term, you agree with them or not? If you do not agree with them, please to inform us in what respects you differ and the reasons why.

“A candid, honest answer to these interrogations is very desirable; it may at once remove the necessity of a further discussion. We design to give you “fair play”—if in any thing your ideas have been misrepresented by us, we hold ourselves responsible for the correction, when informed of it. We present your views entire—by copying the above into your paper you will reciprocate the favor.

“Wishing you health of body and experimental religion in the heart,

We subscribe ourselves yours, &c.

THE EDITORS.”

So I must tell Messrs. Waller and Clack my "experience." which the three past volumes of the C. B. would not hold, before they will enter on the discussion. In the next place I must inform them in what manner I baptize, as preparatory. And, in the third place, I must argue their side for them, and my own side too.—Their method of getting off from the discussion reminds me of a priest and a layman who once agreed to arbitrate a question on which they differed. The layman, confident that he would have a decision in his favor, agreed that *any three men* might be chosen by the priest. Whereupon the priest chose Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and referred the case to their decision. In this way the matter was postponed sine die.

The objection which these gentlemen offer against the discussion should, (were they to act consistently) lead them to be silent on every topic of the christian religion, viz.—"Has not God taught every christian by his Spirit the import of the *thing* signified by the term?" Why then, Messrs Editors, do you presume to teach them any thing, since the Spirit teaches them every thing? Again, if I must yet *tell* these brethren wherein we differ, why did they pretend to tell others how heterodox I am. This would be a work of supererogation.—*Ed.*

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### THE NATIONAL PREACHER.

AMONGST the great *national* objects of the leaders of religion a paper entitled "*The National Preacher*" is proposed by the Rev. Austin Dickinson, New-York. Mr. Dickinson in his prospectus says:—

"It will be the constant endeavor of the Editor, to present the "public such sermons, of a practical tendency, as may contribute "to honour the great Redeemer, and save immortal souls. It is "hoped, that benevolent friends of God and man will find the "work, from its elevated character, suitable to be recommended "to the wise and the noble," and, at the same time, from its simplicity, spirituality, and cheapness, very suitable for general "distribution."

To honour the great Redeemer, and to save immortal souls, is the high object of this paper. Why then does it pay such court to the "*wise and the noble.*" Did the great Redeemer pay court to such characters?—Who are "*the benevolent friends of God,*" that are to recommend it to "the wise and noble." This is really a new sort of character—*The benevolent friends of God!!* We read in scripture that Abraham was called, in honour of his exalted faith and obedience, the friend of God—But there is a vast difference between Abraham and these "*benevolent friends of God.*" This style is just as new as a National preacher addressing himself in written sermons in such a style as suits the wise and noble, in order to save immortal souls. But it is to combine the rare qualities of addressing the wise and noble, and that simplicity, spirituality, and cheapness, which will make it "suitable for general distribution." It is moreover recommended by



the professors of the theological seminary at Princeton; of Amherst college, and of Andover theological school. This is all that is necessary to make it *National*, and these are the benevolent friends of God. Only they recommend the work too soon, before it has acquired any character good or bad—But this is pardonable when it is understood that some of the persons who recommend the work are named amongst those who are to contribute sermons for it. We shall wait with anxiety for some of those *national* sermons from living ministers, which such benefactors of God and man will furnish and recommend.—*Ed.*

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IN reply to many requests from afar respecting the sending of copies of the New Testament pr mail, I would just remark, that it is out of the question altogether. The postage would amount to \$2.25 cts per volume over 100 miles. Works of that size, not published periodically, are virtually precluded from transportation pr mail by the enormous price fixed upon them by act of Congress. I am sorry that it is entirely out of my power to supply a number of small orders from interior and remote places. The work is almost entirely distributed. All I can say is that while I have any copies on hand, I will, on the receipt of the cash for six or ten copies to be sent to one place, carefully put them up in strong boxes, and deliver them to a commission merchant in Wheeling, Va. Whence they can be sent to any part of the Union by land or water carriage. They shall be well directed to the places ordered; but must be sent at the expense and risque of the purchaser. As to the risque I can say, that of the numerous orders which I have filled, none have as yet failed in reaching their destination, but how it may be in places very interior, I have no experience. I think the better plan would be for those in the interior to have me to direct them to some of the eastern or western cities, whence they might have them brought, by the usual method of transporting goods, to their nighest towns or villages. Orders thus received will be supplied to those who subscribed before the work was published at \$1.75 cts. to those who have since subscribed at \$2. We have a few copies superbly bound in calf and gilded, at \$3 per volume.

ALEXR. CAMPBELL.

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 A REVIEW of Dr. Miller's and Mr. J. M. Duncan's last performances on Creeds is crowded out of this number. It shall appear in our next.

#### NEW AGENTS.

Indiana....Dr. Obed Macy, Fountain county; Rufus Brown, Esq. Hindoston.—Tennessee....Joshua Farrington, Franklin.—Virginia....William Lane, Abingdon

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No. 3—Vol. IV]      BUFFALOE, Oct. 2, 1826      [Whole No. 39

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*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10.—Campbell's Translation.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

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### TO MR D.—A SCEPTIC.

#### REPLICATION—No. II.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE, as you see, affixed the epithet *sceptic* to your address I mean no censure or reproach in so using this term. You are, in one sense of the term, a sceptic, you are incredulous and distrustful in the christian religion; but you tell us your difficulties. You say, like Thomas, unless I see so and so, I will not believe. Thomas, however, wanted evidence to establish a certain fact without distrusting any sentence or sentiment in the ancient revelations. Your scepticism is predicated upon imaginary difficulties; or rather by some ill directed genius you would make a lever and a fulcrum of imaginary difficulties. by which you would hurl either the Bible or hell out of the universe. You would like a Bible that had no hell in it; a Bible that made men deserving of eternal happiness because they were incapable of being made deserving of eternal misery. But to proceed—

In my last I paid some attention to your first great difficulty. Such remarks were made upon it as, I conceive, prove it to be an *unreasonable* difficulty. One in which imagination wild and uncontrolled was wholly concerned, and in which *reason* has nothing to do. I now proceed to consider the next sentence in your letter. It is this;—"My view of the character of Deity induced me to believe he would not, (have created any being, and placed him in such a situation in which it was possible for him to make himself deserving of eternal torment) and from this I was led strongly to doubt the Divinity of the Bible." In this sentence you proceed upon a principle which is inadmissible. You represent yourself as having certain views of the character of Deity so independent of the Bible, as that you are constrained rather to reject the Bible than your "views of the character of Deity!!" Your views of the character of Deity are not then derived from the Bible; for it would be absurd, as you admit, for a person who derived all the light he ever enjoyed from the sun, to say, that his views of light were such as to induce him to believe that the sun could not be the fountain of it, because it was not clearer, without intermission, or omnipresent, &c. &c! Your views then of the character of Deity are so correct that rather than abandon them you would abandon the Bible. You doubt the Divinity of the Bible because, as you understand it, it opposes

or clashes with your views of the Divine character. Very well, indeed! In my last I demonstrated in part that you could not know that there is but one self-existent, independent, and eternal God, but from the Bible. But here you advance one step farther than even lord Herbert, who, by seeing one miracle, was enabled to disbelieve all miracles! You have got a character of Deity some where that annihilates the Divinity of the Bible. Tell me, my friend, where did you obtain this character? From the exercise of your five senses, which some call the exercise of reason. Your five senses must be many million of times more acute and penetrating than mine. One glance of your eyes scales not only the summit of Chimborazo, but the loftiest gem that sparkles upon the summit of Mount Zion, Nay it surveys the comet's flight, and pierces down to the chambers of Leviathan in the depths of ocean, and thence draws a character of Deity. Your ear discriminates the wind that whistle on the peaks of the planet Jupiter, from those that roar on the cliffs of the Georgium Sidus. And so with all your senses.

But tell me gravely, if your senses are not better than mine, how you came by this Divine character. Just from what has presented itself to you in the township in which you were born, and in which you live, in the state of Ohio. A sublime character for the Deity it must be, which you could manufacture from the township of—, in the state of—, by working your five senses under the guidance of reason for twenty years. Yet it is so finished that you would prefer it to all the Bible reveals. Nay you would rather deny the Divinity of the Bible than abandon *your views* of the character of Deity!

I shall try what sort of character I could form of Deity from my five senses controlled by reason, after I was told that there is but one God. I suppose myself in possession of the truth that there is *but one God*, without ever hearing a word of a single attribute he possessed, and then, I set about to form a character for him; or, which is the same thing, to endeavor by the exercise of my five senses on the things around me, guided by my reason, to attain correct views of his character.

I began my enquiries on the first of April, 1800, when I was five years old. That morning I was told for the first time there was a God who made all things. What sort of a being he was nobody would tell me. I went to work to find him out. I was told he had made all things; but not knowing how long since, I could not tell any thing about him from the things made, because I could not tell how much they might have been changed since he made them. I stumbled at the threshold and fell into despair just at the beginning of enquiries. I went back to my guide and told him he must tell me one item more before I could learn any thing about this one God. But did he live? Did he concern himself any more with the world after he made it? Has he committed it to other agents? Who are they? Is the sun one, the moon another, the winds a third, the clouds a fourth? Has he done

creating yet? Does he not make more water, more wind, more earth, more animals, &c. &c. &c. Thus I had thronged upon the ear of my preceptor a score of questions. He replied, I told you there is one God who made all things, and that is enough to introduce him to your acquaintance, if you reason right; but as you are a little stupid, I will tell you that he made all things six thousand years ago, and still governs them; but I will tell you no more until you have found out his character yourself. I made a second effort. By the end of April, I had seen the peach-trees and the apple-trees all in blossom, and the young fruit, of which I was very fond, began to exhibit itself as the blossoms fell off. But up came the north wind one night and something called frost came behind it, and in one night all the fruit was destroyed. I looked with great fury in my eyes at this monstrous hard hearted north wind which prostrated all my hopes I blessed the south wind and cursed the north.—But on reflection, said I, there is but one God, who made all things and governs all. Now he must have sent the south wind for these two weeks past and cherished all these millions of blossoms, and then he must have sent up Mr. Boreas with his cold blasts and swept them all to ruin. Thought I, he is a very changeable and whimsical being this who puts himself to so much trouble to make young apples and peaches, and then, in a moment, or fit of passion, because I *lied* the other day, turn right round and destroy them every one; and how unjust he is to make all my brothers and sisters, my uncles and aunts to want apples and peaches a whole year because I *told a lie*. Enraged by my own reasonings, I ran to my cages, and nests of young birds, and found them all frozen to death. Thinks I, what a *cruel* God this is who has killed all these, dear little innocent birds just because he got angry at me. I thought, the other day, he was very good, when every thing was blooming and smiling around me; but now he appears most whimsical, notionate, cruel, and unjust. I was going back to my informant with a score of new questions, but he frowned me from his presence, and said he would not tell me one word more: if I could not make out, for myself, a character for the Deity, said he, you must wait till you grow older and can reason better. So my enquiries stopped, and I settled down in the opinion that God was either not almighty; that winds and rains were stronger than he, or that he was the most notionate, irrational, and whimsical being in the universe: sometimes kind and sometimes cruel, as he pleased.

Early impressions and first views have a great influence upon the reasoning powers in subsequent life; and these first impressions of the character of Deity, drawn from the destruction of the apples and peaches, and the destruction of my young birds and chickens, remained for many years. If others could have reasoned better or had other data to reason upon, they might have come to different conclusions; but these were the best I could command. I began to read geography at the age of thirteen, and astronomy came in my way. When I read of different climates and their

effects upon the human family. I thought that God was either not the wisest being, the most powerful, nor the most impartial. I thought if he made the whole earth he might have made it alike fertile, salubrious, and comfortable, if he had been omniscient and omnipotent. If he could and did not, I thought he was very partial and unjust, arbitrary and unreasonable.

“*The frozen Icelander and the sunburn'd Moor,*” both told a strange story, and reflected much upon their Maker. I saw a good deal of order in the revolutions of the heavenly bodies: but I saw, or thought I saw, a good deal of disorder, of doing and undoing. Astronomers had told me that some stars had disappeared from the heavens, having been struck and consumed by blazing comets, and I began to fear that one of those comets might, in a fit of anger, strike our wooden country and burn it up. That if other stars had shone for thousands of years and were consumed, I could find no reason why our planet might not be subject to a similar fate, from some freak of a mad comet. And as the Deity allowed a system of destruction to follow up a system of providence and preservation, I could not tell but this was his darling pleasure to be always-creating and always destroying. I read something in geography of different nations having different gods: gods of the hills and of the vallies, of the mountains and of the plains, of the seas and of the rivers, of the winds and of the other elements; and thought this explained many difficulties—I was just reconciling my difficulties growing out of the destruction of my apples and peaches and chickens upon the hypothesis that there was a plurality of gods; that they had been quarreling amongst themselves; that the god of the north wind had, in an encounter, gained a triumph over the god of the south wind, &c. But while I was thus meditating, I opened a page in the travels of Curosus, who was describing an Asiatic islander carving a branch of the bread-tree into a little pocket God; which he was to invoke when he became hungry. This occurrence drove me unto scepticism upon the doctrine of a plurality of gods: and so I resumed my early prepossessions in favor of but one God.

In the midst of my excursions in quest of the Divine character, I was struck dumb with an occurrence in my own neighborhood. I had been just concluding that God was *perhaps* a benevolent being, when I was told of the death of an idiot who had lived twenty years in idiotism and worn to a skelton by epilepsy, while his brothers and sisters were all *compos mentis*, intelligent, healthy, and affluent. Thought I, this is a proof that God is partial and unreasonably cruel, for it had been a maxim with me that he that is unjust in a little is unjust, as well as he that is unjust in much; and if God could for twenty years thus punish one of a family and bless all the rest, I could neither tell what he was in himself or what he might or could do.

If I have reasoned wrong, it was the best I could reason on the data before me; and while I found others reasoning differently on the same data, and on different data, I was to question whether

there was any such thing as a reasonable being, and thus attempting to find out by reason a character for God, I was likely to find no character for man: but that he was a central point of contradictions.—So. Inquisitas tells his story.

Now, my friend, your views of the Divine character independent of the divinity of the Bible, are not worth one grain of sand. And every system of scepticism founded upon the Divine attributes, and of religion at variance with the Bible facts, as mere spider's web, woven out of its own bowels, and designed only to catch flies.

I know our colleges are schools of scepticism, and that pure deism is taught in one department in every college in Europe and America, wherever natural religion is taught. But so much for your view of the Divine character at present, on account of which you are compelled to reject the divinity of the Bible. In this you resemble a child who says it would rather have the light of a glowworm than that of the sun.

Your friend,

THE EDITOR.

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*THE following extracts from two correspondents in Virginia, contain some useful hints, and suggest matter for reflection.—Ed.*

LORRETTO, JUNE 27 1826.

“IN the last discourse of the Lord Jesus Christ to the eleven before he suffered, he said unto them, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” The eleven had received the spirit of love, and were thereby able to receive, and obey the new commandment; not so with him who had just gone out from amongst them, he could neither receive, nor obey the commandment, because he had not received the spirit of love, and therefore it was not given till after his departure. This commandment was not given to the eleven only, but to them also which shall believe on him through their word unto the end of the world. The love of the brethren is made the proof of having passed from death unto life, and all who believe in Christ are necessarily possessed of real love towards each other, as a necessary qualification for the kingdom of God.

But there is among us envyings, and strifes, and divisions; and we thereby show that we walk as *men*, not as christians; where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. And so it is among the different denominations of christians, there is much envying and strife, and perhaps no love towards each other. I suppose all agree that among christians of every name, there are true disciples of Christ, accepted of God in him, real members of his body, branches in the true vine, and therefore all one in Christ; and yet these are destitute of that love to each other, which distinguishes the spiritual from the natural man. This I think is the evil which gives the enemy an advantage over us, confirms men in sin, causes the name of Christ to be evil

spoken of, and frustrates all attempts to propagate the gospel among the Heathen. The missionaries are of different names, and each preach themselves, as well as Christ Jesus the Lord. All this I believe proceeds from a want of personal and friendly acquaintance with each other as christians: we meet on business as with men of the world, but no intercourse as christians; if any conversation takes place as christians, it is to argue some disputed point, and only serves to keep up enmity between us. My opinion is, that each christian of every name, ought to know and have familiar intercourse with each other in their respective neighborhoods; to converse freely on the things which belong to the kingdom of God, and in which they are all agreed; so as to have fellowship one with another, and love as brethren, as Christ has commanded us. On all proper occasions in public, (and even in private if agreed on) each may set forth his own opinions, and support them by such arguments as he is able; but without finding fault with any who differ from him, and using no opprobrious epithets or allusions to the practice of other christians; such as baby sprinkling on the one side, or indecently plunging them backwards into a muddy millpond on the other or any other expression which can give offence. Our weapons should not be carnal; these only excite bitter enmity, and never do good. If all know each other to be new creatures in Christ, and all one in him, brotherly love would necessarily follow: the differences that exist would be less hurtful, would be more in name than substance, (as many are already) we should all appear more respectable in the eyes of the ungodly world, and hold forth a better example of believers in Jesus, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in spirit, in purity, than by open communion. Much may be said on this subject, and I hope enough may be done to unite christians of every name in love and fellowship.

With best wishes for a successful issue to your endeavors to restore the purity and original simplicity of the gospel,

I am, Dear sir, yours truly,"

A. S.

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*Culpepper, August 24, 1826.*

ALL scriptures is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. From this view of the word of God, I contend that those that profess to be the disciples of the one Teacher, which is Christ Jesus, should make his word the rule of their faith & practice, & that without any bias in favor of, or against any doctrine or system but what is taught in the scriptures. This many will acknowledge, but when we come to compare their works with what they profess, what shall we say? As we are taught that trees are to be known by their fruit, that example is stronger testimony than theory, & that faith without works is dead, being alone; we shall have to decide that the mul-

titude of every denomination, so far as come under my notice, professing the religion of Jesus, instead of being united as brethren by faith in Christ, are united from the good opinion they have of themselves and the party and system to which they belong. As to their duty, both as it respects the ordinances and commandments of God, and moral conduct, it is not under the precept and restraint of the New Testament; but the influence of the faith and practice of the party to which they belong. From these views of the state of religion, it is easy to discover the evil and prescribe a final remedy. The evil is, that they have made these parties and systems the foundation of truth, as to their faith and practice; they then partially read the scriptures, receive such parts of them as speak favourably of their views, and employ every effort in explaining away, through their divines and systems, as they call them, the subject and institutions of the inspired writers as recorded in the word of God. The scriptures are changed and converted to them, instead of their being changed and converted to the scriptures. The remedy to this great evil can and will be found by those who are willing to believe and practice truth, by making the scriptures the rule of their faith and practice; and instead of (as is often done) changing the scriptures to suit them, let it be their ardent labor by the word to change their faith and practice according to that word, which is like its author, the same yesterday, to day and forever. For this state of things I hope to labour and ardently pray with all that seek God in spirit and in truth. When that glorious change in professors of religion shall be experienced, then we shall be united in faith, and instead of judging each other's religion from the party to which he belongs, we will take the character given in the Testament of a christian, and as many as are found believing in Christ and following his ordinances and commandments, will be owned as brethren, and prove that they are taught of God. Praying that your labors and zeal may increase in the eviction of truth and exposure of error, I subscribe myself.

Your brother,  
And advocate for truth."

J. S. W.

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### **ECCLESIASTICAL TYRANNY.**

I HAVE had the pleasure and the pain of visiting three associations since writing our last number. To the first, viz. the Stillwater, Ohio, I went as a spectator. To the second, viz. The Mahoning, Ohio, I went as a messenger; and to the Redstone, Pennsylvania, I went as a corresponding messenger from the Mahoning. My visit to the Stillwater and Mahoning associations was altogether agreeable. There was no vain jangling about creeds and forms; no controversy about who should be pope and cardinals. There was no interference with the inalienable rights, nor encroachment upon, the liberties of the brethren, considered as individuals or as congregations—All was harmony and peace.



I never witnessed greater harmony or more brotherly love at any public meeting than at these two meetings, especially the latter. I returned home edified and refreshed. After the respite of a day, I set out for the Redstone. As I approached its horizon, the sky began to gather blackness, the reverberation of distant thunders and the reflected glare of forked lightnings from the regions of the Laurel Hill portended a tremendous war of elements, if not a crash of worlds. Three clouds of ominous aspects surcharged with wind, one from the east one from the north, and one from the south, seemed to concentrate not far from the Old Fortification. As they approximated towards each other, they rolled out a great volumes of hydrogen gas, which ignited by some electric sparks, exhibited a frightful aspect, and seemed to threaten a fiery desolation and to hurl ruin far and wide. But to our great and agreeable disappointment it eventuated in a mere explosion of wind, which injured no green nor living thing. It purified the air and was succeeded by a grateful and cheering calm. After having stated these meteorological observations, I proceed to give a faithful description of the meeting itself. And that our readers may have the premises before them, I will state a few historic facts.

One man, whom I will not name, in the true spirit of Diotrepes, has, for at least fifteen years past, lorded over the faith of the whole association, or sought to do it. He was converted under the ministry of a Methodist, and became all at once a Methodist preacher; and having burned out some where near the tropic of capricorn, the *cinder* was carried to the arctic circle, and became a Calvinistic Baptist, of the supralapsarian order. As is usually the case with men of little information and strong passions, when converted from one extreme they run into the opposite; so with this zealous Divine. And as he was extremely lax in his faith in former times, he has bound himself with a seven fold cord never to have any communion with those who will not *say* they believe in the whole "*Philadelphia Confession of Faith.*" He forms a league with two others, offensive and defensive. One of them of no standing in church or state, and the other I know nothing about, save that he has a remarkable red face, and cannot speak only at times. I mean no insinuation against his moral character; for of this I know nothing. I choose to represent each of the triumvirate by their most remarkable traits; for I do not know that I shall ever write their names in this work. These three brothers combined their efforts for the last two years to carry one point: in plain English, that one of them should be Pope, and the other two his Cardinals, the one Cardinal of the Right, and the other Cardinal of the Left. The reason of this combination was, that for a few years past the two first had fallen into their proper ranks, and could not rise to any notice but in the cause of orthodoxy. Who that has his eyes open has not seen that men of the lowest intellect and of the lowest moral endowments are the most zealous in the cause of orthodoxy? and that the reason

is, they are conscious that unless they can raise a clamor about orthodoxy they are likely to pass off the stage as they ought? I have always found those of the most orthodox scent the slowest in the race, and the loudest in sound. The foremost hound makes the least noise about the course, but those hindmost are always sounding lo here! or lo there! Having given this faithful and honest introduction to these triumvirate, which is as much too circumstantial, as it is too long, I proceed to the history of the manoeuvre and intrigue by which they made themselves Pope and Cardinals.

The physical forces which they could bring into the "advisory council" they knew were inadequate to their object. For of 23 or 24 churches composing the association they were conscious that a majority would be against them. According to the constitution of the association each church could legally send three messengers which could have a seat and a vote in their resolves. After exploring the ground, and doing every thing which could be done to increase their physical forces, it was found to amount to 10 congregations; that is, they could not find *ten* whole congregations in the association to come into their views, but they could find a majority in their favor in the whole fractional parts of these ten churches. So that they were entitled to a *representation* of 30 voters. These 30 voters out of 72 which would have been a full representation of the whole association, have now to constitute themselves into the whole association. Orthodoxy must now lend its aid, and the good old constitution must be revived, though it has always been a *dead* letter; *for not one association that ever met was regulated by it for two hours at a time*. But in the constitution it is written that the churches in writing their letters shall refer to the *Philadelphia Confession of Faith*. They must make a bow to it *in limine*. This matter has been for years discussed in this association; and the more it has been examined the less it has been relished. The children in many places now see the absurdity of their fathers and mothers declaring their faith to be expressed in the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, which not one in ten of them ever saw; and not one in a hundred of them could understand if they did see it; and which not one church in America believes to be *the system* of truth taught in the Holy Scriptures: for some one chapter in it is rejected by every church in America. However, it will answer a good purpose to carry this point. So it was resolved by the triumvirate to cut off from 36 to 42 voters, that the 30 above referred to might be the association. And so it came to pass; for soon as the letters were read, every one that did not mention the *Philadelphia Confession of Faith* was handed back to the messenger, and all the voters included in the letter were rejected from the list. So that thus, in direct violation of this *dead-and-alive constitution*, which saith, "the letters when read shall be delivered to the moderator or clerk," the representatives of thirteen or fourteen churches were denied a seat and a vote in the

association; and thus the friends of the would be Pope and Cardinals have the association to themselves. Then the thirty voters appoint their own officers. One becomes a Captain of twenty-nine individuals, and there is room for two under officers to preside over 13 each. After having elected their own officers and invited only such of the strangers to a seat as would answer their views, they proceed to the *greater excommunication*, having by the *lesser excommunication* already despatched about the *three-fifths* of the whole body. And here I am constrained to say, that in all my own experience and reading I have found no parallel to the procedure of these thirty voters. No inquisitorial process was ever so *informal*, and none more shameless and remorseless. The only thing to which I could compare it was the tyranny of Robespierre during the reign of terror in the French Revolution.

An instance or two must suffice:—The first church on the list to be given over to Satan was that in Washington. The guillotine was now erected and the instruments were all prepared for execution. The Pope and his two Cardinals in succession belabored this church for about one hour, calling them Arian, Socinian, Arminian, Antinomian, and every thing that is bad, because they had in their letter refused to call W. B. or any man Pope or Master on earth. Not one word were they allowed to say for themselves. They did not even ask the messengers of this church if they had any thing to say why the sentence of the law should not be executed upon them. By a species of what is sometimes called *legerdemain*, or, in the Welsh dialect, *hocus pocus*, one messenger, or perhaps two, had been introduced to a seat out of the 42 excluded voters, before this case of the Washington church came to judgment. One of these messengers attempted to call a halt to their procedure, but it was all in vain. The church was doomed to destruction, and a majority of thirty hands lifted up to heaven gave their head to the guillotine and their mortal remains to Satan. Next was brought up to trial Maple Creek Church, with its good old Bishop, *Henry Spears*. The good old man mounts the scaffold with a serene countenance, and after the triumvirate had shed a few crocodile tears over the old man and his church, whom they said they loved as their own souls. and against whose faith they had not one objection save they had omitted to mention these words, "*Philadelphia Confession of Faith*" I say, out of a flow of unusual clemency they asked the good old man if he had any thing to say why he should not be beheaded and his carcass given over to Satan. He mildly having answered in the negative, the signal was given and he was despatched without a groan. Next came the venerable old *Mathias Luse* and his church on Pigeon Creek. In addition to the crime of not having mentioned the "*Philadelphia Confession of Faith*," it was alleged by the Cardinal of the Left Wing that they had been guilty of contumacy and unofficer-like conduct. This gave rise to a long debate whether they should be executed for a sin of omission or commission, which was finally decided in favor of the former.

Old *Mathias* made no confession at the stake, but died like a sheep. At this time I stood in need of some fresh air and made my way out of the crowd. I next attended the funeral of the martyrs, and appeared no more in the presence of the sanhedrim. While I was engaged in carrying off the slain, having occasion to come nigh the guillotine, I heard the last groans of the Somerset church.

An Elder *Bradley* from New England had come as a messenger from Pittsburg. He, good man, said all that a stranger could say, to shame the triumvirate and to lead them to repentance; but he might as well have spit in the face of a strong north-west wind. He was *officially* told that he "*occupied too much ground,*" and must hold his tongue. His zeal in behalf of moderation so far provoked the reigning dynasty, that his faith and that of his church became towards evening heterodox. The Cardinal of the Left observed *as I am informed*, that he had left the church *sound in the faith* a few months ago, over which Mr Bradley now presided, but that he verily believed that he (Bradley) had become Arminian or Antinomian, or some other *anti*, and had corrupted them. Whereupon it was moved and seconded, that Mr. Bradley should be indicted for heterodoxy, and a committee was appointed, with his accuser as chairman to take him out to a stump not far from the meeting-house, and try him forthwith. The good little Yankee had so much presence of mind and fortitude as to refuse to be tried by his accuser, and appealed from their jurisdiction to a higher court. He was then committed to prison, or embargoed, and a committee was appointed to pursue him to Pittsburg in due time, to try him upon the indictment.—

In the mean time, I found it convenient to retire from the premises, not knowing but by some arbitrary stretch of power I might be put to death; and so I mounted my horse, and escaped out of their hands. What was done during the night I cannot tell; but so far as I have narrated I pledge myself for the truth substantially of all that I have stated upon the evidence of my own senses.

While I confess myself very doubtful of all those meetings called associations, conventions, conferences, &c which view themselves either as a church representative, or as representatives of churches, I willingly own that the misdemeanors of these *thirty voters* are not to be charged to the account of, or preferred as objections against associations: for one reason; viz. they possessed not one attribute, but divested themselves of every feature, of a Baptist association. For example; suppose thirty members of congress should arrive at Washington city a few days before the others, and after several *night* meetings agree, that, as each newly elected member must produce, from the proper authority in his district, a letter, attesting him to be duly elected, they would reject, from a seat in that body, every member whose letter was not worded in the same set phrase, which they themselves had

fixed upon as constitutional: I say, suppose that these thirty congress men, after dismissing all the others, should proceed to call themselves *the congress of the United States*, and to claim the rights, and profess to perform the duties, of that body; would any man in his senses call them such, or would he object to all or any meetings of congress, because *thirty* individuals had taken it into their heads to tyrannize over the nation? Not the *system*, but the *men*, in this case would become the proper subjects of reprehension. It is as nearly analogous to the case in hand, as any we can imagine. I would not, then, attack all general or public meetings of messengers from christian communities, through the medium of such monstrous occurrences; nor lay to their charge the conduct of these modern religious knight errants. But as there are the *leaders* and the *led* in this, as in all similar occurrences; and as the *led* are perhaps conscientious in their votes, while the *leaders* cannot reasonably be thought to have any conscience about it, it may be necessary to ask a few questions designed to awaken them to reflection.—

When your moderator prayed in the morning of this day of slaughter that you might “act in all your proceedings from unfeigned love to the Saviour, and the brethren, and with a single eye to the glory of God,” did you say, *Amen*? If you did, were you in earnest? When he prayed that you “might be *directed* in all the proceedings of the day by the Holy Spirit,” did you not remember that you had, the *night* before, determined on the course you would pursue? Did you ever think of the similarity of your proceedings in council to those of that Sanhedrim which condemned **THE JUST ONE** to the cursed tree? Did you act as a church representative, or as representatives of the consciences of your friends at home? By what law or rule in the Testament, or in the Confession of Faith, did you pretend to **excommunicate** churches? From what did you excommunicate them? Do you think that their not *naming* “the Philadelphia Confession” will preclude their admission into heaven? And if your excommunication cannot affect their standing in the estimation of the Great King and the holy angels, how much is your excommunication worth? Will it degrade them in the estimation of men, or does it not degrade you? Do you not rank a refusal to acknowledge the Confession of Faith, with murder, adultery, and theft: inasmuch, as you affix as grievous a censure, and as heavy a punishment, to the one as the other? Do you not make a denial of the Bible and of your *human* creed equally criminal, and equally worthy of the greater excommunication? What assurance does it give either of the faith of a church, or of an individual to say:—“We believe in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as they are explained and held forth in the Philadelphia Confession of Faith?” Does this Redstone patented form of a church letter, give any assurance at all, that the church is a christian church? Would not their *saying* or *writing* any thing else be just as good proof? What sort of a foundation for christian

love is this— “We believe in the Bible as explained in the Confession of Faith?” To love for this sake, is it to love for Christ’s sake? Do you think that the best way to save life is to cut off the head, to quench a flame by throwing oil upon it, or to reconcile the injured by adding to their grievances? Do you think that the Lord will thank you now, or smile upon you hereafter, for having declared that you will have no christian fellowship with those who own the same Lord, claim the same Spirit, worship the same God: hold the same faith, hope, and baptism with you, because they would neither bow the head, nor bend the knee, to your little Philadelphia Confession of Opinions? Do you think your consciences will approve it when you come to die, and that you will glory in having done so in the day of Judgment? Lastly, would you not, and ought you not, was it in your power, according to your proceedings, to bolt the gates of heaven against those churches, and banish out of that kingdom all who will not subscribe your book of dogmas?

I do not think you either will or can answer these queries; but my desire is that you may, from your inability to answer them, be brought to repentance before it be measured to you as you have measured to you as you have measured to others.

*Ed.*

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### A NEW ASSOCIATION.

AS I have been informed, the messengers of the non-conforming congregations agreed to go home, and report progress to the churches which sent them, and to propose to them to send messengers to Washington, Penn. on the Saturday preceding the second Lord’s Day in November next; which churches, it is expected, will send persons duly empowered to act in the forming of a new association. As a majority of the non-conforming churches are in Washington county, the probability is, this new association will be called the Washington Association. It is also probable it will be constituted on more liberal principles than that which has imposed upon them the necessity of setting up for themselves. And here it may not be amiss to speak in parables to the wise; for to them similitudes are plain.

In the days of Abecedarian Popes it was decreed that a good christian just measured *three feet*, and for the peace and happiness of the church it was ordained that an iron bedstead, with a wheel at one end and a knife at the other, should be placed at the threshold of the church, on which the christians should all be laid. This bedstead was just *three feet* in the casement on the exactest French scales. Every christian, in those days, was laid on this bedstead; if less than the standard, the wheel and a rope was applied to him to stretch him to it; if he was too tall, the knife was applied to his extremities, In this way they kept the good christians, for nearly a thousand years, all of one stature. Those to whom the knife or the wheel were applied either died in the preparation, or were brought to the saving standard.

One sturdy fellow, called *Martin Luther*, was born in those days, who grew to the enormous height of *four feet*: he of course feared the bedstead and the knife, and kept off at a considerable distance deliberating how he might escape. At length he proclaimed that there was a great mistake committed by his ancestors in fixing upon *three feet* as the proper standard of the stature of a good christian. He made proselytes to his opinions; for many who had been tried on the three-foot bedstead, who were actually *four feet*, had found a way of contracting themselves to the popular standard. These began to stretch themselves to their natural stature, and Luther had, in a few years, an iron bedstead *four feet* long, fashioned and fixed in his churches, with the usual appendages. The wheel and the knife soon found something to do in Luther's church; and it became as irksome to flesh and blood to be stretched by a wheel and rope to four feet, or to be cut down to that stature, as it was to be forced either up or down to the good and sacred *three-foot* stature. Moreover, men grew much larger after Luther's time than before, and a considerable proportion of them advanced above his perfect man; insomuch that *John Calvin* found it expedient to order his iron bedstead to be made six inches longer, with the usual regulating appendages. The next generation found even Calvin's measure as unaccommodating as Luther's; and the Independents, in their greater wisdom and humanity fixed their perfect christian at the enormous stature of *five feet*. The Baptists at this time began to think of constructing an iron bedstead to be in fashion with their neighbors, but kindly made it six inches longer than the Congregationalists, and dispensed with the knife, thinking that there was likely to be more need for two wheels than one knife, which they accordingly affixed to their apparatus. It was always found, that in the same proportion as the standard was lengthened, christians grew; and now the bedstead is actually proved to be at least six inches too short. It is now expected that six inches will be humanely added; but this will only be following up an evil precedent; for experience has proven, that as soon as the iron bedstead is lengthened, the people will grow apace, and it will be found too short even when extended to *six feet*. Why not, then, dispense with this piece of popish furniture in the church, and allow christians of every stature to meet at the same fireside and eat at the same table?—The parable is just, and the interpretation thereof easy and sure.

Every attempt at reformation since the rude but masculine efforts of Luther, has been predicated upon the same principles. He did not like the popish superstructure, notwithstanding he built upon the same foundation. So did all his successors. They all divided the New Testament into *two chapters*. The title of the one was **THE ESSENTIALS**—and the title of the other was **THE NON-ESSENTIALS**. In one party the one chapter, and in another party, the other, is much the larger. Still the volume comprizes but two chapters, however disproportioned they may be. Many efforts

have been made to reduce the chapter of Essentials into narrower limits; but as it is reduced the other is enlarged, and the old division is kept up. The book called *The Creed* contains all the essentials; and as they are there correctly arranged and soundly digested, this book is more the subject of controversy than the Testament, which has the essentials and the non essentials all jumbled together.

Suppose, then, that a number of churches should agree to throw aside the iron bedstead, and take the book in one chapter, and call it their Creed and Book of Discipline. What then? Oh! says *Puritamus*, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, &c. &c. do this. Stop, my friend, not one of them dare trust themselves upon this bottom; they all have their creeds and disciplines to keep them from sinking. What then if an experiment should be made, and a fair trial of the adequacy of the Divine Book should be given; and whenever it fails of the promised end, let any other device be tried. But among all the experiments of this age and country, it is nowhere recorded that such a trial has been made and failed. I am aware of all that can be said on the other side, and still I assert that no such an experiment and result are on record. And, moreover, I do not think it is likely that it shall ever be proved by actual experiment that the New Testament, without a creed, is insufficient to preserve the unity, peace, and purity of anyone congregation, or of those of any given district. But above all, let us have no more iron bedsteads, with of without wheels or knives.—*Ed.*

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### REVIEW OF MILLER AND DUNCAN.

DR. MILLER has resumed his pen against Mr. Duncan. His pamphlet is titled "A letter to a gentleman of Baltimore in reference to the Rev. Mr. Duncan by Samuel Miller, D. D. Professor of Ecclesiastical history and church Government in the Theological Seminary, at Princeton, N. J."

The following summary embraces the outlines of the whole pamphlet of 90 pages—

I. Reasons why Dr. Miller should not reply to Mr. Duncan's book. These are: 1st an aversion to controversy—2d. The professional avocations of the Dr. were of too pressing a nature. 3d. That formerly he had resolved to have no controversy with Mr. Duncan. 4th. Because he saw no good end to be gained by the controversy. 5th. Because Mr. D's. book required no answer. Yet, notwithstanding all these strong objections, the fact is the Doctor has taken up his pen, and is pledged by all that's manly, good, and fair, not to lay it down until convinced, confuted, or triumphant.

II. The second item in the Dr's. book is six charges against Mr. D's. book. These are: 1st. Mr Duncan is contending without an adversary in all he says about the Bible as the one, only, sufficient, and infallible rule of the christian faith and practice; and in all he says of the secular, ambitious, encroaching and



tyrannical spirit of the clergy from A. D. 100, till A. D. 400, or to the council of Nice, also in his remarks on the corruptions and errors of the early ecclesiastical councils and creed makers—2d. That while Mr. D's. premises are acknowledged by Dr. Miller, he dissents from him in the logical propriety of his conclusions. That is, the Dr. and Mr. Duncan agree in the premises, that there is but one infallible rule of faith and practice; but the Dr. thence infers we ought to have a fallible one, and Mr. Duncan very illogically concludes that we ought not—Concerning the primitive fathers and their councils Mr. Duncan and the Dr. agree; but Mr. D. infers their decisions and their creeds were like their makers; and Dr. Miller infers that a clean thing may and can come out of an unclean.—3d. His third charge Mr. D's. book is, that it proves too much for Mr. Duncan himself; that is, because Mr. D. will have no human creed he ought to have no preachers nor commentators, &c. and the Dr. alleges that the arguments which prove no human creed, also prove no preachments nor expositions of scripture. This is equivalent to saying, If a person contend that men should be *free*, they ought, for the same reasons, to contend that men should be ignorant. 4th. A fourth charge against Mr. D's. book is, that it no where tells how the important ends may be attained without creeds, which the Dr. contends are attained by them, such as uniformity in opinion, &c, 5th. His fifth charge is, that while Mr. D. contends against the unlawfulness of creeds, he allows the indispensable necessity of having a confession of faith himself—i. e. while he contends that men's consciences should not be enslaved by human creeds, he requires men to confess that they believe the gospel, &c. 6th. The Dr's. sixth and last charge against this book is, that is, that it is wholly irreconcilable with the constitution of any Presbyterian church.

After making out these six crimes this guilty book, the Dr. proceeds to defend himself from the attacks of Mr. D. and to show that the concessions which Mr. Duncan found in the Dr's. other works which subvert his own argument in favor of creeds, are not to be used in any other controversy than with an Episcopalian. That what the Doctor says when addressing Episcopalian is not to be remembered when he writes in defence of his own system—He next gives us his *opinion* of the judicial proceedings of the synod of Philadelphia in the case of Messrs. Duncan and M'Lean which, indeed, is very flattering to the synod. Then he comes to discuss the question; whether creeds, if adopted, ought to contain any other than a few fundamental truths? He thinks they ought. To this item follows a vindication of Presbyterianism from the imputations of an ambitious, encroaching, tyrannical, and anti-American spirit. A question is then started whether Dr. Miller's views of creeds are favourable to the circulation of the Bible without note or comment, by the Bible societies? That his views are favourable to such a circulation of the Bible he would wish us to entertain; but in fact, as he afterwards states, the question is, "Whether the Bible shall be circulated

*without note or comment; or not at all?"* His answer is, that it would be better to have it "accompanied with an enlightened, perfectly orthodox and judicious commentary;" but if the Bible cannot be accompanied with such a comment (which he thinks it could not yet awhile) he would prefer to see it circulated without note or comment *rather than not at all*. He concludes by an attempt to mitigate the evil of subscription to creeds, by showing that it is only the teachers of religion who must unequivocally subscribe to creeds as *THE system* of truth taught in the Bible. It would be desirable that the laity were *orthodox* as well as pious; but for the present distress it will suffice if the clergy subscribe; for in that case there is a probability the laity may be kept orthodox.—Such are the outlines of Dr. Miller's defence. From all which it appears that in the Dr's. opinion religious sects are still necessary, and creeds are necessary to keep them up; that Presbyterianism is just the identical religion of the New Testament, and that when the millennium commences all the christian world will become Presbyterians; that the tenets of this party will triumph over all other tenets, and be universally believed and obeyed—that the Bible will be circulated yet for a little while without note or comment; but after a little it will be accompanied with the Westminster Creed, and Catechism, and Matthew Henry's notes or some such orthodox and pious commentaries: and that then it will come to pass in religion, as it was before the project of the Free-Masons in the plains of Shinar of building a tower to reach to heaven, the earth will be all of one language and of one speech.—*Ed.*

\* \* \*

To this "Letter to a Gentleman in Balitmore," Mr. Duncan has written a Reply of 143 pages, duodecimo. This Reply is divided into six sections, with prefatory remarks and a general conclusion. In the first section Mr. D. gives his reasons for not following step by step the arrangement Dr. M. was pleased to make in his lecture; and very mildly calls the Doctor to an account for a number of unwarrantable assertions which he was pleased to make in his "Letter to a Gentleman in Baltimore." The victory gained over Dr. Miller in this first section is chiefly embraced in the following items:—1. Dr. M. had, in his *lecture* on the utility of creeds, asserted that "the experience of *all ages* has found creeds indispensably necessary." This position he asserts in his *letter* was unassailed by Mr. D. or, at least, was left in all its force. By an induction of historical evidence which is irrefragible, Mr. D. had shewn before, and again shews, that no such experience exists; and that the age or *ages* anterior to the Council of Nice had no such instruments; that "human creeds" and "scholastic theology" are the creatures of ecclesiastical power, and the offspring of a degenerate age. Dr. M. is manifestly foiled in this point, for having asserted that the experience of *all ages* had found creeds indispensably necessary, it be hoved him to shew that they were in use in the primitive age in the ages anterior to

the Council of Nice. His failure in this instance makes his assertion not worth a goosequill. And their being of indispensable utility in keeping up popery, prelacy, or presbyterianism, or any sect, so far from being an argument in their favor, is, in my humble opinion, just the reverse. Dr. M. fails as much in the hands of Mr. Duncan in making out the following position as in the instance just mentioned, viz. "Human creeds are friendly to the study of christian doctrine, and, of course, to the prevalence of christian knowledge." This position is fairly demolished both by reason and fact.

Mr. D. remarks, page 13, "Creeds are considered as unfriendly to the acquisition of christian knowledge, because they take Divine truth out of its biblical connexions; throw it into scholastic forms; substitute abstract propositions, as disputable as they are philosophical, for plain practical law; and interfere with the varied operations of different minds, by forcing a unity of sentiment as the expense of free inquiry. This view of creeds, which every man may see exemplified in the controversies of the present day, was traced up to the same degenerate ages, when scholastic theology as correlative with ecclesiastical power, was introduced as another active cause, creating the *indispensable necessity* for these instruments. Thus history, instead of passing any eulogy upon their power to extend spiritual erudition, proclaims them from the first to have been mere tests of philosophy, and therefore the ministers of strife and controversy. Such they have always been, and such they are now"

Mr. D. is never more successful than when he fights Dr. M. with his own weapons. Most unfortunately for the Dr. he had once a controversy with the Episcopalians in a series of "Letters;" and as the prelatists argued in favor of their establishment from the primitive fathers, ancient councils, canons, and creeds, the Doctor was obliged to storm their citadel, and in doing this he came out in favor of the *Bible alone*. Here I must give Dr. Miller's own words, as quoted by Mr. Duncan. Mr. D. in addition to the quotations in his former "Book on the Unlawfulness of Creeds," adds as follows, page 16.

"In the "Letters" he (Dr. M.) speaks of the *Bible alone*—of the word of God as being the *sole standard*—of *the traditions and invention of men*, as not to be *followed*—of our having but *one master*, even Christ—of our obligation to call *no man, or body of men*, masters, on earth, &c. i. e. I supposed him to be maintaining, in all its integrity, this argument against the Episcopalians,—that it was death to any cause which could not be sustained by the *Bible alone*. To quote some new extracts:—Thus he smiles at a prelatical concession:—"In other words, they confess that the scriptures, taken *absolutely alone*, will not bear them out in their claims. But they suppose, and insist, that the *facts* which are mentioned in the sacred history, *taken in connexion* with the writings of the *early fathers*, decidedly supports this claim. That is, the New Testament, in its own Divine simpli-

city, is insufficient for their purpose; but *explained*, and *aided*, by the writings of fallible men, it declares positively in their favor. Is it so?—What is this but saying, that *the Bible is, not a rule either perfect, or sufficient for the church?* What is this but embracing a *principle which makes human testimony co-ordinate with that of God*; and which must involve us in all the mazes and uncertainty of tradition.” Thus also he quotes the declaration of the celebrated *Chillingworth* with great commendation:—“I, for my part, after a long, and, I verily hope and believe, impartial search of the true way to eternal happiness, do profess plainly, that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my feet, but upon *this rock only*, viz. the *Scriptures*, I see plainly, and with my own eyes, councils against councils; some fathers against other fathers; the same fathers against themselves; a consent of fathers of one age against the consent of fathers of another age; and the church of one age against the church of another age.”—“But it is needless,” continues Dr. M. “to multiply reasonings, or authorities on this subject. The *sufficiency and infallibility of the scriptures* ALONE, as a rule of faith and practice, was assumed as the grand principle of the reformation from popery, and is acknowledged to be the foundation of the protestant cause.”

These principles and observations of Dr. M. in his argument with the Episcopalians, are just as forcible against himself when they come from the pen of Mr. D. So that if Dr. M. in this way triumphed over the prelates, Mr. D. triumphs over him by his own words. In the first section of Mr. D's Reply these points are obviously gained, together with others of minor importance; so that in the first encounter he has actually got within the entrenchments of his antagonist.

In the second section he advances towards the pavillion of the general himself. I would gladly be more copious in my extracts here, but my limits confine me to the following.—

Page 21. “In continuing his objections, Dr. M. says—“A still more remarkable charge to which Mr. D's book is liable, is, that while he maintains, with so much zeal and vehemence, the unlawfulness of all creeds and confessions, he distinctly allows the indispensable necessity of having a confession of faith, and confesses that he has, and employs one himself.”—I beg leave, very respectfully, to say, that the *charge* is most remarkable; so much so, that it is far from being *correct*. One of the necessary qualities of a good controvertist is, that he should carefully endeavor to understand his opponent; and most scrupulously avoid misrepresenting words, or phrases, or sentences, which it would require some ingenuity to misunderstand.—I did not condemn *all* creeds, taking the term *creed* in its literal sense; but I did condemn all creeds, taking the term *creed* in its ecclesiastical sense, i. e. as expressing a rule of faith and manners, composed, authorized, and *enforced* by a voluntarily association: I did not confess that I employed a creed, in the ecclesiastical sense of that term; but did confess that I had one, in the literal sense of the term; and ad-

mitted that every man must have one, as far as he has investigated to his own satisfaction, any set of subjects which may be proposed to his belief. It is difficult to perceive how my meaning could have been mistaken, or not be grieved by the use of such unfair artifice in argument."

The burthen of this section is the explanation of the position "that every real christian has a creed" and to contradistinguish this from the documents in question from ecclesiastic creeds, and authoritative terms of communion. The pernicious influence of these human creeds is clearly developed in this section, and towards the conclusion of it the case is forcibly stated in the following words, with which we shall conclude at present.

Page 33. "Now, if the church cannot live simply with her Bible, but flourish with her creed—if the Bible affords no effectual guard against the inroads of heresy, while a creed does—if the privileges of the ministry are to be determined, not by the Bible, but by a creed,—then is not the one *practically* put into the place of the other? Is not one *practically* better than the other, inasmuch as it does what the other cannot do? In short, is it not the supposed practical *usefulness* of creeds, which has obtained for them all the labored eulogy they have received."

\* \* \*

### STAR OF THE SOUTH.

A PAPER under the above title has recently appeared in Milledgeville, Georgia. This is one of the luminaries of the day, just adapted to the *relaxing* influence of a southern climate; for the editor is busily employed in *relaxing* the sanctions of the gospel. He has reasoned himself into the belief that *all men will be saved*, and is now employed in teaching the readers of his paper that *no man will be punished in hell*. So that the murderer and the saint shall ultimately enjoy the same eternal felicity. So that all the threatenings of the Living God are empty sounds, and they that reform and they that reform not shall be equal in the enjoyment of the same felicity. By a telescope of prodigious power this *rational* editor has described Paul and Nero, Elijah and Jezebel, Caiphas and John—Herod and the Baptist, all standing in a glorious group before the throne of God. He sees Death and Hades cast into the lake of fire, and passing thence to Heaven—with many other rare sights.

He has also discovered that "*it is a violation of the directions of the Saviour for any one to pray in PUBLIC; to pray to any being but the Father; to pray for any thing except BREAD, for the forgiveness of sins, and deliverance from evil.*"!!! So that all the apostles have seduced mankind both by precept and example, by teaching them to pray for every thing which they wanted; and especially in teaching them to pray for one another. When Paul prayed repeatedly for the saints, and for so many favors for them, "*he violated the directions of the Saviour.*" What strange light

does this Southern Star afford! Should it mingle its rays with the Middle and Northern Stars, what a blaze of light will shine upon these states!!!

EDITOR.

### THE NEW TESTAMENT.

SOME of the priests in Ohio, who pretend to great erudition, have raised an evil report against Campbell's translation of the four Gospels, giving out that Dr. Campbell was a Socinian and the head of a faction of this stamp in the Kirk of Scotland. This is a gratuitous slander. Such a charge was never before exhibited against Dr. George Campbell. Another person named Campbell, did; half a century before Dr. Campbell's translation was published, raise some noise in the Kirk of Scotland about Socinianism. If the above slander was not invented by its author in Ohio, he should have known better than to have confounded two persons so essentially dissimilar in views—especially in a matter so important. I am not sure but that the same gentleman will be sorry to find that he was mistaken; for generally they who propagate an evil report wish it to be true.—*Ed.*

\* \* \*

### A TRUE ANECDOTE.

A WORTHY Divine from some theological school in New England, but now an elderly preacher, not long since sojourned all night with an acquaintance of mine in the Western Reserve. By some sad misfortune he dropped a roll of sermons which contained his whole system of Divinity. It was picked up in the fields of his host, and some of the youngsters not knowing but they had found a treasure, set about examining its contents. It proved to be a collection of thirteen or fifteen sermons in manuscript. On one page, by way of memorandum for the use and benefit of the preacher, and to conceal his poverty, he had noted down the times and places in which each of the sermons was pronounced. It appeared that those sermons had been repeated in different times and places from 15 to 53 times, thus averaging 34 times each. Now allowing one of them for each Sunday in a year, the stock had served him from nine to ten years; and at the usual price of six dollars for each delivery, this little roll had brought him in revenue of 2856 dollars. Truly they were valuable sermons! My informant saw the roll and the memorandum, and mentioned that the dates of some of them were, if I remember right, thirteen years old. He is a man of truth, and I doubt not but that it is an unvarnished fact. Alas for the times and the systems which give birth to such a scheme of miserable hypocrisy!

EDITOR.

\* \* \*

➡ I CANNOT yet fix upon the time of my departure to the South-West  
A. C.

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*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10.—Campbell's Translation.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

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**TO MR. D, A, SCEPTIC.**

**REPLICATION—No. III.**

*Dear Sir,*

IN again reading your letter, I have already, I perceive, got my lever under the heavier end of your difficulties. What you next say is rather a farther development of those noticed, than a detail of new ones I will, however, still prosecute the subject farther, and pay a due regard to those sentences which exhibit your difficulties in a new, or in a stronger light.

There is in all the productions of sceptical writers which I have seen, a singular confounding of things revealed with their own reasonings. More than half the time their premises are in the Bible, while they are cavilling against it. *You* seem to have fallen into the same predicament. The sentence in your letter, next to those I have examined, is of this character. It reads thus:—"I thought that as the greatest degree of happiness was the only object of creation, the design of the Almighty would have failed, if, as the scriptures authorize us to believe, a majority of mankind will be forever damned."

Let me now ask you, How did you come to think that the greatest degree of happiness was the only object of creation? If not from the Bible—from what source? It will serve no purpose to say "*By reasoning;*" for this is but a mere excuse for plagiarism. For a man might as rationally propose to create something out of nothing, as to propose to reason without something to reason upon. And now I ask you (for your own conviction,) *Upon what* were you reasoning when you came to the conclusion that "the greatest degree of happiness was the only object of creation?" Upon something in the Bible, I conjecture; for there is nothing out of it from which this can be legitimately inferred on principles of reason.

The grave terminates all reasonings about happiness. No person can look beyond it without the telescope of faith—without the Bible. Now no man can *rationally* conclude from all that passes from the cradle to the grave, that "the *greatest degree* of happiness was the *only* object of creation." If there be a truth in the Bible which human experience approbates, it is this, "*the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain.*" I positively deny that there is any such data afforded in the material world, from which any man can legitimately conclude that "the *greatest de-*

gree of happiness was the *only* object of creation." In fact, all human experience is to the contrary of such a conclusion; for no one in this life ever tasted one drop of the *greatest degree of happiness*; and how, in the name of the whole five senses, could he conclude, either from his observation or experience, that the *greatest* degree of happiness was the *only* object of creation!!! From this, methinks, you may see that you are indebted to the Bible, either understood, or misunderstood, for your premises; and that there is no logical connexion between your premises and your conclusions.

But, again—You *add* to the Bible with as little ceremony as you borrow from it without acknowledging the debt. Pray where does "the Bible authorize you to believe that a majority of mankind will be forever damned?" This may be a fact; and it may be admitted without in the least invalidating the truth of the Bible. For no man can argue from the fact that there are *ten* times more blossoms in spring than apples in autumn, that the world is not under the government of God. But without questioning the truth of such a termination of things, I ask Where does the Bible authorize such a belief? That in past ages, or in the present, a majority of mankind have walked in the *broad way*, and but few comparatively in the *narrow way*, may be admitted as a Bible truth; and yet it will by no means follow that a majority of mankind will be forever damned. For one or two substantial reasons: For any thing you or I know, all the human beings that have yet lived may be as a drop out of a bucket in comparison of the whole human family. Again—Of the millions of human beings that have been born, one-third, at least, have died in infancy, concerning the eternal destiny of which the Bible says just not one word. But that a period of many generations is yet to come, in which the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, the Bible explicitly declares; and concerning what numerical proportion of the whole human family shall be saved, the Bible says not one word. Of the saved it says, "they shall be an exceeding great number, which no man can number," and this is more than it says of the *number* which shall be cast off into hell. You will see that I determine nothing about the comparative number, but only say that you have no scriptural authority for believing that a majority of the whole human family will be eternally damned. I would add, that in reasoning against, or in calling in question, the divine authority of a book to which yourself and all intelligent persons are obviously indebted for every correct view of the invisible and future world, it behoves you not to reason from conjectures, or ill formed views, which are predicated upon mere imagination. But as I before said, nothing can be inferred from the *numbers* saved or lost against the divinity of the book, from mere principles of reason.

The subsequent part of this period is engrossed in my *Replication, No.1*. You add, "I thought that as the Deity was the first



cause of all things, he was responsible for all things, especially for evil, as he possessed a greater power to prevent it than the *immediate cause*; and, if so, he could not punish any of his creatures with eternal misery." This much will suffice for the present epistle.

When you talk of the Deity being *responsible*, you lose sight of the essential attribute of Deity. A Supreme can neither be responsible nor accountable; for responsibility and accountability imply dependance. To whom can a Supreme be responsible? An independent dependent being is no greater contradiction than a responsible Supreme. To whom could the Creator be responsible for creating so much sea, so much cold, so much darkness, so many reptiles, so many monsters in the ocean, so many conflicting and jarring elements in this material system? If to his creatures, then he is like them; if not to them, to none.

Some talk of his preventing *moral evil* by an exertion of almighty power; of his having "greater power to prevent it than the immediate cause;" of his being stronger than Satan. But all such notions; if they have any foundation at all, are built upon the most palpable inattention to *rational* nature. And here I would affirm that it is impossible to conceive of a rational creature of an *infallible* nature. But in affirming this I am brought to the shore of an immense ocean where weak heads are sure to be drowned. Let us try whether we can swim a short distance in sight of land.

Let us then try an hypothesis of this sort, viz. Suppose that all those beings called angels, of which you have doubtless heard, had been created infallible creatures. What then? None of them *could* have become Satan. But what next? None of them *could* have been capable of *moral good*. For it is essential to moral good that the agent act freely according to the last dictate, or the best dictate, of his understanding. Moisture is not more essential to vegetation than this liberty of acting according to the views or feelings of the agent is to moral good. Please consider, that if a rational being was created *incapable of disobeying*, he must, *on that very account*, be incapable of *obeying*. He then acts like a mill wheel, in the motions of which there is no choice; no virtue, no vice, no moral good, no moral evil. A little reflection is all that is wanting to see that a race of beings created incapable of disobeying (*i. e. infallible*;) are as incapable of moral good or moral evil; of virtue or vice; of rewards or punishments; of happiness or misery, as the stones of the field. There are some things impossible to Omnipotence. Hills cannot be made without vallies; shadows, without substances; nor rational beings, without free agency. "It is impossible for God to lie." It is impossible to create a being that shall be capable of obeying, and at the same time incapable of disobeying. If, then, and order of beings had been created amongst which it was impossible for any one to become Satan, it would have been as impossible for any one of them to be

either morally good, virtuous or happy. So ends the first hypothesis. And who can bring it to any other issue?

Let us try another. Suppose that when one or more of those beings called angels had disobeyed and fallen, that he had been annihilated by an exertion of almighty power. What then? Physical power triumphs over an evil agent. What next? *Moral evil is not subdued by moral means.* Therefore the possibility of its recurrence in the same order of beings is not prevented. To prevent its recurrence in the same order of beings a mere display of physical energy is insufficient; wisdom must be displayed as well as power; goodness and justice must be exhibited as well as omnipotence. To have crushed the first rebel by an immediate display of simple omnipotence would not have prevented the rebellion of others; it would not have been godlike, but it would have been in the style of mortals, who, when foiled in one department of energies, seek redress in another.

To launch out into the developement of views purely metaphysical in order to correct metaphysical errors, is at best only calculated to create a distrust in those visionary problems on which some build as firmly as if on the Rock of Ages. I never wish to establish any one point in this way; but I desire to throw a caveat in the way of those who are willing to risk eternity itself upon a visionary problem.

How "God's possessing a greater power to prevent moral evil than its immediate cause, prevents his punishing any creature for his evil actions," is to me altogether unintelligible. No father would reason thus with respect to a disobedient child. God has power to prevent A from killing B; ought he not therefore to ordain the death of A, or inflict any punishment on A for killing B? We sometimes reason on such principles against the way of God as would condemn every human being.

But leaving this ocean of speculation, (for my head aches,) let us approach the shore. Moral evil exists as sure as we exist. From all that we can reason on its origin, nothing can be concluded against the divinity of the Bible. The Bible is the only book in the world which pretends to give us a history of its origin, progress, and cure. We do know that it exists; for of this we have indubitable testimony, and there is nothing repugnant to reason in the sacred history of its origin, which is simply this: God made rational beings of different orders, that is, beings capable of obeying and disobeying his will, without which capacity we have seen they could be neither virtuous nor vicious, happy nor miserable. Those beings were necessarily created under a law. One or more of them disobeyed that rule of action. This first act of disobedience was the first moral evil in the universe. God did not immediately destroy it, as we have seen and the Bible testifies. It is in the nature of moral evil to multiply its exhibitions. This it has done. And God has adopted a course of government adapted to its nature, which the Bible unfolds, and at which some men cavil. This is an additional proof

of its nature and existence. He has devised and revealed a remedy for those laboring under its consequences. Those who receive the remedy are cured. Those who do not, remain under its influence.

Now what other or more rational history of moral evil can be given? Nay, is there any history of it besides the Bible history in the world. What can—what does Deism present? Is there a slippery *perhaps* on the subject in all their systems? Does not Deism make God as directly and immediately the author of moral evil as of moral good? Is not men's aptitude to it called by them *nature*. Yes, the course of human nature. And whether they represent man as springing from the ground as a mushroom, or as the fortuitous concourse of atoms, do they not view him as just the same being now that he was when he first opened his eyes, or from a vegetable began to have the power of locomotion?

To those who are modest enough to question their own capacity to decide on all things supernatural, invisible, in heaven, earth, and hades, with infallible certainty, I doubt not, but the Bible account will appear at least *rational*; and I am now, and I hope always will be, able to prove that any other account, theory, or conjecture different therefrom, is just as futile and as childish as the schoolboy's theory of the earth, which made the globe rest on the back of a large turtle, but could find nothing for the turtle to stand upon.

You shall, God willing, hear still farther from your friend,  
THE EDITOR.

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## A RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF THINGS

No. XV.

### LOVE FEASTS.

THAT the Bible is precisely adapted to man as he is, and not as he was, or as he shall be in another state, is with me a favorite position; and one, as I conceive, of much consequence in any attempt to understand the Sacred Book. Next to it in plainness and importance is this—that the religion of Jesus Christ is predicated upon the whole man, his soul, body, and spirit. There is not a power, capacity, or attribute, which man possesses, whether animal, intellectual, or moral, which it does not lay hold of; which it does not address, control, or direct, in the pursuit of the most dignified and exalted objects. From the loftiest faculties of the mind, down to the appetites and passions purely animal, it loses sight of nothing. Hence we may say of it as the Saviour said of the Sabbath, "*It was made for man.*"

It is a religion essentially social, and the reason of this is found in the nature of man—for he is a social being. The religion of Jesus Christ refines the social feelings, and gives full scope to the exhibition of all that is social in man. No man can therefore either enjoy, or exhibit it to advantage, but in the midst of chris-

tian society. Hence "love to the brethren," and all that springs from it, forms so conspicuous a part of the christian religion.

A christian congregation established upon the New Testament exhibits the most perfect society of which human imagination can conceive. Every perfection and advantage that belongs to society is a constituent of it. When we have put every faculty into the most active requisition; when we have aroused all our powers to discover or to exhibit the nature, properties, excellencies, and benefits of the most finished, polished, and sentimental society, we have only been seeking after or exhibiting that peculiar character of society which the New Testament gives birth to, and to constitute which is its highest object, as respects the present world. Neither reason, nor even fancy itself, can project a single ornament, can point out a single perfection or benefit that belongs to society, which does not belong to, form a part of, that society of which we speak.

But I speak not of a degenerated state of a christian society, such as those dead and misshapen things which intriguing kings and sycophantic priests have given birth to; but I speak of a christian society in its pure and primitive state, such as that formed by the direction and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Many societies called "christian" are the habitation of envy, pride, ambition, selfishness, a rendezvous of moping melancholy and religious superciliousness; a conjunction of ignorance and superstition; a combination of gloom and invincible moroseness. A great majority of christian congregations assume an aspect more becoming an assembly of pharisees and monks than of christians. A severe austerity, a rigid sanctimoniousness, an awful penitential silence characterize their interviews. Their Sunday apparel seems to sympathize with an agonizing piety within, and every movement indicates that there is something in their religion at variance with their lives and their comfort. These are but little things; yet they are symptoms of a diseased constitution, and like an unnatural pulse, assure the physician that the vital functions are laboring under a morbid influence. There can be no doubt to those who drink deep into the spirit of the New Testament, but that the aspect of a society of primitive worshippers was essentially different from ours. The hope, and joy, and love, and confidence in God, which their views of Jesus inspired, animated their countenances and their deportment, and shone forth in their whole demeanor; as the ignorance, the doubts, and fears, and awful uncertainty, of a company of cloistered friars and nuns, designate their faces and gestures. It is not going too far to say, that an intelligent mind makes an intelligent countenance, and exhibits itself even in the ordinary movements of the outward man. It is much more evident that the whole aspect and demeanor of a congregation of worshippers is an index to their peculiar views and sentiments. Who, that is acquired with the views and sentiments of the individuals composing any congregation, does not see, or think he sees, in the outward man

the character he has formed of the inward man. This I do not say as if it were my design to enjoin upon individuals or congregations to cultivate a system of appearances or movements, comporting with the sentiments, views and feelings of others; but to lead them to reflect on the *causes* of these things, and to inquire after what that was, and what that is, which distinguishes us from the primitive disciples.

This leads me to remark that the primitive christians had, amongst other things which we have not, a particular kind of feasts, called in the New Testament, "*feasts of charity,*" or rather "*love feasts.*" This was not a practice for which they had to work themselves up, but it was a natural and unforced expression of the spirit which dwelt in them. A marriage supper is not more natural than a christian love feast. There does not appear any precept enforcing or enjoying such feasts in any part of the apostolic writings. This would have been as inconsistent with the genius of the book, as for it to have given a commandment that christians should eat and drink together. It was as much the genuine result of their religion, as verdure is the result of the genial influences of spring. When God sends the rain and causes the balmy zephyrs to breathe, it is unnecessary to issue a command to the seeds of plants to germinate and grow. Thus it came to pass, that soon as the Spirit of God was poured out on Pentecost, and disciples multiplied, they not only attended upon the ordinances of social worship enjoined upon them by the apostles; such as "*the breaking of bread,*" "*the fellowship,*" "*the prayers,*" "*the praises.*" &c. but they were led to meet in each other's houses, and to "*feast with gladness and singleness of heart.*" This going from house to house and eating their food with gladness and singleness of heart, or as it is more correctly and beautifully rendered, "and breaking bread from house to house, they partook of their refreshment with joy and simplicity of heart, praising God," is just what is fitly called a feast of love, or *the love feasts* of the New Testament; because Christian Love bade the guests, brought them together, and was president of the table.

Feasts, either public or private, are usually denominated from the cause that institutes them. Now when a number of christians are invited purely on christians considerations to meet either in a particular family, or at a public place of rendezvous, for the purpose of social eating and drinking, or feasting; this repast, whether given by one individual brother, or made by the contributions of all, is a *christian love feast*. To these feasts was added the song: yes, the sacred song of joy and gladness was a prominent part of the entertainment: for it is added, "they partook of their refreshment with joy and simplicity of heart, *praising God.*" What more natural than these christian feasts? Refined and elevated sociableness is the direct tendency of the christian religion. The table and the fireside; the scenes of festivity, of social converse, and of social song, consecrated by christian affection, become as joyful and cheering to christian hearts, as ever

was the altar of Hymen to the bridegroom and the bride—as ever was the marriage supper to the nuptial guests.

When any intruded into these love feasts, or were bid to the entertainment undeserving of it, these were “spots and blemishes” in those feasts of love, and are so designated by the apostles. Hence it is inferred that none but those embraced in christian love were wont to be invited to those entertainments; and that no social eating and drinking of a mixed character, where our relatives and neighbors are invited, irrespective of christian considerations, can lawfully be called a *christian love feast* in the primitive sense of these words. It also follows that whenever a company is called together, all of which are disciples of Christ, to eat and drink, and to be cheerful, such a feast is a christian love feast, and forms no inconsiderable part of that system of means which is wisely adapted to enliven christian affection, and prepare men for the entertainments of heaven.

When the ancient order of things is restored, these feasts of love will be found as useful for the promotion of humility, benevolence, joy, and peace, as they were in those hale and undegenerate days of primitive simplicity. They will be found as necessary for the perfection of enjoyment in this earthly state, as any of the acts of social worship are to the edification of the christian community in their weekly meetings. They are obviously distinguished from any of the acts of social worship ordained for the whole congregation on the day of life and immortality; but houses are not more necessary to shield us from the inclemencies of the weather, than those festive occasions are to the consummation of the entertainments, and finished exhibition of the sociability of the christian religion. EDITOR.

\* \* \*

### A STEP TOWARDS REFORMATION.

WE have just read “An *Apology* for withdrawing from the Methodistical Church, and a *Blow* at the Roots of Partyism—by J. & J. Gregg of Indiana.” This is a well written pamphlet. It is luminous, temperate, and forcible. The writers well understand their subject, and lay before their readers a chain of reasoning and a statement of facts well deserving the attention of their Methodistic brethren. I feel perfectly certain that no well disposed and sensible Methodist can read this pamphlet and not be convinced; and that should any zealot attempt to reply to it, he will only act the part of the viper in the fable which attempted to eat a *file*; he may destroy his own teeth, but cannot wear down the subject—Indeed the facts and reasonings in this pamphlet have a very commanding bearing upon all the sects of the day as well as upon that from which the writers withdraw. They trace up all the streams of the waters of strife; or in other words, they trace up all the meanderings of sectarianism to their original fountain. I can only give the reader a taste of it in one or two short extracts, Speaking of the origin of the causes of division they say, (page 5:)—

“Hence the origin of those swarms of creeds and confessions which have ever since deluged the world in confusion and darkness; which are all founded upon an anti-christian assumption, which is the very germ of popery, and which directly presupposes or calls in question the perfection of the grand constitution, canon or the covenant given by unerring Wisdom, without clerical legislation.

“This doctrine of human legislation was the grand floodgate through which error has poured forth its inundating streams and deluged the church in confusion, persecution, divisions, and strife, and has superceded the only standard given by King Jesus, subverted his authority, and introduced the reign of the Man of Sin: emphatically the reign of ANTICHRIST.”

Speaking of the remedy for this state of things, they observe—

“Thus by the aid of sacred and ecclesiastical history, we have arrived at the grand cause that first gave rise to, and still is the parent of divisions in the church of Christ. Hence the remedy is plain: curtail or retrench the unscriptural, self created, tyrannical authority of the dominant clergy, and disannul all the illegitimate, spurious trash, commandments of men, which, says an apostle, turn from the truth; their popish idols, creeds and confessions, which enslave the consciences of Christ’s disciples, and thus prostrate their different sectarian human establishments in the dust; erect the infallible rule of faith and practice; organize every worshipping assembly upon primitive principles, let each be constituted a church with the full power of self-government, independent of any foreign jurisdiction, but vested with the supreme power; to execute no other laws except the laws of Christ, and thus reinstate every disciple of Christ to his inalienable, social, and christian rights; thus reduce religion or christianity to its original simplicity and purity, and thus again let Christ be crowned the sole head of his church, and King in Zion; and sweet social concord, harmony, love, and union will be restored to the mangled, bleeding body of Christ, and not before.”

That the reader may know how far this pamphlet reaches into the system of *John Wesley*. I will just give, in one short extract, the position which is, in my judgment, unanswerably supported to the end of the work. Messrs Greggs come forward with their objections in their answer to the following question. (page 6:)

“But what is there in either the doctrine or discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church against which you object?

“*Ans.* Several of the fundamental principles, or most prominent features of Methodism, as an ecclesiastical establishment, are anti-scriptural, and resemble popery much more than apostolic order, and which evidently have originated either from popery or from the same primary principles from which it originated.”

In establishing this grand position sundry minor ones of considerable importance are established, such as—

“True Methodism, as a system of ecclesiastical policy, rests on, or is built upon an anti-christian assumption for its foundation, or else has sprung from the Mother of Harlots.”——

“But now, beloved, should we make it appear that there never was, upon episcopal principles, a regular bishop in the Methodist church, and consequently not one regularly ordained minister of any grade—what then? Will it not appear that Methodist episcopacy is founded in assumption, and is hence destitute of even the supposed authority of the Roman Catholic episcopacy? And should we make it appear that episcopacy, which is the fundamental principle of the ecclesiastical government of the Methodist church, the keystone of the vast arch, is anti-scriptural and anti-christian—what more? Will it not appear that the Methodist people are either kept in ignorance upon this important subject by their rulers, or else they are, to say the least, a very good-natured people tamely to submit to a system of laws and law-makers that derive their power from anti-christian principles.”——

“We are amazed and astonished that good men of liberal information—that gospel ministers, should publicly profess to be moved by the Holy Ghost, or called of the Lord to take upon them that office, or ministration, when in fact the Holy Ghost has never constituted any such office, composed of the like attributes.”——

“Every church built or established upon any other constitution than the New Testament, and that acknowledges any legislative authority other than Christ and his apostles, and which is governed by any other laws, rules, or statutes than those enacted by divine legislation; and which has assumed any other name than that given by divine authority, is a mere sectarian human establishment. The conclusion is fair; escape it if you can.

“The Methodist episcopal church is built on—not the New Testament, as its constitution—but the discipline and laws of the legislative authority of the general conference, and by its laws are governed and has assumed a party name unknown to primitive christians. Therefore, the Methodist episcopal church is a mere sectarian human establishment.”——

“Those human standards, constitutions, creeds, covenants, articles, disciplines, rules, and laws, which are all predicated upon the inadequacy or imperfection of the Perfect Standard given by Jesus Christ, and all derive their existence from the same principles, are the very essence of partyism—of the divisions and schisms that now disgrace christianity. And however zealous good men may be to support them and plead for their utility, they are thereby pleading that the will of heaven, the intercessory prayer of Jesus Christ may never be fulfilled, that divisions may continue, and the church never arrive at that perfect unity for which the Saviour prayed.”——

It can be no injury to any sectary to read this pamphlet, but it



may be of much benefit; and could I make a present of a copy of it to every Methodist in America, I would do it. *Ed.*

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THE following letters are from the students of theology in the Hamilton Seminary, New York:—

HAMILTON VILLAGE, August 24, 1826.

*Dear Sir*—On a request made to you some time since, you very politely forwarded, to the Philomathesean Society, of the Literary and Theological Seminary, in this place, your paper styled "*The Christian Baptist.*" You have not failed to remember us ever since, but have, without any remuneration, furnished us with it regularly. You have thus manifested for us a friendly feeling, a kindness in your attention for which we should be grateful, and for which we now, sir, tender you our unfeigned thanks.

But for reasons which we are willing frankly to avow, our society has recently come to the resolution to ask you to discontinue your publication.

It was hoped, respected sir, that your time, your influence, your talents, would all have been put in requisition to subserve the cause of God, and consequently the happiness of man. It was hoped, that thousands would rise up to call you blessed; and that the evening of your life would be calm and composed; cheered by an approving conscience, the approbation of your fellow-creatures, and the smiles of indulgent Heaven. But upon a careful examination of your paper, among much that is good, we find much that we cannot approve; much that is repugnant to the best feelings of man, and subversive, as we apprehend, of vital piety. In this vale of tears man needs all the comforts which can be derived from the light of divine revelation, all the consolation which God in infinite mercy has vouchsafed to man through a blessed Mediator; besides, he needs all the encouragements, all the persuasion, which can be afforded by the most devoted and godly men of the present age, to forsake the contracted views, and jealousy of feeling, which so strongly marked the conduct of our fathers. We admit that there may be much in the church at the present day that is reprehensible. But what way is most likely to effect a change? Is it by a confirmed course of ridicule and sarcasm, or by a dignified argumentative, and candid exposition of errors, and a mild and persuasive invitation to amendment?

What consolation can we possibly receive, unless we can so live at all times, that when God calls us to his dread tribunal, we may be in readiness to appear? Oh! what will be the situation of that servant, who, when he is called, shall not have on the wedding garment? Shall we preach, shall we pray, shall we circulate our thoughts through the medium of the press, without the most scrutinizing search of our own hearts? and a petition at the throne of Divine Grace, that God may bless our every effort for the good of mankind? What are we, dear sir, but miserable worms of

the dust? Shall we who hope to inherit, in a few days, the great and exalted privilege of the lowest place in heaven, keep up a continual warfare with our fellow-creatures, and expect to gain the approbation of a pure and infinitely Holy Being, by acts so deficient in charity? The cold hand of death may be upon you before this hasty and imperfect scroll shall reach you; and perhaps the hand which now sketches these lines will be no more active when this letter reaches the place of its destination. These may be considered trite remarks; but death, judgment, and eternity are solemn things—and they are at hand! Permit us to remind you of the great concern which some of the most able, devout, and pious writers have experienced, when publishing their works, apprehensive lest they might not be productive of good.

With a fervent prayer that your mind may be so directed by Divine Grace, and that you may be so governed by Wisdom that the best interests of your fellow-creatures may be promoted, and God honored, we bid you farewell.

By order of the Society,

W—— D——, *Cor. Sec.*

\* \* \*

YOUNG GENTLEMEN,

I CANNOT but feel indebted to your urbanity and admirable piety for the practical little sermon you have had the condescension to deliver to myself for my own exclusive benefit. Had it not been for your kind *mementos* I might have forgotten that I am a *mortal* being, and an *accountable* one. But you have been kind enough to assure me that I must die and be judged, and that at no distant period; for all these proofs of benevolence on your part I should be extremely *insensible* were I not to feel grateful; and *impolite* were I not to acknowledge my obligations to you. It is true, indeed, that it is not apparent from your letter to what religion you would have me proselyted—whether to the Jewish, Mahometan, or Christian; for as to anything it contains of a distinguishing character, it might have been written by a Jew, a Musselman, or a Christian. There is one thing sufficiently plain, however, that you would have me converted to a religion of more charity, and which would dispose me to sing with the charitable poet—

“Father of All! in every age,

“In every clime ador’d;

“By saint, by savage, and by sage—

“Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.”

Or rather—

“For modes of faith let zealous bigots fight;

“His can’t be wrong, whose charity is right.”

Were it not apparently impertinent and somewhat invidious to deliver a lecture to one’s superiors, especially to persons already so pious, I feel from the very bottom of my heart a strong, a vehement desire to request you to read the New Testament of

Jesus Christ once through, with all that pious concern which you so feelingly exhibit for me. For I feel as certain as I live, that you are not indebted to it for the piety which your communication breathes; else you could not have deliberately denounced the Saviour of the World and his holy apostles for their plain, and bold, and severe reprehension of the errorists of that age. This exhortation I would enforce, with many evidences of its necessity, with many proofs of its importance, with many directions for its adoption, were I addressing persons less pious than yourselves; and I would urge it with more concern upon you, as you are preparing yourselves to be guides of the blind, teachers of babes, and instructors of those ignorant and out of the way; but, as I before said, it would appear impertinent and invidious for me so to do.

You must not call this sarcasm nor raillery; for I assure you I doubt not your pious souls have been sorely grieved with the impious spirit of "The Christian Baptist;" for it never has looked with a benign aspect either upon the professors of theological schools, nor their disciples. It has never flattered their pious efforts in making christian bishops for christian congregations by means of a system of speculation, and a few rules for collecting sermons, or manufacturing those of ancient times down to the present taste and fashion. But again I entreat you not to imagine that I do not conceive you pious students of divinity; nay, I doubt not but you are as pious as any of the students of Gamaliel, not even excepting Saul of Tarsus. But should you ever be born from above, I will expect to see your piety exhibit itself in a different way and to run in a different channel.

With unfeigned wishes for such an event, I subscribe myself

Your grateful friend,

THE EDITOR.

THE following epistle from a minority of the students of said Seminary exhibits another kind of piety:—

BROTHER CAMPBELL,

*Dear Sir*—PROBABLY the same mail which shall bring you this letter, will bring you another from the Philomathesean Society of this place, requesting a discontinuance of your paper, which, agreeably to their request, you have very liberally and regularly sent them. The truth is, sir, the society are, and ever have been, since your paper was sent for, divided on the subject. The propriety of keeping it has been frequently litigated with much warmth. Some have been very anxious to keep it, and others have been very bitter against it. But those opposed to it have at length prevailed; and, as members of this society, we *must* submit. Yet, as *individuals*, a few of those in favor of keeping your paper, have concluded unitedly to ask it as a favor, to continue (to us) "The Christian Baptist." We ask it as a favor, because we are here supported by the charity of the public, and are unable to defray the ordinary expense of it. Should it be your pleasure to gratify our request, we hope ever to remember it with

gratitude. But whether you should comply with our request or not, may you ever share largely in that grace you so eminently need to succeed your endeavors to restore "the ancient order of things." May you have that wisdom which cometh down from above, which is pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated. With undissembled piety, christian humility, and apostolic devotion, may you, by plain, persuasive, and christian-like argument, be enabled to expose the errors of the age, and establish that purity and simplicity which characterized the apostolic age. May the good will of him who dwelt in the bush rest upon you forever, and the fruits of genuine piety be your choicest blessing. May your age be clearer than the noon, and as a morning without clouds; and when you shall be called to pass the Jordan of death, may you have the peaceful satisfaction of reflecting upon a life spent in the service of God. May your sun set in tranquility, and the beams of eternity salute your rising peace.

Yours, most sincerely and most affectionately,

C— S—:

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*My Dear Friends,*

WITH great pleasure I comply with your request, and hope that you will be always ready, when you either adopt or reject any sentiment in this work, to produce good and scriptural reasons for so doing. I have never felt any disposition to censure those who differ from me in any of my views, provided always, they seemed to act reasonably and conscientiously, and had something like argument or evidence to support them. Indeed I cannot say I *censure* any different from me on any account. It is not my province to censure. I may pity and lament their obstinacy, or their weakness; but if I view any thing more correctly, I have no ground of boasting in myself. I do love all them of every name under heaven that love my Lord and Master, and I would deny myself, to any extent, the law of our King commands, to render any service to the humblest disciple in his kingdom. And while I write and labor as I do, he that knows the hearts of all flesh knows that I do it from the fullest conviction from his oracles that the christianity of our day is a corrupt christianity, and that *the ancient order of things* is lost sight of in almost all denominations of professing christians. I do consider that there are many, very many christians, in the present day, greatly out of the way, and that they are suffering famine and disease in their souls because of it. I am assured that good health cannot be restored but by the depleting and stimulating plan recommended by Paul in his letters to Timothy and Titus.

Should any of you, at any time, feel any objections which you deem insuperable against any thing in this work, it will give me great pleasure to have you state them to myself: or should any of your instructors dislike any thing in it, their objections shall be thankfully received, carefully considered, and most respectfully replied to. We must all give account of ourselves to

the Lord, and whatever we think now, I am sure at that moment we would rather have his approbation than that of all the human race besides.

Praying that you may be prepared to give up your account with joy, and not with grief, I write myself

Your obt. servt. for the truth's sake,

THE EDITOR.

P. S. I make no apology to you, nor to the Philomathesean Society, for publishing your letters; believing that there is nothing which they contain that is of any private interpretation *Ed.*

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*From the "Western Luminary" of September 27.*

MR. EDITOR,

PERMIT me to call the attention of your readers to a work which is now circulating freely among our Baptist brethren in this state. I allude to the New Testament lately published by Mr. *Alexander Campbell* of Virginia; concerning which there is much false impression on the minds of many.

It was expected by people generally in this part of the country, that Mr. Campbell intended to furnish us with a translation executed many years since by Doctors *Campbell* and *M'Knight* of Scotland, and Dr. *Doddridge* of England. If this expectation had been realized, the writer of this notice would have been satisfied, believing those translations to be generally faithful and correct; but finding on examination, that the deviations from those authors are exceedingly numerous, he asks leave to lay before the readers of your paper the following statement, in order that they may judge for themselves whether their impressions concerning this work have not been in many instances erroneous.

On the single subject of *baptism*, the alterations from the translations of the above authors are *upwards of eighty*. There are no less than *seven* of these in the third chapter of the "Testimony of Matthew." In all of the gospel by Matthew, there were found, at least, *sixteen* alterations on this subject—in Mark, *twelve*—in Luke, *eight*—in John, *eleven*—in Acts, *nineteen*—and a few in some of the other books, making at least the number mentioned above.

As it was found to be too tedious and troublesome to compare the whole work with the originals, in order to ascertain the deviations on all subjects, a selection was made of a single epistle for this purpose. This was the Epistle to the Hebrews translated by Macknight; and in this were found *upwards of sixty* alterations from that author.

Now, Mr. Editor, if this epistle be a fair specimen of the whole Testament, it will follow, that there are contained in it upwards of *one thousand five hundred* variations from the translations of the learned Doctors whose names are in the title page, although numbers of our wise men in Kentucky imagine that we have it almost verbatim from these translations.

Most of the variations in the Epistle to the Hebrews are of small importance, but they serve to shew us that Mr. Campbell was anxious to furnish the public with a gospel, shaped exactly to his own views.

In glancing my eye over other parts of his work, I perceived an alteration in the Acts of the Apostles, which, in my view, is of very considerable importance. I allude to Acts xx. 28. "Feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood." It is translated "God" by Dr. Doddridge, and he gives a note stating that there is no good authority for the change which some propose to make, of "God" into "Lord" This has long been viewed, as a powerful text in opposition to those who deny the proper divinity of Christ; for it states positively, that he who purchased the church with his own blood, is God. This did not pass unnoticed by the Unitarians, and hence they have long endeavored to persuade people that the common version of the original is erroneous, and ought to be changed as above; and I am sorry to say that Mr. Campbell makes the change, although it is in opposition to the pious and learned Doddridge from this part of his work is taken. I know indeed he passes over it silently, but it may not tend the less on that account, to unsettle the minds of common readers with regard to an important doctrine of God's word.

Mr. Campbell has been charged with leaning towards Unitarianism. I know not whether there be a sufficient foundation for the charge or not; but if not, he ought to guard against giving a handle to the enemies of truth.

The above remarks are not intended as a discussion of the merits of this work, but simply to show to those who read it the necessity of guarding against the supposition that it is the identical translation furnished by Doctor Campbell, Doddridge and Macknight.

A FRIEND TO TRUTH.

\* \* \*

### A REFUTATION OF THE FOREGOING MISREPRESENTATIONS.

THERE are many ways of making false impressions upon the public mind besides the telling of downright lies. But there is as much real falsehood in the sight of Heaven and all intelligent minds in giving such a representation of things, in whatever language it may be uttered, as gives a false impression to the hearer. And when it is done *intentionally*, it differs nothing from the grossest deception. The writer of the above article has, in my judgment, as really "*borne false witness against*" me, as if he had accused me of treason against the state; and what is far worse in the case, it is in a matter of incomparably and inexpressibly more momentum.

Reader, ask yourself what is the impression which the above statement makes upon your mind. 1st. Does it not lead you to

think that I had cheated public expectation in the execution of a work contrary to my proposals and conditions of publication?

2d. Does it not lead you to think that I have *secretly*, and with an *intention to deceive*, foisted into the works of Doctors Campbell, Macknight, and Doddridge, "*one thousand five hundred*" and more alterations?

3d. Does it not lead you to think that I had some *other "gospel"* of my own, different from that of those Doctors, which I wished by a fraudulent artifice, to impose upon the public as theirs?

4th. Does it not lead you to suspect that I am an artful Socinian, changing and interpolating the sacred text to establish a favorite hypothesis?

5th. Does it not, lastly, lead you to believe that I am a very bad man, and a most impudent deceiver, deserving of no confidence as to honesty and integrity in my professions?

Such, I believe, are the impressions it is *designed* to make, and such I am certain are the impressions it is calculated to make upon the minds of all them who either know me not, or are prejudiced against me.

Now, courteous reader, I will ask you one question more. Do you not think, that if there be no foundation for any of these impressions—for any of these malignant insinuations—that the author of the above statement has as really violated the ninth commandment of the sacred *ten* written by the finger of God, as if he had accused me of murder, theft, or any other crime of which I am innocent?

Now for the proof. It is a fact which can be proved in any court of law or equity, that the work is as exactly executed according to my prospectus as it could be, with this one exception, viz. that I did not put upon the margin the different translations for reasons assigned in my General Preface, but placed them in an Appendix. See Preface, p. 10.

In the second place, it is a fact which can be proved in any court of law or equity, that I have faithfully given the translation proposed, and that the *eighty* alterations on the subject of baptism which the above statement mentions, are *authorized by Dr. Campbell* and *proposed in my prospectus*.

And here let it be noted, that this "*Friend to Truth*" tells *eighty lies* in telling one truth! for the *eighty* differences, if like the *seven* mentioned in the 3d of Matthew, (and this is the only specification he has made,) are only in *one* word, which it can be proved in any court of law and equity in England or America, is authorized by the said Dr. George Campbell, who this "*Friend to Truth*" says is "a faithful and correct" translator in general. Eighty times it is *immerse* or its derivatives, instead of the Greek word *baptize* and its derivatives, which we promised in our prospectus to attend to. Thus his *eighty* differences are in fact but *apparently* one, and in *reality* not one. For it can be proven as aforesaid, that Dr. George Campbell has said and published to the

world that *it ought to be done* as I have done, and gives his reasons why he did not do it.

Again—I request the reader’s attention to the following item in my prospectus:—

“There is also one improvement of considerable importance which ought to be made in this work, and to which we shall attend. Sundry terms are not *translated* into English, but *adopted* into those translations from long usage. Those terms occasionally translated into English by Campbell and Macknight; but not always. We shall uniformly give them the meaning which they have affixed to them, wherever they occur, and thus make this a *pure* English New Testament, not mingled with Greek words, either adopted or anglicised. *But in doing this, we shall not depart in any instances from the meaning which they have declared those words to convey.*”

You see there is one promise of great importance in *italics* in this quotation. Now it can be proven in any court of law or equity where the English language is spoken, that I have not, in *one instance*, departed from this promise. I challenge all the colleges and divines on this continent to shew that I have not, *in every instance*, so done. Let this Doctor of Divinity, this “*Friend to Truth!*” *make an attempt.*

He finds “upwards of *sixty* alterations” in the Epistle to the Hebrews. How this sounds! True he admits them to be of little importance—but how numerous are they! Now, lovers of truth, he has not been half as ostentatious of his calculating prowess as he might be: for, in fact, there is more than *one hundred and twenty* “ALTERATIONS” in the first six verses of the 3d chapter of this epistle!!! In other words, I have given six full verses of “*alterations*” from the translator of this epistle. But what are they? Why, when the matter is looked into, Dr. Campbell’s translation of six verses is put into the text in preference to Dr. Macknight’s. Thus I have departed one hundred and twenty times from Dr. Macknight in one half dozen of verses. And what has become of Dr. Macknight’s translation of these six verses? Have I cheated the public, and made them believe that they were reading Macknight. No, indeed; Dr. Macknight is faithfully given in the Appendix, because there was not room for it in the margin; and about *fifty* times you will find Macknight in the Appendix in this epistle. Now the fact is, this lover of truth to the contrary notwithstanding, these *fifteen hundred* “*variations*” are this kind; and I am not sure but he might have made them *twice* fifteen hundred if he had been a little more at leisure.

This tremendous number of alterations will sound as terrific in the ears of the honest members of Dr. Blythe’s or Dr. Breckenrige’s congregation in Lexington, as did a sentence I met with in Michaelis’ Introductory Lectures to the New Testament, when I was a “*student of Divinity.*” Michaelis, a very learned and a very orthodox professor, informed me that in the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, amongst the best of them too, there were



more than FORTY THOUSAND ALTERATIONS OR VARIATIONS!! But when I began to understand the nature of these alterations, there were not more than a *hundred* of them of much importance. Thirty-nine thousand of them were something like this Dr's *eighty* apparent differences in *one word*, but, in *reality*, *no difference*. But after all this alarm of the church in danger! the fact is, the public have *all the translation* of these three Doctors in the volume, and these *fifteen hundred* different translations into the bargain! So that if the matter be rightly understood, the direful, or rather *ireful* insinuations of this *Friend to Truth* are so many encomiums upon the work!

But this "*Friend to Truth*," this *masked* champion of orthodoxy, aims a deadly javelin at my heart. He would assassinate me in the dark! He would "*rob me of my good name*," and massacre my reputation, and destroy the influence of the best translation of the New Testament that ever appeared in our language; because, for-sooth, he thinks it endangers his *baby sprinkling*. And in this I am not to blame. See Appendix No. 4. His own good and "*faithful*" Doctors are to blame. They were witnesses, in secret, but now they have come out to the public gaze, and I must be called "*a Socinian*," and an "*interpolator*," that I may be burned by some good John Calvin, and that the witness of these three "*faithful and correct*" translators may be again imprisoned. And why am I a Socinian now? Because, on the authority of the acknowledged great, and learned, and mighty collator of versions and manuscripts, I have preferred the term *Lord* to *God*. And here again, have I cheated the public? Nay, verily, I have given both Yes, both Doddridge and Griesbach. See Appendix No. 47. For although I am as firmly convinced of the proper divinity of the Saviour of the world, that he is as literally and as truly the Son of God as the Son of Man, as ever John Calvin was, I would not do as this "*Friend to Truth*" insinuates I ought to have done, made the text bend to suit my views. But in reality it is more in favor of the divinity of Jesus as it is in Griesbach than as it is in Doddridge. It is only against the awkward phraseology of those controvertists who makes more Socinians than Calvinists by their efforts to convert the former. On this ground it was that Dr. Whitby preferred the reading of *God* instead of *Lord*, while he gives better authority for the latter than the former. But I was not thinking about favoring my views, nor any man's views, in preferring Griesbach to Doddridge. *While I give the reader both*, I leave him to judge for himself; but this "*Friend to Truth*" would have given *but one*, as he blames me for giving both. I said in the preface I gave the most conspicuous place to that *reading* or *rendering* which I thought deserved it—and so it happens here.

Now my reasons for preferring *Lord* in this place to the term *God*, are as follows:—Some ancient MSS. have it *God*; others, *Lord and God*; others, *God and Lord*; some, *Lord God*; others, *Christ*; others *Saviour*, and some of the most ancient have it *Lord*.

Griesbach gives all these readings, and decides in favor of the latter. Besides I added, in my own mind, to the authority of Griesbach, the following facts. Ireneus, one of the oldest writers who flourished A. D. 176, quoting this passage in L. 5. 14. quotes it as in the New Translation. Now I think this is great weight, as he lived before any controversy arose about the passage, and before any of the MSS. now in existence were written. Again—the Syriac translation, the oldest in the world, has it *Lord*. I do not know how much influence these facts might have had on the mind of Griesbach in deciding for himself on the manuscripts before him; but I mention them as adding in my mind to the weight of his decision.

But after all, I feel assured that this "*Friend to Truth*" examined the whole translation in order to find something to impeach my reputation, and that he fixed upon this as the only, and the most likely foundation on which he could rest his lever in order to hurl me down in the estimation of those whose conviction upon another subject he feared. And yet he has *ten* times more reason to impeach *John Calvin* and *Theodore Beza* on account of Socinianism than me, excepting that I have not given my voice in favor of burning any Servetus. For both these gentlemen argue that the famous passage which a hundred orthodox divines and critics have condemned as spurious, viz. 1 John, v. 7. does not prove *the unity of three persons in one God*, admitting it to be genuine.

Now I know that this "*Friend to Truth*" has a way to save himself from all these remarks. It is this: He has not pronounced any opinion upon "*the merits*" of the translation; he has not affirmed any of the things he has insinuated and he only meant to correct the false impressions of others; and that he has not in so many words accused me of unfaithfulness in the case—but we do not thank him for leaving this back door open. He has done his best to blast my reputation and to destroy the influence of the work. I am glad to have it investigated with all scrutiny and severity, and to hear every objection to it from any quarter, because I am of opinion I can defend the work in every grand point against any opposition from any quarter whatever. Numerous attempts similar to that of this anonymous *Divine*, were made against the common version now in use, but the king's decree put them all to silence.

I have only to add, that my opinion is, that this slanderer was afraid to publish his name because he is of slender reputation already, and one of those Divines on whom I had to call when last in Lexington because of slanders which he propagated against me, and which he was obliged to retract or explain away.

If the editor of the "*Luminary*" has any regard to his character as a "*Friend*" of *Justice*, he will publish this statement, as I have published his, and thus "do unto others as he would wish them to do unto him."

EDITOR.

BY the last mail I received the 12th and 19th numbers of the "Baptist Recorder" These zealous champions of creeds and human systems are determined to have the arena to themselves. Their paper abounds with such pieces of downright billingsgate as that from which the following extracts are taken. If their system of creeds and "*their views*" of "experimental religion" are to be defended and maintained by such weapons, the conquest is theirs: I will not, because I cannot, fight with such weapons, while contending for any item of that religion, the establishment of which cost the blood of myriads of martyrs, and caused the Divine Founder of it to pour out his soul an offering for sin. That the reader may judge for himself, I shall give an extract or two from the 12th number of the Recorder. Speaking of a distinction found in some of the back numbers of this paper between *faith* and *opinion*, the writer says—

"We cannot believe without evidence; but, mark it well, friend at Buffaloe, we can have "*opinions*" without it. This is another item in your creed, for which you deserve well. "*O si sic omnia*" Our judges and juries should reward you with any thing short of a crown. They may now form opinions without witnesses, and doubtless correct opinions too. We cannot believe that there is a Camel in the moon without proof; but we can be of *opinion*, without proof, that in the moon there is a grand prairie, where herds of Camels, Buffaloes, and Elephants roam and feed and play! *Mirabile! Mirabile!* All the way from Buffaloe!"—

"And still thou art a Baptist Bishop. Yea, verily—a Phenix Bishop—a "*rara avis in terris*—without thy mate in all creation"—without a parallel from Dan to Beer-Sheba Oh, no! thou art not a Baptist Bishop; thou art the *chief* Bishop of a rising tribe; and we advise thee to take to thyself a name quickly, lest in our notice of some other portions of thy creed, we should perchance give thee a CHRISTENING"——

Many such fine specimens of sound reasoning, of good taste, of true politeness, and of a *genuine* experimental religion, are found over different signatures in this work, most of which, I am of opinion, are from the pen of one of the editors. Those who are pleased with this way of maintaining a religion cause, may find many savory morsels of this sort from these puissant pens. But my King's commandment is, "*Answer them not.*"—Ed.

October 9th, 1826.

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### A GOOD "CHRISTENING."

"Go up, thou baldhead!"

SOME *religious* editors in Kentucky call those who are desirous of seeing the ancient order of things restored, "*the Restorers.*" "*the campbellites,*" and the most reproachful epithets are showered upon them because they have some conscientious regard to the Divine Author and the divine authority of the New Testament. This may go down very well with some; but all who

fear God and keep his commandments will pity and deplore the weakness and folly of those who either think to convince or to persuade by such means.

\* \* \*

### THE POINTS AT ISSUE.

WE contend that all christian sects are more or less apostatized from the institutions of the Saviour, and that by all the obligations of the christian religion they that fear and love the Lord are bound to return to the ancient order of things in spirit and in truth. Our opponents either contend that they are not apostatized, but are just what they ought to be; or if they admit of any defection, they contend that the time is not yet come—they must await the Millennium; and that it is better to keep up the present systems than to attempt any thing else. This is just the naked question, detached from all superfluity, and it would be well for both the friends and opponents of this work frequently to reflect upon it.

Ed.

As it is expected that I will arrive in Mason county, Ky. as soon as this number, no appointments can be intimated for that vicinity; nor can I, owing to various causes, as yet lay down my own route. I intend, if the Lord permits, to make an extensive tour and an expeditious one, through that state and places bordering on it. It is hoped, and I suppose reasonably expected, that those in arrears to this establishment, and the subscribers to the current volume, will pay over to our agents immediately, that they may be in readiness for a call from us. We are constrained at this time to be somewhat urgent, as justice requires us to liquidate the debts of the establishment as soon as possible.

A continuation of the Review of Messrs. Miller and Duncan has been crowded out of this number, as well as some other articles intended for it.

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No. 5—Vol. IV] BUFFALOE, Dec. 4, 1826. [Whole No. 41

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Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10—Campbell's Translation.]

Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.

[Paul the Apostle.]

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### TO MR. D, A, SCEPTIC REPLICATION—No. IV.

Dear Sir,

YOU say that "if our Maker was *almighty*, he could have created universal happiness" But his works prove him almighty, and experience shews that he has not created *universal* happiness; for even the *temporary* evils which millions feel are incom-

patible with the idea of *universal* happiness. You in this instance, therefore, argue against both observation and experience. But you add, "To this end, (i. e. *universal* happiness,) I conceived every thing in nature had a direct tendency." What "*direct tendency*" you can see between idiotism, decrepitude, penury, disease, and all the evils of the brutal creation towards *universal* happiness in this state, I cannot conjecture; and if you take into view a *future* state, you then admit the very truth at which your scepticism revolts. But what is no less strange, you say you are "able to reconcile the evils we feel here as necessary to our peculiar state of existence" This is like a person saying he is able to carry two hundred pounds upon his shoulders, but adds he is unable to carry *fifty* You talk of a *peculiar* state of existence *here*; but when you reject the divinity of the Bible, where do you learn of *any other* than this *peculiar* state of existence *here*? Another state of existence *hereafter* is a Bible truth, but not one which can be derived from any other source.

I aim at no more in these remarks than to convince you that your whole style and sentiment is at variance with your doubts. The grand principles are already laid down which shew your difficulties to be *unreasonable*, and emerging from an unchastened imagination. In the same style you affirm, "Punishment, I thought, should be proportioned to criminality: but in inflicting eternal punishment for temporal crimes the principle of justice is violated." What that principle of justice is I know not, which teaches us that a man should be punished no longer than the precise time he sins, or that if an offence is committed in one minute the punishment should be of no longer continuance. This is precisely the force of your objection. For the idea of punishment being *longer* than the time of sinning, is that which staggers you. It would, therefore, be a violation of this "principle of justice" to confine a man in a penitentiary for eighteen years for a crime which he perpetrated in half an hour. On this "principle of justice" it would be unreasonable to cut off a man's life for ever from the earth for an action which he committed in one minute. Men are in the habits of "punishing eternally" their fellow-creatures for "temporal crimes" For when A kills B, he is by his peers and the law of his country punished with an *eternal separation* from the whole human race existing upon the earth. But on *this your "principle of justice,"* this is a gross violation of all right. But again, there is another sophism in the terms "temporal crimes." I know of none such; for as to the time in which any action, good or bad, is finishing, it is nothing. For instance; A kills B. Now B is in a moment cut off from all his relatives. His children lose him once for all. The effects of this murder are eternal; or, in other words, the children of B are ever deprived of their father, and B himself is forever deprived of his life by an action which was perpetrated perhaps in a minute. The consequences are eternal, and not temporal; and therefore it is out of all propriety to talk of "temporal crimes." It would require more

logic than, I presume, is possessed by all the colleges in your state to shew or prove on fair principles, that there is any crime temporal, in your sense of the words, or that there is any crime committed the consequences of which are not eternal.

You make some strong cases and propose some queer questions; but they only glance at one side of the difficulty, and are all capable of being turned to any point in the compass of human ingenuity and human weakness: such as, "*Could the God of compassion have sat on his throne of untroubled felicity whilst a being whom he had called into existence, who would never have been liable to pain but for him, was enduring the pains of hell fire.*" You might have said, 'Was enduring the pains of the gravel or rheumatism, or an infant enduring the pains of the cholic, or of a burned or scalded finger, or of a fever,' &c. &c. for these cases are as much in point as yours when presented in connexion with "*the God of compassion.*"

The consummation of your difficulties is, I presume, expressed in the following sentence "And besides these, it appeared to me inconsistent with the Deity." (I suppose your ideas of the Deity) "to require from us, *on pain of damnation* if we failed, implicit belief in an account of transactions which occurred several thousand years ago, (and considering the imperfect medium through which information was communicated from one age to another,) and of which it required the utmost stretch of intelligence to comprehend even the probability." Your difficulties in this sentence are predicated upon false views of the gospel and of its evidence. It is not a fact that implicit faith in transactions at best probable, is required *on pain of damnation*. Every thing in this sentence is convulsed and distorted. Men are not, in strict propriety, even required to believe any thing *on pain of damnation*. For example; suppose you had swallowed the most deadly poison, and that some benevolent physician had voluntarily called upon you and told you that there was a medicine which would save your life, but if you did not take it you must most certainly die; would it be a truth for you to assert, when cavilling against the medicine, that you would not taste it because he had required you implicitly to receive it *on pain of death*. I say it would be a false representation of the whole matter, notwithstanding it is true that if you did not receive the medicine you must die. Now I cannot conceive how it could be "inconsistent" with the most benevolent being to address a dying man as the physician in question has addressed you, and to assure him that eternal destruction must be his doom if he reject his medicine. Now the fact is, all men are sick of a disorder which must prove their eternal ruin if they are not cured of it. This is just as certain as death. I will not spend time in proving it. A remedy is provided. It is an infallible one. It is presented gratuitously, and directions for its use are appended to it. To excite interest, and to persuade men to receive it, they are told a solemn truth—that die they must—that perdition awaits them, if they do not receive it.

Some say they are not sick, and they will live for ever without it. Others say they are sick, but have no confidence in the medicine. Others have no objections to the medicine, but dislike its administration. Others receive the medicine gratefully, are thankful for it, and are cured by it, and would persuade others to come and be cured. Amongst those who object to the medicine there is a great variety. Some will not take it because the physician tells them they cannot be healed without it. Some reject it because they think they ought not to have been sick, and are incensed against their Maker because he did not give them a constitution insusceptible of disease. They defy Omnipotence to arms, and console themselves that if they are lost it will be their Maker's loss as well as theirs, and that it will pain him as well as them. They choose death to spite him. Others object to the medicine because every body will not be cured, and all the world saved by it. They would believe its efficacy and partake freely if all were to be cured by it, but because they are told that all will not receive it and be healed, they will not taste it. So it goes. I have seen many men act the part of a spoiled child, which cried all morning about its breakfast, and though in need of food, it spurned the bread and butter, and threw it back upon the too kind and lenient hand of an affectionate parent, because its humor was not consulted in some peculiar way.

But it is not a fact that men are required to believe implicitly on pain of damnation; nor is it a fact that the transactions to be believed occurred several thousand years ago; neither is it a fact the medium of information is of such character as you describe; nor is it a fact that it requires the utmost stretch of intelligence to comprehend the probability of those transactions which constitute the gospel. This is not the place, nor is the time so opportune, to enter largely into the nature of the gospel nor the evidence which supports it. But I will give you a brief statement of the gospel and a few remarks upon the evidence of its divine authenticity in my next.

Your sincere friend,

THE EDITOR.

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## REVIEW OF MILLER AND DUNCAN.

[CONTINUED.]

IN the third section Mr. Duncan repels the *third* charge of his antagonist. It was confidently alleged by Dr. Miller that Mr. Duncan's arguments against creeds proved too much for Mr. D; for if Mr. D. objected to creeds because they were *human*, he ought to object to expositions of scripture, or comments, verbal or written, because they are *human*; therefore, concludes the Doctor, Mr. Duncan's arguments prove too much for him. This is the way that men of talents impose upon the weak and unsuspecting. Mr. D. drives Dr. M. from this sophism by shewing that he wilfully changes the question and misrepresents him: for Mr. D. does not object to creeds simply because they are *human*, nor indeed at all on this account, but he objects to men making human creeds

*authoritative*, making them as binding on the conscience as if they were of divine authority: he would, he shews, object to human sermons and human commentaries too, if they were to be imposed upon the people as *terms* of communion, and he would not care that any church published a *human* creed every time they met, provided it was a mere declaration of their faith that day, and not intended to be binding upon them and their children after them while they met in that house In page 40 Mr. D says—

“In relation to “commentaries on the Bible,” his argument is, if possible, still more defective. They may not be altogether harmless, and the church, upon the whole, might do as well, if not better, without than with them. For the most part they manifest very little intellectual independence, and are the depositories of the dogmas and notions of the day in which they were written. But still, no man is obliged to own or read them; no church court will try heresy or immorality by their interpretation; there is no difficulty in exchanging them, and no censure implied in rejecting them. But what of ecclesiastical creeds? Are they thus lightly esteemed? Do christians consider them as mere commentaries? Would Dr. M. listen for a moment to any overture, which would propose so to treat them?—Let men write as many creeds as they please, and publish them as often as they please. But let it be done on their own responsibility, and let ministers and christians read them or not, at their own option. On these terms our controversy would soon be over. Dr. M’s third charge therefore is wholly unfounded.”

In the fourth section of Mr. D’s book he does more than defend himself, for he mortally wounds his opponent. With an air of triumph Dr Miller had asked, “how the church can take effectual measures to exclude Pelagians, semi-Pelagians, Swedenborgians, Universalists, Arians, and Socinians from her ministry, without the use of creeds and confessions in some form?” This question Mr D. treats in a most masterly manner. He shews in reply to the first, that “*the man who cannot be condemned by the scriptures is not to be condemned at all.*” He shews that the very *creeds which* were made against those heresies and heretics did not keep them out. This he supports by historic facts well introduced, such as—

What did the *Nicene* creed (made against Arius himself) effect? “Was Arius converted, convinced, or silenced? Very far from it. Contentions abounded, angry debates were protracted, and Arius was banished. A little while after Arius was recalled, and *subscribed the creed*, remaining still unchanged in his heretical sentiments; so that this “important end,” of excluding Arius from the ministry, was not secured even by a CREED.

“Nor did many years roll by, until a bishop of Rome was guilty of an equally disgraced manoeuvre. Pope Liberius, “about the middle of the fourth century, when the Arian controversy was at its height, intimidated by the power of the reigning emperor Constantius, whom he knew to be a zealous disciple of



Arius, declared publicly in favor of that party, and *excommunicated Athanasius*, whom all the orthodox regarded as the patron and defender of the catholic cause. This sentence he soon after revoked; and after revoking it, his legates, at the council of Arles, overawed by the emperor, concurred with the rest in signing the condemnation of Athanasius, yielding, as they expressed it, *to the troublesome times*. Afterwards, indeed, Liberus was so far a confessor in the cause of orthodoxy, that he underwent a long and severe banishment, rather than lend his aid and countenance to the measures which the emperor pursued for *establishing Arianism throughout the empire*. But however firm and undaunted the pope appeared for a time, he had not the magnanimity to persevere; but was at length, in order to recover his freedom, his country, and his bishopric, induced to *retract his retraction*, to sign a second time the condemnation of Athanasius, and to *embrace the Arian symbol* (creed) of Sirmium. Not satisfied with this, he even wrote to the Arian bishops of the east, excusing his former defence of Athanasius; imputing it to an excessive regard for the sentiments of his predecessor Julius; and declaring, that now, since it had pleased God to *open his eyes*, and shew him how justly the heretic Athanasius had been condemned, he separated himself from his communion, and *cordially* joined their holinesses, (so he styled the Arian bishops) in supporting *the true faith*. Before he returned from exile, meeting with the emperor, who was by this time turned *semi-Arian*, the pliant pontiff, impatient to be again in possession of his see, was induced to *change anew, and subscribe the semi-Arian confession*." Will Dr. M. who has so earnestly asked me what I would have done with my doctrine as a member of the council of Nice, look at the contrast, and candidly answer to himself, who "missed the point"—the ancient confessor or the creed-maker?"

But "admitting," says Mr. D. "that he may, by his creed, exclude Pelagians, semi-Pelagians, Swedenborgians, Universalists, Arians, and Socinians from the ministry, by what authority does he extend its operation, and exclude from the ministry, in his voluntary association, men who are contaminated by none of these heresies? Men against whom he has not a word to say, but that they oppose the exercise of human authority in the church, and are scrupulous to preserve the rights of the human conscience, and the supremacy of the Lord Jesus, as King and Head of his church? Will he permit me respectfully to return his own words to him: "Why this almost entire silence concerning a part of the argument, which, first of all, and above all, demanded his whole strength? Not, I am persuaded, because he had not discernment enough to see the full front and force of the difficulty; but because he had nothing to say. Here his doctrine labors most deeply and fatally. Until he shall relieve it from this difficulty, he will have accomplished nothing. It is a millstone about the neck of his cause, which, unless detached, must sink it irrecoverably."

Here the Doctor receives an incurable wound. I am sorry that I cannot publish the whole of Mr. Duncan's answer to this question, because in giving a few slices of it I do injustice to the whole. In shewing how the church may be preserved *pure* without these humanly authoritative human creeds, he is full and convincing. He asks, *How did the primitive church, and down till the council of Nice, exclude heretics and heresies?*—If creeds are necessary, *why did not the Master himself give us one? Why did not the Apostles give us one, seeing the church must perish without it?* Out of about forty pages of the most relevant matter in reply to this question, I can give but one quotation more:—

“If then the question is again pressed, how shall we exclude heresies and their advocates from the church, I reply, let christians quit their scholastic strife, and seek after nothing but biblical theology. Let young men, while training for the ministry, be turned to the study of the BIBLE, and taught to learn for themselves what Jehovah has said. Systems of theology will always produce heretics; for they are always creating matters of “doubtful disputation,” and ranging parties in hostile array. Few men examine every thing which belongs to any given system; and many men declare a vast deal more than they know. A principle is taken for granted, and then its legitimate consequence is boldly defended; whereas both should be discarded, if the first were candidly and fairly considered. Let young men be taught to investigate for themselves; to turn their attention to the scripture page, and declare no more than what they learn from prayerful and diligent inquiry. When this is done, the “millstone,” which we are endeavoring to detach, shall roll to the bottom of the floods; and Dr. M. and myself, with our Bibles in our hands, shall rise to the paradise of God, to differ no more for ever. There we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known; and charity, the greatest of all christian graces, now so loosely seated on our hearts, will adorn us with her mantle while eternity shall last.”

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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*Extract of a letter from a friend in North Carolina, to the editor, dated September 10, 1826.*

—“I wish to encourage the more general circulation of them, as in the general, I heartily approve of what they contain, especially the imposition of the priesthood; yet I must acknowledge there are a few things to which I have some objections. Objec. 1st. The call to the ministry, you, if I mistake not, reject any thing like our having a knowledge of any special call of God to the work, as this call was confined to the days of the apostles, and accompanied with miracles as the evidence. This I acknowledge, and the calling may be said to be a miraculous calling, as well as many miracles attending their work, (the case of Paul;) but since the days of the apostles, I have to believe that the real ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ are divinely and especially called to the work; not that I believe that every person who takes

it upon himself to teach or preach, is called of God to the work; no, far be it, for I believe that there are but few, compared to the number now engaged in this all-important work, know any thing like a work of grace upon their souls, and as little about a call to the ministry. I believe many are nothing better than wolves in sheeps clothing, and many, too many, are preaching for filthy lucre, feed and are kept fat on goats' milk; but yet I believe those that are owned of God are such as have passed from nature to grace, have experienced the new birth, and not all such called to preach; though I acknowledge that every lay member is to teach and preach both by example and precept, if they act up to their duty and privilege, as lay members and not pastors. Neither do I believe that every person whose mind may lead him out to public speaking, is to be considered as qualified for an elder or pastor; for in the church, God has placed diversities of gifts, by the same Spirit, some pastors, some teachers, some to exhortation, &c. and we are all called upon to the exercise of these public gifts; but I believe those that are called to labor in word and doctrine and to take charge of the flock of God, to feed them, &c. have some special exercise of mind not known to others. I will tell you a little of the exercise of my mind. I entertained a hope about 29 years ago, that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned my sins; that I was justified in his sight through the all-atoning blood of the cross, &c. At this time I felt unspeakable love both to God and my fellow-creatures, and it was my heart's desire that all might see and test the sweetness of this salvation, &c. but yet I can date no call to the work of the ministry. About six months after, I had a most transporting view of this glorious plan with its sweet and unbounded fulness—the beauty of holiness, the hateful nature of sin, the happy state of the saints, the deplorable state of the wicked, &c. that immediately my mind was impressed something like this; that as God had been so good as to reveal and make known these things to me, if I did not go forth and warn poor sinners of their danger and endeavor to point them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, that God would require their blood at my hand, &c. I trembled, I tried to make my excuses, but yet it would awful sound in my ears and reach my very heart, Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel! For seventeen years was this the case; but at length, with much fear and much trembling, I had to venture upon the Lord. Since that, though doubts and fears often I have to labor under, I witness peace in venturing in the work. It would exceed the limits of a letter to detail minutely the exercise of my mind for seventeen years.

Obj. 2d. You say, if I mistake not, that we only have to acknowledge that we believe that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. Now I believe that there are thousands that are so well instructed in the scriptures, that they believe this in the head, but not in the heart: and this belief may influence them so as to live moral lives with graceless hearts. I believe all such as have been and are de-

livered from the curse and bondage of the law, and have been put into the liberties of God's dear children, can render such an account of the exercises of their mind while under conviction, their deliverance, &c. &c. as is common with other christians, and in this way to get fellowship, which is desirable in the church of Christ. I only drop these few remarks, and must come to a close after noticing another objection—that of faith.

You hold out to view that the scriptures hold out but one faith. True, there is but one true and saving faith, which is that faith that works by love and purifies the heart from sin, &c. But the scripture speaks of a faith which we make shipwreck of, a faith devils, &c. Probably I might have understood you better had you have been a little more full on these subjects. I have been short in my objections and remarks, for it would require a letter of several pages to give you my views on the subject, which I may attempt another time.

Funeral sermons, so called, I believe to be antichristian and traditional. I should be glad you would give us your views of this subject in one of your papers, as fully as possible.

Adieu, my dear brother, for the present. I hope ever to be your well-wisher and fellow-laborer in the common cause of our Divine Master, and that in much love. J.C."

*Dear Brother,*

WITH regard to the *two* objections stated in yours of the 10th September, I have a few things to remark. And with respect to the first, it ought to be considered that *preaching, teaching, and ruling* embraces the whole duties belonging to the offices ordained by the Saviour relative to the conversion of sinners and the edification of disciples. These *works* were, for a time, to be performed by the same persons. And if we understood the precise idea attached to these terms by the apostles, there would be less difficulty in our minds as to the *call* and qualifications indispensable to these works. The term *call* itself is a scriptural term, and was used by the apostles in a certain definite sense.

You have no doubt frequently observed that we contend that the scriptures never be understood in any other way than by attaching to the terms found in the book the very ideas which the sacred writers and speakers affixed to them. To take their terms and attach other ideas to them, is the grossest imposition upon ourselves and others. To attempt to understand their terms, or to investigate the meaning of them is not a mere controversy about *words* and *names*, as some would *have it; for the whole* of our salvation is found in words, and communicated to us in terms; and unless these words and names are apprehended, we are just in the predicament of those who have no revelation. It is matter, therefore, of vast importance with me to understand the words found in these sacred writings in the very identical sense of the writers; and I am assured that when this is done all doubts upon the subject of religion will vanish, and the New Testament will be perfectly understood. There is but *one rule*

to be observed in order to gaining this end, and that is to take notice how the terms are either universally or specially used in all the places where they occur. This requires much reading and attention, which, however, always repays the diligent. The laborer is always rewarded with prompt payment. No man can labor one day in those mines but he must carry home with him the precious metal at night. God is not (like man) obliged to carry on any work upon mere credit. He always pays down at the moment the work is done. Nay, we can never bring him in debt for he pays for every stroke while it is striking.

But to return. Let the term *preaching* and the term *call* be understood aright, and there can be no controversy between us upon the subject. But you think "there is a call to the ministry." In this phrase the terms are all changed. I think there is a call to the office of a deacon, and I think there is a call to the office of a bishop; and I think, moreover, that no man can constitutionally assume, or take to himself, these offices, unless he is called according to the apostolic rule. But with regard to "*the call to the ministry*" the Bible says nothing; and although I understand the ideas attached to these words in *popular use*, I reject them from my vocabulary altogether, because they mislead those who wish to understand the christian scriptures in their own simplicity and force. The Bible knows nothing about "the ministry" of the Catholic, Episcopal, or Presbyterial church, nor any other ministry save that of Moses and Christ. There is no such office as that of a pope, cardinal, dean, chapter, archbishop, church warden, presiding elder circuit preacher, class leader, lay presbyter, Presbyterian minister, Congregational or Baptist Divine mentioned from Genesis to Jude. It is true, John, in the Revelation, mentions something about them, but it is when he is describing that curious animal that rose out of the sea, that spoke like a lamb and which had horns and claws somewhere about it. Now as the Bible knows nothing of these offices, it is unreasonable to expect to find a *call* to them mentioned in the volume. "A call" in some sects means so many hundred dollars a-year; in other it means a deep impression upon the mind; and in others it means no more than the voice of the congregation.

I know what you term "a call" is just what I felt a hundred times when a boy. And I still feel it. I feel that it is my indispensable duty to call upon sinners to reform, and to flee from the wrath to come. I also feel that it is my indispensable duty to write and publish this paper, and to make use of all righteous means to circulate it far and wide. I could not conscientiously abandon it. But shall I say that I am specially called by the Holy Spirit to edit the "Christian Baptist?" If there be any sense which can be put upon these words, which will justify their use in this connexion, I will add, that I am as much called by the Holy Spirit to publish the "Christian Baptist." as any man upon the earth is called to preach the gospel. What think you of this? A man that can *read* well, and who finds persons who cannot *read* the testimony of

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, is also called by the Holy Spirit to *read* those testimonies; and in so *reading*, he is *preaching* the gospel. I think the whole amounts to this, and the whole controversy issues here: those who feel it their duty to preach the gospel, call this sense of duty "*A call of the Holy Spirit*"; and when they feel it their duty to visit the sick and to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, they consider this sense of duty a mere dictate of conscience, or a part of religion, and do not rank it so high as a special call of the Holy Spirit, whereas in fact it is the same in every respect. And did men feel that there is as much religion in feeding the hungry and visiting the sick, as they think there is in public speaking, I doubt not but that they would think they had as divine, and as authoritative a call, to the one as to the other. But many, from false views of things, after they have found peace and joy in the gospel, think that there is no way of *serv*ing God nor men but in preaching the gospel, and they can have no rest night nor day so long as they are not "*serv*ing God," i. e. in their view, preaching the gospel. Hence so many not only attempt to preach the gospel, but even to teach the christian religion, who have need themselves to be taught the very first principles of the doctrine of Christ. In this way they impose upon themselves, the church, and the world with a good conscience, thinking they are serving God, and they are either emphatically or exclusively the servants of God. Now I am led to think from the apostles' doctrine, that the poor widow, or the waiting maid who labors industriously in her station, and who obeys Christ, is just as good a servant of God and "*minister of Jesus Christ*" as ever John Calvin was, or any other preacher or teacher is. On this topic I cannot be more diffuse at present.

As to your second objection, I will only observe that, although every christian can tell much of his own past and present feelings, there is no law, commandment, or rule calling upon him to make them known for any purpose whatever. And there is no divine commandment, rule, or precedent, authorizing us to demand, in order to baptism, any such a recital; but a true, sincere, or hearty profession of the faith which the apostles required. Disciples are not to be baptized *into their own experience*, but *into the faith*; nor are we to love them because of their experience, but because they are partakers of the same precious faith. Nor is their *telling* their experience any more assurance that "*their religion is seated in their heart*" than their professing the faith. There is not one advantage to be gained by hearing or telling all the workings of unbelief, or all the conflicts of conscience, or all the agonies of despair, all the calms and storms of the experience of John Bunyan, or any other man; and it is absurd, in every sense of the word, to call such agitations and mental commotions as were *prior to conversion*—I say again, it is absurd to call such, "*christian experience*." Any thing it may be but *christian experience*; for a christian experiences no such things. And it is absurd on another account to require a candidate for baptism to tell us

his *christian* experience, for it supposes that he must have lived a long time a christian without obeying the very commandment which points him out as a disciple of Christ. And for a Baptist to baptize any candidate on the *recital of his christian experience while disobeying the gospel*, is the climax of inconsistency. If I am to be entertained with such recitals I would ask persons to tell me what they experienced while they disobeyed the gospel, and what they experienced since they believed and were baptized. This would at least be consistent with Baptist proceedings; but the popular course is at war with the very elements of their own system. I have only to add one word more, that to call the experiences of men, before or after they believe, *vital piety*, is the greatest abuse of language and good sense that I know of.

On the subject of FUNERAL SERMONS, the law of my King says nothing. Some may, perhaps, have read in their Testaments of the eloquent eulogy and pathetic funeral oration which the Rev. Simon Peter delivered on the death of Deacon Stephen; or of the feeling funeral sermon that the pious and Rev. Saulus Paul pronounced on the death of the Rt. Rev. and venerable James Zebedee. Those who have read the funeral sermons delivered by the apostles on the death of John the Baptist, and Mary the mother of Jesus, will no doubt admire the practice; but for us who have lost all these parts of the New Testament, we cannot be supposed to have much taste for this kind orations. For my part, I would rather hear one *resurrection* sermon than ten burial sermons.

I have been sometimes asked how this practice got into fashion. The only history I can give of it is as follows:—In the days of popish uniformity it was usual to gather the friends of the deceased to contrive some way of expediting the progress of the departed in his journey through purgatory. For this purpose his relatives gave oblations, and the priest was there ready to receive them. When the oblations amounted to something sufficient to make the gates of purgatory yield, the priest went down with the sum and gave his orders to the keeper of this prison to let the ransomed captive escape.

The followers of John Calvin and Martin Luther did not relish this custom; but in process of time some of their followers thought that the Romanists gained something from *the dead* for the benefit of the living; and they set about visiting the houses of mourning, and of making lamentation over the dead for the purpose of affecting the living. They professed not to benefit the dead, but the living. The Rich had large funerals and many mourners, and consequently the priests were more attentive on these occasions, because it gave them a “a greater opportunity of *doing good*” It then became a dishonorable thing to have funeral sermons when relatives died, and so it passed off into a mere token of respect for the dead and living. It is now a mere complimentary thing; and you know when any thing is considered a *decent* thing, there are many excuses for it. And so it is said it is a good time to touch the feelings when the heart is melting with

grief; and it is for the sake of the living and not for the dead that this custom is kept up. It has often astonished me how much more pains is taken, and how much more ingenuity is exhibited in finding authority or excuses for the support and continuance of human institutions, than for attending upon the Divine ordinances plainly declared in the New Testament. But how sensible christians can justify themselves to their own consciences for neglecting the ancient order of things, and in following up human traditions, is to me a matter of inexpressible surprize. I saw, not long since, a funeral sermon advertised on the occasion of the death of Jeremiah Beauchamp and his wife, and a funeral sermon has been delivered on the execution of malefactors in some of our cities. No doubt these were proper themes; but it is something like those "affairs of honor" amongst people of color, which are a good lesson to such men as the honorable John Randolph and the honorable Henry Clay.

Many, however, deliver funeral sermons from the best motives, and this is with them a sufficient excuse. Balls have recently been introduced in Paris by the prayers of a clergyman, and no doubt there was need for them. And "the grace" before a public dinner has been drank down in a toast after dinner. Editors of newspapers pronounce encomiums upon the prayers of religious orators of the day. A cattle show and an exhibition of horses and hogs must be carried to the church and consecrated by a priest; and nothing is wanting to sanctify a horse-race, and make it a sealing ordinance, but a small stretch of charity—about as much as will license a billiard table and a game of cards. WHAT A RELIGIOUS PEOPLE WE ARE!!! Wishing you and I may be content with, and live up to the piety ordained in the New Testament, I subscribe myself your affectionate brother and fellow-laborer in the doctrine which is according to godliness,

THE EDITOR.

October 10th.—Written in great haste.

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### CHRISTIAN MORALITY.—No. IV.

#### ON SPEAKING TRUTH.

"AND as he thinketh in his heart, so doth he truth express," is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Truth is the basis of all confidence amongst rational beings. Implicit confidence in every word spoken would have always been enjoyed had it not been for the introduction of lies. Unbelief and distrust are the natural results of a system of lying and deceit. God has thought proper to designate himself, since the introduction of falsehood into the universe, as "*the God of Truth.*" The Devil is always represented as a *liar*—as the father of liars—as the arch deceiver. Eve was seduced by a lie; and the belief of a lie became the cause of all distrust, and opened a fountain of deceit which has corrupted the whole race of Adam. By the *belief of a lie* death entered into the world; and God has thought proper, *by the belief of the truth*, to introduce men into the en-



joyment of life. Every thing good is on the side of truth; and every thing evil is leagued with falsehood. The lying tongue and deceitful lips are an abomination in the sight of God; because from them have proceeded all that is the cause of misery and wretchedness in the world.

From these maxims, which are as universally admitted as the evidences of the christian religion, it is easily inferred that truth is a capital virtue, without which there is no goodness in man. Christians having experienced the evil consequences of the first lie that was spoken in human ears, and having been proclaimed and brought back to God by the belief of truth, are led not only to love *the truth* which brought them to reformation, but to love truth in general. To speak it and practise it are therefore indispensable duties of the christian.

All errors in religion are of two kinds; as we say, errors in doctrine and errors in practice. Errors in doctrine are simply lies; whilst errors in practice are transgressions of law. Doctrinal errors are doctrinal lies, or false views which the mind takes of things revealed. If, then, a man believe false doctrine, he simply holds that for truth which is, in plain English, a lie. Of those doctrinal lies some are inoperative speculations; others are operative falsehoods which issue in the transgression of law.

Some men, for example, teach for doctrine that reformation is Not the *immediate* duty of all men yet unreclaimed. Some believe this to be a truth; consequently, do not reform; but are waiting for something as previous or preparatory to it. Now the holding of this error issues in the transgression of law, or in the transgression of a divine commandment, which expressly saith, "God commandeth *all men every where* to reform." Again—Some take up false views of this reformation, which issue in practical errors. Supposing it to mean no more than a change of views or a regret for the past, they are led to rest in a change of system or of sentiment, while their practices continue as they were. But did they view it as a truth, that, in the proclamation of reformation, God commandeth such a change of sentiment *through the truth proclaimed*, as commences forthwith a reformation of life; and that this *reformation of life* is the end or object of the commandment or proclamation, then nothing short of such a reformation could satisfy the person entertaining such a view of this proclamation. In this we see how errors in doctrine, or doctrinal lies, issue in transgression of law, either in the way of omission or commission.

The apostle John, both in his Epistles and in the Revelation, distinctly and boldly denominates the speakers or promulgers of false doctrine, *liars*. Those who profess to know God; but in works deny him, the same apostle calls *liars*. "If," says he, "a man saith I know him, and keep not his commandments, he is a *liar*, and *the truth* is not in him." When the apostle John saith, "all *liars* shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire,"

there is every reason to believe, from a just regard to his style, that he especially means the propagators of false doctrine.

But we would call the attention of our readers to a great apostacy from truth, not only doctrinal or sentimental truth, but from speaking truth and giving true representations to one another in the common intercourse of life. The time has been when a christian was understood to mean a person free from guile, deceit, and falsehood of every kind. He was understood to be a person purified in heart by the belief of divine truth; a person who made no false pretensions nor promises, and always gave a faithful representation of things. But there appears an awful declension in the general character of christians from this description, in the present day. "Christian nations" are as famous for lying and deceit, as they are for their refinements in the arts of war and an honest way of men-stealing. The great multitude seems to have lost a regard for truth, and to have adopted a regular system of prevarication and deception. Even the most solemn promises and pledges are violated without any apparent contrition. A tells B, without any apparent compunction, that he cannot meet his engagements because the times are hard. He will not discommode himself, or make any sacrifice, and scarcely an effort to redeem his pledge, because it is fashionable to excuse oneself for failing to fulfill promises by laying all the guilt upon the depreciation consequent on our extravagancies. But this is not all. In speaking of one another, and to one another, exaggeration and hyperbole do not satisfy the propensity for the marvelous, do not give full vent to our passions, our loves or our hates; but downright fabrication and gross misrepresentation become necessary to carry favorite objects; insomuch that we scarcely know how much to subtract from all that we hear, in order to arrive at the truth. Those whose consciences will not brook downright fabrication and blunt lying, will nevertheless button themselves up to the chin in a garment of guile of as many plies as the seven-fold shield of Achilles; so that if you were to unbutton some of our giants in morality, they would be mere pigmies in statue. Equivocation, mental reservation, ambiguity, double meanings, high colorings, small subtractions, and little additions are the apparent order of the day. Now the genius and spirit of all the precepts and examples of christian morality on this point are in direct opposition to this course of the world. Even hypocrisy and guile are denounced as most odious offences against the Spirit of Christ; and yet hypocrisy and guile are the most *decent* of all the species of lying and deceit exhibited in the world. One of the ingredients in that famous recipe for long life which king David first promulged, and which the apostle Peter attests, is this; "If a man would *live long and see good days*, let him refrain his tongue from evil and *his lips from guile*." If christian societies do not reform in this respect, the character which Paul gave of the Cretans will soon accord with the great mass of the christian world—*"The Cretans are always liars."*

Every pretence, profession, declaration, and promise, that does not fully accord with simple fact, is to be ranked under the generic head of LYING, and divests the character of that essential attribute of the inhabitants of heaven. "And as he thinketh in his heart, so doth he truth express." EDITOR.

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## A RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF THINGS.

No. XVI.

AMONGST all that has been said in this work on the ancient order of things, we do not at present recollect of having received any objections from any quarter against any one position laid down in any essay under this head. We have received numerous communications presenting objections to some articles in this work, but none that we remember of against any one item which we have said belonged to the ancient order of things. To what this is owing I presume not to say. One thing is obvious from the face of this work, that our correspondents are not backward in exhibiting their objections, nor are we very scrupulous about laying them before the public. This silence, then, on this grand chapter of this work is to be attributed either to a general conviction, or a patient investigation not yet finished, or to an entire apathy on the subject. We would rather ascribe it to either of the former two causes, than to the latter.

Before we proceed to any new items under this general head, we shall offer a few remarks on that spirit and temper of mind which was exhibited while as yet the ancient order of things stood uncorrupted, and which it may be presumed must be possessed and exhibited in order to the restoration of that order.

One of the most infallible signs of true conversion which I know any thing of—and one which the ancient converts generally exhibited—and one which Saul of Tarsus at the moment of his conversion so eminently displayed, is couched in these words—"LORD WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?" This unfeigned and vehement desire to know the will of the Lord in order to do it, is, in my humble opinion, the surest and most general and comprehensive sign, proof, and pledge of regeneration. The spirit and temperament of the ancient christians inclined and drew them, as the laws of gravitation do all bodies to the centre of the system, to a most devout conformity to all the institutes of the Prince of Life. They loved his will supremely. Neither fire nor water, famine nor sword, good fame or bad fame prevented them in their obedience. They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and loved not their lives unto death rather than renounce their allegiance in any one point to him who died for them. His laws and institutions were all in all to them. No scribe, no rabbi, no sanhedrim, no human tribunal, no popularity amongst their own people or foreigners, no reproach, no privation could induce them to treat his will with either coolness, indifference, or neg-

lect. They reasoned thus: If Jesus died for us, we owe our lives to him. We are his, and not our own. His will shall be ours; his statutes shall be our choice. Our only concern shall be, "*Lord what thou have us to do?*"

Let the spirit, then, of the ancient christians be restored, and we shall soon see their order of things clearly and fully exhibited. "If the eye be sound the whole body shall be full of light;" and if the heart be right, the practice will bear the test of examination. To have the ancient order of things restored in due *form* without the spirit or *power* of that order, would be mere mimicry, which we would rather, and we are assured the primitive saints themselves would rather, never see. The spirit of the present order of things is too much akin to the spirit of this world. It looks with a countenance beaming too much complacency on the pride and vanity, on the tinsel and show, on the equipage and style, on the avarice and ambition, on the guile and hypocrisy of this world. Its supreme petition is not "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" but, "O ye sons of religious fashion! ye leaders of religious taste! ye synods and councils! ye creeds and systems! ye mitred heads and patented divines! and thou, O Mammon! tell us plainly, tell us fully, what you would have us to do to gain your admiration, and, if possible too, to save our souls." This is not the spirit of all, of any creed, or of any party; but this appears the leading and triumphant spirit of the present order of things.

The spirit of the ancient order always looked up to the throne of Jesus, while that of the modern looks around on the smiles of ecclesiastic rulers. The spirit of the ancient derived its joys from the complacency of the Founder of the Faith; the spirit of the modern, from the approbation of the leaders of devotion. The apostles' doctrine was the food and support of the former, while creeds and commentaries are the nourishment of the latter. The praise of God animated that—the praise of men enlivens this.

May I tell a little of my religious experience, as this is much the fashion now? I will once at least, comply with the will of the religious populars. Well, then, I once loved the praise of men, and thought that it would be a great happiness could I so shape my course as to merit the praise of God and the approbation of men. I saw there was a kind of piety the people of fashion in the religious world admired, and I thought that a few small additions to it might make it pass current in both worlds. I set my heart to find it out. I saw but little difference in many sects as represented true piety, but a good deal as respected show and ceremony. I thought that which was most popular might upon the whole be the safest, as it would make sure of one point at all events, and might gain the other too. For there was a John Newton in the church of King Harry and a George Campbell in that of St. Charles. I vascillated here for a time. If I joined the most fashionable and profitable society, and adopted the most *genteel* order of things, I did not know but that if I were a pretty honest and

faithful member, like some of those good Churchmen or Presbyterians, I might chance heaven as well as they, and at all events I would be sure of good entertainment on the road. As yet I felt not the attractions of the love of God; but soon as I was enabled to calculate the import of one question, viz. "What is a man profited if he should gain the whole world and lose his life?" and soon as I understood that it was "*a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance*, that Jesus the Messiah came into the world to *save sinners*," even *the chief of sinners*, I reasoned on different premises and came to different conclusions. If bought at so dear a rate, and purchased at such an immense price, I found all my faculties, and powers, and means and opportunities were claimed on principles at which no generous heart could demur. Had I a thousand tongues as eloquent as Gabriel's, and faculties of the most exalted character, 'twas all too little to tell his praise and to exhibit his excellencies to men.

The only question then was, *How shall I do this*, to the most advantage? In attempting to find an answer to this, I found that there was a way already laid down, which, if I was adopted and pursued, must lead soonest and safest to this point. It was all comprised in two sentences—Publish in word what he has done, and as his own institutions will reflect the greatest possible honor upon him in this world, let them be fairly exhibited and the end is gained. This claim of thought just led me to the question, Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" Now, in attempting to find an answer from his oracles to this petition, I took it for granted that there was no new communication of his will to be expected, but that it must be sought after in the volume. When any act of devotion or item of religious practice presented itself to my view, of which I could learn nothing from Master's Last Will and Testament, I simply gave it up; and if I found any thing there, not exhibited by my fellow-christians, I went into the practice of it, if it was the practice of an individual; and if it was a social act, I attempted to invite others to unite with me in it. Thus I went on purging my views, and returning to his institutes until I became so speckled a bird that scarce one of any species would cordially consociate with me; but I gained ample remuneration in the pursuit, and got a use of my wings which I never before experienced. Thus too I was led into a secret, which as I received freely, I communicate freely. It is this: There is an *ancient* and a *modern order* of things in the Lord's house. Now I am sure that if all my brethren had only the half of the religious experience I have upon this subject, they would be doubly in the spirit of this ancient order, and their progress would be geometrically proportioned to what it now is, *My friends will forgive me for so much egotism—and my enemies will find fault with me at any rate*; so that it is little matter, as respects them, what I say or do. In the mean time, however, I cannot conclude without again remarking, that if the spirit of the ancient christians and of their individual and social conduct was more inquired after, and more cultivated,

we should find but little trouble in understanding and displaying the ancient order of things. Ed.

\* \* \*

*From the Reformer.*

### REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCHES.

*Mr. Editor,*

I HAVE before me a letter received from a Baptist preacher in Wake county, N. C. stating that nine churches of the Raleigh Baptist Association have rent themselves from that Association, in consequence of the annoyance they have met with from missionary schemes and missionary beggars. They call themselves the "Reformed Baptist Churches." I also saw a few days since, a respectable Baptist preacher from the Neuse Baptist Association, who stated that he thought there were as many as fifteen churches in that Association ready to separate from the Association for the same reasons. He also stated that one church in the Kehuke Association had pointedly declared against the missionary and money-begging system. Many of the churches have long been grieved and troubled by the vile arts and schemes which have been resorted to for obtaining money, under pretence of spreading the gospel, and they are now fully determined to rid themselves of the abomination by denying their pulpits to all missionary beggars, and removing from among them such members as continue their adherence to any of the popular and anti-christian projects of the day. This is indeed making a bold stand, and presents an ominous aspect to the great missionary works and doings among the Baptists throughout the United States.

Whoever has had an opportunity to observe the pernicious effects of the missionary and money-begging proceedings in this country, will want no other evidence to convince him that they are not of God. But the common people all along have been kept, in a great measure, from an open expression of their sentiments on this subject, in consequence of hearing it asserted by their head teachers and great men, that none but the more ignorant and unformed part of society would be found the opposers of missions, &c. It is time for these high-minded and ambitious leaders and professors in the church to know that this assertion is not founded in truth, and also to know that the strength and success of a cause in a community, as in a country, does not lie in a few would-be great men, who are seeking their own interest and renown, but in the great body of the common people, who are too honest to patronize wickedness, and sufficiently informed to know when they are imposed upon, as well as independent enough not long willingly to submit to such imposition. When this class of people, either in a religious community or a country, by repeated grievances and impositions, once firmly and unitedly resolve to reform abuses and to extricate themselves from the evils and sufferings under which they labor, all the arts and sophistry of designing and interested men will not be able to

shake their purpose or prevent the accomplishment of their object. From what I know, I have no hesitancy in saying there has always been a majority in the Association already mentioned, that were opposed to the missionary proceedings and speculations which have been introduced among them; but this majority have been reproached and stigmatized as ignorant and uninformed, and they have borne and forborne until at length their aggrieved feelings will no longer be restrained, and they will seek that redress which they have it in their power to obtain. And so far as I am a prophet, I venture to predict that the Baptist denomination will be divided on the ground of these missionary and other schemes throughout the Union. It becomes the leading characters among the Baptists, therefore, to take a candid view of their proceedings, and return to the plain and scriptural way of promoting the cause of religion and righteousness which they were in when the Lord prospered them, and not adopt the schemes and practices of corrupt and worldly denominations, among whom true and humble piety has long since departed.

A SUBSCRIBER.

\* \* \*

*From the Connecticut Courant.*

### THE OLD MAN.

“WHEN I was a little child,” said a good man, “my mother used to bid me kneel beside her, and place her hand upon my head while she prayed. Ere I was old enough to know her worth, she died, and I was left too much to my own guidance. Like others, I was inclined to evil passions; but often felt myself checked, and, as it were, drawn back by a soft hand upon my head. When a young man, I travelled in foreign lands, and was exposed to many temptations. But when I would have yielded, that *same hand was upon my head*. I was saved. I seemed to feel its pressure as in the days of happy infancy; and sometimes there came with it a voice, in my heart, a voice that must be obeyed, *Oh! do not this, my son, nor sin against thy God.*”

WHY gaze ye on my hoary hair,  
 Ye children, young and gay?  
 Your locks, beneath the blast of care,  
 Will bleach as white as they.

I had a mother once, like you,  
 Who o'er my pillow hung,  
 Kiss'd from my cheek the briny dew,  
 And taught my faltering tongue.

She, when the nighty couch was spread,  
 Would bow my infant knee,  
 And place her hand upon my head,  
 And kneeling, pray for me.

But then, there came a fearful day;  
I sought my mother's bed,  
Till harsh hands bore me thence away,  
And told me she was dead.

I pluck'd a fair flow'r, and stole  
To lay it by her side,  
And thought strange sleep enchain'd her soul,  
For no fond voice reply'd.

That eve I knelt me down in wo,  
And said a lonely prayer;  
Yet still my temples seem'd to glow  
As if that hand were there.

Years fled—and left me childhood's joy,  
Gay sports and pastimes dear,  
I rose a wild and wayward boy,  
Who scorn'd the curb of fear;

Fierce passions shook me like a reed;  
Yet, ere at night I slept,  
That soft hand made by bosom bleed,  
And down I fell and wept.

Youth came—the props of virtue reel'd;  
But oft at day's decline  
A marble touch my brow congeal'd—  
Blest mother! was it thine!

In foreign lands I travell'd wide,  
My pulse was bounding high,  
Vice spread her meshes at my side,  
And pleasure lur'd my eye;

Yet still that hand, so soft and cold,  
Maintain'd its mystic sway,  
As when amid my curls of gold  
With gentle force it lay.

And with it breath'd a voice of care,  
As from the lowly sod,  
“My son—my only son—beware!  
Nor sin against thy God.”

Ye think, perchance, that age hath stole  
My kindly warmth away,  
And dimm'd the table of the soul;  
Yet when with manly sway,

The brow the plumed helm display'd  
That guides the warrior throng,  
Or beauty's thrilling fingers stray'd  
These manly locks among,



That hallow'd touch was nee'r forgot  
 And now though Time hath set  
 His frosty seal upon my lot,  
 These temples feel it yet.

And if I e'er in heaven appear,  
 A mother's holy prayer,  
 A mother's hand, and gentle tear,  
 That pointed to a Savior dear,  
 Have led the wanderer there.

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HILARY, *Bishop of Poitiers in Aquitanic*,  
 Who flourished in the 4th century, speaks as follows of the spirit  
 of creed-making in his time, which was but a few years after its  
 rise:—

“It is a thing equally deplorable and dangerous, that there are as many creeds as there are opinions among men; as many doctrines as inclinations; and as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us; BECAUSE WE MAKE CREEDS ARBITRARILY, AND EXPLAIN THEM AS ARBITRARILY. And as there is but one faith, so there is but one God, one Lord, and one baptism. We renounce this one faith, when we make so many different creeds; and that diversity is the reason why we have no true faith among us. WE CANNOT BE IGNORANT, THAT SINCE THE COUNCIL OF NICE, WE HAVE DONE NOTHING, BUT MAKE CREEDS. And while we fight against *words*, litigate about new questions, dispute about *equivocal terms*, complain of authors, that every one make his own party triumph; while we cannot agree, while we anathematize one another, there is hardly one that adheres to Jesus Christ. What change was there not in the creed last year! The first council ordained a silence upon the *hoomoousion*; the second established it, and would have us speak; the third excuses the fathers of the council, and pretends they took the word *ousia* simply; the fourth condemns them, instead of excusing them. With respect to the likeness of the Son of God to the Father, which is the faith of our deplorable times, they dispute whether he is like in whole, or in part. *These are rare folks to unravel the secrets of heaven. Nevertheless it is for these creeds, about invisible mysteries, that we calumniate one another, and for our belief in God.* We make creeds every year; nay, every moon we repent of what we have done; we defend those that repent; we anathematize those that we defended. So we condemn either the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own in that of others; and, reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin.”

\* \* \*

WE have seen a number of a new periodical work, entitled WISDOM & THE ALETHEAN MESSENGER, published by Friend Hull Barton, in Portsmouth, N. H. From the specimen before us, the work breathes a benevolent spirit, and aims at the personal and social reformation of the professors of the christian religion.

*It is one of the many publications of the day which calls for REFORMATION, and which opposes an ambitious and designing priesthood. Although there may be a good deal of sentimental differences amongst the conductors of those journals which are in profession, and, no doubt, in sincerity, aiming at one thing, the RESTORATION OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY; undoubtedly their influence in breaking down the outworks of prejudice and calling up reflection and examination, will be sensibly felt at the seat of the beast. We wish success to them all in proportion to their attachment to, and exhibition of, the Ancient Order of Things.—Ed.*

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*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

WHEN I received the epistle from Mr. D., a sceptic, my father was on a visit at my house. I handed it to him and requested him to write a suitable answer; with an engagement that I would write an answer without seeing his, and that his should be written without seeing mine; that we should then read them and put it to vote which should be published. When written and read, we voted them "both best," and agreed that both should be published. Accordingly, without further ceremony, I lay his before the reader. It ought to be stated that he promised to confine himself to the mere difficulties.

EDITOR.

To Mr. D.—

SIR—IN adverting to that part of your letter containing the difficulties which occurred to your mind in your re-examination of the evidences for the truth of divine revelation, with your request for a satisfactory solution; I perceive you assign me a task of no small magnitude, to the accomplishment of which two things appear indispensably necessary; viz. a competent ability on my part to propose a just and adequate solution, and on your part a capacity or state of mind competent to receive it; neither of which might be the case, and yet the difficulties not insolvable. In the mean time, however, before we attempt things so remote and apparently arduous, let us advert to things contiguous and which lie immediately before us; by this means we shall advance better prepared to encounter those huge and apparently insuperable difficulties, or they may vanish as we approach, and, like imaginary mountains upon the verge of a distant horizon,

totally disappear. Two things which involve the whole are obvious and tangible; namely the Bible and the World. The former of which corresponds as exactly to the latter as the reflection of the face in a glass answers to the face reflected. The Bible presents us with a certain description of human nature, that is, of the dispositions, conditions, conduct, and characters of mankind; and, at the same time, in connexion with this, with a correspondent display of the divine procedure towards mankind, either as approbatory or disapprobatory; on the one side proposing and conferring rewards of privileges; on the other, denouncing and executing punishments or privations. All this we find, both by our own, and by universal experience, to be correct. The description exactly agrees with the thing described. The effects and consequences perfectly corresponding to the approbatory or disapprobatory annunciations, whether we trace them upon the ample and diversified page of universal history; or upon the more limited page of our actual experience and observation. We every where perceive a perfect coincidence between that which is and has been the character and condition of mankind, both individually and collectively, with the effects and consequences; and what the Bible presents us upon these topics;—the actual providence of God in the series of events perfectly corresponding to that which is written. Besides this display of facts, of which there can exist no doubt to him who will avail himself of the existing and obvious documents, the Bible further informs us of two things of which we must otherwise have remained entirely ignorant, as evidently appears from the existent state of all the nations that have not received it. Namely, how things came to be as they are; and what will be the future consequences after the termination of the present state of things. Of the truth and propriety of these two latter items of the divine testimony there are and have been great diversity of opinion, many difficulties and objections have originated to inquisitive minds, which, for aught I know, have never been, nor possibly can be resolved in this life: their truth and propriety, however, have never been attempted to be disproved by contrary testimony, and, I presume, never will. No credible witnesses ever have been, nor, I again presume, ever can be produced to prove the contrary of what is recorded in the first three chapters of Genesis or in the last three of Revelations, whatever doubts may arise concerning the wisdom, the goodness or the equity of the proceedings and events therein recorded. Whereas much and satisfactory evidence have been and can be produced to evince the truth, that is, the divine authority and authenticity of these portions of the sacred record. But to come to the difficulties which you suggest, through the proper medium, let us first see how the quantum of evil, both physical and moral, which the Bible and matter of fact, or, in other words, universal experience present to our consideration, may be shown to be consistent with the attributes of prescience, goodness, and power, which the Bible, and the common consent

of all that receive it as a divine revelation, ascribe to God. The Bible and all that receive it in its proper character, indeed all that are tolerably well acquainted with the history of the world, with the past and present condition of mankind, do and must acknowledge that a vast and almost endless variety of evils, physical and moral, vex, torment, harass, and oppress the world; and that this has been the case from the earliest ages. The Bible in the meantime informing us that the physical evils are the just and proper results and consequences of the moral; and that they are ordained of God as punishment, preventives, or correctives; and also that they shall not cease with the present state, but shall continue to afflict the wicked and impenitent during the whole course of their existence in a future state, for ever and ever. Now if penal evil be inseparably connected with moral in the constitution of things; if it be the just and settled order of the divine government, as the Bible and universal experience testify, why should we suppose it to cease to afflict the wicked in a future state more than in the present: and that there will be a resurrection and future state of the wicked the Bible most expressly testifies? And if it be not inconsistent with the prescience, goodness, and power of God to be the creator, preserver, and governor of such a world as this is, and has been now for near 6000 years; a *very sink* of moral evil, and constantly oppressed, racked, and torn to pieces with physical evil: why should we suppose it to be inconsistent with these divine perfections to continue the same for any indefinite duration? Upon what principle should we plead for its consistency with the above attributes to continue such a state of things for 6000 years, that might not as well apply, for aught that we know, to 60,000 years? And if it be a just decision that the "wicked should travail in pain all his days," supposing him to live 1000 years; upon what principle should we shew it to be an unjust decision supposing him to live 100,000 years? And if all the torture and torment that is and has been excruciating the human family for so many thousand years, has been compatible with the 'untroubled felicity of God of compassion;' may there not be similar or tantamount reasons that would render it compatible with his untroubled felicity, nay, with his infinite wisdom goodness, and mercy to continue the punishment of the wicked to endless duration? Upon what principle should we suppose it? If he punished the wicked because they are wicked, from his essential and just abhorrence of their wickedness, because of its intrinsic malignity; shall we suppose he will ever change in this respect? And should we farther suppose that the sufferings inflicted and endured in this world on account of sin are relatively useful to the purposes of the divine government; by what reason or upon what principle should we attempt to prove that the continued manifestation of the divine displeasure upon the wicked for their wickedness might not be equally useful to the purposes of the divine government in relation to a future state? In short, upon what premises soever we attempt to

reconcile the present condition of the world to the revealed character of God, the same or similiar premises will reconcile to the divine character the future state of rewards and punishments revealed in the Bible.

Upon the whole, the investigation of this subject, if duly considered, has a powerful tendency to impress our minds with two important conclusions. The one is, as the Bible happily expresses it, "Who by searching can find out God? Who can know the Almighty to perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? it is deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is wider than the earth; it is broader than the sea. How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out!" The other is, How heinously malignant the nature, and how dreadful the consequences of sin! What a world of misery, what an infinity of evil has its introduction occasioned! To what a stretch of condescension and goodness has God vouchsafed to condescend, in sending his only begotten Son into the world, that we might be saved through him, from this deadly evil!

T. C.

\* \* \*

THE following most excellent epistle is from the pen of one of the most experienced christian bishops in the city of Philadelphia. We have not one objection to a single sentiment it contains. The reader will see that I am still thought too severe in some of my strictures. I had thought that I had become extremely mild. In selecting terms and phrases it is with me a matter of great self-denial to reject an appropriate one and to adopt one less appropriate, merely because the most appropriate is too true—that is, too severe. But as we grow older, I hope we will become wiser.

EDITOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

*My Dear Sir,*

YOUR answer to *Paulinus* in your September number is truly pleasing. I have rejoiced in spirit and praised the Father of Light for its contents. Your capitals deserve indeed to be written in capitals of gold—"NO MAN CAN BE SAVED BY THE BELIEF OF ANY THEORY, TRUE OR FALSE—NO MAN WILL BE DAMNED FOR THE DISBELIEF OF ANY THEORY." Nor is your assertion less important—"the only question with me is to understand "each sentence" [of the scriptures] "in its own context." Go on and prosper, till you have sapped and overturned the kingdom of the clergy, purged the churches from all the old leaven and gathered multitudes to the Saviour. To understand what God says to us in his word, in the sense in which he speaks, is to hear that our souls may live. The moment we mistake his sense, we speculate and turn truth into falsehood in our corrupted minds; and then "if the light that is in us be darkness, how great is that darkness." Your close and pointed reasoning about theological tipplers is certainly excellent, but perhaps too highly figurative, and its language not understood by all your readers. Be sure that your ideas be understood by the babe in Christ, however illiterate, and you will re-

joice the hearts of the simple, and put to flight the many speculatists in christianity. Besides, while I highly approve of the great leading ideas of your work, I can by no means approve of the harsh epithets and the much sarcasm that so easily flow from your pen. Why such expressions as "the populars." "banditti of the orthodox," or even "kingdom of the clergy," or any manner of expression that may make the truth a greater offense to the weak believer or the worldly professor than it really is. But it is likely that you account your pointed and even burnished arrows all blunt enough to rouse the dormant spirit of the age—and perhaps in this thought you are correct. I trust, however, you will remember that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.

I am not at all surprized that the descriptions you give of faith, regeneration, christian experience, and the sanctifying influence of the truth, should occasion such opposition. No man will believe that faith is the belief of the gospel till he understand the gospel in the sense in which the apostles preached it. Express the gospel in every possibly way, and exhibit in the most pointed manner that it is impossible to be saved in the very nature of things in any way but by believing what God has said of his Son. Still the thing is not understood—the internal feeling and sentiment of every one, even the best instructed in speculations about the gospel, is, "What shall I do that I may work the works of God." And if you are so plain and pointed that such persons cannot mistake you that you mean exactly what you say, that faith is no more than believing what God says of Jesus—then the carnal mind rises in wrath against God's only way of saving sinners. For in the ears of all such persons the words Jesus, faith, repentance, &c. mean no more to them than the same thing they have done, or are about to do to reconcile God to them, and thus avert his wrath. The work that God has wrought they will by no means believe. And it has appeared to me the more orthodox, as you would say, unbelievers are, the more they are opposed to salvation by faith. The fact is, that men are not disposed to be dependent on the Saviour for salvation, and therefore their heart rises in enmity against the doctrine of the gospel. And this is the real cause why their minds are blinded as to God's way of renovating the human soul and sanctifying all its powers. You have no doubt observed the striking beauty of the Saviour's words to Paul in reference to the effects of that gospel which he was to preach among the Gentiles. Acts xxvi. 18. "To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them that are sanctified through faith that is in me." Here the Saviour attributes the enlightening of the mind, the renovation of the heart, the forgiveness of sins, and the present and eternal inheritance of his people, to the faith that is in him. A mistake then with respect to this faith will be fatal, to the whole of personal salvation. Hence the great mistakes about what is called "christian experience." I do not, indeed, ap-

prove of the phraseology. The word "experience" is used, I think, only three times in our translation of the Bible: first, in the book of Genesis, xxx. 27. where Laban says that he had learned by "experience" that the Lord had blessed him in worldly things on account of Jacob. Second. Eccles. i. 16, where Solomon boasts of his having great "experience" of wisdom and knowledge, evidently in worldly matters above all that were before him in Jerusalem. And third, Rom. v. 4, where in Paul's beautiful climax he informs us that "patience worketh experience." The two first passages seem to regard altogether the things of this life; and Paul's "experience" seem plainly to refer to the proof we have of the interpositions of the Divine Providence in our behalf, when we patiently endure afflictions, especially for the sake of the gospel, or for righteousness' sake, as may be strikingly seen in the case of Joseph when imprisoned in Egypt. But this aside, I know what believers mean by "experience," viz. all the influence of the Spirit and gospel of God upon their minds and hearts. But others have a very different meaning. Their experience is their Saviour. That is, the many convictions of sin, and the law work they underwent before Christ, as they think, was made precious to them, and the sad struggle they have had since to persuade themselves that God loves them, and that they have an interest in Christ. That is, their religious feelings are their experience and their Saviour and their ground of hope, such as it is, before God. You would do well, then, to analyze and expose "experience" in this way. We may rest assured, that if we use the words "christian experience," or any other phraseology in a sense in which the Holy Spirit does not use them, that some error lies at the bottom. When the Spirit of Truth describes the influence of divine truth upon the mind, he uses more emphatic and defined language—such as "light in the lord," "righteousness," "knowledge," "the holiness of the truth," "the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" or as Paul beautifully states it in few words, when enjoining on Timothy that he ought to charge the teachers of christianity that they teach no other doctrine than that which the apostles taught, he reminds him that the end of this charge which he gave him was "love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling." Tim. i. 5. Now Paul's definition of vain jangling in christianity, let it be about what is called christianity experience or any thing else, is that which is aside from love out of a pure heart and of good conscience, and of faith unfeigned I admire this definition of "christian experience," or, I would rather say, of the influence of the gospel upon the powers of man. But what does Paul mean? His meaning is obvious and the more striking that he descends his climax. The last step of his ladder is "faith unfeigned." And this is that which saves the guilty, depraved, perishing sinner. "Faith feigned" is when a man professes with his lips what he does not believe in his heart, like Simon Magus,

who professed with his lips what he discovered by his works he did not believe in his heart. "Faith unfeigned" is the language of the lips expressing the belief of the heart. Like the eunich when put on examination of his faith, that is of what he believed, answered, which seems to have been the express index of his heart, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Acts viii. 37. Or, as Paul himself expresses it. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus," [the very identical Jesus whom Paul preached] "and believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead; thou shalt be saved." But say many, thou must believe with thy heart and not with thy head. Oh, fools, and slow of heart to believe, what even common sense dictates! Are there two ways of believing? If a man believes—he believes; I know of no other way of correcting the fallacy. The question is, Does a man believe what God has said of his Son, or instead of this does he believe any religious conceit of his own imagination, or that of any of his fellow-men? He may believe any thing in religion he pleases, but if he does not believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the only Saviour, he cannot be saved. Faith unfeigned, then, is to confess with the mouth, as an index of the heart, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. Now the second step upward (of christian experience) or rather of the influence of divine truth upon all the powers of man, is "a good conscience." Conscience is that knowledge which men have of their connexion with the author of their existence, either from tradition or from the written word of God, whereby they understand that now and after death they must give an account of themselves to God. What an awful account this must be is beyond the power of utterance. Overpowered with the account men hear the gospel that the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses from all iniquity, they believe it and escape to the blood, the sacrifice which the Saviour offered on Calvary, and see in this sacrifice that which satisfies the justice of God as to their crimes, and glorifies all the perfections of Deity in their justification, and obtain peace with God through the death of Christ; yea, the answer of a good conscience towards God through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, because that resurrection evinces that the Deity was satisfied with the atonement made on Calvary, inasmuch as Jesus of Nazareth was raised from the dead, and placed at the right hand of the throne of the Almighty. Consequently, that which satisfies the justice of the eternal God, pacifies the conscience which is enlightened in the knowledge of the justice and holiness of God. Those who have their consciences satisfied with any thing less than that which satisfied the justice and holiness of the Deity, are building upon the sand. A good conscience is that which meets the justice and purity of the Divine Majesty, by the righteousness of God, the obedience unto death, of Jesus the Son of God. We have the answer of a good conscience towards God, because we urge nothing in our justification before him but what magnifies his law and makes it honorable; namely, the death of his beloved Son.



And we receive all our knowledge of right and wrong from this source, This, then, is a good conscience. The pure heart, the heart is defined by Peter—"Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren,' &c. &c. 1 Pet. i. 22. The "truth" is the gosel of the Son of God, which exhibits every object in its true light, and stands opposed to all the lies of Satan and his children about any thing you please. Obeying this truth is believing it in the very sense, and in none other in which God speaks it, and this necessarily produces a pure heart, the purification of the whole soul—the mind is enlightened, the conscience is purged and at peace—the passions, the will, the affections, all the violations are thrown into the gospel mould—the new creature is produced, the workmanship of God; or, as Paul beautifully describes the believing Romans, "God be thanked, that though ye were the slaves of sin, ye have obeyed from the heart that mould of doctrine into which ye were cast." Rom. vi. 17. The gospel is the mould of teaching; obeying the gospel is believing the gospel; by believing the gospel, the soul is cast into it, as metal in fusion is cast into a mould and receives all that divine impression, in every power of the soul which the gospel believed is calculated to produce. Hence love to God who first loved us—love to all, whether persons or things, that bear his authority and his image. Hence especially the peculiar affection which is purely a christian affection—love to the brethren of Christ, because they are his brethren for the truth's sake, for the gospel's sake which is in them and shall be with them for ever, whether on earth or in heaven; and hence the benevolence to all men which the gospel breathes to the most inveterate of God's enemies. All this worketh that Spirit of the Truth which convinceth men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment by the gospel. Never was there any other work of the Holy Spirit to the personal salvation of men, to their being born from above, or being partakers of the divine nature. If any man have not this spirit of Christ with which he was anointed, he is none of his. This is the pure heart. And all this purity is from faith in the Son of God. No right sentiment, no peace of conscience, no holy feeling, no submission to the authority of God, no holy living but by the belief of the Son of God. Jesus must have all the glory. He has all the glory of the new creature, because he is the head of it; and his enemies who would have any religious experience from him, shall be eternally disappointed. I say, then, if I understand you, I wonder not that your little work meets with many enemies in what is called the religious world. But go on. I would say *Macle*, if it did not savor of the beast. Cut off every sentiment and every feeling that is not grafted on the cross of Christ and care not who feels the severe incision. For every plant which the great husbandmen has not planted shall be rooted up.

When I began this scribble I intended in the end of it to have given you specimens of speculation in christianity contrasted

with the opposite truth, which have been among my papers for some time; but I have neither time nor room. If any ideas in this epistle be approved by you, they are at your service—and I can send you the specimens another time.

W. B.

*Philadelphia, Oct. 12, 1826.*

\* \* \*

*From Campbell's Lectures.*

### THE WORLD RULED BY NAMES.

I HAVE met with the observation, though I do not at present recollect where, that the world is ruled by names. It matters not who said so: but experience shows us that there is more truth in the remark than any one at first hearing would be apt to imagine. When names are first assigned to offices or even to orders of men, there is commonly an association of ideas, favorable or unfavorable in some respect or other, which is derived from the more ancient to the more recent application of the term. And even if the term should be coined for the occasion, the materials whence it is taken, that is, the known etymology, produces the same effect. It invariably gives rise to certain associations; these influence opinion, and opinion governs practice. We have seen the tendency which the distinction of mankind into clergy and laity had, to heighten, in the minds of the populace, (that is, more than nine-tenths of the people) the reverence for the sacred order. The effect thus actually produced, in ignorant ages, through the arrogance of the one side, and the superstition of the other, is sufficiently manifest, and perfectly astonishing. I shall proceed to take notice of the consequences of some other innovations in the style adopted on these subjects.

A close resemblance, both in titles and functions, to the Jewish priesthood, came soon to be very much affected by the pastors of the church. The very names of high-priest, and Levite, which the inspired writers had never once applied to any class of ministers, ordinary or extraordinary, in the christian commonwealth, appeared to have a wonderful fascination in them, that rendered them incomparably superior to any appellations which Jesus Christ or his apostles had thought fit to bestow. Besides the fancied dignity, the sacerdotal titles had been always understood to convey the notion of certain rights which conduced both to the honor and to the emolument of those to whom these titles belonged. Now having availed themselves of the supposed analogy, they thought they had the best right in the world to extend their claims much further; arguing, that because the bishops, presbyters, and deacons, were the high-priests, priests, and Levites, of a superior, a more heavenly and spiritual dispensation, they ought to possess more of the unrighteous mammon, that is, more earthly treasure and greater temporal power. And, what is still more extraordinary, by such wretched reasoning the bulk of mankind were convinced.

It is worth while to remark the great difference between the style adopted by the apostles, in relation to all sacred matters,

and that which, in the course of a few ages, crept into the church, and even became universal in it. Under the Mosaic economy, which exacted the rigid observance of a burdensome ritual, the only place devoted to the ceremonial and temporary service, consisting in sacrifices and oblations, ablutions, aspersions, and perfumes, was the temple of Jurasalem, for no where else could the public ceremonies be lawfully performed. The places that were dedicated to what may be called comparatively the moral and unchangeable part of the service, consisting in prayers and thanksgivings, and instructive lessons from the law and the prophets, were the synagogues, which, as they were under no limitation in point of number, time, or place, might be built in any city or village where a suitable congregation of worshippers could be found; not only in Judea, but wherever the Jewish nation was dispersed, and that even though their temple and their polity should subsist no longer. The ceremonies of the law being represented in the gospel as but the shadows of the spiritual good things disclosed by the latter, and its corporal purifications, and other rites, as the weak and beggarly elements, intended to serve but for a time, and to be instrumental in ushering a more divine and rational dispensation, it was no wonder that they borrowed no names from the priesthood to denote the christian ministry, or from the parade of the temple service, much calculated to dazzle the senses, to express the simple but spiritual devotions and moral instructions, for which the disciples of Jesus assembled under the humble roof of one of their brethren. On the contrary, in the name they gave to the sacred offices, as well as to other things, regarding their religious observances, they showed more attention to the service of the synagogue, as in every respect more analogous to the reasonable service required by the gospel. The place where they met is once, James ii. 2. called a synagogue, but never a temple. "If there come into your assembly," *eis ten synagogen 'umon* And it is well known that the names teacher, elder, overseer, attendant, or minister, and even angel, or messenger, of the congregation, were, in relation to the ministry of the Jewish synagogue, in current use.

When we consider this frequent recourse to terms of the one kind, and this uniform avoidance of those of the other; and when at the same time we consider how much the sacred writers were inured to all the names relating to the sacerdotal functions, and how obvious the application must have been, if it had been proper; it is impossible to conceive this conduct as arising from any accidental circumstance. We are compelled to say with Grotius, (*De imperio sum. Potest. cap. ii 5. "Non de nihilo est, quod ab eo loquendi genere, et Christus ipse, et apostoli semper abstinerunt"*) It is indeed most natural to conclude, that it must have sprung from a sense of the unsuitableness of such a use to this divine economy, which, like its author, "is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." I may add, it must have sprung from a conviction that such an

application might mislead the unwary into misapprehensions of here the nature of the evangelical law.

In it Jesus Christ is represented as our only priest; and as he ever liveth to make intercession for us, his priesthood is unchangeable, untransmissible, and eternal. A priest is a mediator between God and man. Now we are taught, in this divine economy, that as there is one God, so there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. The union of the mediatorship, and consequently of the priesthood, in the strictest sense of the word, is as really an article of our religion as the unity of the godhead. I do not deny, that in a looser sense every minister of religion may be called a mediator, or, if you please, a priest; inasmuch as he is the mouth of the congregation, in presenting their prayers to God, and is, as it were, also the mouth of God, on whose part he admonishes the people. The great reason against innovating by the introduction of these names is, not because the names are in no sense applicable, (that is not pretended;) but because, first, they are unnecessary; secondly, their former application must unavoidably create misapprehensions concerning the inspired penmen of the New Testament, who best understood the nature of that ministry, never did apply to it those names.

But to return. The only proper sacrifice, under the new covenant, to which all the sacrifices of the old pointed, and which they were consummated, is the death of Christ. Thus, as it cannot, like the legal sacrifices, be repeated, neither requires nor admits any supplement. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Sometimes, indeed, in regard to the Mosaic institution, an allegorical style is adopted, wherein all christians are represented as priests, being, as it were, in baptism,\* consecrated to the service of God, the community as a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices to him, the bodies of christians as temples destined for the habitation of God through the Spirit. The oblations are thanksgivings, prayer, and praise. The same name is also given to acts of beneficence and mercy. "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." This is also the manner of the earliest fathers. Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, after mentioning Christ as our all-sufficient high-priest, insists, that in consequence of our christian vocation, we his disciples, not the pastors exclusively, are God's true sacerdotal family. *Emeis archieratikon, to alethinon genos esmen tou Theou.* In this allusive way, also, the terms circumcision, passover, unleavened bread, altar, sabbath, and the like, are sometimes allegorically applied by the sacred penmen. But no where are the terms high-priest, priest, or Levite, applied particularly to the ministers of Christ.

Doctor Hickee, a zealous asserter of what he calls the christian priesthood, has a wonderful method of solving this difficulty. He supposes that Christ and his apostles acted the politicians in this

\*Many of our readers will concur with us in differing from this sentiment.  
 Editors of Witness.

particular. According to him, they were afraid, that with all the miracles and supernatural gifts they could boast, it was an undertaking too bold to be hazarded, to appear as rivals to the Jewish priests. Here he inadvertently ascribes a conduct to Jesus Christ, which, in my apprehension, reflects not a little on the sincerity of that spotless character. "As a Jew," says he, (let. I. chap. iii sect. 1.) "he was to observe the law and the temple worship, and live in communion with the Jews; which, though he could do as a king and a prophet, yet he could not do it with congruity, had he declared himself to be their sovereign pontiff, that very high-priest, of which Aaron himself was but a type and shadow." But allow me to ask, Why could he not? Was it because there was a real incongruity betwixt his conforming to the Jewish worship, and his character of high-priest? If there was, he acted incongruously, for he did conform; and all he attained by not declaring himself a priest, was not to avoid, but to dissemble, this incongruity. And if there was none in conforming, where was the incongruity in avowing a conduct which was in itself congruous and defensible? We are therefore forced to conclude, from this passage, either that our Lord acted incongruously, and was forced to recur to dissimulation to conceal it, or that Doctor Hickeys argues very inconsequentially. The true christian can be at no loss to determine which side of the alternative he ought to adopt.

But to consider a little the hypothesis itself, the apostles might boldly, it seems and without such offence as could endanger the cause, call their master the Messiah, the king, (a name with the Jews above every other human title.) They might, in respect, say safely, that though their chief priests and rulers had killed the Lord of Life, God had raised him from the dead; nay, had done more, had exalted him to his own right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to the people, and remission of sins. They might thus openly, if not put him in the place of the priest, put him in the place of the Almighty, to whom the priests are bound to minister, and from whom ultimately all the blessings must be obtained; nay, and represent his power as more extensive in procuring divine forgiveness and favor, (the great object of all their sacrifices) than any that had ever been experienced through the observance of the Mosiac rites; inasmuch as "by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." Yet, says the Doctor, they durst not call him priest. Now we know that the usurping of this title was not, by the Jewish institute, either treason or blasphemy; whereas, the titles and attributes, which the apostles gave their master, were accounted both treasonable and blasphemous by the unbelieving Jews, and with too much appearance of truth, if Jesus had been the imposter they imagined him; for the disciples set him in their representations above every thing that is named, either in the heaven, or upon the earth. I might say further, Did the first preachers hesitate to maintain the cause of their master, notwithstanding that by im-

plication it charged the guilt of his blood on the chief priests and rulers, as those rulers themselves but too plainly perceived? But why do I say by implication? They often most explicitly charged them with this atrocious guilt. It was in the midst of the sanhedrim that Stephen boldly said, "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them who shewed before of the coming of the Just One of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." Might they thus with safety to the cause, at least, though not with impunity to their persons, exhibit those priests as homicides, parricides, regicides, and, if I may be allowed a bold expression, even deicides; and yet durst not, without involving the whole in one general ruin, so much as insinuate that they also had their priests? *Credat Judæus Apella*

In short, the whole pretext of this learned Doctor is precisely as if one should say, that if in a country like this, for instance, one were to raise a rebellion in favor of a pretender to the crown, the partisans, might, with comparatively little danger or offence, style the sovereign in possession a tyrant and usurper, and proclaim the man they would set up, king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, and ever add, defender of faith. But it would be imminently hazardous, and would probably ruin the cause, to insinuate that he had the patronage of any ecclesiastic benefices. They may with safety denominate him the head of the church, and of the law, the source of all honors and authority in the state, and even give him higher titles than ever monarch had enjoyed before; they may assume to themselves the names of all sorts of offices, civil or military, under him; but if they would avoid inevitable perdition, let them not style any of themselves his chaplains. In fact, the absurdity here is not equal to the former.

*Witness.*

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### TO MR. D, A, SCEPTIC.

#### REPLICATION—No. VI.

IN my last I promised you a brief statement of the gospel with a reference to your difficulties. In attempting this I must, owing to circumstances, be governed by the circumscribed limits of a sheet.

Through habit it frequently happens that the most sublime and interesting truths are heard with apathy and indifference. Because familiar with the terms, *gospel, salvation, eternal life, love of God to sinners.* &c we often pronounce and hear them with as much indifference as the most common incidents of the day. But this is not all; ideas are often attached to the terms above mentioned which contribute to the insensibility with which they are so often heard and expressed, and which divest the terms of that which most of all could interest the hearts of sinners I will, therefore, present the gospel in the form of a proclamation. that the novelty of the *form* may awaken, if possible, attention to *the thing*. It is not the definition of a name, but the exhibition of facts the most significant, at which I aim. I in-

clude in the proclamation that which makes it *glad tidings of great joy unto all people* to whom it is promulged. It is in the name of him who has a right indisputable so to speak:—

WHEREAS all mankind have corrupted and debased themselves, have sinned against me and come short of my glory, in consequence of which they are estranged in heart from me, irreconcilable to my government and will, and filled with enmity against my moral character: And whereas there is no possibility of their restoration to my favor, nor of their true enjoyment of themselves, in consequence of their ignorance, guilt, indisposition and subjection to their passions and appetites by any means within their reach—I DO HEREBY PROCLAIM TO ALL MANKIND INDISCRIMINATELY, That, moved by my own pity and compassion towards them as my own creatures, though fallen and degraded, I have sent my only begotten Son into the world to reveal to them my true character; to acquaint them with their true condition and circumstances; to expiate sin by the sacrifice of himself, to honor and exalt my name in all the earth, and to render it every way compatible with my righteousness, to whomsoever I will. Be it known, therefore, to all mankind, irrespective of family, sectional, or national distinction, That it is my WILL to pardon, and accept into my favor and friendship, every one who believes or trusts in him as my Son and the only Saviour of men, and who is thereby reconciled to my character and will: and I do hereby declare upon my own veracity, that I will raise to life again all who die in the faith of my Son, and glorify them at the consummation of this state; that I will introduce them into my own presence in heaven, and bestow upon them all the happiness of life eternal in my kingdom of glory for ever. But whosoever hears and rejects this my proclamation, shall be condemned, and shall share only in the resurrection of damnation. In attestation whereof, I have sent my prophets and apostles, accredited with all the powers and gifts of my Holy Spirit, to promulge this my proclamation, and to demonstrate the truth and certainty thereof by all the signs and pledges which rational beings can demand, and to commit the same to writing, stamped with such evidences as are requisite to gain it universal acceptance. And I do give in it charge to every saved sinner under heaven, to take all necessary pains, and to use every possible means of giving publicity to the same until I call him home; and I do most solemnly declare, that eternal vengeance awaits all them who do not obey this my proclamation, and who shall corrupt, add to, or diminish aught therefrom.

Such is the gospel in the form of a proclamation from the invisible God. Now the question is, To what in this can any man reasonably object? I confess I know not. I admit, indeed, that some objections are made to it, but they are most unreasonable. For instance, it is objected that faith or belief is made a condition or a *sine qua non* to the enjoyment of this salvation, and that this faith is an involuntary thing. This objection is perfectly un-

reasonable, and built upon a mistaken view of faith. It is impossible that any medicine can cure a diseased body unless it be received into that body. In the same way, it is impossible that the gospel can save any soul unless it be received into that soul. And whatever answer you would give to him who objects to a medicine simply because it will not cure without being taken, I would give to him who objects to the gospel because it will not save without being believed. If the gospel could save a man without being believed, I am sure the benevolence which gave birth to it would not have restricted its benefits to believers. But the benevolence and philanthropy of God cannot affect our hearts unless it be known and it cannot be known unless it be believed, because it is the subject of testimony. And although faith may be said in some sense to be involuntary, yet it so happens that unbelief, where the gospel is promulged, is perfectly a voluntary thing, and that is the reason why they who reject the testimony which God has given of his Son, have no excuse for their sin. Also, in rejecting this testimony, they prove their perversity by divesting themselves of all those principles of reasoning, which govern them in the affairs of this life, and in admitting to be true a thousand things which govern their conduct in this world, which are neither so important in themselves nor supported by a thousandth part of the evidence which supports the christian faith. In a word, in rejecting the gospel they reject their own reason, sin against their own principles, degrade their own faculties, and, what is still worse, they make God a liar, and appropriate his attributes to their own conceits.

I am constrained to break off. If what I have said in reply to yours is not satisfactory I should like to hear from you again. In the mean time I should recommend you most humbly and prayerfully to take up the blessed volume, and (if you can get a copy of the new translation I have lately published, it will facilitate your inquiries a hundred fold,) give it a regular and close investigation from beginning to end, about a dozen of times, and then tell me what you think of it.

Your Friend,

THE EDITOR.

*Kentucky, Nov. 29th, 1826.*

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GOOD men of all sects have nearly the same views of Creeds, Ecclesiastical Courts, of "Christian Experience," and of Pure Religion. The following sentiments are extracted from one volume of the works of JOHN NEWTON of excellent memory.—*Ed.*

"I dare not say what the Lord may or may not do; but I have no present conception of love without faith, or of faith without some communication of gospel truth and light to the mind"——

"I am not very fond either of assemblies, consistories, synods, councils, benches, or boards. Ministers as individuals in their respective places, are like flowers, which will preserve their colour



and scent much longer, if kept singly, than when packed together in a nosegay or posey, for then they quickly fade and corrupt"—

"It is possible to preach a very good sermon from an English or Scotch proverb. Modes and fashions alter in religious matters, as well as in dress. Our first reformers usually preached from *common places*; they did not take a text, but discussed a subject—such as faith, repentance, holiness, &c. yet surely they were preachers of the gospel. The two volumes of Homilies, to which our clergy are obliged by law to subscribe their assent, are a valuable collection of sermons in this way"—

"On our side of the river, many think as highly of Episcopal or Congregational order. Perhaps much of our differences of opinion on this head, may be ascribed to the air we breathed, and the milk which we drank in our infancy. If I had lived in Scotland, and known the Lord, my ministry, I suppose, would have been in the Kirk, or the Relief, or the Secession; and if Doctor Erskine had been born and bred among us, and regarded according to his merit, he might perhaps have been Archbishop of Canterbury long ago."—

"May we not say with the apostle, *Grace be with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity?* I think that is a latitudinarian prayer—I hope many agree in loving him, who sadly disagree about trifles. Such is the weakness and wickedness of the heart, even in good men. There is a great and old established house, which does much business, and causes no small disturbance in the world and in the church. The *firm* is SATAN SELF AND Co. Till this powerful, extensive partnership be dissolved, we cannot expect perfect peace and union among all believers. It will be a joyful day, when its credit shall totally fail. Such a day we are warranted to hope for."—

"I cannot speak as you do of remarkable discoveries, &c. I trust I do walk by faith—I certainly do not walk by sight. All my hope, light, and comfort is derived from a little book which I can carry in my pocket"—

"If all lay preachers were like-minded with Messrs. H\*\*\* and A\*\*\*, I would pray the Lord to increase their number a hundred fold. We have some such in England, but not a few who would be better employed at the plough or the loom."

"A man who is more fond of novelty, than of honest labor or of being always called plain Tom or Dick, having a good stock of self conceit, transforms himself into a preacher—he then expects to be styled Mr. Thomas, perhaps the Rev. Mr. Thomas, to be excused from work, and to look almost like a gentleman. I fear such motives as these may stimulate some to be missionaries, both for at *home*, and for *abroad*. When these are invited to houses of the affluent, courted and caressed by people of the first character, laden with gifts and presents, &c. considering what human nature is, I cannot wonder if this sudden transition from obscurity to honor and public notice, has a tendency to turn

their heads, and make them think themselves persons of no small consequence."——

"I pray the Lord to bless you and all who love his name in Scotland, whether Kirk, Circus, Relief, Burghers, Anti-Burghers, Independents, Methodists, or by whatever name they choose to be called. Yea, if you know a Papist, who sincerely loves Jesus, and trusts in him for salvation, give my love to him."——

"Study the *text* of the good word of God. Beware of great books. The first christians had none to read, yet they lived honorably and died triumphantly. Beware of leaning too hard upon human authority, even the best; you may get useful hints from sound divines, but call no man *master*. There are mixtures of human infirmity, and the prejudices of education or party, in the best writers. What is good in them, they obtained from the fountain of truth, the scriptures; and you have as good a right to go to the fountain head yourself."

"There was a man and his wife who had no book but the Bible. In this they read daily, and received much comfort. One day their minister from the pulpit recommended some commentary. They attended to his recommendation, for they purchased the commentary, and sat down to read it. After reading in it for some time, the man asked his wife how she felt now under the commentary. I will tell you how I feel. When I read the Bible itself, I felt as if I had drank a glass of wine; but this commentary tastes like a glass of wine in a pail of water. The wife acknowledged her feelings were the same; and by mutual consent they returned to the Bible."

So did write a good High Churchman.

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*From an English paper.*

### WEALTH OF THE CHURCH OF SPAIN.

THE Pope, having granted to the king of Spain the *liberty* of conferring pensions amounting to a third part of the bishops' revenues for one year, the Spanish government demanded of them (long before the revolution) an estimate of their amount. It may easily be supposed they would not rate them very high, and it is thought that, with the exception of the Archbishop of Toledo, they only valued them at half, or the third part of their real value. The following were the returns received and on file:—

<i>Archbishop of</i>		<i>Archbishop of</i>	
Toledo,	£110,000	Fortosa,	6000
Zaragoza,	13,000	Coria,	5000
Santiago,	32,000	Astorga,	4000
Seville,	40,000	Almeria,	3100
Granada,	11,500	Santander,	3450
Valencia,	26,000	Palencia,	4300
Osma,	11,500	Gerona,	2500
Placentia,	8,000	Feruil,	3000

The total revenue of the Spanish Archbishops, and Bishops, according to their own estimates, amounted to £520,000 sterling; the revenues of the canons of the 1st and 2d class amounted to £469,845. Some of the canons whose incomes do not exceed £300 are enabled to keep coaches. Many of the bishops live in a style of magnificence surpassing even that of the grandees.

*Income of the Spanish Clergy.*

Tithes,	-	-	-	-	-	-	£110,900,000
Fees,	-	-	-	-	-	-	110,000
Alms,	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,950,000
Livings,	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000
Produce of church yards,	-	-	-	-	-	-	600,000
							£113,660,000

At first sight it will appear incredible that a nation whose annual expenditure does not amount to £7,000,000, should ever have allowed the clergy to raise a revenue double that of the kingdom. But this phenomenon has been a consequence of their enormous power. Yet in spite of the inquisition, all the men of talent who have governed Spain, have endeavored to make the clergy contribute a portion of their immense wealth to the support of government. Long before the revolution they had more than once applied the ecclesiastical revenues to the public service, and when the Cortes did the same, they only followed the example given to them by many ministers of absolute kings, who reigned prior to Ferdinand.

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*From the Salem Observer.*

### EPISCOPAL CLERGY IN ENGLAND.

IT seems by a statement contained in the Report of the Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty in England, that the odious exaction of "Easter Offerings" still disgraces some of the clergy in that country. In one village, twenty persons, wretched in poverty, were recently summoned for arrears of these dues, before the clergyman, though not a magistrate, by whom the claim was made. One poor old man, 85 years of age, for two years dues, 4 pence each year. Another, three years, at the same rate; and to the account was added, "*for your daughter, two pence ha'penny each year, making seven pence ha'penny.*" This person had to pay four shillings costs of suit. Another instance of oppression is given in an account of a clergyman who refused to perform the rites of burial upon a child, because he had been baptized by a dissenting minister. The funeral went to the burying ground, and after waiting a considerable time, the friends conveyed the corpse to a ground belonging to Dissenters, where they interred it. Another clergyman refused a place of burial to an infant child of a Baptist minister; and the parents were compelled to carry their infant to a Baptist burial ground, nine miles distant. In another place, the priest refused to bury a child of a dissenting minister unless he received the fees of baptism as well as interment.

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*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

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Pittsburgh, December 6th, 1826.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

Sir—AS you are in the habit of favoring your numerous readers with an account of some of the religious publications of the day, especially of such as have a favorable aspect towards the grand and desirable object of your editorial labors, "*the restoration of the ancient order of things*," I take it for granted that the following document will not be unacceptable either to you or to them.

There is just issued from the press, in this place, a work, titled, "*The supreme and Exclusive Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in Religious Matters, maintained; and the Rights, Liberties, and Privileges of the Children of God established from the Sacred Scriptures, in Opposition to the Assumed Powers of Ecclesiastics. In two parts. By John Tasse, Pastor of the Congregational Church, Pittsburg.*" This work contains 265 pages, duodecimo. The first part is predicated upon that ancient prophecy, Deut. chap. xviii. as quoted by Peter, Acts iii. 22. 23. "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall you hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you And it shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."

In this part the author first illustrates the similarity between Moses the type, and Christ the antitype, in a variety of striking coincidences, both personal and official, in order to illustrate and establish the truth of the prophecy.

He next proceeds to develope and enforce the duty of unlimited obedience in all things. This he does with great apparent solemnity and elaborate pathos; and finds much to blame and lament, and justly too, on account of the manifest neglect of, and opposition to, the exclusive and universal authority of this great prophet amongst professors of every name and description. "There is not," says he, "that entire subjection of mind to the instructions of Christ, discoverable among professing christians, that there ought to be. There is not that total and unqualified surrender of the soul to all the doctrines, and to all the duties which he inculcates. They not only listen to his word with a partial ear and straitened understanding, but with prejudiced

mind and a steeled heart. Determined at all hazards to maintain their ground, they cannot, they will not be persuaded to resign themselves to the entire control of the Lord Jesus. We complain not now of any particular description of professing christians. The evil is general and deep-rooted in them all, and demands immediate remedies. It is an eating gangrene that will soon corrode the vitals of religion, and eat out the very marrow of the gospel. And how can it be otherwise if the authority of Jesus is superseded by the authority of other principles? if pride, and party zeal, and selfishness, and love of systems, with all their close attendants in the train, march up, in rank and file, to dispossess the Son of God from his high seat as Lord of conscience?" Page 42.

Again, page 48—"Not that any professing christian will openly or avowedly deny the authority of Jesus. But whether his authority is set aside avowedly or otherwise, it matters not. It amounts to the same thing. "Ye call me Master and Lord, and do not the things which I say. Many will say, unto me in that day, Lord! Lord! to whom I will say, I know you not; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. What we complain of, then, is that attachment to self-formed and conjectural principles, by which the authority of revelation is superseded;—that love of *system* which grinds down and newmodels every opposing passage of these holy records, until it is supposed to tally with our acknowledged creed;—that blind and unconquerable love of party, which forces the Oracles of Heaven out of their natural and obvious meaning to support its unhallowed pretensions." Page 54 "Yet, singular to tell, that some of our most zealous advocates for *systems* talk of persons going to hell with an orthodox creed; as if religious truth had changed its nature, and become the soul's eternal enemy. Perhaps, however, there is some cause for thinking so; some real operative principle that works the effect; but surely in the word it is not, nor can it be. The doctrines which the Saviour taught tend not to lead men in the path to hell; but upward lead to glory and immortal joy. Whence is it, then, that such reflections rest on orthodoxy? We suspect the cause is near at hand, and quite within our reach. The general source from which men learn religious sentiments is not the word of God, but the formal systems of the day; or from the party to which they respectively belong. In those systems the principles of religion stand invested with all the authority of ecclesiastical statutes, and enforced by ecclesiastical sanctions, but the authority of Christ attends them not. There they are exhibited in all the nakedness of systematic stiffness, stripped and leafless as the sturdy oak in winter, couched in the technical and logical phraseology of the schools; but they stand divested of those heavenly charms which engage our affections; of that sympathy and love which subdue the heart, and captivate the soul. There they are set forth contaminated with the foul breath of fallible and dying mortals, addressed only to the intellects of men; announced in words of

human wisdom, and compounded of the most heterogeneous materials; and, consequently, cannot reach the conscience, nor carry conviction to the inquiring mind: they possess no attractions to catch the soul, no loveliness to engage the heart to the admiration of virtue. And every step we take in pursuit of truth, as exhibited in these formularies, is attended with uncertainty and doubt. We may talk, then, of the wisdom of our ancestors, and their claims upon our high regards; but their wisdom was certainly human wisdom, and the regard we owe them ought never to be placed in competition with that which we owe the Lord of life. How very differently do the scriptures teach us! They take every avenue to the human heart. They enlighten us with their instructions, and sanctify us by the purity of their truth, and the unction of the Good Spirit from on high; they command us unto subjection by their authoritative voice; and deter us from the paths of folly by the thunders of heaven. They engage our sympathetic feelings by the sympathy and love of Jesus; and excite our imitative dispositions by the exhibition of all that is amiable and of good report in the conduct of these whom they set before us for our examples. Instead of an abstruse and metaphysical phraseology, we have the plain and obvious language, which his righteous servants spake, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Instead of the productions of fallible men, we have the pure and infallible testimony of the Lord Jesus. And in place of the dry systematic formularies of human wisdom, we have all the excellency, and beauty, and harmony of the doctrines and duties of God's word, represented in their close connexion and dependency. And with all the charms with which virtue can adorn the human character, we see the Son of God invested, and in him morality and holiness assume a living form to attract and draw us from the fatal paths of folly, sin, and shame. *That* orthodoxy, therefore, which changes not the heart, but leads to ruin and despair, is the genuine offspring of human creeds: from the pure fountain of eternal truth it has not sprung. Surely the doctrine of Christ must be sadly compounded with false principles, or associated with most erroneous sentiments, when it ceases to produce those natural effects ascribed to it in the scriptures. Were it received pure and unmixed from the fountain of truth now, as it was in apostolic days, it would still bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ to the glory of God."

Page 59. "The doctrines and commandments of men, on whatever pretence introduced, ought to meet with that severity of rebuke, which they most justly deserve. They have ever been the source of discord and corruption in the church of God. If Christ is sole governor in his kingdom; if he is given as leader and commander to his people; if he, as Moses was, is faithful in all his house; and if he possesses the exclusive right of dictating to the conscience of men, and of making laws for their regulation in religious matters; then, every rule of expediency, every doc-

trine of human formation, every case of conscience determined in any shape, by persons possessing an assumed right to do so, is contrary to the rights and prerogatives of the Lord Jesus."

After insisting at length upon the exclusive and universal obligation of hearkening to the voice of our Great Prophet, and of the ruinous and dreadful consequences of rejecting or neglecting his authority, or in any wise interfering with it, he comes to the second part, p. 85, to treat more particularly of the supreme authority of the Lord Jesus in relation to his churches, and to vindicate the liberties and privileges of his people from the assumed authority of ecclesiastical courts of every description. He prefaces this part of the subject with a quotation from Acts xxii. 17—28 a part of Paul's farewell charge to the elders of the church of Ephesus.

Page 85. "Warped by the prejudices of education, or blinded by a superstitious attachment to a particular sect, some are of opinion that the Bible lays down no specific rules for the management of Christ's kingdom, but leaves it to the prudential management of its friends to regulate its concerns."

In reply to this assumption our author justly argues, that it goes "to arraign the wisdom of God,—to charge the oracles of heaven with what would render them useless and nugatory" That "we can never conceive that an all-wise God would leave his word imperfect; or that he would grant us a code of laws which would either be inapplicable or deficient; much less, that he would leave his people altogether destitute of such *necessary* regulations" That, "of all the duties which devolve upon a governor, there is none more essentially necessary than the formation of wise and equitable laws for the management of his subjects. Without these it is impossible for him to maintain his authority, or prevent anarchy and confusion throughout his dominions." That, "it is equally impossible for subjects to submit to law with which they are totally unacquainted." That, of course, it becomes the bounden duty of every wise ruler to govern by righteous and equitable laws, and to publish these for the benefit of all concerned. Also, that, by the nature of the laws promulgated, we judge of the qualifications of the governor from whom they derive their authority and character" Therefore, that "if the Lord Jesus is King of kings, and Lord of lords, it is but reasonable to expect that he will govern *his subjects* by regulations corresponding with his righteous character: that, as they are willing subjects, and must render a cheerful, and not a forced obedience, they must become acquainted with the laws of his kingdom, as promulgated by *himself*; and then their obedience will not be an act of submission to the authority of man, but to that of Jesus Christ: their faith will not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. But to suppose that the Lord Jesus governs his church without any fixed or determined laws; or that, if he does rule by such laws, he has not clearly or explicitly made them

known to his people, ought to be regarded as too gross an insinuation to admit of the smallest consideration."

Thus he argues for the indispensable necessity of a distinct, intelligible, and competent exhibition of law, both for the honor of the ruler, and the loyalty and comfort of the ruled. And certainly to good effect. For to acknowledge Christ as a ruler without a law; or by a law deficient and unintelligible, would, to say the least, be a foul imputation upon his character. What would we say of a civil governor or of a government that would proceed in this manner? Would we not call that governor or government weak, foolish or tyrannical?

After obviating an objection to the above statement, drawn from the informal and unsystematic exhibition of the laws which the church of Christ is to be governed, our author proceeds [page 88] to an examination of the nature and constitution of those primitive societies called churches of Christ, in order "to ascertain the amount of the information furnished in the scriptures respecting their government, laws and customs, as they existed in apostolic days;" and resolves his inquiry into the four following questions: "What is the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood? What is its nature and constitution? What are the permanent officers and ordinances of a scripturally organized church? And what are the particular duties devolving upon those officers?"

In the prosecution of these inquiries, he confines himself wholly to the sacred records; except that, in one single instance, he refers to the well known Apologetic of Justin Martyr, in p. 211, which shall be noticed in its proper place. He commences with exhibiting the certain and definite meaning of the term *church* in its appropriated application to the people of God, both in the Old and New Testament. In the course of this investigation it is fully evinced that the term church, or congregation, (as some translate it) when applied to the people of God has always one of the two following significations; namely, either the whole body of the redeemed contemplated as co-existing either in heaven or earth; or else to one particular society met, or in the stated habits of meeting together in one place for religious purposes. That this latter and particular application of the term is sometimes attributed to the congregation as distinguished from their pastors and teachers, but never to the latter as distinguished from the former: as also the term *clergy*, translated heritage, 1 Pet. v. 3. applied by the apostle to the people, contradistinguished from their bishops and pastors. It is also clearly evinced that the term church is never used to designate a confederation of churches; or a representative assembly composed of delegates from such confederation.

Page 102. "Moreover, we maintain that the word church, in the scriptures, can be understood neither literally nor figuratively, as applicable to an assembly of delegates from different churches or congregations. Not *literally*—for as we have shown



before, it is already the appropriated name of those societies from which the delegates are supposed to be sent, and these various societies are never assembled in one place, so as make but one society, and therefore can never be called a *church*; they are not literally a church, but *churches*; for they literally meet in a number of different places: and, surely, a number of distinct assemblies can never be called one assembly. But, you say, they are assembled figuratively in their representatives. Suppose they are, this does not altar the case; for the designation *church* cannot apply, in singular number, to these representatives figuratively, no more than literally, for the best reason in the world—because the representatives assembled must, in this case, be designated by the very title by which their constituents are known. And as, in the present instance their constituents are designated by the plural noun *churches*, for this very reason, if we wish to apply the appellation to a representative body figuratively, we must call them *churches*, not *church*; for all these different assemblies, according to scripture usage, are never known, nor described by the singular noun, *church*; but always by the plural, *churches*. Accordingly, it might be properly said, in a figurative sense, that the Presbyterian congregation enacted a certain law, thereby meaning that the general assembly did so. But we could never, with propriety say the Presbyterian congregation did so; for all the congregations of Presbyterians are not known by the title *congregation*, in the singular number. Or suppose, for sake of illustration, that an assembly of delegates from Antioch, Syria, Silicia, &c. together with the apostles and elders resident in Jerusalem, met as a representative body there; this meeting could not, in a religious sense, be literally called a church, for this word was already pre-occupied, being the appropriated name of any particular assembly of the saints, who met for worship; consequently, could not become the designation of a meeting so differently constituted: nor could it be so called figuratively; for we could not say that *the church* in Jerusalem enacted certain decrees, for this would be false; the meeting of christians in Jerusalem, previously known by this designation, not being a delegated body at all, but a worshipping society; consequently it could not be the assembly called *the church in Jerusalem*, which enacted such decrees as the case supposes. And on the supposition that this representative body was the enacting authority, it could not be figuratively called *the church in Jerusalem*; for it was not the church in Jerusalem merely, that had delegates in the representative body; but, as is alledged, there were delegates from a great number of other churches throughout Syria, Silicia, &c. consequently, the decrees of these churches, made by their delegates assembled in Jerusalem, could never be figuratively called the decrees of the church in Jerusalem, but must, in consistency with the rules of rhetoric” (he might have said, with the rules of common sense,) “be called the de-

crees of the churches represented, inasmuch as these churches, by their representatives, enacted them."

Our author, after thus vindicating the term *church* from a gross misapplication, manifestly designed to give an appearance of scriptural authority to the representative system of church government, next proceeds to notice an unhappy sectarian abuse of the term:—

"By a strange and almost unaccountable revolution in the history of the appellation *church*, from being the designation of a christian society, it has come to be in connexion with some other descriptive word, the badge of distinction among the various sectaries. Hence we have the Lutheran Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church the Baptist Church, &c. all of which designations describe the boundaries of the respective sects to which they refer; or, as they are frequently used, represent the supreme judicatories belonging to these denominations. Hence the assemblies of God's people have been robbed of their proper scriptural name, and others substituted for it; and almost all that remains to the original proprietors of it, is, that they are permitted to grace the walls of their meeting-houses with this designation, and call them churches. All the honors and privileges belonging to those who formerly were the rightful owners of the title, have been gradually assumed, and finally usurped, by what are now denominated church judicatories, together with the title itself. Yet for such an application of the word *church* to a representative body, the scriptures do not lay the smallest foundation. "The notions, therefore, of a church representative, how commonly soever it has been received, is a mere usurper of a later date, and it has fared here, as it sometimes does in cases of usurpation, the original proprietor comes, though gradually, to be at length totally dispossessed. Should any man now talk of the powers of *the church*, and of the rights of *churchmen*, would the hearers apprehend that he meant the powers of a christian congregation or the rights of all who are members of the christian community? It is therefore, not without reason that I affirm, that the modern acceptation, though an intruder has jostled out the rightful and primitive one, almost entirely."\*

Our author modestly concludes this part of his investigation by submitting the result to the judgement of the candid and impartial; with the following protest:—

Page 141. "It only remains for us to declare, That we do most solemnly protest against all ecclesiastical courts of every description, as completely hostile to the supreme authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, and subversive of that pure and personal obedience which we ought to render to him, as king and head of his church And still further, we do not hesitate to pronounce *that system*, which erects partition walls, or frames terms of communion, either congregational or ministerial, by which christians are prevented from joining together with their fellow christians in the

\**Campbell's Lectures*, p. 166.

service of God, or from engaging to perform their duty according to their talents or abilities, as destructive to the best interests of christianity, and as sanctioning the breach of that primary law of Christ's house—the law of love.”

PHILALETHES.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

\* \* \*

*Paulinus* to the Editor of the “Christian Baptist.”

[SECOND EPISTLE.]

Virginia, November, 1826.

Dear Sir—IT is time I had made my acknowledgments for the attention which you have paid to my first letter; not only in giving it a place in your interesting publication, but in replying so promptly and largely to the various points introduced to your notice. I am your debtor also, and in no small degree, for the copy of your discourse on the abrogation of the Old Dispensation, &c. It proved a mental treat, for which I beg you will accept my hearty thanks.

*The metaphysical* parts of this composition, however ingenious (and ingenious they certainly are,) I let pass. You have yourself glanced at them, by way of disapprobation; and I have long been persuaded that with metaphysical reasonings we have but little to do, in illustrating and enforcing the simple truths of the gospel. Nor do I mean to express *unqualified* approbation, as to the rest of the discourse. This could hardly be expected: and were you to revise and republish, I think it probable that the statements or remarks, even in regard to the governing object, might, in some two or three instances, wear a different aspect. The main point appears to me to be triumphantly carried; but there are expressions and sentiments which seem to be rather unguarded and defective, and to require some modification. The pamphlet is lent out; so that I cannot refer to it so definitely as I could wish; but as this matter is thought by some of the wise and good, to involve consequences of a dangerous tendency, I must ask your indulgence while I make a few remarks.

After proving that we are now under the Legal Dispensation, or *the Law*, (so called,) and shewing that we are to draw our views of *actual duty* from the New Testament, &c. when you come to the case of the unconverted sinner, you place him, I think under the Law of Nature. True it is that you make the summary of the Law, [*“Thou shall love the Lord thy God,”* &c.] the basis of all Divine Law. This is, indeed, a thought as important as it is just and striking. Yes, this principle, no doubt, is carried round, through the vast range of the universe, to all orders and ranks of intelligent beings, as the foundation on which all particular obligations are built up: so that however the Law, as a Dispensation, may be branched out or modified, to suit different classes of rational beings, or different times and circumstances, it stands on the same eternal, unchanging basis, This

sentiment commends itself at once to the mind of an intelligent reader of the Bible: it taxes not our ingenuity for proof; and had some of our "divines" happily taken it up, in proof of the immutability of the "Moral Law," they need not to have set up their chymical apparatus, to convert one thing into another, by attempting to prove, that the law given to angels, the law given to Adam, and the ten commandments, are all the same.

I may seem to be digressing, but you will not consider me as having lost sight of the point. You place the unconverted sinner under the Law of Nature. And why not place him, my dear sir, *under the whole of God's revealed will, according to the Dispensation under which he lives?* Thus I think, is perfectly consistent. Even the heathen are under the Law of Nature; (Rom. ch. i.) and wherever the New Dispensation comes, it lays hold of every human creature, with the grasp of divine authority, while it presents the exhibition of divine mercy. The *basis* of obligation is the same, in the benighted regions of paganism, and in the enlightened lands of christendon; but the *dispensation*, and the *particular obligations*, are certainly very different.

I might enlarge on this topic, but I consider it unnecessary: your own reflection no doubt will supply, or has supplied, whatever I might add by way of argument. A brief remark or two, however, I must beg leave to subjoin, in order to obviate misapprehensions, as to my own views of this matter of Old Testament and New Testament obligations. And first it appears perfectly scriptural and proper, to consider us under the New Dispensation, as still under *Divine law*, though not under "*The Law*," or the Legal Dispensation. The will of God, as exhibited under the New Covenant, so far as it consists of prohibitions and injunctions, is now his Law to us. Secondly, by this Law, or revealed will of God, (call it what we may,) unconverted sinners are certainly condemned; and by it, christians are to have their hearts and lives regulated. I only add, thirdly, that whatever is sanctioned, as of continued obligation, by the letter or spirit of the New Testament, is to be so received, wherever found;—whether in the Old Testament, or even as a dictate of nature.

Dismissing this point, I come now to notice one of deep interest, on which, in your answer to my first communication, it is but justice to say, you appear to have bestowed much attention. I allude to the subject of Divine influence, or the operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart of man. I feel confident that you wish me to be free and candid in my communications; and I certainly feel as confident, that without full liberty of this sort, I should find no satisfaction in communicating my thoughts at all. This is all the apology I deem necessary. Freely and candidly then, I must say, that while many things in your answer—and many incidental remarks, in reference to this very point, met my admiring approbation, I felt some degree of disappointment at the manner in which you considered it proper to shape your reply, in this particular case. Your reasons are; no doubt satisfactory to

yourself: perhaps they ought to be so to me to all. I have heard much said about your answer to *Paulinus*; for it has excited amongst us a high degree of attention. Some of your readers are satisfied; some are not. And though, upon a candid, careful, re-perusal of your letter, I think it justly due to you to say, *that you are an avowed friend to the Spirit's operations, in the production of genuine religion*, I must own that I could still wish, you had found in your heart to dispense with what I consider an over degree of scrupulosity, and to answer in a more *direct* manner. I certainly do not think of dictating to you; nor do I wish, by any means, that you should do violence to your own conscientious views of propriety: but I must think you carry your scruples on the subject of *theories* and *systems* to some excess. Permit to me state, as briefly as I can, my own views. By the way, I did wish to introduce, in this letter, some new subjects; or at least to take up some that were just touched on in my former communication: but I must say out what I have to say on the matters in hand, before I can attend to any others; and there will then, I doubt, be but little room left, without occupying too many of your pages.

Now, my dear sir, be it known to you, and to all whom it may concern, that I am as little disposed to advocate or favor the "art and mystery" of manufacturing theories and systems in religion, as almost any man—perhaps even, as brother Campbell himself. True it is, that I sometimes indulge my imagination in conjectures;—in attempting some little excursions in the unknown regions,—in the wide field of possibilities, &c. though I do not wander into so many *fields* as a certain D. D. whose sermon you reviewed; nor do I exhibit these conjectures as articles of faith. But these conjectures, I presume, are a different sort of thing from what you mean by *theories* in religion; and again I say, I am no advocate for the formation of mere theories; nor for the compiling of abstract truths: nor do I think that those laborious writers, who have attempted to manufacture a regular connected system of divinity from materials such as they could collect, have thereby advanced the cause of unadulterated religion. I say, a *regular, connected system*: for though I believe such a system does really exist with God;—that the golden chain is complete; yet it appears to be exhibited only in some of its parts; the connecting links being hidden in impenetrable, adorable darkness. The skill of man is thus baffled; and wherever a fond system-maker exhibits what he would call the whole golden chain, we shall find, upon examination, that he has only some of the parts—(perhaps, indeed, only some of those which are actually revealed,) joined, here and there, by a hempen cord, or an iron link of his own making .

I have no disposition, I assure you, to carry the fruits I may be enabled to gather from the tree of life. (the Bible,) to any *distillery*, Arminian or Calvinistic, to be run down into *alcohol*: I would rather take them in their own proper state. I do not con-

sider myself obliged either to be laced up in the *stays* of *John Calvin*, or to wear the *surtout* of *James Arminius*: I like better “the robe of righteousness—the garments of salvation,”—found in heaven’s wardrobe, ready made, and to be procured “without money and without price.”

This egotism, it is hoped, will be excused in the present case;—and so much with regard to theories and systems, shaped according to human skill. It is to be lamented, indeed, that systems, seem to please some professors of religion, more than the good news of salvation by Christ; and that they manifest more solicitude for the preservation of their beloved plans, than for the maintenance of vital and practical godliness. Touch every chord in the lyre of salvation;—they still remain listless, unmoved, till the darling notes be sounded to which their spirits are in unison. O for the time when divine truth—the *whole* of divine truth, shall be relished, as coming from God!—when the souls of professed christians, tuned by grace, shall respond to every declaration of the will of God;—now, with holy *fear*; now, with lively *hope*; now, with “*joy* unspeakable and full of glory;” and always, with obedient “*faith* that works by love.” This will not be till the Bible is taken, in good earnest, as the standard of faith and practice. O, sir, may God speed your efforts to call the people to this only standard! May He assist us to plant this standard, this milk-white banner, on the heights of Zion—no more to be insulted by the party-colored flags of Creeds and Confessions of Faith waving over it!

But after all that I have said, I am not so apprehensive—not so tremblingly alive” to the danger of theory and system, as to avoid the direct expression of a sentiment on any proposed subject in religion, where indeed I have a sentiment made up on such subject. And why, my dear sir, should we be thus apprehensive? Is there any inconsistency, any impropriety, in so expressing our sentiments? Surely I should think not: or else, as far as I can see, we might narrow the limits of our liberty this way, to one solitary, general, proposition or declaration—I *believe what the Bible teaches*.

My letter grows long, and I must condense;—must throw out some two or three paragraphs, which I had scribbled off to be transcribed. As I can conceive nothing improper in the simple expression of religious sentiments, so, (to go a step farther,) I see no harm, no injurious tendency, in distinguishing and arranging any scriptural topics, for the sake of bringing the authorities of the Bible to bear on them, and obtaining a more lucid view of the different subjects. But then, *be it well observed*, I would take all these matters simply as I find them in the scriptures;—not as mere abstract truths, but as having their adjuncts;—not as naked theories, but as practical lessons. I would not exhibit them as forming a system,—the connecting links of the different parts being here and there supplied from my own metaphysical reasonings; much less would I, do for the sake of any system, sacrifice

one part of divine truth to any favorite view of another part. Such are my thoughts in regard to theories and systems in religion. If now, while I think you rather in danger of fastidiousness on the one hand, you should consider me in any degree unguarded on the other, I should really wish to see the evil pointed out: for I again say, I am no friend to the "art and mystery" of system-making. And here I leave this matter: no doubt you will think it high time.

I have lately received my copy of the new translation of the New Testament,—a work which I think well calculated to aid the liberal-minded reader in his study of the sacred volume;—to relieve the mind on some passages which, in the common translation, appear difficult, if not unintelligible; to enlarge our comprehension of divine truth; and to confirm our belief, by bringing forward, (as every good translation does,) the same general representation of the sacred original. Of one or two of the *supplements* I stand in doubt; and, whether it be taste, or the effect of habit, or something better, I have now and then met with a new term which pleases me less than the old one. But as yet I have not given the whole book a perusal, and must be sparing of particular remarks. The four Gospels (or Testimonies) I had before read;—having in my possession Dr. Campbell's Translation, with his admirable Dissertations.

Before I leave this subject, and bid you adieu for the present, though I have occupied. I doubt, more than my share of room, I must take occasion just to say, how highly pleased I am with your "Prefaces" and "Hints to Readers," &c. and at the same time, how sorry I am to find *one particular sentence*, which to me appears to be *seriously wrong*. It is in the Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. "And here let it be noted, (you say,) that the justification by works, and that by faith, of which Paul speaks, and of which our systems speaks, are quite different things. To quote his words and apply them to our questions about faith and works, is illogical, inconclusive, and absurd."

On this point I can now say but little. The sentiment you have expressed in the general preface to the Epistles,—that we are to attend to the circumstances of the writer and the persons addressed, &c. is readily admitted to be correct and important: and that we are not to make every period a proverb, like one of Solomon's, &c. But then, dear sir, is it any thing uncommon, in epistolary communications, (especially in those of a *didactic* nature,) occasionally to express a truth, a maxim, a position, of *general* application? Certainly not, and to me it seem entirely clear, that the apostle has done so in the case above alluded to. While he assures the Jews that they could not be justified by the works of their law;—while he reminds the Ephesians, that it is "not by works, so that no one can boast;"—and while he remarks to Titus, that we are saved, "not on account of works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own mercy," &c.—am I not authorized to maintain the same truth, as of general ap-

plication? Surely I should think so. If I have misunderstood you, excuse me; and be persuaded, my dear sir, that the interest I take in your labors, is one powerful motive with me to remonstrate, wherever I have done so. I need not remind you, that according to our motto, "The Bible our Standard," I must adopt no man's views, however right in many things, where he appears to be in an error.

Believe me, with best wishes,

Yours in the Gospel of our common Lord,

PAULINUS.

P. S. I have just read the *Christian Baptist* for November: it combines entertainment and instruction. *Appropos!* Pray send me a copy of the publication by Messrs. Greggs, (which you have reviewed,) marking the price. We have among us some religious excitement, and additions have been made to the church.

\* \* \*

FOR THE "CHRISTIAN BAPTIST."

### EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION.

THERE are a few topics in our religion to which the writers of the New Testament have paid very particular regard. They are, 1st, The Messiahship of Jesus. 2d, The history of the Apostles. 3d, The right ordering of the primitive churches; and 4th, The history of the church general, or whole body of christians.

In making a selection of the sacred books, it was, therefore, with great propriety that the first place was assigned to that order of them which particularly respected the founder of our religion—Jesus.

With equal propriety the second place has been given to those books which speak of the second order of religious character, viz. the immediate followers of Jesus, or the twelve apostles, a general history of whose labors has been delivered to us by Luke in the Acts or Actions of the Apostles.

The epistles addressed to particular churches occupy the third place, and discourse generally upon the various relations subsisting between them and the Messiah, whose mission they had recognized; their obedience to him; their worship, discipline, order, &c.

While the Revelations, which furnish us with a prophetic account of christianity in the aggregate, from the days of the apostles till the end of the world, occupy the fourth place.

That the mission of Jesus, the history of his twelve apostles, the constitution of the primitive churches, and finally the fortunes of christianity in the aggregate, are therefore subjects of great and popular importance, cannot, I think, be reasonably doubted.

But after all, what would it profit me to understand all that the Revelations have said of the church general, what happiness should I derive from the most perfect acquaintance with what is written of the primitive institutions, or of the twelve apostles, or



even of Jesus himself, in all the scriptures generally, and in the four gospels in particular, unless at the same time I knew that I myself were individually and personally interested in the great salvation. This brings us precisely to what is vulgarly called "*experimental religion*," a phrase which, by the way, means nothing more than those personal proofs and evidences of our individual adoption into the family of God, which are to be found in the character of every genuine christian. Other topics may be great and of general importance; but if I have rightly defined the expression *experimental religion*, then it stands for something of more vital importance to my *present happiness* than all other matters—it stands for the personal evidences or may own individual election to eternal life. Beings of a different order may possess great knowledge of Jesus, of the twelve apostles; the primitive churches, and also of the body of Christ in general, but they can have no experimental religion, no personal proofs that they are individually interested in this salvation; therefore, they can derive no happiness from the belief and contemplation of those subjects. The Devil possibly has a more extensive acquaintance with those topics than the most enlightened christian; yet his knowledge must inevitably result in trembling, He has no experimental religion.

Will any man assert, then, that it is of small importance to be convinced that I am individually interested in the salvation of God? I presume that no christian would willingly be guilty of such temerity; and I hesitate not to aver that it is of supreme importance to me to be well informed on this grand point; therefore, it has pleased the Holy Spirit, besides those books written concerning Christ, his apostles, the particular churches, and the body general, to give us also another order of books written on this very topic. The *epistle general*, and especially the first of John's, is devoted to this subject, and details to us the various evidences by which we may know that we are "in him that is true;" that we are "now the sons of God," and "have eternal life." In fact, I fear not to hazard the opinion that the New Testament had been incomplete without something on the topic indicated by the *unsound phrase* "experimental religion." Something on this point, indeed, was necessary to keep a man from being imposed upon in regard to his own character, while, on the other hand, something seemed necessary to be said about the infidel or apostate, to keep a man from being imposed on in regard to the character of others. This has actually been done by Peter and Jude, who, in their general epistles, have spoken both of unbelievers and apostates. This topic, I presume, we must, by way of analogy, style *experimental infidelity!*

Thus we have in the New Testament, books which inform us of Jesus Christ, the apostles, the first churches, the church general, the character of the unbeliever, and finally the character of the true believer, or of the personal proofs of a man's adoption into the family of the Most High.

Experimental religion, then, (for I scorn to fight about the sound when we have agreed upon the sense)—experimental religion, I say, is one of those subjects which the Holy Spirit has shown to be of importance, inasmuch as he has condescended to discourse upon the christian graces and gifts which constitute what we call by this rotten phrase, “experimental religion.” In another paper I may, perhaps, enumerate some of those particular evidences by which the christian may know that he is a son of God; though I may just add here, that the scriptures informs us that, 1st, Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. 2d, Whosoever loveth, hath been begotten of God. 3d, That whosoever hath the hope of the gospel in him, is an heir of God; and finally, that all christians know that they have been begotten of God by the spirit which he has given them. Thus the faith, love, and hope of the gospel, with the gift of the Holy Spirit, are all proofs of our individual personal adoption.

PHILIP

\* \* \*

### EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I FIND the saints are yet in Babylon. Many, very many are conscious of it, and are desirous of coming out of her that they may not partake of her plagues. But they are beset with difficulties. They have lost not the copies of the law of their King, as did their types, the Jews in the literal Babylon; but they have lost the sense, or rather have been preached out of the sense of the law, and many are even preached out of their common sense. They are sensible of this. But this is not all. There are too many Sanballats and Tobiahs, and too few Nehemiahs and Ezras. The captives, too, are so much attached to the chains that bind them, and so much wedded to the manners of the Babylonians, their captivators, that they are, in many instances, unwilling to hazard the dangers and to encounter the reproaches incident to an attempt to return to Jerusalem. I labor incessantly to convince and to persuade the people who fear God, both out of the law, prophets, psalms, and apostolic writings, that such are their character and circumstances, and to induce them to return. It happens in this case as it did when the gospel was first promulged—some believe the things that are spoken, and some believe them not. The number of believers is, indeed very considerable. But when they think of repairing the breaches and rebuilding the temple, some Sanballat says. “Will we revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?” And, to scandalize them, some Tobiah adds his scoff, saying, “Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall!” However, many of the people “have a mind to work,” and the wall will be reared. Out of Babylon they will—they must come; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. And should we never see the day, we will die in the full assurance of faith that the saints will separate themselves from the strangers, and renounce allegiance to their spoilers and captivators. Many of those friendly to a return, are attempting to persuade their communi-

ties to arise in the mass and to march in one phalanx, and flatter themselves that they may succeed. However much we do desire such an event, we cannot reasonably expect it; for such an event never happened. No community, either political or religious, ever was reformed in the mass. No people ever, all at once, returned from any apostacy. Even when God's typical people were brought back out of Babylon, of the whole nation but forty two thousand three hundred and sixty at first returned.

I have been often interrogated on the subject of a model or a precedent for the restoration of the ancient order of things. Some seem to think that the New Testament ought to furnish an example of the sort, or some directions for the accomplishment of an object so important. It does, indeed, in some sense, though not in the way which some desire. It teaches us how Jews and Pagans were converted unto the faith, and how both people were consociated into one community. It teaches us upon what principles they became one, and for what ends and uses they maintained the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. It exhibits to us what they did in their congregations; but it does not, because it could not, afford a model of a people returning from a long and grievous apostacy. The christian communities had not then apostalized, and consequently no example of a return could be afforded. Until Rome was built there were no great roads leading thither, nor groups of people returning thence. For this reason the New Testament could not afford a model such as we want. But it foretells this apostacy; its rise, progress, and termination: it exhibits the thing in emblems, and in sacred symbols teaches us how to come out of THE MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT. It imperiously commands a return to Jerusalem; and, in general principles, ordains the way. If, then, we only remember whence we are fallen, we may reform. We may return unto the Lord. But it does more than all this. It not only minutely describes the apostacy, and characterize the *Man of Sin* and *Son of Perdition*; but it leads us, in the way of symbols, to understand where we are, and how to return. It tells us plainly that we may find, in the history of the Jews, our own history, and a remedy for all our grievances. To illustrate this point, I cannot do better than to present you the outlines of an oration delivered on this subject. It was the first time that I predicated a public speech on the writings of Nehemiah; and I must (as they say John Bunyan was wont to do) write down the discourse after it was pronounced, or give the items and outlines of an extemporaneous address:—

#### THE OUTLINES OF AN ORATION

*Predicated on the 4th and 6th chapters of Nehemiah, the 2d chapter of the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, and the 17th and 18th chapters of the Revelation.*

After reading the above portions of the sacred writings, a few general remarks were made on the character of the inspired books, and particularly on the peculiar method which God had

adopted in communicating instructions to men. The utility of the adoption of types, or emblems, in communicating instruction, was next exhibited. The natural world considered as a volume of natural types, and the sacred history of the Jewish people, a volume of spiritual types. After these introductory observations, the Jewish scriptures were examined on the subject of types. From this examination it was found—

1st. That there were persons and things originally designed as types; and also that persons and things not originally designed as types, were, in the New Testament, by the inspired commentators on the Old Testament, adopted as types, and used as such for the illustration of the christian doctrine. Of the former sort were the priests under the law, the altars, sacrifices, tabernacle, its vessels, the temple, &c. &c. Of the latter kind were Adam, the deluge, Sarai, Isaac, Hagar, Ishmael, &c. &c.

2d. By connecting the two Testaments, or the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, it was found that certain persons, in certain respects, were types or examples of Jesus Christ; that his being called the second Adam, a priest after the order of Melchise dec, a Mediator such as Moses, &c. &c. were proofs and illustrations that he was considered the antitype of many types. But this was not all. On the authority of the infallible commentators, *Paul*, it appeared that there were not only types of Christ in the Jewish scriptures, but that there were types of the christian people, their worship, and circumstances; and, indeed, that the history of the church was all found in type in the history of the Jews. In illustration and confirmation of this, the following particulars were notices:—

1. That all the same *names* which are in the christian scriptures appropriated to the christian assembly or church, were first appropriated to the Jewish people in the mass. Such were the terms *called, elected, redeemed, bought, purchased, ransomed, chosen, a peculiar people, a holy nation, a kingdom of priests, my people, my beloved, my children, spouse, bride, saved, &c. &c.*

2. That all the christian ordinances and worship were typified; such as the Lord's day, by *the morrow after the Sabbath*, when the first ripe sheaf was waved; christian immersion, by their being immersed once into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; their frequent eating the manna and drinking the water from the rock, an ensample or type of our participation of the emblems in the Lord's supper; their sprinkled altar, a type of our sprinkled consciences; their *loutron*, or laver, or bath for cleansing the priests, a type of our bath of regeneration; their first tabernacle, or holy place, a type of the christian church; their common priests, a type of christians: and their high priest a type of Jesus; their thank-offerings, of our praises; and their sin-offerings, of the sacrifice of our great High Priest. Incidents in their history were also shewn to be types of incidents in our history. Such as their being called out of Egypt; their receiving of a law afterwards; their journey through the wilderness; their river Jordan; their

promise of a rest in Canaan; their entrance into it; their city Jerusalem; their Mount Zion; their captivity in Babylon, and their deliverance thence. Other incidents were taken notice of, such as the rebellion of some of them; their falling in the wilderness; their judgements; their reformations; the special government under which they lived; the rewards and punishments. The authority of the christian apostles was adduced in support of these facts; such as Paul's comments in the 10th of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians; his letter to the Hebrews every where.

These remarks and illustrations were merely introductory to the portions of scripture read. We then proceeded to demonstrate the fact that the captivity of Israel was in all its prominent features a type of the present state of the christian world. This was proved,

1st. From the fact that Paul declares *twice* in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians that these things (which happened then) were *tupoi*, *types* unto us. Chap. x. 6. "Now these things have become *types* or examples to us" And verse 11. Now all these things happened unto them as *tupoi*, types or examples, and are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come."

2d. From the fact that John in the Revelation transfers the very name of the people or city of captivity of the Jews—I say, he transfers that name to the city of our captivity and to the state in which we are, and calls our spoilers and captivators *Babylon the Great*. There is a *spiritual* Sodom, Egypt, and Babylon. See Revelations, chapters xi. and xvii.

3d. From an analysis of the second chapter of the 2d Epistle to the Thessalonians. This led to an exposition of the more prominent features of the countenance of the *Man of Sin* and *Son of Perdition*. That he was not a political, but a politico-ecclesiastical personage, was shown from his sitting not on a civil tribunal, but in the temple of God, and from the term MYSTERY in capitals upon his forehead. That his impious assumption of the character of God consisted essentially in his claiming dominion over the faith or consciences of men, and a homage from men due to God alone.

In speaking of the Woman of Sin, viz. the *Mother of Harlots*, as well as of the Man of Sin, we did not confine neither him nor her to the walls of Papal Rome; but very briefly it was remarked, that although "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS" might live in the *great city*, yet her *daughters* had married and left her; in plain English, that every council ecclesiastic which assumed the right of dominion over the faith and conscience, and claimed titles of homage, such as REVEREND, &c. or any attribute of power or honor which belonged to God alone, was a legitimate descendant, daughter, or grand daughter of the woman on whose forehead was written, "MYSTERY; BABYLON THE GREAT, MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH," cautiously avoiding offence, as some of her progeny were present. I went on to demonstrate from our own experience and observation, inde-

pendent of the sacred testimonies; that we were now in Babylon. Waving all advantages which might have been derived from the time, and times, and the deviding of time; the three years and a half, the forty-two months, the 1260 days, the accordant emblems of 1260 years; their commencement and termination—waving a hundred minor evidences likewise of the fact, the attention of the audience was confined to *three* obvious proofs, via.—

1st The confusion of religion speech now existing, analogous to the confusion of speech at Babel, and the confounding or mixing the language of Canaan with the language of Ashdod during the captivity; our creeds, systems, sermons, and scholastic terms, mingled with some biblical terms, terminating in an almost general ignorance of the sacred writings, and an impossibility of understanding the holy oracles, were just noticed illustrative of the exact analogy between us and the Jews while in Babylon.

2d. The almost total deprivation of the consolations of the christian religion, apparent in our private capacities and in our public meetings, in our individual experience, and in our social interviews; the melancholy and gloom; the prayers and feelings of the religious, expressed in the 137th psalm in short, all the grand characteristics of our state, as respects the enjoyments of the religion we profess in its public institutions, and in its personal and family benefits, are exactly correspondent to the state of the Jews during their captivity. An appeal was here made to the experience and the prayers of the pious, predicated on the first six verses of the 137th psalm.

3d. The intercommunity with the world, the mingling of religion and politics, the alliance of church and state either in the European forms or by the more specious incorporations of these United States, the almost general conformity to the world in all its frivolities, in the gratification of all those appetites, passions, and propensities, purely animal, so common amongst christians; the great neglect, the very general neglect of the christian education of the youth, and the consequent irreligion and evil morals of many of the children of christian parents, are similar to the intermarriages between the Babylonians and the Israelites, and the almost universal assimilation of the children of those unauthorized marriages to the children of Chaldea. Thus, from the confusion of religious speech, the absence of the christian institutions and the enjoyments dependent on their observance, and the deterioration of christian morals by an almost exact conformity to the course of this world, being the antitypes of the confusion of the Hebrew language in Chaldea, the absence of the temple and its worship, and the amalgamation of the Hebrews and Babylonians by marriage and familiarity, was argued the fact that we are yet in Babylon agreeable to the scripture declarations and evidences before mentioned.

Having found ourselves in Babylon; having seen the almost exact agreement of the types and the antitypes, we were led to

inquire why the Jews were carried captive into Babylon, that we might in the analogy find a proof or evidence of the reasons assigned in the New Testament why christians are in spiritual Babylon. We found that the Jews had broken God's covenant with them as a nation, by which he had engaged to be their king and protector, and that in consequence he had permitted their temple to be burned, their city to be laid waste, their land to be turned into a desert, and themselves to be slaves to Pagan sovereigns. And so with the antitype. The christians departed from the new covenant. The threatenings declared by Jesus Christ to the seven congregations in Asia have been executed. The Lord Jesus has been disregarded as king, and his institutes forsaken. Other church covenants have been formed; other authorities have been acknowledged; other lawgivers have been obeyed, and other apostles than those sent by Jesus, have been enthroned in our hearts. Therefore are we in Babylon.

Their return is a type of ours, else the system of types is defective and fails of perfection. Cyrus made a proclamation: liberty was granted by the state in which they were enslaved. The civil powers now are relenting, and our government has given us the liberty and acknowledged our right to be governed in our consciences by the Great King. The proclamation by Cyrus was not more friendly to the return of the Jews to their own land and laws than is the constitution and laws of these United States. The time has arrived that the return should be commenced.

But how is it to be effected was next proposed. Both the doctrine of the types of the New Testament agree—

1st. The Jews confessed their sins. See Nehemiah ix. 6. They said, "O Lord, many years didst thou forbear our fathers, and testified against them, by the Spirit in thy prophets, (as he has to us by his Spirit in the apostles;) yet would they not give ear." "Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments and thy testimonies wherewith thou didst testify against them."

2d. But they did not only confess their sins. They personally reformed; they reformed their family discipline; they returned unto the Lord with all their heart.

3d. They gave the people the law in its original import.

4th. And they solemnly engaged, as a society, to walk in God's law which was given by their lawgiver, and "to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our God, and his judgements and his statutes." See Nehemiah x. 29. Let us go and do likewise, as respects our king, his laws, commandments and statutes.

We were then led to consider the parts of Nehemiah read, as typical of the difficulties, reproaches, and opposition which must be encountered by those who undertake to rebuild the city and the temple.

Such were the outlines of an oration designed to shew that the ancient order of things must be restored, and that the way is

marked out, not only in the apostolic writings and prophecies, but also fully exhibited in the typical people. These outlines you may consider and fill up at your leisure. But should you neglect this, remember the command of the Lord our King. "Come, out of her, my people, that ye may not be partakers of her sins, and that you may not receive of her plagues."

P. S. There was something said on the reasons why the Mother of Harlots had MYSTERY written on her forehead, which I have not room to give you at present.

Versailles, Ky. Dec 26, 1826.

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### ANECDOTE.

A FUNERAL Sermon was actually preached in Kentucky by one of the editors of a religious newspaper, for JEREMIAH BEAUCHAMP, the murderer of Col. Sharp, from these words, "*To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*" I am told the orthodox preacher labored hard to prove that *suicide* does not preclude a man from blessings of eternal life. This not only equals, but far surpasses the religion of the Parisians, who lately have introduced their *balls* with prayers and praises. Truly, we are a devout and orthodox people! I should add that the preacher believes in the final perseverance of the saints; and so do I, but not in the final perseverance of *sinner*s—*Ed.*

\* \* \*

### MOTHERS.

"IF any thing in life deserves to be considered as at once the exquisite bliss and pre-eminent duty of a mother, it is this—to watch the dawning disposition and capacity of a favorite child; to discover the earliest buds of thought; to feed with useful truth the inquisitiveness of a young and curious mind; to direct the eyes, yet unsullied with the waters of contrition, to a bounteous benefactor; to lift the little hand, yet unstained with vice, in prayer to their Father who is in heaven. But so it is: The child, as soon as it is released from the bondage of the nurse, and needs no longer a careful eye to look after its steps, and guard it from external injury, is too often surrendered to preceptors, some of whom are employed to polish the surface of the character and regulate the motions of the limbs, others to furnish the memory and accomplish the imagination, while religion gets admission as she can, sometimes in aid of authority, and sometimes in a Saturday's task, or a Sunday's peculiarity, but how rarely as a sentiment. Their little hearts are made to flutter with vanity, encouraged to pant with emulation, persuaded to contract with parsimony, allowed to glow with revenge, or reduced to absolute numbness by worldliness and cares, before they have ever felt a sentiment of devotion, or beat with a pulsation of sorrow for an offence, or gratitude for a benefit, in the presence of God."—*Buckminster.*



THE *Christian Baptist* continues to receive a considerable accession of respectable patrons, most of whom wish to obtain the work from its commencement. We regret that their demands cannot be but partially complied with, the first edition of the three first volumes being entirely exhausted. The fourth volume can still be had. Though not authorized what reply to make to those desirous of having the *whole* work; yet we venture to say, that if they exercise a due degree of patience they will be supplied, a *second* edition being now in the press. *The Printer.*

\* \* \*

IT is probable some of the communications in this number would have been replied to or commented on, had the editor been present when they were inserted. Should they require editorial attention, his remarks will appear in the next, or, it may be, in the April number. He is now on an excursion to the south-west. *Appropos:* This will account for the apparent neglect of the editor in not attending to some correspondents, who, not aware of his absence, expect immediate answers to their epistles

*Ibid.*

\* \* \*

AN Essay on the "*Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things*" is received, but came too late for this paper. It will appear in the next.

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*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

## A RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF THINGS.

No. XVII.

### PURITY OF SPEECH.

IF all christians "*spake the same things*" they would doubtless be of the same mind. Yes; but, says the philosopher, if they were all of one mind they would all speak the same things. Grant, then, that *speaking* the same things is the effect of *thinking* the same thing; and yet, perhaps it might be true that *speaking* the same things might, in its turn, be the cause of *thinking* the same things. For example; William and Mary thought the same things concerning John Calvin—they *spake* the same things

concerning him to their children and their sons and daughters thought the same things of him. This is true in the general.

It is no uncommon thing in the natural world for an effect to be the cause of another effect, and the last effect to be similar to its cause. For example; there is a chain of seven links. A person with a hammer strikes the first link. The motion of the first link is the effect of the stroke of the hammer; but the motion of the first link becomes the cause of the motion of the second, because of the impulse it gives it; and the motion of the second becomes the cause of the motion of the third, and so on to the end of the chain. In each of these effects, so far as they become causes, there is something similar to the first cause. Now it is much more obvious that, in the world of mind or thought, this similarity exists to a much greater degree than in the world of matter. The reason is, men cannot think but by words or signs. Words are but embodied thought, the external images or representatives of ideas. And who is there that has paid any attention to what passes in his own mind, who has not perceived that he cannot think without something to think about, and that the something about which he thinketh must either assume a name, or some sort of image in his mind, before his rational faculties can operate upon it; and moreover, that his powers of thinking while employed exercise themselves in every effort, either by terms, names, or symbols, expressive of their own acts and the results of their own acts? Now, as men think by means of symbols or terms, and cannot think without them, it must be obvious that speaking the same things and hearing the same things, though it might be alleged as the effect of thinking the same things, is more likely to become the cause of thinking the same things than any natural or mechanical effect can become the cause of a similar effect. This much we say for the employment of the speculative reader; but for the practical mind it is enough to know that speaking the same things is both rationally and scripturally proposed as the most sure and certain means of thinking the same things. On this view of the matter, I would predicate something of great consequence to the religious world. Perhaps I might find something in it of more real importance to all christians of every name, than all the fabled powers of the philosopher's stone, had they been real. Perhaps in this one view might be found the *only* practicable and alone-sufficient means of reconciling all the christian world, and of destroying all partyism and party feelings, with all their retinue and train of evils which have been more fatal to christian light and liberty than were all the evils which fell upon human bodies from the opening of Pandora's box, to the animal enjoyments of this world. But how shall we speak the same things relating to the christian religion? Never, indeed, while we add to, or subtract from the words which the Holy Spirit teacheth. Never, indeed, while we take those terms out of their scriptural connexions, and either transpose them in place, or confound them with terms not in the

book. If I am not greatly mistaken, (and I beg to be corrected if I am) the adding to, subtracting from, the transposition of, and mingling the terms of the Holy Spirit with those of human contrivance, is the only cause why all who love the same Saviour are disunited. Now every human creed in christendom, whether it be long or short, whether it be written or nuncupative, whether it be of "essentials or non-essentials," whether it be composed of five or fifty articles—either adds to, subtracts from, or transposes the words of inspiration, or mingles things of divine and human contrivance together. No such volume, no such articles can be *the form* or a form of sound words. Every creed is a new *mould* of doctrine, and into whatever mould metal is cast, when moulded it must assume the size and impress thereof. Let silver be cast into a French, Spanish, English, or American mould of the same size, but differently constructed; and although it is all the same metal, and of equal size, each crown, whether French, English, or Spanish, assumes a different stamp. Now the apostle Paul uses this figure, Rom. vi. xviii. (see the new translation,) "Ye have obeyed from the heart that mould of doctrine into which you were delivered," or cast. Now does not reason and experience teach us that if ten thousand pieces of coin were cast into the same mould they would bear the same impress. We have but one apostolic *mould of doctrine* in the world, and all the sons of men cannot construct a mould of doctrine like it. A human conscience cast into the mould of the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodistic, or Baptist creed, and a human conscience cast into the apostolic mould, all bear a different stamp. The Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodistic, Baptist, and Apostolic coin, not only wear a different date, but a different image and superscription. Martin Luther's head, John Calvin's head, John Wesley's head, John Gill's or Andrew Fuller's head is stamped upon each of them. Not only is the *Anno Domini* different, but the image or head is different on each. They may be all silver of equal purity for aught I know, till they are tried in the furnace; but they are not one, neither can they be in image, superscription, date, and other circumstances, and therefore cannot pass current in another country. Let them, however, be tried with fire, and melted down, and all cast into the apostolic mould, and they will come out with a new image and superscription, and pass current through all the empire of that head which is stamped upon them. The figure, I think, is the best in the world, and illustrates the whole matter. I am indebted for it to the Apostle Paul. He gave me the hint, and I am grateful for it.

Some of our Baptist friends here in Kentucky have tackled round, and thought of a new plan of making a mould to give no impress or stamp to the coin at all. They will have no image, superscription, or date upon it. They will have the coin to weigh so many grains or pennyweights, but without a stamp. A plan of this sort has been lately proposed by one of our good Doctors; but to the astonishment of all, the first coin that came out of

this new mould was inscribed with the number "*six hundred three score and six.*" Let him that hath understanding explain how this could be. But of this hereafter.

Let then, but one mould of doctrine be universally adopted, of standard weight, image, and superscription, and every christian will be one in every *visible* respect; and then, and not till then, will the kingdom be *visibly* one. There will be *one king, Dei gracia*, on every crown; and that crown, if of genuine metal, will pass current through all the king's dominions. It is admitted there may be some pewter, or brass pieces whitewashed; but the former will soon grow dim, and the latter, when rubbed a little, will shew a baser metal.

I may be asked, How does this correspond with speaking the same thing? I will tell you, it is but a figure illustrative of the same thing. The same image and superscription engraven in the mould, answers to the same things spoken in the ear and conveyed to the mind. The same impression will as made upon the mind as upon the metal. And did we all speak the same things we would be as visibly one as all the pieces of coin which have been cast into the same mould. I again repeat, *that this unity never can be obtained while any other creed than the sacred writings is known or regarded.* And here I invoke all the advocates of human creeds in the world:—

Gentlemen, or christians, whoever or whatever you be, I will consider your attempt to disprove this position a favor done to me and the christian world. None of you have ever yet attempted to shew how christians can be united on your principles. You have shewed often how they may be divided, and how each party may hold its own; but while you *pray* for the *visible unity* of the disciples, and advocate their visible disunity, we cannot understand you.

But to come to the illustration of how speaking the same things must necessarily issue in thinking the same things, or in the visible and real unity of all disciples on all those topics in which they ought to be united, I will select but one of the topics of capital importance on which there exists a diversity of sentiments. For example: *The relation existing between Jeusu Christ and his Father.* This is one of those topics on which men have philosophized most exuberantly, and on which they have multiplied words and divisions more than on any other subject of human contemplation Hence have arisen the Trinitarian, Arian, Semiarian, Sabellian, Unitarian, and Socinian hypotheses. It is impossible that all these can be true, and yet it is possible that they all may be false theories Now each of these theories has given rise to diction, phraseology, and style of speaking peculiar to itself. They do not all speak the same things of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But all who do speak the same things belong to one theory. Scripture words and sentences are quoted by each of the theorists, and to these words are added expositions and definitions

which give a peculiar direction to the words of the Holy Spirit. Some portions are considered by each theorist as peculiar favorable to his views, while others are not often quoted, and if quoted at all, are clogged with embarrassing explanations. Some of the words of the Holy Spirit are quoted with great pleasure and others with great reluctance. And why? Because the former are supposed more favorable to the theory than the latter. I have often seen with what pleasure the Arian dwells upon the words "*first born of every creature;*" "*the beginning of the creation of God.*" And how seldom, and with what reluctance, he quotes "*I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last;*" "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God" Again, the Socinian emphasizes with great force upon the words "*The man Christ Jesus;*" but never dwells with delight upon this sentence, "Who being in the form of God, did not think it robbery to be like God." The Trinitarian rejoices that "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and that these three are one;" that Jesus said, "I and my Father are one," &c. But seldom does he quote on this subject the texts on which the Arian and Socinian dwell with pleasure. Not one of them will quote with equal pleasure or readiness every thing said on this subject; and had they the liberty they would trim and *improve* the apostles' style to suit their respective theories. They would do, as I heard a preacher do this week, quote the scriptures thus; "if any come unto you and bring not the scriptures thus; "If any come unto you and bring not the doctrine of the absolute, unoriginated and infinite divinity, the doctrine of the eternal filiation and generation of Jesus Christ, receive him not into your house." They do not speak the same things of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Now, suppose that all these would abandon every word and sentence not found in the Bible on this subject, and without explanation, limitation, or enlargement, quote with equal pleasure and readiness, and apply on every suitable occasion, every word and sentence found in the volume, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; how long would divisions on this subject exist? *It would be impossible to perpetuate them on this plan.* I ask the world if it would not? But, says an objector, there would be as many opinions under any other phraseology as the present. This might be for the present generation, but they could not be perpetuated. And as to any injury a private opinion may do to the possessor, it could, on this principle, do none to society.

Again, could not men believe in, obey, love, fear, and rejoice in Jesus Christ as readily and to as great a degree by speaking and hearing all the words and sentences in the volume, as they now do in all the varieties of their new nomenclature. Let them then be cast into the same mould; that is, speak and hear the same things, and there would not be a Trinitarian, Arian, Semiarian, Unitarian, Socinian, or any thing else but a christian on this subject, or an infidel in the

world. It would be so on all other topics as on that instanced, if the same principle were to be adopted.

Men would, on this principle, learn to appreciate and love one another, and to estimate human character on the real standard of piety and moral rectitude. Unfeigned obedience to the Lord, guileless benevolence to all men, and pure christian affection to the household of faith, would be the principle of appreciation of human character. Not our wild reveries, our orthodox jargon, or our heterodox paradoxes would be of paramount importance. Never can this state be induced until a *pure speech* be restored—until the language of Canaan be spoken by all the seed of Abraham.

Our confessions of faith, our additions to, our subtractions from, our transpositions of, and our extractions out of the book of God, are all in open hostility to the restoration of a pure speech, and are all under the curse, and we are punished with famine and sterility on account of them. I have seen a confession of faith all in Bible terms, extracted and transposed, like putting the eyes and ears and tongue in the right hand. Now I object as much to a creed in Bible terms transposed and extracted, as I do to worshipping the Virgin Mary instead of Jesus the Messiah. The transposition of the terms or the extraction of sentences from their connexions is just as pernicious as any human innovation. Samples of this sort will be afforded at another time.

*No man is to be debarred the christian church who does not deny in word or in works the declarations of the Holy Spirit, and no man is to be received into the christian community because he expresses himself in a style or in terms not found in the christian books; which must be the case when a person is obliged to express himself in the corrupt speech or in the appropriated style of a sectarian creed in order to his admission.*

EDITOR.

\* \* \*

For the Christian Baptist.

### EXTRACTS FROM TASSEY'S VINDICATION

Of "*the supreme and exclusive authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in Religious Matters.*"

[CONTINUED.]

IT appears a matter of such vast importance, especially in the present corrupt and divided state of christianity, to have the sole and exclusive authority of our Lord Jesus Christ in religious matters fully vindicated, and re-established in the hearts and minds of his professing people; that every publication which has this for its object appears peculiarly worthy of public notice. And as this appears to be the grand object of the "Christian Baptist," I have supposed a few extracts from the work under consideration would not be unacceptable to its readers. Mr. T's sole object in his vindication, is to establish the all-sufficiency, and alone-sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, as a plain adequate expression of the divine will for the instruction and direction of the

people of God in all matters of faith and duty; to enforce the most strict and conscientious observance of them in all things for this purpose, and to obviate the interference of all human authority between the word of God and the consciences of his professing people. In the prosecution of this object it necessarily occurs not only to vindicate the independent and intrinsic sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures as a complete rule of faith and obedience, by arguments drawn from the character and declarations of their divine author;—by an induction of leading particulars respecting the faith and order of the church, its officers and ordinances, and the qualifications and duties of its members; but also to attack and obviate the high pretensions of assuming ecclesiastics, by vindicating the sacred text from the false constructions forced upon it in support of their pretended claims. This he does by shewing, in the first place, that the fixed and appropriate meaning of the term *church*, in the New Testament, when used in relation to the subjects of the Redeemer's kingdom, is either universal or particular, as noticed in my last. In the prosecution of this part of his plan, (page 94,) referring to apostolic times, he observes that, "in those days sectarianism had no existence, except as contemplated in prophetic vision. The amalgamation of christian communities into one solid, compact, and united body, by representation in ecclesiastical councils, was not then heard of. Such worldly compacts of self-seeking and self-interested spiritual rulers, endeavoring to promote their ambitious designs, had not, at this time, as afterwards, subverted the liberties and privileges of the children of God. The wisdom of ecclesiastical councils had not, as yet, occupied the place of the wisdom of the Lord Jesus; nor had scholastic or systematic divinity destroyed the simplicity of the doctrine of Christ. For otherwise do matters now appear. We must now have a system of government modelled upon the best establishments around us. We must have superior and inferior courts, legislative assemblies, and ecclesiastical judicatories. And what, at the best, makes but a bungling job of the whole of such systems, is, that the same assembly is this moment legislative, and anon judicative; not only is it the maker, but the executor of its own laws; thus opening a door for the most tyrannical exercise of power. It is well that our liberties, civil and religious, are guaranteed by wise and liberal institutions. Were it not for this, we should soon be furnished with the necessary appendages of all such ecclesiastical establishments to wit, inquisitorial racks and gibbets, the most convincing instruments ever used by ecclesiastical power. Matters, then, have mightily changed since apostolic times. The appellation *church*, from designating a few disciples associated together to sing praises to Jesus Christ" (and commemorate his death) "has come to signify a large and respectable body or sect of professing christians, once a year represented in general assembly, or in its convocation of bishops, usually convened to make laws to bind the consciences of their careless and submis-

sive adherents. Accordingly we have the Romish Church, the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church, the Baptist Church; and their natural associates in power," (the Romish Conclave) "the Convocation of Bishops, the General Assembly, the Methodist Conference, the Baptist Convention; a kind of phraseology to which the New Testament is a total stranger. Little did the first christians think that the body of Christ should ever be split up into such fragments and that its professed friends should become the rivals of earthly potentates in their thirst for splendor and power. Little did they suppose that the followers of Christ should so far lose sight of their Master's glory, as to become the mere dupes of a designing oligarchy, in promoting the prosperity of any particular sect or faction. Now that all this has come to pass, may be established from the most indubitable phraseology: what does such languages as the Baptist *interest*, the Methodist *interest*, the Presbyterian *interest*, indicate? Who does not perceive that the secret spring of action which this betrays, is the aggrandizement of a party? *This*, and often *this alone*, is the grand moving cause of all that fury, zeal, and seeming earnestness with which our peaceful hours of rest have been broken in upon, and grievously misspent. And, to promote and gain this mighty end, have been the cause of collecting together synods and other ecclesiastical councils, since the commencement of those extended corruptions, by which the churches' beauty has been defaced. But who is there so blind as not to see, that, in proportion as the aggrandizement of a sect is promoted, so is the glory of Christ injured; and, the cause of truth and righteousness, of heavenly peace, of christian love and unity, more pleasing than the splendid offerings of mighty conquerors, is immolated at the shrine of this insatiable love of party?"

"Oh! then, let us return to the simplicity and purity of ancient times, when the disciples of Jesus, in their associated capacity, or as individuals, acknowledged no authority, either delegated or assumed, but that of Jesus Christ; and when, in their church assemblies, they could carry into execution the laws of Jesus, without the aid of self-constituted courts, either to new model or explain them; or any human authority to give them *sanction!*"

"Once more, we observe, that the language of the sacred writers, when they come to refer to the local situations of the various churches, decidedly proves that they had no conception of a consolidated earthly church, either extended" (as embracing the whole population of a district or country, as the church of Scotland, &c.) "or representative" (by delegates or otherwise.) "When they refer to any circumscribed or limited situation, as a town or city, they, in all such cases, use the singular number, as the church at Ephesus, at Corinth, at Cenchrea, which was about two miles from Corinth,—evidently because there was no christian society in any of these places, but one, to which the designation *church* justly belonged. But when they come to



speak of a certain district of country, in which there was a number of such assemblies, they as invariably use the plural number; as, "The *churches* of Judea which are in Christ Jesus; the *churches* of the Gentiles; the *churches* of Macedonia; the *churches* of Galatia; the *seven churches* which are in Asia;" never the "*church* of Judea, of the Gentiles" (or the gentile *church*,) "of Macedonia, of Asia, or of Galatia." Now this phraseology proves that the word *church*, in the singular number, was so completely appropriated to a single congregation of Christ's disciples, and had become so universally the name by which such an assembly was distinguished, that nothing but local situation was necessary to subjoin to it in order to make it explicitly refer to a particular society; and, that it would have been an absolute abuse of language to have used it as the appropriate name of any differently constituted meeting. The word *congregation*, which, through custom, has become the appropriated name of an assembly of people in the habit of meeting to attend to the worship of God, might as properly be applied to a session, a presbytery, a synod, and a general assembly, as to apply the appellation *church* to any of these. But, were we to adopt this course, confusion and obscurity would be the consequence, and language would cease to be (an intelligible) medium of communicating our ideas. Were the word *congregation* to be indiscriminately applied to the meetings above noticed, then it could be the appropriated name of none of them; and we would be obliged to use it with such expletives as would prevent mistakes. In like manner, if the word *church* became the appropriated appellation, by which a worshipping assembly of the saints was distinguished; it follows, that it could never have become the appropriated designation by which any differently framed assembly could be represented. Nor could it ever be used in reference to a representative assembly of any description without the addition of such expletives; or, in such a connexion as would preclude misapprehension. But in none of the passages in which the appellation *church* occurs, where it is supposed to apply to a representative body, are there any expletives subjoined to intimate a change in the application of the word; nor is there any thing in the connexion which would indicate such a use of it, as shall afterwards more fully appear. If then, this is the fact; and if the word *church*, after all, will be found to mean, at one time, a kirk session, or consistory; at another, a synod, or provincial conference; and again, a general assembly convened in judicature; or a general conference in conclave assembled; and yet no intimation of any of these different meanings in the connexion; nor any expletive annexed to intimate the change must there not follow the utmost confusion and misapprehension? and would not every writer who would commit such blunders, be justly chargeable with darkening counsel by words without knowledge? Should he not be reprehended severely for his ambiguous and unmeaning phraseology? And is it so, that it remains to be

the province of the Holy Spirit alone, to write unintelligibly?—To use words, yea, appropriated names, in a variety of different meanings, without warning us of the change; or intimating the reason for such alteration from the fixed and determined meaning of such appellations! Far be it from any christian to think so improperly of the productions of inspiration;—to suppose that he ever meant to speak unintelligibly, or use language calculated rather to obscure, than to elucidate divine truth! Let us prefer charging the evil to its proper cause,—a disposition to make the scriptures quadrate with our respective systems. It is this that has affixed certain meanings to words, which the Spirit of God never intended them to convey. By this means men gratify their prejudices, and prop up those systems of religion to which they are attached, and give them the appearance of scriptural support; when the volume of inspiration directly discountenances and opposes every thing of the kind. So long, therefore, as we are to regard words as signs of our ideas, and the Divine Spirit sent to reveal to us every thing necessary for the proper management of his children, we ought to lay it down as a fixed principle, that when he speaks to us, he intends to be understood; and, consequently, that he uses words in their commonly acknowledged import.”

Thus our author justly reasons against the perversion and abuse of the language of inspiration, and points out the true cause of it, while rescuing and defending the term *church* from the forced and incoherent meanings imposed upon it, in support of an assumed authority to dictate in matters of religion. And having done this, (as I think he most evidently and irrefutably has, in the course of his investigation,) all rule and authority in the church of Christ, (except that of a single congregation with its proper officers, over its own proper members, in the execution of the laws already made and provided in the holy scriptures for the government of the church,) are for ever abolished. Consequently, every distinct worshipping assembly, or particular church, remains in full possession of all that power of complete self-government, with which the apostles left the primitive churches fully invested, after they had set in order amongst them the things that were wanting for this purpose.

In the course of his vindication, our author frequently refers to the modest assumption in behalf of synods and councils, recognized in the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter xxxi. section 3. and adverts to the only two passages of scripture therein quoted in support of it; without a formal reference to the Confession by a full quotation of the passage, which reads thus: “It belongeth to synods and councils ministerially to determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience; to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and government of the church; to receive complaints in cases of mal-administration, and authoritatively to determine the same; which decrees and determinations, if con-

sonant to the word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission; not only for their agreement with the word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in his word. Acts xv. 15-31. xvi. 4. Matth. xviii. 17-20. "These are the claims of the whole Presbyterian body on which they have continued to act, however otherwise divided in sentiment, from the year 1647 to the present day. Claims which justify the pretensions and acts of all synods and councils, from the council of Nice to the present day; for, according to them, and *they are the judges*, both the authority enacting, and the acts enacted, are according to the word of God. It is true, but rather unhappily for them, it is conceded, sect. 4. that "all synods or councils since the apostles' times, whether general or particular, may err, and many have erred: therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice, but to be used as a help in both." Eph. ii. 20. Acts xvii. 11. 1 Cor. ii. 5. 2 Cor. 1. 24. "Therefore, before we can warrantably receive their help, we must first help ourselves; and ascertain by our own research of the holy scriptures, whether those things, which they have determined, are so. A poor, uncertain, fallible help, indeed! And yet so invested with a divine authority, as to be an "ordinance of God!!" And which if we do resist, we are sure to receive present damnation!!! For who ever resistest the dogmas of such decreeing and enacting authority, without being cast out as heretics or schismatics, however unscriptural they might appear to the conscientious recusant? But this, it seems, has only been the case "since the apostles' times." Happy, then, yea, thrice happy, the christians that lived in the apostles' times, whose helps were infallible. Helps that might be depended upon with the utmost confidence. Helps worthy of God to give, and of his people to receive. And would it not be better still to rest in the helps thus supplied, than to have recourse to such miserable supplements,—such super refinements of "*rules and directions* for the *better* ordering of the public worship of God, and government of his church?" Have we not reason to fear, yea, is it not evident, that the rules and directions superadded to what the apostles left behind them, under the pretence of *the better ordering of things*, have had the very contrary tendency? Did not the apostles, by means of the faith and order establish by them in the churches, leave the christian communities in peace and love amongst themselves, and towards each other? But how is it now, after the *better orderings* and additional improvements of, at least, fifteen hundred years? Let the reader judge.

But to proceed: Our author not only evinces by a copious induction of evidence from the holy scriptures against the allegations of Dr. M'Leod and others, that the term *church* is never used in the singular to denote a plurality of assemblies in any place, united in a representative body, to regulate the concerns of its constituents; but also attacks and exposes the forced interpretations put upon Matthew xviii. 17. &c. and Acts xv. 15—

in support of such representation. The reader will please to recollect, that it is upon these two passages, as upon an impregnable foundation, that the whole colossian superstructure of synods and councils, their divine constitution and mighty powers are predicated, in the above cited article, from the Westminster Confession of Faith. They ought certainly, therefore, to be proof of the most obvious and decisive character, in order to support such high pretensions, such as vast assumption of power. But from what appears upon the face of the investigation before us, the former shrinks, nay, quite disappears at the first touch; and, considered as proof, goes rather to demolish than to support the superstructure founded upon it. For, as our author justly observes, the phrase, "*tell it to the church,*" in the above connexion, precludes for ever the possibility of appeal, inasmuch as the sentence of the church is decisive, being ratified in heaven. If we understand the word *church*, then, in its appropriated scriptural import, for a single congregation of saints stately meeting for religious purposes, a rejection of its decision admits of no appeal. And if we should understand it as Presbyterians do, to mean a kirk session, a presbytery, or a synod, to whichever of these the complaint is made, by its decision the matter is determined, being ratified in heaven; consequently to the defendant, or rather to the recusant, there remains no room for appeal, though he should think himself aggrieved. "Tell it to the church," then, is the third and last step in the process; however we may understand *the term*. "In the reasoning which we have followed up, says Mr. T. in reference to this quotation, we have taken it for granted, that some one of the courts specified, might have been intended. But—whether you call it a consistory, a session, a committee, a bishop's court, a synod, or conference, what you please, there is not the most distant allusion to any one of such constituted judicatories, whatever, in the passage. We would ask—What hinders the word *church* from being here understood in its usual and determined acceptation?"—"By what rule of sound criticism, says Professor Campbell, can we arbitrarily impose here on the word *church*, the signification of church representative, a signification which we do not find it bears in one other passage of scripture? To affirm, without proof, that this is the sense of it here, is taking for granted, the very point in dispute."\* "Let it first be shewed, that in the phraseology of the New Testament, the word *church* is applied to a representative body of any kind, and we will relinquish the point." &c. Our author next proceeds to investigate the claims in support of the representative system, founded on Acts xv. 15. &c. the other part of the foundation assumed in the Westminster Confession, in support of the divine right of synods and councils: the whole of which claims appear, in the course of the investigation, to receive as little countenance from this latter passage, as they did from the former.

\**Campbell's Lectures*, p. 164.

P. 124. "We shall now more particularly examine the 15th chapter of the Acts, which is supposed to present an example for the courts of appeal, and to which all the different denominations refer with confidence in support of their respective systems. To conceive, however, that this chapter lays a foundation for papal usurpation, and diocesan episcopacy, and classical presbytery, is perfectly absurd: yet this is the grand proof to which they all appeal in support of these different hierarchies. That this chapter lays no foundation for any one of the above systems, and especially for those courts of appeal, or ecclesiastical councils, for which it is so triumphantly quoted, we propose now to demonstrate. Mr. M'Leod informs us, that "we have in this chapter an authoritative decree, enacted by a representative assembly, exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction over churches and presbyteries." That it is an authoritative decree, we most readily admit; and who is there that denies it? But that this decree was enacted or ordained by a representative assembly, we refuse to acknowledge. The first argument by which he attempts to prove his position is this: "The apostles did not determine the question as inspired extraordinary teachers and rulers. When inspired they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. This excludes disputation. But about the question there was much disputation!" On reading this paragraph we were struck with astonishment—What! the apostles did not determine the question as inspired, extraordinary teachers!! For what then are these *uninspired* decrees placed in the *inspired* volume? Not determine the question as inspired extraordinary teachers!! Why then does the language of the decrees declare the contrary? "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things." What! this question not determined by inspiration, and yet "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost!!!" Oh! prejudice! oh! bigotry! what have ye done? Ye cease not to pervert the right ways of the Lord. Need we, then, endeavor to argue out these decrees to be an inspired document, when they are expressly so called by the inspired writer himself, and also by the unanimous voice of the apostles and elders, with the whole church, who preface their letter with this declaration?—Who can deny it, that believes the inspiration of the scriptures at all? This one fact, then, invalidates for ever any argument that can be drawn from it in favor of ecclesiastical councils and enactments. But we are told, "About this question there was much disputation, and inspiration excludes disputation." Be it so. Among whom did this much disputation take place? Was it among the apostles? No such thing. Not a symptom of this kind is noticed as happening between those inspired characters. On the contrary, the three of them that spake are in perfect accord in their views of the subject; as any person may see, who will take the trouble of examining the narrative. Nor does the circumstance of the apostle's arguing the point from the Old Testament scriptures, or

from the facts that had occurred under their own labors, alter the case respecting the inspiration of this document, more than the same course destroys the inspiration of the epistles, in which we find it pursued to great extent. This, therefore, was evidently an extraordinary meeting, because composed in part of inspired extraordinary men, who were competent to ordain inspired decrees, being authorized to do so by the Holy Ghost. Until, then, you can find a synod partly composed of such characters as are competent to enact decrees under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, as the above mentioned document was ordained, it is vain to plead this case as a precedent for ecclesiastical courts, or to talk of enacting authoritative rules of faith and manners for the disciples of Christ. The claims of the court of Rome, on this score, have some degree of consistency with them. It at once sets up for infallibility, and his Holiness tells you plainly, that he is the successor of Peter, and derives his authority immediately from Jesus Christ, whose vicar he is upon earth. But here are ecclesiastical courts claiming a right, authoritatively to enact laws for the people of God; to determine *articles of faith*, and resolve *cases of conscience*, and that, at the very time they are disclaiming every thing like infallibility.— We would ask, then, What is the difference between a Presbyterian synod or assembly, claiming to be the *successors* of the *apostles*, exercising their assumed power in the name, and by the authority of Jesus Christ; and his Holiness the Pope, claiming to be the *successor* of Peter, and exercising his assumed power in the name, and by the authority of Jesus Christ? For our part, we have a *number*, by whose combination they become the more dangerous.

Page 98. "But let us inquire more minutely into the materials of which this assembly was composed. Were they *ministers* and *elders* only? "Yes," says our author, "the assembly was composed of *presbyters*." "No," says the inspired writer, "for it pleased the apostles and elders, with the *whole* church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch." And again, "the apostles, and elders, *and brethren* send, greeting." Here, then, are two writers at issue upon this point; and the question simply is this, Shall we believe the assertion of Alexander M'Leod, because—? Or shall we believe the testimony of Luke, because he was inspired by the Holy Spirit?"

I shall close these extracts for the present with the following; see page 124:—"What, then, becomes of this *jure divino* system, or the *divine warrant* for ecclesiastical courts? Is there any *warrant* whatever contained in the inspired volume for such constituted courts? We reply unhesitatingly, that there is not, in any shape; neither directly, nor impliedly. That there is nothing "agreeable to *sound reasoning* from established truths,—nor from *approved example*,—nor sanctioned by *divine approbation*,—nor established by *divine acts*,—nor recommended by *directions from God*," to be found in favor of such a system; and,

consequently, that it cannot be of *divine right*, our author himself being judge."

Philalethes.

TO BE CONTINUED

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[*This following Reply to a second communication of "A Friend to Truth", which appeared in the "Western Luminary," some time since, was intended first to have appeared in that paper. The reason why not published in the Luminary, will probably be made known hereafter.—Print.]*

MR. SKILLMAN,

Dear Sir—IT is said you are a christian. I will, therefore, address you as if in truth you were one. I profess to be a christian, and will speak to you as I think a christian ought to speak. Christians have a right to use a liberty with each other, not common to all mankind. They may exhort, admonish, reprove, and entreat one another in a way in which the children of this world dare not. They are all born again, and from above, and have kindred feelings, desires, aims, and pursuits. They are children of one family, are all taught of God, and under the government of one Divine King. They are mutually bound to be subject to the same laws, and to watch over one another. They sometimes err. Hence arise the obligations of reciprocal care for each other's good.

You published, about three months ago, a communication injurious to my moral and religious character. You saw my refutation thereof six or seven weeks ago. You promised, from a sense of justice no doubt, to publish my refutation a week after you saw it. But you did not meet your engagements, because it is presumed the author, or authors of the slander, had not their rejoinder ready. Dare you not let my reply appear as soon as you saw it, or as soon as you promised it? Were you afraid to let your readers see it, unpreceded by a second publication of the slander, and unsucceeded by a long rejoinder: lest they should be in danger of being convinced? There is either cowardice or injustice apparent in this thing; but which, I will not say; or whether either, until you vindicate yourself. If the sun ought not to down upon a christian's anger, it ought not to rise and set for forty days on the columns of slander and evil report uncontradicted, when the refutation is in possession of the publisher. It is true you informed us you expected an addition of subscribers to your paper; and that you would ultimately have the pleasure of publishing more generally my refutation. But, sir, in gaining power you lost time; and one great act of kindness not always compensate for two wrongs. Now I exhort you to do no more. Be never ready to take up an evil report against your neighbor; and should it get into circulation, be ever ready to put it down.

But now to the rejoinder of your "Friend to Truth." He has tried to escape through the back door which I mentioned in my refutation he had left open for himself. He contends he said

no harm of me, nor of the New Testament; nor did he intend to praise, or blame, or criticise the work, but merely to correct a false impression on the public mind, that prevailed among many. This is, I grant, what he *professed* to do; but, in *reality*, he made a false impression upon the public mind, and most grievously slandered me. He brings the foulest charge ever mortal man brought against me. Now for the proof. His own words are, "Ho" (viz. myself) "was anxious to furnish the public with a gospel shaped exactly to his own views." Now, Mr. Skillman, I ask you what more grievous charge could you conceive of, than to accuse a professed christian of wilfully, designedly, "*anxiously*" imposing upon the christian public a book, purporting to be a correct translation of the New Testament, "shaped exactly to his own views," and in which he makes the Spirit of God speak to suit himself, regardless, of the true meaning thereof? It is a crime above all forgery, interpolation, and perversion, known in human affairs. If this be done without a shadow of proof, without a single specification, is it not slander of the highest character? I leave this question with you, sir, and the public. But the fact that I am so accused without a single specification in proof thereof, is manifest from the two pieces published in your paper over the signature "*Friend to Truth.*"

I must not feel slandered nor injured by such an allegation; nor must I defend myself from it, unless I renounce all christian character!!! So this gentleman insinuates. It would be impolite and unchristian in me to plead not guilty. I have not so learned Christ. I have plead not guilty, and this pious and just lover of truth has written again And what has he said?—

1st. That he is not Dr Blythe.

2d. That he "*brought no charge against me*"

3d. He acknowledges that he made one false representation on Acts xx. 28.

4th He attacks Griesbach.

5th. He proves me a Unitarian.

6th. He demands of me the proof, or to say that I am a Unitarian. And,

7th. He then charges me only with "fast winging my way towards the cold regions of Unitarianism." He then prays for me. The whole farce is then complete.

On these points I must of course say something. He says I "attribute his piece to Dr. Blythe." No where is this said in my reply. He then drags into view an interview I once had with Dr. Blythe of which he gives a one-sided and incorrect representation. I feel not one unkind emotion towards Dr. Blythe. It is true he acted unkindly, and, I think, an unchristian part towards me. In the fall of 1824, when I was in the neighborhood of his congregation, as I was correctly informed, he commanded his people not to go hear me, telling them I "*was a very bad man and he could prove it.*" This was obviously an attack upon my moral and religious character. I called upon him for an explanation,



and his reasons for accusing me. I told him what I had heard. He did not deny having said so. I called on him for the proof. He said he knew nothing about or against my moral character, and that he did not mean my moral character; but that he considered me *erroneous*. I said the people did not so understand his accusation, and that the term "bad" always related to moral character, and that if he had said an *erroneous* man I should never have inquired after it. I also added, that a person acquainted with the meaning of words could not use the term *bad* as synonymous with *erroneous*. He again repeated as above, and thus retracted or explained away the import of his accusation. He then told he pitied me. I replied, I also pitied him. He added, that I was laboring to pull down the kingdom of the clergy, and that he was determined to build it up. As to any challenge I gave him to "a debate before the sovereign people," I am not conscious; but Col. Drake will, no doubt, remember whether or not; and as he heard my conversation with the Doctor, I appeal to him whether the above is not correct. This is Mr. Friend Truth's first proof that the New Testament is not faithfully published.

In the next place this good man reminds his readers that his sole object in his piece, was, "to correct false impressions that prevailed among many with regard to the New Testament." But we have no evidence that any "false impressions" existed but the word of an anonymous scribe. And no man could have any such impression as he describes, who had read the work; as every thing is plainly stated both in the prefaces and appendix. So that his effort was altogether gratuitous, and uncalled for. And he admits he had never seen the prospectus; consequently, could say nothing about my fidelity in the matter. This is his second argument to prove the translation unfaithful.

On the subject of baptism, he had said that "the alterations were upwards of eighty," and complains of my saying that this was telling *eighty lies in one truth*. This, I own, as he understands it, was quite as impolite as it was for Paul to say that the "Cretans are always *liars*," or as it was for John to say, that "he is a liar who says he knows God, and does not keep his commandments." But he is too sanguine when he thinks that I admit he tells *one truth* in this matter. For, should a schoolboy say he had seen *eighty pigeons*, when he only saw *one* eighty times, I would not allow that he had told one truth in his whole story. And the young student of which he speaks, and of whom he read in the *spellingbook*, who made *three* chickens out of *two*, reflects on himself, and not on me, if he had the sense to see it. It suited his conduct—not mine. He next passes by with a sneer the fact that Doctors Campbell and Macknight authorized every thing said on baptism in the whole work. Three facts are stated in my reply, shewing that there is not in *reality* one alteration on the subject of baptism, in the whole eighty; and, Mr. Skillman, take notice, he does not attack one of the three. I demand of him a *refutation*, if he can, of these three facts. All that he can say,

these three unassailed, is only *making* instead of *removing* "false impressions." Thus we dispose of his "more than eighty alterations," or his third argument to remove false impressions.

He next tells us that Griesbach divided the collated manuscripts into three classes, and, "if he mistakes not, changed the reading" of *God* into *Lord* (Acts xx. 28.) "on the authority of a *very few*." As he appears afraid of committing himself here, we shall advise him to inform himself better before he next writes, and request him to give the names of the manuscripts upon the authority of which the reading is preferred, and then we shall see whether they are of more weight than the very many on the other side. But here he gives up the point about my making a false impression, and also passes by without a single remark the testimony of Ireneus and the Syriac version. He also fails to charge Griesbach with Unitarianism, and Michaelis with Socinianism, which he ought to have done. He also studiously avoids telling us how the reading *Lord* instead of *God*, destroys the divinity of Jesus. Until this is done, it is all a mere puff of noisy breath. I assert that Griesbach's Greek Testament is the most correct text in christendom—and this at least is a fair and full balance to all his assertions on Nolan. So goes his *fourth* argument.

His fifth argument is, that I am *almost* a Unitarian, and sorry is he that the evidence is not stronger. But this he is at great pains to prove. His first proof of this tremendous charge is, that "*Christian Union*" was Dr. Fishback, and "*Aquila*" was Barton W. Stone; and that I persuaded Dr. Fishback, and B. W. Stone that there was no difference between them on the subject of worshipping Jesus. But, unfortunately for his conclusion, the premises are *false*: for B. W. Stone never wrote one sentence in the *Christian Baptist* over any signature whatever. *Six transit gloria mundi.*" His "*good reason*" to the contrary notwithstanding. His second reason why I am a *Unitarian*, is, because I told a correspondent from Missouri that I was not a *Socinian*. Because I am not a *Socinian*, therefore, I must be a *Unitarian*. This is second logic. He believes me sometimes. Well now, I will tell him that I am neither an *Arian*, nor *Unitarian* nor *Sabellian*. *Query*—Will he now believe that I am none of these, upon the same evidence on which he believes I am not a *Socinian*?

Third proof of my *Unitarianism*—I quote the Reformer. Now I never heard nor understood that the Reformer was a *Unitarian*, nor did I ever hear him so charged. But if he be, will my quoting him on historical matters, or any other, not on the doctrine of Jesus, prove me a *Unitarian*. If so, then every one is a *Deist* who quotes Hume or Gibbon; every one that quotes Dr. Blythe is a *Presbyterian*, and every one that quotes John Wesley is a *Methodist*. A fine critic on the New Testament truly!!!

His fourth proof is, that I sympathized with the rulers of Transylvania University when persecuted by *the righteous*. I pitied the *goats* when the *sheep* butted them prodigiously. Yes,

I pitied the goats' *horns* when red with the blood of the sheep. And if a Protestant should knock out the brains of a Papist, and I should be so unfortunate as pity the Papist, I must then turn Catholic, and worship the host. Admirable translator!! Profound interpreter!!! *Steel* and lead might as soon elicit a spark of fire, as thy genius prove me a Unitarian. I never sympathized with the religious opinions of any ruler of the Transylvania University; for I never knew that they gave themselves nor the public much concern about supernatural religion of any sort; but I confess that I thought it unadvisable that the Presbyterians should control every fountain of literature in the West; and unreasonable that a *state* institution should become a *sectarian* school. After thus proving me to be a Unitarian, he asks me to say whether or not I am, by writing certain phrases which he has the goodness to prescribe, only attaching to them, without mental reservation, the orthodox sense. I see he thinks me conscientious! Well now, should I conscientiously avow that I am not a Unitarian, Socinian, Arian, Semiarian, or Sabellian, I wonder whether he would believe me. We shall try. If he does not, then my using his *test* words would be of no use; for, then, I spake feignedly. Strange case, indeed! I am accused of being, or leaning to a Unitarian, and not one sentiment or sentence in all my writings or public speeches adduced in proof. I am accused of making a New Testament to suit my gospel; and yet my accuser does not say what my gospel is, nor does he say that I have perverted one single word to favor it—Yes, he has. Has he not censured the word *Lord* instead of *God*? But has he accused Griesbach, Ireneus, and Syriac version, and many others, of having gospels of their own to foist upon the public?—No. Has he accused them of Socinianism or Unitarianism?—No. If, then, this "*alternation*," himself being judge, does not prove them interpolators and heretics, how can it criminate me!!! But, sir, is it not passing strange, that, of all the texts that speak of "the supreme deity of Jesus" in the whole *New Testament*, *he has not found one against which to except in the new translation, save this one!* and even this one he does not presume to *shew* to be Unitarian. Is it so that he has not another one in all the book to place along side of it. Surely, then, the new translation is most unexceptionable on this subject for more than *twenty* have been excepted to in the common version on this account, by Calvinistic writers, as I can prove.

I do charge him with the slander in this instance; and I call upon him to shew that there is any gospel other than the apostolic supported in the new version. I have often given my reasons why I object to expressing myself in any creed language upon any article of the christian religion. See also an essay on purity of speech, in the February No. of the Christian Baptist, on this very topic.\* I do believe that Jesus the Saviour is the

\*The Essay referred to was received at too late a date for the February No. It will be found in this.—Print.

*Word made flesh*: that this Word was “in the beginning with God, and that this Word was God.” I do believe and teach that he is “the Alpha and the Omega—the First and the Last.” I believe that “although he *was rich*, and thought it not a robbery to be like God, yet he made himself poor,” and ten thousand persons are witnesses that I pray to him and teach others to pray to him, and to worship him with all their hearts, without reservation or equivocation. If this be a proof of Unitarianism or Arianism, I may be accused; but otherwise no man can accuse me without being guilty of slander. But I will speak of him in Bible terms, and in the words which the Holy Spirit teacheth, and not in the language of Ashdod. I do so on all other topics equally with this. But, like a true son of a sect, this anonymous slanderer first orders me to be scourged, and then asks me what I have done. He first accuses me of the basest crime, and then, unable to convict me of it, he *adjures* me to say, am I not guilty. He condemns me and then calls for the evidence. But I defy him to prove his charge, and to prove from the new version that I have not faithfully done every thing proposed to be done in the work. In his last piece he has, indeed, not even adverted to the essential parts of my former reply. He has not made a single objection to the 15th and 16th paragraphs of my reply, nor a single remark, that I can see, on them; and these unassailed, he has conceded every point of importance.

He thanks me not for having given this translation to the public, but snarls at the idea of its being imprisoned, because two or three *clergymen* in the state have the whole work, and perhaps not more than *three* men in the whole state have *all the three works*, which I have given in one volume. Many of them may have one of the *three*, some *two*, but very few indeed have the whole; and should not the “*laity*” have the work as well as the *clergy*? *I gave it to them*—and he will take it from them. I can prove, as soon as he gives his name, if I am not greatly mistaken, that he has actually took home to his own house the work from some of his lay brethren, first telling them its faults and then *accepting* of it as a *present*. His name, in full, will decide this point. But with all he says about the clergy having these works, I am told he had to ride to Winchester to a circulating library to get a peep into Doddridge on Acts xx. 28. that he might make out his case.

He request me to publish his rejoinder. My rules require his name when a request of this sort is made. Let him publish his name, and I will publish them from Dan to Beersheba.

Mr. Skillman, as a christian I can have no object but truth. I am not afraid to avow my sentiments on any subject. I am obliged to you for your last extract from the Christian Baptist; but cannot thank you for the *head* you made for it. But your *head* and my *body* will not make one man. I court investigation, special and strict investigation of the new version. I thank all for their criticisms, but none for their slanders. I feel able to de-

fend the work against all opposition, and will think so until I am tried. You will publish this, I trust, as soon as you see it, especially as you have published the slanders of your friend *twice*, and tacked his rejoinder to the heels of my reply. You will excuse this hasty scroll, as your paper was received by me after night, on the 6th inst. at Louisville, am now starting to Indiana, and cannot transcribe my Monday morning's lucubrations. Your honest friend,

A. CAMPBELL.

Louisville, January 8, 1827.

\* \* \*

### ANECDOTE.

A SCOTCH blacksmith being asked the meaning of *metaphysics*, explained it as follows:—"When the party who listens dinna ken what the party who speaks means, and the party who speaks dinna ken what he means himself—that is metaphysics."

\* \* \*

No. 9—Vol. IV] BUFFALOE, B. C. VA. April 2. 1827. [Whole No. 45

*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

THROUGH the watchful care and supporting hand of the Father of Mercies, we have returned in safety from a tour in the states of Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Tennessee, occupying a period of four months. On this tour I had the pleasure not only of visiting my old friends and acquaintances, but of adding many new ones to the number. To this pleasure, however, was annexed the pain of parting. For, to the uncertainty of meeting again in this pilgrimage, was added the uncertainty, in some instances at least, of meeting in the assurance of meeting many of our friends in that blessed state where there is no more separation, it must be acknowledged that there are some personally attached to us, and we to them, from various reasons, concerning whose eternal life we can entertain but a very slender hope. It is, perhaps, natural; but so it is, that while we exercise benevolence towards all mankind, we more ardently desire the salvation of some than of others. Hence it is, that on our list of friends there are some of whose salvation we are not always sanguine; yet, from their social and merely human virtues, we feel compelled, with more than ordinary zeal, to exclaim, *Would to God that they were not only almost, but altogether christians!*" The Saviour once looked upon and loved a young man of extra-

ordinary virtue, who, with a sad and sorrowful heart, bade him adieu. He was almost, but not altogether a disciple. There are, perhaps, few christians unacquainted with the feelings and views to which we allude. There is no doubt but that the Saviour of the world, his apostles, and the christians of the primitive age, had many friends who never became obedient to the faith. But this is a subject on which we can neither think nor write with pleasure. We shall therefore dismiss it with the expression of a wish that none may construe attachments or friendships, based on considerations merely human, into an affectionate regard for the Saviour and his disciples.

We added much to our knowledge of men and things religious, and returned home richly laden with materials for public edification. These materials have been quarried out of the actual condition of things in the religious world, and will require but little skill to adjust to advantage. We got into the cabinet of the popular systems, and into the *sancta sanctorum* of the religious world. At these we had but peeped before, but now have looked full in the face the sacred effigies which fell down from Jupiter. We are often wont to conclude that from a few samples we know the whole, and that from a short acquaintance we know the man. Of the fallacy of such conclusions we have frequent proofs, but yet we are reluctant to suspect that we may be wrong. I would not raise expectation too high, nor give occasion to retort—

*“Returning from his finish’d tour,*

*“Grown ten times perter than before;”*

but I would say that I think I am better qualified to speak to the religious world on the subjects to which I have been calling its attention, than before. I have been questioned and cross-questioned a thousand times on a thousand topics; I have heard religious experiences, religious doubts; histories of conversions and relapses; of family religion, of family discipline, of christian congregations, of councils, conferences, and synods, of debates and strifes, of revivals and declensions, of persecutions and triumphs, of religious wars and commotions—so numerous and diversified, so ordinary and extraordinary, that I think little can be added to give variety to the religious scenery which I now have in retrospect.

If undissembled piety yet exists on earth, I have seen it; if christian friendship or brotherly love have yet their abode on earth, I have sojourned with them: if intelligent zeal and active philanthropy yet warm a human heart, or animate a human tongue, we have heard their eloquence and felt their power. And if there can be seen a dreary waste of frigid speculations; if there be on earth a barren desert of withered forms and parched ceremonies; if there be a valley of dry bones and lifeless skulls, strewed with the spoils of death, we have traversed it through. If there be superstition, delusion, enthusiasm, scepticism infidelity, or atheism yet alive, we have conversed with them.

Of the teachers of what is called religion, we have had a very full example. From the allegorizer, who preaches Christ and his church out of every verse of the Song of Solomon; from the mystic, who finds the whole plan of salvation in Paul's shipwreck and escape on Malta; from the inspired enthusiasts, who tells of dreams and visions, of extacies and revelations all the day; from the drivelling paraphrast to the verbose and soporiferous commentator, we have had a perfect example. But on the other hand, we have also been conversant with the sapient doctors of biblical criticism, the shrewd and convincing reasoners upon the law and the testimony; the profound interpreters of scholastic theology; the eloquent declaimers against vice and immorality; the dispassionate and frigid metaphysician; the practical preacher, and the erudite bishop. But what is worthy of notice and still more of remembrance, we have heard some commend the life they will not lead, and approve the course they will not follow; who

*"See the better way and approve it too,*

*"Detest the worse, and still the worse pursue."*

Of the influence of these teachers there is every where illustrious demonstrations. Here is a congregation all on fire, and there another cold as Boreas. Here there is one intelligent and liberal; there another ignorant and bigoted. Here they are all intent on mysteries, and there on their interpretation. In one congregation it is all doctrine; in another, all practice. In a few the supreme question is, *"Lord, what wilt thou have us to do?"* but in many it is in effect what is most fashionable?

Religious sects do not bound and limit these diversities, but they exist in all. We mingled with all, conversed with all, and found in all pretty much the same varieties. A few differences in opinion do not always, indeed very seldom, make a visible difference in the exterior or interior items of a profession. The Baptist and the Paido Baptist, the New Light and the Old Light in the same latitudes vegetate alike. They wear different regimentals, rally round different standards. and flight under different captains; but neither the flag nor the cockade makes a difference in the soldiers. One is heroic and daring; another dastardly and timid under any insignia. As of nations it was once said, of sects it may now be said, *"In every one he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him."* And will not the sprinkled which by nature keep the precepts of our Lawgiver, judge thee a transgressor, though immersed, who boast in your immersion, and keep not the commandments of your King?

The two greatest evils we have to deplore, because pregnant with the greatest evils to mankind in general, are the manifest want of congregational and family discipline. The easy terms on which many are admitted into christian communities, and the little attention paid to their after behaviour; the great zeal manifested for the acknowledgment of the party *shibboleths*, and the little concern expressed for the good works of christians, have

almost defaced the landmarks which bound the plantations of nature and of grace. The decent moralist without, and the precise professor within, the pale of christian society, are, in the main one and the same character. And when the question is asked, *What do you more than others?* It is answered by comparing the best in the church with the worst out of it—a mode of reasoning the most sophistical in the world. It should have been by comparing the worst in the church with the most respectable deistical moralist, and not by demanding all the boot between the decent sceptic and the extravagant debauchee, or licentious rake, to make the odds between the christian and the unregenerate. But thus it is that many upon themselves and one another. They are content to say that they differ from others, inasmuch as they frequent not the ballroom, nor the theatre, nor the haunts of dissipation. To this add, that the reins of congregational discipline are held in such an enfeebled hand, that a group of the most motley character is held together whithersoever the impetuous of passion, sense or appetite guide the way. Though this is not universal, it is a very general in all parties. The restraints of christian doctrine are relaxed by the artificial or rather mechanical restraints of wayward creeds, and an agreement in “*essential*” *opinions*, covers a multitude of actual aberations from the morality of the Lord Jesus.

The most generally true and correct report of the Baptist churches which could be given is as follows:—Four congregations or churches are under the pastoral care of one shepherd. He visits them every fourth Saturday and Sunday. In their church capacity they meet once-a-month. They meet at 12 on Saturday, and after organizing themselves by prayer and the appointment of a moderator for the day, business is called up. If there be no “business” on the docket an effort is made to create some, lest they should be idle. The business generally consists in hearing the experiences of candidates for baptism, should any offer. Each member becomes a juror, and when the candidate tells his story a verdict is agreed on according to the nature of the case. If a favorable opinion of the candidate is entertained, he is ordered to be baptized; and this matter disposed of nothing remains but to hear a sermon, or to quote the 18th of Matthew over some case of discipline. The *first* day of the week, commonly called *Sunday*, is occupied in singing a few stanzas of something called hymms, which in general are the metrified articles of the creed of the church. Next comes a prayer, or the hymn turned into prose; that is, the opinions of the brethren dressed up in the form of prayer; and then comes the sermon, in which one drop of wine is turned into a gallon of water. By this miracle the faith, that is the *opinions* of the brethren is strengthened, and sometimes their heads become dizzy with the sound, or rather effervescence of the distillation, or decomposition of the concrete material. Speculations are sung and then prayed, and then preached and then sung, and then prayed and then blessed. And after being



thus fed and feasted the brethren go home for one month to ruminate and digest this hearty meal. Thus the lambs are fed, and the sheep feasted. As to the children at home, the little kids are playing about the shepherds' tents, or nipping the blossoms on the hills. It is altogether left to Heaven when and how to convert them. It is a work of sovereign grace which no education can accelerate or retard. So sovereign are the conversions and so supernatural, that there is as good a *chance* in the playhouse as in the chapel. A minute acquaintance with novels and romances is as well adapted to conversion as the historical books of the Old and New Testaments. The great concern about the children is, that they may be rich and honorable in this world; that they may be able to control a great many pounds of bread and beef, and to dispense it with a good grace. Thus their minds grow up a great moral waste in which grow exuberantly the corrupt passions and appetites of nature.

This is not too highly colored for the *present* order of things on a general view; but we rejoice to know that there are many individual and some congregational exceptions. But when we describe things in the aggregate we speak of them as becometh their more general features. A great majority of the families I visited to attend to family religion and to the religious instruction of their children, and some of them to the religious instruction of their servants. But on all hands I heard of, and in some instances I saw, "christian parents" in whose house the melody of praise and the voice of prayer is seldom heard, except when a preacher calls. Neither is it uncommon to find a whole family reared and married and not a professor among them!! Yet in the polite circle & amongst the honorable cits, none are more conspicuous than they. Were time *eternity*—this life *eternal*—this world *heaven* and all things here *immutable*, reason and religion would unite in teaching us to devote our whole souls to the objects around us; but as we do not profess to think so, such christians are the greatest paradoxes in the universe. These remarks proceed from benevolence, and are designed not to flatter the wayward—not to allure the unsuspecting—not to conceal our shame—not to reproch the upright—not to palliate the forward—not to countenance the latitudinarians—nor to compliment the orthodox; but to warn, admonish, to reprove, confute and commend, when it is due. It is not he that commendeth himself who is approved, but him the Lord commendeth. . .

EDITOR.

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## A RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF THINGS.

No. XVIII.

THE present general order of things is exhibited in miniature in the preceding remarks. There are many who advocate the present order of things—not, we hope, the effects of that order, but the system of things which legitimately issues in these re-

sults. They are, to say the least, false reasoners, or fallacious philosophers. They do not assign to effects their proper causes, or to causes their proper results. True philosophy consists in assigning effects to their true causes; false philosophy, in assigning effects to other causes than their own. We have often heard much of how the Lord has blessed the present order of things by the numerous converts and large accessions made to congregations under the reigning systems. This is most fallacious and dangerous logic. If it were true philosophy, it would equally prove that infant sprinkling, the invocation of saints, and the whole system of papistical and protestant managements were of divine origin and approbation. For how often do we hear the Papist and the Protestant appealing to the mighty achievements of their leaders in proof that the Lord is with them, and that he countenances all their movements? Each party numbers its Israel every year, and capitalizes its converts, in attestation that the Lord is there. Scarce a revival comes, but Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists come in for a share; though, in general, the two former outcount the latter. Now if the Baptist annual converts prove that the present order of things is of divine origin amongst them, it will as logically prove that the present order of things amongst Catholics, Presbyterians, and Protestants, is of divine approbation. All that my reasoning powers can conclude from these premises, is, *first*, That if the Lord's hand is not in these accessions, they are equally deceived; and though in different degrees, all distant from the equator of truth. One is ten degrees south; another, ten degrees north; and though twenty degrees apart, they are equally distant from the equator of true religion. But, in the *second* place, if the Lord's hand is in these accessions, then it proves that he disdains equally their systems and their order, and bestows his favors indiscriminately on all. It cannot be argued that he approves all their systems; for this would terminate in the most absurd results. He would then approve of Papacy. Episcopacy, Presbytery, and Independency—of infant sprinkling and of believer's immersion, and of a hundred things flatly contradictory to each other. I say, then, it proves, on the best hypothesis, that he disdains all their systems and their order, and that he loudly proclaims it by the distributions of his favor upon the Baptist order, the Methodistic order, the Presbyterian order, and so forth. If the Lord approved of one of the present systems he would confer all his favors upon that people; or, in other words, he would assemble his elect under that standard, and signalize them as he once did the only nation he selected and made his own. They could exclaim, What people like us!! What people hath the Lord blessed as he hath blessed us!! I say, then, that to my reasoning faculties, the logic of the Baptist Recorder or that of the Presbyterian Luminary now confederated proves not that the Lord approbates that for which they contend, viz. the present order of things in their respective circles, but that he equally disdains both their orders. I would like to see

them try their logic here. He sends his gospel to them all, on the supposition that the work of these revivals is his, and thereby calls them to reformation. I have no idea of magnifying mole-hills into mountains, nor of consecrating the language of Ashdod into that of Canaan; I have no idea of amalgamating oil and water, of christening pagans, or of paganizing christians; I have no idea of raising up a holy seed from Egyptian or Babylonish wives, nor of proving that the Lord approves the present order of things, because the Methodist and Baptists annually count twenty thousand converts a-piece.

During the ancient order of things there was no church meetings for the purpose of receiving candidates for immersion. There was no monthly meetings to decide who should be baptized. There was no person who held his membership in one church and had the pastoral care of another in which he was not a member, and to which he was not amenable, as is now the case very generally. There was no church in those days of primitive integrity, composed of a hundred members, which, in a case of discipline, gave only eleven votes, six against and five for the delinquent, and then excommunicated him. There was no deacon appointed solely for the purpose of carrying about a plate four times a-year. There was no society whose whole code of discipline was the 18th of Matthew. There was no one who had any formulary, creed, or confession, other than the apostolic writings. Now let him that affirms to the contrary remember that the proof lies upon him. And we will assure him that his proof will be faithfully published by us, should he send it for that purpose. The subjects introduced here are intended for future development.

EDITOR.

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### THE CREED QUESTION.

THIS question has been long and warmly contested in the United States. In Kentucky an anonymous writer, who it is believed has changed sides on this question more than once, who calls himself "*Aleph*," and very pertinently too, has thrown down the gauntlet in an extraordinary way indeed. Another, who goes a step higher, even to the second letter of the Hebrews alphabet, and calls himself "*Beth*," has severely castigated the temerity of his brother Doctor. It is passing strange that the only two Doctors of Divinity in the West, of the Baptist denomination, should thus become *Aleph* and *Beth*, and stand on the two sides of this question. The *creed side* has lost 100 per cent. within a year or two past, if I mistake not. Its advocates have deserted the old ground, and Doctor *Aleph* in his recent challenge has got it fixed on no ground at all, but, like Mahomet's coffin, hung between heaven and earth. It would require a critic to understand his challenge. It is in the following words:—"If Mr. Duncan, Mr. Campbell or the Reviewer, should be inclined to meet the "great question fairly in reference to the principle of having a "creed, not in regard to the contents of any particular creed, nor

“in regard to church administration, for these are different subjects; if they will meet the single question above stated, their error shall be made apparent, even to the most ordinary capacity.” So, then, Mr. “Aleph” will not contend for the contents of his creed, but for the principle of having one. Neither will he contend about the use to be made of his creed in church administration. But all he will engage to do is to contend for the principle or right of having a creed. This is with him the great question. But unfortunately or accidentally it happens that the Doctor has given his challenge so as to preclude the hope or fear of an opponent. The Doctor is a very amiable man, and I cannot think designed to play the sophist here, though he has done it to extravagance. I ascribe it to his cause and not to his good sense. Suppose, for example, I had written against polygamy, or against the right or principle of having two wives. Suppose that some polygamist should have said, and defied the world on it, that “If Mr. Duncan or myself should be inclined to meet the great question fairly in reference to the principle of having a wife, not in regard to the number or character, nor their treatment; if they will meet the single question above stated, their error shall be made apparent to the most ordinary capacity”—what answer would it deserve? If it were not an insult to the good sense of the reader, I would say, Sir, you have changed the ground of controversy altogether. I contend not against the principle of having a wife; but, sir, *you* contend for the principle of having *two*; and before you will make my error apparent to the most ordinary capacity, you will first produce the divine authority or right reason of having two wives at one and the same time. I contend for one divine and infallible creed, and you argue for a human and fallible one along with it, or for the “*principle*” of having two creeds. Now, sir, the proof lies upon the affirmer. Be so good, then, as to produce your divine authority or your good reasons for the principle of having two creeds, and then I pledge myself to make your error plain to the most ordinary capacity. Now, my kind friend Aleph, stick to your text, and, like an honest man, come out, not in the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, but write your name in full.

I must not close till I have let Beth confute Aleph in his own words. The preceding challenge of Aleph is replied to by Beth in the following words:—

“I have never heard of any christian man who controverted the propriety and even the necessity of having a creed. The only question is, Whether or not Jesus Christ shall be the author of the creed, and of the constitution and laws of his church? or shall a voluntary association of men take this business out of his hands and form one to suit their own views and purposes, by either changing the doctrinal statements, facts, and connexions, as they appear in the word of God, or by adding to, or taking from his system of truth, or by epitomising it? It required the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to write the system of faith in the gospel,

and shall a voluntary association of men presume to exercise the power of changing, modifying, or improving it? This would, in my judgment, savor very much of conspiracy against the kingdom of Christ, and of a presumptions sin. If one association of men have a right to form a creed, another and another have, and churches formed in accordance with them have equal claims to divine authority. The Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, and Roman Catholic, all stand upon the same footing. Each one under this divine authority, claims the right to wage war upon the rest in defense of their faith; and thus we have five different organized armies, marshalled under different standards, commanded by different officers and united by different creeds, in active conflict, *by divine authority too*, in direct violation of the express commands and authority of Jesus Christ in the gospel! All this is done under the pretext of keeping out Arians and other heretics. Every one assumes the right to be God's commentator and expositor, instead of the apostles, and all differ, and make their differences articles of faith." EDITOR.

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### THE NEW TRANSLATION

*From the Western Luminary of February 7.*

**ACTS xx. 28.** "*Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.*"

Mr. Alexander Campbell, it seems, in his new translation, substitutes the term *Lord* for *God*, in the above passage. This, he tells us, he has done on the authority of Griesbach, Ireneus, who flourished A. D. 170, and the Syriac version. According to the alteration, it reads, "*feed the church of the Lord,*" instead of "*the church of God,*" as it is in our common version.

It does not appear to me, that any one should oppose the introduction of a various reading into the common text, when the change is evidently for the better, and is clearly supported by satisfactory evidence, as the genuine reading. But when this is not the case, it surely ought not to be attempted; because all attempts to alter the text in common use, tend to unsettle the public mind, in relation to, and destroy the confidence of the people in, the sacred scriptures.

As different opinions appear to be entertained relative to the above passage, permit me to inquire whether the phrase, *the church of the Lord*, is a New Testament phrase? *The church of God*, we know to be language quite common with Paul, as the following quotations will show:—

"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, unto *the church of God*, which is at Corinth." 1 Cor. i. 2.

"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor the Gentiles, nor to *the church of God*" 1 Cor. x. 32.

"But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, *neither the church of God.*"—"What! have ye not houses to

eat and to drink in? or despise ye *the church of God*, and shame them that have not?" 1 Cor. xi. 16. 20.

"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted *the church of God*." I Cor. xv. 9.

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto *the church of God* which is at Corinth." 2 Cor. i. 1.

"For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted *the church of God*." Gal. i. xiii.

"For ye brethren became followers of *the churches of God*, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus." 1 Thess. ii. 14.

"So that we ourselves glory in you in *the churches of God*." 2 Thess. i. 4.

"For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of *the church of God*?"—"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is *the church of the living God*." 1 Tim. iii. 5. 15.

If, now, it be inquired, "How often is the phrase, *the church of the Lord*, used in the New Testament?" I believe the answer must be, "Not once." If it be there, I have not been able to find it; and Horne, in his "Introduction to the Critical Study of the Sacred Scriptures," tells us it is no where in the New Testament. These facts render it evident, that Paul was not accustomed to use such a phrase as *the church of the Lord*, but was in the habit of calling the church *the church of God*; and that, therefore, the strong presumption is, he did so in Acts xx. 28. in his address to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus. For it is to be remembered, that although Luke was the penman, yet the language is Paul's. And as it stands in our common version, it is just what we might expect from him. It "smacks" so much of Paul—is so much like him, that I can hardly help thinking we have the very language he used. But to change it into *the church of the Lord*, necessarily introduces to us a new speaker, and a new New Testament writer.

It is, then, evident that the common reading in the passage under consideration is the authorized reading—authorized from parallel passages of scripture, which warrant the phraseology, while the change which Mr. C. has made, was in like manner unauthorized. With this strong and not easily refuted presumption in favor of the phrase as it stands in our Bibles, it appears to me we ought to have powerful external evidence (as that which arises from a various reading in ancient MSS. and versions is called) in support of the change, before it is introduced.

But when the external evidence is examined, there is no such weighty preponderance in favor of the alteration, that I know of. What is Griesbach does decide in favor of the change? At least one other critic,\* of no ordinary talent and industry, and per-

\*I mean Thomas Hartwell Horne, in his "Introduction to the Critical Study of the Sacred Scriptures." Vol. 2, p. 350, 351, second London edition.

haps, full as learned as Griesbach, and who has written since him, and profited by his labors, after having noticed all the various readings, and cited the evidence in favor of each, decides that the weight of evidence from ancient MSS. versions, and the fathers, is in favor of the common reading.

The same author tells us that the old Syriac version is neither in favor of the common reading, nor of Mr. C's; but supports the phrase, *the church of Christ*. If so, there is a slight mistake in Mr. Campbell's piece, published in the Luminary of the 3d of January, which informs us that that version contains the reading which he prefers; and likewise a slight diminution of the evidence on which he makes his change.

From the same source we learn that *Ignatius* supports the common reading; a father, who, flourished considerably earlier than Ireneus, on whose testimony Mr. C. places no such reliance. "Ignatius, as it is testified by ancient christian writers, became bishop of Antioch, about 37 years after Christ's ascension! and therefore, from his time, and place, and station, it is probable that he had known and conversed with many of the apostles." (vid. Paley's Evidences, p. 82, 83). For the same reason, therefore, that the testimony of Ireneus is relied on for the change of the passage, that of Ignatius should be preferred to retain it as it is.

These considerations ought not to be unknown to a man who undertakes to alter the sacred text in common use. And when we reflect that Mr. C. is considered a man of talents and learning, it is difficult to shut out the suspicion that he was an *a priori* preference for the term *Lord*, or some other word, rather than the one which our version contains, which is well calculated to excite a fear, that he has a leaning to the Arian creed.

#### VINDEX.

WERE it not for the fictitious name and the last period of the preceding *critique*, we would say that it has some appearance of reasonableness about it. The last period would, in cases of testimony, subtract much from the competency of the witness. There is not only a logical defect, but a manifest prejudice apparent in it. This will appear by substituting the name Griesbach in lieu of mine. Then his last sentence will read, "And when we reflect that Griesbach is considered a man of talents and learning, it is difficult to shut out the suspicion that he has an *a priori* preference for the term *Lord*, or some other word, rather than the one our version contains, which is well calculated to excite a fear that he has a leaning to the Arian creed." Now, as this reading, in the opinion of "Vindex," excites no fears of the orthodoxy of Griesbach and others, it could not in relation to me, were the author as free from prejudice against me as against Griesbach. This, then, is a proof of prejudice, or of a defect in the logical power of this *avenger*. No man can reason fairly when under the tyranny of prejudice.

I will now, with the utmost frankness, examine his reasoning. It is obvious that his *critique* is based upon the singularity of the phrase, "*church of the Lord.*" He has very satisfactorily shown that the phrase "*church of God*" is of frequent occurrence in Paul's style, and the phrase "*church of the Lord*" does not occur in any other passage. Now all this is well told and reasonable enough. From this he concludes very plausibly that the reading *church of God* ought to be preferred to the *church of the Lord*. This is much more specious than solid. To argue on this principle may, in his estimation, suit a case of this sort exactly; but I well know he would not abide by its application in many other passages. There are many phrases which occur but *once* in Paul's writings, which I know he would like to see excluded on this account from the apostle's writings, though Paul uses others frequently which are nearly of the same effect; such as. "*the blood of Jesus,*" "*one mediator,*" "*the man Christ Jesus.*"

The strength of his objection is simply this, that the words "*church of the Lord*" occur no where else in his writings, but this equally applies to many other phrases; and consequently, as he would not exclude them on this account, to be consistent, he ought not here to object on this ground.

But I proceed to notice another and greater objection to his criticism. I will apply his own principles of reasoning to another clause or phrase in the common version of this disputed text. This is the phrase "*blood of God,*" or "*his blood,*" applied to God. Now I affirm, in my turn, that this phrase occurs no where else in the whole New Testament, but that other phrases as kindred as the phrases *church of God* and *church of the Lord*, are quite common on this subject. If then his logic is sound, it equally militates against the common version of this text as against the new: "Vindex" himself being judge. We have the phrases "*blood of Jesus,*" "*blood of Jesus Christ,*" "*blood of Christ,*" "*his blood,*" applied to the Lord, and "*thy blood,*" "*blood of the Lamb,*" and "*blood of the Lord,*" but no where have we the phrase "*blood of God,*" or "*his blood,*" applied to God. Some of these occur often, and all *once*, independent of the disputed text. Now if I have any reason about me, Mr. Vindex is confuted by his own argument. For his reasoning will exclude one part of the disputed text which he wishes to retain in the common version, for the same reasons precisely which he urges against the new. It is a good rule that works both ways. Indeed, the phrase *blood of God*, or *his blood* applied to God, is just as great a solecism in the inspired style as the phrase *death of God*, or *his death* applied to God, would be. This, then, authorizes me to conclude my criticism on Vindex' *critique* in his own words: "To change it into *blood of God*, or *his blood*, necessarily introduces to us a new new speaker, and a new New Testament writer." Is not this another proof that "the legs of the lame are not equal?"

Now, admitting that the phrase *church of the Lord* occurs no where else in the New Testament, it militates no more against



its genuineness than it does against the phrase *blood of Jesus*, which also occurs but once. But this is not all: there is no such incongruity between this phrase and the whole New Testament style, inasmuch as the phrase *church of Christ* is quite in the inspired style, as there is between the phrase *blood of God*, or *his blood*, and the apostolic phraseology. Here, then, we have the advantage in the new version over the old on the principle assumed by Vindex himself.

Vindex alleges, on the authority of Horne, that while Griesbach and Ireneus have it *church of the Lord*, the Syriac version has it *the church of Christ*. But in equipoise to Dr. Horne, I affirm that Dr. Whitby asserts that the Syriac version has it *church of the Lord*. This, however, on Vindex' own acknowledgment, affects not the merits of the question. I cannot at this time affirm, from my own inspection, that the Syriac version has it on the side of Dr. Horne or Dr. Whitby; but on either side, it is on the side of the new version rather than the old. Against this, prejudice itself cannot cavil. I cannot equal Horne to Griesbach with so little ceremony as Vindex seems to do. I subtract nothing from the merits of Horne, when I give it as my opinion that he does not rank at all with either Griesbach or Michaelis or any of the first collators. That was not his business, nor is it his merit.

I should like to see the words of Ignatius which favors the common version. I have not seen them; and if the allusions to them are similar to those in Paley, Dupin, Eusebius, and other ecclesiastic writers, they are not worth a grain of sand. It is not plead by Horne that Ignatius quotes those words of Paul directly, nor do I know of any reference to them in Ignatius' works which would establish any reading. Nothing short of a direct quotation will, or can be admitted in this case.

But in the last place on this subject, I have a greater reason to prefer Griesbach and other authorities to the common Greek, than any yet mentioned. And, strange as it may appear, it is for the very reason why many short-sighted critics prefer God to Lord. They conceive, like Matthew Henry, whom I esteem as a good man, but a very weak commentator, that the reading of God rather than Lord, exalts the dignity of the Saviour—exalts him more than reading Lord in preference to God. Now I conceive that there can be no higher dignity, personal nor official, than is contained in the phrase *church of the Lord*; especially when the same church is called *the church of God* by the same speaker. Here we have all that can be argued from the *name*, in favor of his dignity from the common reading.

I reason thus: There is more value in one human being than there is in one million of globes such as this we inhabit. If, then, the whole assembly, or church, or congregation of purified and glorified human beings belongs, *jure divino*, or by inheritance, or by redemption to the Lord Jesus; if it be *his own*, as it is his Father's, I can conceive of no glory superior to his personal glory

and majesty. I can conceive that he is worthy, infinitely worthy, to receive all blessing, adoration, and thanksgiving from every rational and glorified being in the universe. I conceive that all the paltry criticisms and puerile notions about the phrase *blood of God* fall infinitely short of those masculine and sublime contemplations, originating from the apprehension of that ineffable glory couched in the proprietorship of the whole assembly of immortal saints. For when I scan, by all the lights of astronomy, the worlds and systems of worlds of matter which glimmer over the vast immensity of the spangled firmament; when I add to their real magnitude and grandeur all that the loftiest flights of imagination can bestow, and reflect that one immortal, one deathless spirit is of infinitely more value than they all; how inconceivable and inexpressible thy dignity, glorious Lord, who claims them all as *thine own* by a right which no creature in all the orders of intelligence can ever, dare ever, or will ever dispute!

Thus I reason, and till better informed, must reason on the sublime view presented to my mind in Paul's farewell address to the elders of a congregation in Antioch. But still I contend that no ideas I could entertain of the propriety of the phrase, nor of its accordance with the style of the speaker, and congruity with the sentiment of the whole volume, would authorize me or any one else in preferring the reading in the new translation, were it not supported by authority equal, or paramount to the other, which I think will appear to all who will or can weigh the authorities on both sides.

If I could expect any thing like candor or justice from Mr. Skillman, editor of the "Luminary," I would demand the insertion of this article in his paper; more especially as he gathers into his paper all the febrile, jejune, splenetic, and pusilanimous effusions of the masked tribe of dreamers which have honored the "Baptist Recorder" with their impalpable and nameless denunciations.

EDITOR.

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### CONFLAGRATION

#### Of "the Sacred Writings of the Evangelists and Apostles of Jesus Christ!"

*Extract of a letter from Kentucky, dated January 9, 1827.*

"EDMUND WALLER, brother of the principal editor of the *Baptist Recorder*, declares he "is sure you are not regenerated," and that "you are ignorant of the grace of God." I asked him if he had conversed with you about these things. He replied, No: but that his brother George had, and he told him so and so. He boasts much of being stable and immoveable in the doctrines, and told myself and others that he had prayed to God *ten* days to know whether he should burn your Testament or not, and, upon mature reflection, had come to the conclusion to do so. Having a good fire one day, and his family being out, he shook the leaves well and committed it to the flames with a clear conscience. I

asked him if he thought God had told him to burn it in his *ten days'* praying. This threw him into a great passion; but he acknowledged God had not done so directly; though it is fairly to be inferred from his praying and the conclusion of the matter."

If such be the fruits of regeneration and the evidence of knowing the grace of God, I conceive they are not to be envied who the boon as theirs. Lawrence Greatrake and his brother Edmund Waller afford as proofs of their regeneration such evidence as I own I never possessed. And, indeed, I never read of such evidences, save in their history of their experience. The Chinese, it is said, who cannot read, when they discover a piece of writing on the ground, will neither tread upon it nor burn it, lest the name of their god be upon it; but here a regenerated christian with a clear conscience designedly commits to the flame the whole testimony of God concerning his favor in the gift of his only begotten Son, and boasts of it as the Catholics in former times boasted of doing God service when they burned the heretics. And why did he burn it? To immortalize his name; yes, to immortalize his piety. I am authorized in concluding this to have been his motive from the fact that he published in his brother's paper an account of the matter, as follows—

*"For the Recorder.*

*"Dear Brethren—*I subscribed for Mr. Campbell's Testament, and received it, paid \$1.75 for it, kept it five or six months and compared it carefully with one I have loved ever since I was 13 years old. On the first reading I condemned it, but let it remain in my house some two or three months; then tried it again, condemned and burnt it.

EDMUND WALLER.

*Jessamine county, January 29, 1827."*

Can the present century equal this? I want a parallel case to put on file with it for the benefit of posterity. He compared it carefully with the common version!! yet it is believed he could not tell the nominative case to a verb, nor the antecedent to a relative, to save himself from the Spanish inquisition. But he is regenerated, and prayed "*ten days*" for light on this subject!!! His one dollar and seventy-five cents cost him ten days praying!! —Criticism, avaunt! This defies you!

EDITOR.

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### THE NEW TRANSLATION.

The first edition of this work is, with the exception of a very few copies, disposed of. It has been well received and highly approved of by many competent judges, alike distinguished for their piety and erudition. The objections made to this translation are not in the proportion of ten per cent; to those made to former translations; and I presume were it generally received, or rather circulated, the objections from all parts of the union would not proportionately amount to more than they now do. Many objections and petitions against the common version, it is said, were presented on its first appearance. The king's decree silenced

them at first, or until use had rendered it familiar, and the youth accustomed to read it at school when they arrived to manhood thought well of it, and esteemed all the points and letters in it of divine authority. It is to be hoped that no such means will ever again be resorted to, to give currency to any translation. That only should obtain general reading, whose merit deserves it. We have often been requested, (and it is probable at some future day it may be undertaken) to publish a pocket edition of this version. But before a second edition, either of a larger or smaller size, will be proposed or attempted, we wish to receive all the criticisms and emendations which can be proposed by the learned and pious of all denominations. We therefore humbly solicit from all concerned or interested, whatever light they have to throw upon the subject. We will be thankful for objections and criticisms, candid or uncandid, even as plausible as the article copied into this number from the "Luminary." Such investigations and criticisms, from whatever motive they proceed, are beneficial to the public, who are desirous of understanding the book. The weak-minded only are afraid of new translations, or, at most, those who have not thought much upon the subject. I think the illiterate have stronger faith who read many translations, than the same class have who read but one. The reason is obvious: Faith has to do with facts and events attested. Now as all translations, even the most imperfect, present all the same facts, and personages, and every thing historical to the mind of the reader, he, though unacquainted with the original tongue, becomes more assured of the certainty of the facts he believes, because he finds that all translators, which are to him as so many witnesses, give the same historical statements. Suppose, for example, an Englishman unacquainted with Greek, understands the French, Spanish, and German languages, and reads in them all the New Testament. He finds that all the persons, events, places, and occurrences—all the lives, labors, and successes of the apostles—in a word, every thing historical precisely the same—would not such a person have more rational ground of assurance of the correctness of any translation than he who has read but one version? Improved translations do not introduce any new articles of belief, because they attest no persons nor facts, no historical matters that were not attested before; but they have their value and importance from the plainness, force, beauty, and simplicity in which they present the testimony of God to the reader. In every thing that concerns *faith*, all translations are the same; but as respects a clear and comprehensive *understanding* of the book, there is as great difference as there is, or as there can be, in any number of witnesses giving testimony in any case. While nine of them declare all the same facts, it may happen that the tenth expresses himself with so much more perspicuity, that there is incomparably less difficulty in understanding him than the other nine. So much for the objection to new translations, as supposed detrimental to the *faith* of the reader. We solicit most earnestly all

criticisms, objections, or emendations, which piety, biblical knowledge, or general information can present. We wish to live for the benefit of our cotemporaries, and of the next generation. We are indebted to those that have gone before us, and that debt we can only discharge so far as we labor for the benefit of those who are to live after us.

EDITOR.

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## MR. ROBERT OWEN AND THE SOCIAL SYSTEM.

### No. I.

MR. OWEN has attracted much attention in this country as well as in Britain from the singularity of his views, and the benevolent nature of his efforts for the amelioration of society. He has afforded evidence of "mental independence" never perhaps surpassed before. His talents, education, fortune, and extraordinary zeal in the prosecution of his favorite object, entitles him to a very liberal share of public respect. It is, I believe, very generally admitted that he is perfectly disinterested as far as respects pecuniary gain, in all that he has done, and is doing, for the establishment and development of the social system. He has not been treated, however, with over much courtesy by many editors, both political and religious, who have animadverted on his principles and his plans. For my own part, I have felt some degree of sympathy for him, and of mortification too, at the nibblings of his opponents. I have waited for a better acquaintance with his principles and managements before I even ventured to form an opinion for myself, either of their wisdom or practicability; and am not yet able to form a satisfactory opinion of the social system as advocated by him. I have long endeavored neither to condemn nor approve any opinion either because it is old or new, popular or unpopular. Paul's maxim I esteemed of equal importance in all things—"*Bring all things to the test, and hold fast that which is good.*"

The benefits resulting from a co-operative system have been apprehended in theory and proved by experience, before we heard of Mr. Owen in this country. A social system of co-operation may be grafted on any system of religion, true or false; but that a social system of co-operation can at all exist without religious obligations has never yet been proven; but this appears to be the experiment now on hand at New Harmony, Indiana. In this Mr. Owen has afforded the most convincing proofs of "mental independence." The annals of the world fail to present one single league or confederation for any purpose that was not perfectly ephemeral, without religion of some kind or other. I have no notion of getting angry with Mr. Owen, or of belaboring him with harsh epithets, for hazarding an experiment of this sort. It is true, indeed, that I regret than any person born in the eighteenth century, and educated in the kingdom of Scotland, should have profited so little by the circumstances around him, and should have learned so little from all that has gone before him, as to sup-

pose that a being such as man is, could be happy in any circumstances, without the hope of immortality beyond the grave.

I regret very much, indeed, that Mr. Owen has found it necessary to the completion of his plans to abolish every vestige of the religion of the Bible—from the divine ordinance of matrimony down to the observance of the Lord's day. This I regret from my regard for the social system in particular, and also because of its pestiferous influence on certain classes of society, who need the benefits of something more than the social system to improve their morals and their circumstances.

It appears that the human mind may be so intensely applied to a favorite object of study or pursuit, as to lose its own equilibrium, so to speak; and that a man may become a downright enthusiast on any other subject as well as religion. There is a deistical, atheistical, political, economical, as well as a "christian" enthusiast. And Mr. Owen seems to have paid so much attention to the influence of circumstances upon human character, an influence very great indeed, as to have ascribed omnipotence to it, or rather to have defied it. This I presume to be the cause of his "mental independence." I know, indeed, it is not very easy to bound or limit the influence of surrounding circumstances, but still they have limits, even in forming human character. To make every thing in human character depend on the power of circumstances, is to me as great an error as to make nothing depend on it. These are the two extremes. "*Media tutissima est.*" The true and safe way lies between. Education may do as much for the animal man as cultivation may do for plants, and I think it can do little, if any thing more. That moralist who conceives that he could, by an entire change of circumstances, effect an entire change of character, is not less deceived than the botanist who thinks he could make grapes grow on thorns, or figs on thistles. by a change of climate and of culture. No change of circumstances could make a goat produce wool, or convert a lion into a lamb. So no change of circumstances could make a Nero out of Mr. Owen, nor a Bonaparte out of Gen. Hull. There is more born into the world than flesh and blood, and yet a great deal depends upon corporeal organization. No change of circumstances could make a painter or a musician where the eye and the ear are not bestowed by nature; so no change of circumstances could make the naturally indolent, selfish, envious, ambitious, the contrary characters. I cannot, then, ascribe the attributes of Deity to the circumstances of birth or education, and therefore I cannot be so *mentally independent* as Mr. Owen. But Mr. Owen only dates the era of "Mental Independence" from the fiftieth year of political independence, consequently he does not owe his "mental independence" to the circumstances that surrounded him more than forty years ago.

Out of this "mental independence" has arisen the hostility to the Bible which so much characterizes the New Harmony Gazette. Free agency, responsibility, marriage, and every religious

institute are exiled from the city of *Mental Independence*. These are not the circumstances which are to surround the infants born there. No, these are all inimical to "mental independence."

I am glad to see upon the whole, that a series of essays against the Bible has commenced, and that an "*Enquirer*" has published his number *one* on this subject. I do not rejoice in the thing itself, but that we shall have a *chance* (as we are not free agents) of hearing all that mighty evidence in favor of no religion, and against the Bible which "the first year of mental independence" can bestow upon the world. If no abler hand will appear on the side of the Bible, I shall be compelled to volunteer in the service, for I am indebted more to the light which it contains than to all the circumstances else which surrounded me from infancy to man; and I am as certain that this new era of "mental independence" with all the circumstances to which it may give birth, will not be worth the testimony of John to the illuminated citizens of New Harmony, as I am that Mr. Owen did not create himself. But I will wait a few weeks until the work has progressed a little, and till I see the strength which is to come into the field.

I will only add that it is the deistical or rather atheistical part of Mr. Owen's system to which I am compelled at present to object. I should like to have his definition of the term "*morality*," for I think it is wanting to make his paper intelligible to most readers.

EDITOR.

\* \* \*

### TO "PAULINUS." LETTER II.

*My dear sir,*

MY absence from home at time of the publication of your favor of November last, will, I hope, be accepted as an apology for the delay of my reply. Your remarks upon the discourse on the abrogation of the Legal Dispensation perfectly meet my approbation. I do not object even to your placing the unregenerate descendants and neighbors of christians "under the whole of God's revealed will according to the dispensation under which they live." Nor, if I recollect right, does this militate with the doctrine of that discourse. In placing the unregenerate Gentiles under what is called the Law of Nature, as explained in that discourse, we had respect to them in the mass, without regard to specialities in their condition. But were I asked where I would place the unconverted Virginians on the principles asserted there, I would answer, Under the New Testament. I would, in addressing them, demonstrate that the principles, laws, or light in that volume, would prove their awful condemnation in the day of vengeance, if they obeyed it not. I would assure them that the first commandment obligatory on them, was, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.*" That disobedience to this commandment would prove their condemnation. If asked for the second commandment, I would reply, "*Be immersed every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of your sins.*" Until

these *two* commandments were obeyed, I would shew them that they are not in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and that they were worthy of condemnation, if on other account, on this, *that light was come into the world, and they loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.* These commandments not obeyed, I would endeavor to convince them that they could promise themselves nothing, on any rational principle, but an eternal separation from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power in the day of righteous retribution. In addressing such a people, I would give such an exhibition of the matter, always emphasizing on the first commandment of the New Dispensation, without obedience to which no other commandment could be acceptably obeyed.—Viewing the matter, then, *in the light of laws*, I would proceed thus: To preach the law or decalogue of Moses to the citizens of Virginia, is to me as irrational and unscriptural as it would be to command them, upon the authority of moses, to emigrate to Canaan.

The metaphysics of that discourse I am glad to find you disapprove. It is for the same reason that I disapprove of the metaphysics on the influence of the Spirit in renewing the human heart. In my last to you on this subject I went to the utmost line, as I conceive, marked in the Bible, and perhaps a little beyond it. I attribute a good deal of the general satisfaction which it has given, both in the West as well as in the East, to its having reached the threshold of the temple of metaphysics.

Still you think I ought to have answered “in a more *direct manner*” that part of your letter on the subject of divine influences, and you state that you “are not so tremblingly alive to the danger or theory and system as to avoid the direct expression of a sentiment on any proposed subject in religion.” Neither am I, provided the subject in religion be a subject on which the Bible treats. But at present there are *two* sorts of subjects in religion—one on which the Bible says not one word, and one on which it says something. I was asked, on my late tour, very many questions on what are called religious subjects, to which I could give no answer from the Bible, because the Bible said nothing about them. It is true I gave direct answers to some of those queries, but they were answers derived from the same cistern whence the queries came. You are not ignorant, my dear sir, that in this catechetical age we have many queries of this sort.

A very zealous divine, who, before my arrival in his parish, had published a bitter, little, unmeaning piece, against my views of faith, as he called them, asked me at our first interview, “whether saving faith was an act of the *intellect* or of the *heart*” —whether it was an *intellectual* or *approbatory* act. This question was asked me, too, after he had published me as contending for a faith merely *intellectual*, and after he had declared himself pleased with all that I had said in the only discourse he had heard me deliver, being only “displeased with the things I had not said.” Having previously published me as altogether *intel-*



*lectual*, he had the kindness to call on me for the proof. It is true his letter was signed only with the initials of his name; but when I lately saw it in a very religious newspaper, I doubted not who the author was; for it was a *fac simile* of his views. Now, my dear sir, what answer from the Bible could I give to such a query? I told him I could give him a metaphysical answer, but none from the book. Not waiting for this, he went on to talk about *believing with the heart*, as a scriptural phrase, and contrasted this with *believing with the head*. The former he called "*approbatory faith*"—the latter *intellectual faith*." I found it very difficult to convince him that the contrast between the *head* and the *heart* was one of his own making; that Paul knew nothing, and said nothing about *believing with the head*. Paul, I added, contrasted the *mouth* and the *heart*, and not the *head* and the *heart*; or, in other words, that it required "*the confession of the mouth*" as well as *the belief of the heart*, to make a christian. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." I would not admit that there was such a thing at all as believing with the head. I hope I removed some of his prejudices, and might have removed them all, had he not first committed himself in the aforesaid publication. I give the above as a sample of such questions as cannot be answered out of the Bible. If answered at all, the terms must be changed, and a new form assumed. You will not understand me as arranging your question on the Spirit's work under this head. I merely intend distinctly to mark the differences between those subjects in religion of which the Bible says nothing and those on which it speaks.

In reply to those queries on subjects in religion of which the Bible speaks, more is necessary than to say, "I believe what the Bible teaches." That is not the question. The question is, What does the Bible teach on such a subject? Such a question merits a direct reply. It sometimes happens that the subject is one on which the Bible says so much that little more than the outlines can be given in the compass of an ordinary reply. This is the case on the subject of the operations of the Holy Spirit.

On this subject much has been said in the second volume of this work, because there is a great deal said by the apostles on this subject, and a great deal said in the present time not authorized by the apostles. The subject has not been exhausted: but there may be questions proposed on subjects of which the Bible speaks, which the Bible will not answer. For example; *HOW does the Spirit influence the minds of men?* is a question I cannot answer from the Bible. But if I am asked, Does the Spirit regenerate the human heart? Does it influence the minds of men? I answer, The Bible teaches it does. But I have a great scrupulosity of mind in going beyond what is written on this subject in particular. The reason is, some speculative theory of

spiritual operations is the very essence, the very soul, of every system of religion in christendom. The deist, the lifeless formalist, the rational christian," and the flaming enthusiast, have all their theories of spiritual operations. The "*rational christian*" you will perceive I rank among the others. I admit of no such a distinction. The Bible knows nothing of *rational* or *irrational christians*—of *good* or *bad christians*. A *christian* designates all that the Bible approves. A bitter sweet or a sweet bitter is not more incongruous; nor is a sweet sweet, nor a bitter bitter more redundant than these epithets attached to that name. When I hear a man contend that he is a *rational christian*, I know that he is in Babylon.

But to return. The popular theories about divine influence, or the operations of the Spirit, terminate either in one or the other of these two similitudes. A sea captain and his crew, intent on a voyage from New York to Palestine, had got all the tackling of the ship and all the necessary sea stores for the voyage aboard. Every thing was ready on the appointed day. But there was no wind. The captain and his crew amused themselves every day, sometimes in the city and sometimes in the ship. Thus day succeeded day, until the time arrived when the voyage should have been finished. The owner of the ship demanded of the captain why the voyage was not made. The captain replied, he and his crew were every day ready and every day at their post, but that there had not been a single breeze of wind. The ship, he added, was rotting and the provisions were daily consuming; but inasmuch as he could not create the wind, nor cause it to blow, he could neither blame himself nor his crew. The owner was chagrined, but could not censure the captain nor his crew.

Another captain, bound from Egypt to Corinth, so soon as he had collected his crew and fixed upon the day of his departure, determined to make the voyage in a given time. Finding that there was no wind and that wind was necessary to his success, he invented a large pair of bellows, and set all his crew to work to blow upon the sails. They succeeded in getting the vessel, the tide being favorable, out of the harbor. But so soon as they had cleared the promontory, and fell into the current, their strength and their bellows, inadequate to the current, they were carried off by it, and ultimately perished in the sea. The interpretation and application is easy to him that understandeth the secrets of the reigning systems.

Any theory on this subject which countenances the listless and inattentive, which disheartens the anxiously desirous, which imboldens the arrogant and presumptuous, is not of God, is not countenanced by the Bible. I often think of a saying of old brother Asher's in Kentucky. He told me, in December last, that 'he believed in the doctrine of *the final perseverance of the saints*, and yet he believed that this doctrine would be a means of the damnation of thousands in Kentucky.' In this laconic way I would speak of the operations of the Spirit.

If any man ask me *how* the influence and aid of the Spirit is obtained, I answer, By prayer and the word of God. Thus I will give direct answers, so far as, I think, the oracles authorize.

But I am governed more in speaking upon this subject by the following, than by all other considerations: **THE APOSTLES PREACHED CHRIST AND NOT HOLY SPIRIT; or rather, they preached the Holy Spirit when they preached, Christ.** So the Saviour instructed and commanded them. *They preach the Spirit with most success who say nothing about his work in conversion.* So did the apostles. In all the sermons pronounced by the apostles to unregenerated persons, of which we have so many samples in the Acts of the Apostles, they never once spoke of the works of the Spirit in conversion. *Not one example in all the volume—not one model of the discourses we every day hear about the work of the Spirit.* The apostles remembered that the Spirit was not to speak of himself, his own office and work, but of Christ. Their good news, therefore, was about Christ crucified. The gospel most admired in many places, is not the gospel of Christ, but the gospel of the Spirit, or the gospel of the preacher's experience. Because I do not in every sermon tell the people how bad I once was, and how good I am now, some of these new gospelizers declaim against me as unregenerate. And they pass themselves off as spiritual men and good teachers because they tell of the work of the Spirit upon their own hearts instead of telling what Jesus has done for the world. Thus their hearers go home, looking into their own hearts for some consolation, instead of looking off to Jesus, the author of salvation. They rejoice in themselves and in their holy spirit, and not the Lord.

But I must break off in the midst of my reply, begging you, my dear sir, to have patience with me and I will pay thee all. I cannot, however, close this part of my reply without assuring you of my perfect accordance with you on your remarks upon conjectures, theories, and systems; and that the continuance of your correspondence affords me peculiar pleasure. I hope in my next to give you full satisfaction on the sentence to which you object in the preface to the Epistle to the Romans.

Wishing you health in soul, body, and spirit, I remain your  
fellow-servant in the gospel, THE EDITOR.

\* \* \*

### FICTITIOUS NAMES

IN my late tour I found that some teachers who, in conversation and in their public discourses, sometimes approved of the sentiments published in this work, were wont to write against them under fictitious names. The assuming of a fictitious name, when writing against a person who appears in his own proper name, appears to me a cowardly and unjustifiable course; and I do think that every christian should be like Nathaniel, *an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile;* I therefore declare it my intention henceforth to make no replies to anonymous opponents, always considering them as unworthy of notice, because of the

suspicion inseparably connected with the anonymous. Howbeit, this is not to be understood of my private correspondents, nor of those whom I have already noticed under the mask of an assumed name. This resolution will be carried into effect in relation to all those who may rationally be supposed to have seen it before they wrote. For in that case we will be authorized to conclude that they expected when writing to pass unnoticed, and feared to hazard an exposure. EDITOR.

\* \* \*

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE great accumulation of essays and queries during my absence precludes the hope of being able to lay them all before our readers in a little time. Some of them, as we have opportunity, and as we judge them adapted to public edification, will occasionally appear. To facilitate this, we have printed a great deal of matter in this number, and will in the ensuing, in small type. I consider it due to my friends to occupy the greater part of this number myself. A great many letters not answered, will be attended to as soon as possible.—Ed.

\* \* \*

### NEW AGENTS FOR THIS WORK.

*Kentucky*—G. W. Elley, Oldham county; Thomas Jackman, Nicholasville; Wm. Sterman, Danville; Cyrus Edwards, esq. Elkton.

*Tennessee*—Isham L. Watkins, Clarksville; Elder Joshua Speers, Harpeth; Moses Norvell, Nashville, omitted in the last list of agents.

James Scott, Cadiz, Ohio, instead of Bishop Philips, removed.

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*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

### DEFERRED ARTICLES.

THE following letter is from one of the most intelligent churches in the western states with which we are acquainted. It was addressed to a very respectable Baptist Association in the state of Tennessee, and we are happy to learn that this Association had so much intelligence and liberality as to accept it as the

platform and basis of a union with it and the church who wrote it. So long as associations are kept up, we think that were they to act up to the principles herein stated and recognized, much less injury could result to the christian community from their meetings than has hitherto been the result of them. This is a good step and a rapid advance towards the introduction of a better order of things.—Ed.

*The Church of Jesus Christ at Nashville, to the Concord Association, sendeth christian salvation:*

DEAR BRETHREN,

AFTER an interval of two years, we again address you by letter and messengers. Various circumstances induced us last year not to unite ourselves to any association, which circumstances it is not necessary to enumerate. We again present ourselves before you, and request to be admitted into your body.

Deeming it perfectly necessary that we distinctly understand each other, upon forming this union, we think proper to state our sentiments concerning associations, and the relation they bear to the churches composing them.

Your code of government, as published in 1825, declares that the association "shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage, neither shall it have any classical power, or infringe upon any of the internal rights of the churches." To all this we cheerfully consent, and consider it an expression of our own feelings. We may not, however, understand it alike, and will therefore beg leave to exhibit our views of it.

We understand this sentence as saying, that the association has no power to determine what any church shall receive as her creed; or whether she shall have any creed or confession at all, other than the Bible; and consequently, that she has no power so to lord it over God's heritage, as to condemn any church for holding or teaching any *scriptural truths*, though they be at variance with the *opinions* of this body concerning such truths.

In this view of the subject, we presume it will not be required of us to subscribe to any human instrument of union, as the test of our doctrine or practice. For we cannot but believe, that the Holy Bible is as plain in expressing its own truth as it ought to have been; and consequently that no men can express more clearly than it does, what we are to believe and practise. If this be true, (and we presume it will not be denied) it is useless for us, as a church, or for any body, to hold up a twinkling taper to give light to the world, when the sun shines in his meridian splendor. *If the fear of God and the love of the brethren will not hold the disciples in union, upon the one foundation, we may forever despair of any such instruments of union as creeds and confessions of faith obtaining so desirable an end.*

Again—We understand the "constitution" of your body as saying, when it declares the association "shall have no classical, power" &c. that the association does not intend to interfere WITH ANY of the *internal rights* of the churches. That is to

say: the association has no power to interfere with the *order, doctrine, government, or practice*, of any church, *governed in all*, by the great charter of our religious privileges—the *New Testament* of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We consider all these to be the “*internal rights of the churches*”—rights given them by the Great Head of the church—rights expressly defined and limited by Him, “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;” and, therefore, rights which are inalienable, and over which no body of men on earth has any control. In short, we consider ourselves at liberty to appoint our own teacher or teachers, and all other officers without molestation or assistance from many; and to judge for ourselves, when the sentiments delivered by our teachers, so appointed, are contained in the Holy Bible; without acknowledging the right of any others to interfere in the judicial investigation of such sentiments.

Indeed, brethren, we look upon your “constitution” as guaranteeing to every church connected with it, a full, free, and unmolested liberty of conscience—a liberty unshackled by any authority, except his who has set his people free; a liberty that is not, and will not be, used as a cloak for licentiousness by any one who fears God, and desires to walk by the light of the truth; and a liberty which none other than God who gave it has any right to destroy, and which this association, most certainly, will never assail.

It is our desire, beloved brethren, to live harmoniously with all our brethren; and while we acknowledge ourselves to be “of you,” we think that these are the only principles on which unity can be maintained.

We do not consider *ourselves* the guardians of the public faith; nor as having any right to direct what any shall believe. Error requires not human efforts to overthrow it: the exhibition of the truth in its simplicity, has ever been found, in the hands of God, a weapon most mighty to the pulling down of strong holds.

We trust, brethren, that while we deny the authority of men in matters of religion, we feel bound to endeavor to ascertain the will of our glorious chief; and so far as we know it, to observe it. We are far from supposing that all is known, at the present day, of the Records of Heaven, that can be known; and are therefore willing to learn “what is truth,” whoever be the instrument of pointing us to it. That there yet remains much to be known concerning divine things we must believe; for “if any man thinks he knows any thing, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.”

\* \* \*

*Another Textuary and a fine Specimen of the Art of  
Mystery Making.*

WHAT fine talents some men have of making clear sentences obscure; simple things, complex; definite terms, ambiguous; and intelligible words, incomprehensible. With what ease can some men make the Bible say and support any thing they please. Had

Martha been in the congregation at Paris, with what amazement would she have heard her words ground to dust and a three-cocked hat made out of them!!! Such is the order of things for which the chief editor of the Baptist Recorder contends!

PARIS, Ky. October 24, 1826.

*My Christian Brother,*

I AM not unfrequently somewhat amused to see disappointed superstition and bigotry struggling for life. It reminds me of the land tortoise, which lives nine days after it is beheaded. One would suppose enough has been said and done already to convince every candid and reflecting mind of the errors of the times. And I cannot well account for the reason that men professing to be unprejudiced, are not convinced, if not from what is said, yet from the real state of the world. The war of conflicting elements should inspire every one, in the region thereof, with a sense of danger: but when jarring sentiments, political and theological, are in a state of hostility, like the soldiers of Cæsar, to whatever standard each finds himself attached, there he wields the implements of death in defence of that standard; or like some poisonous reptile insulates himself, and when any one approaches near, darts his venom and destroys his enemy. These men appear to be convinced, though unwilling to acknowledge it; and are out of humor, because they happened not to make the discovery themselves, and therefore will not admit what another has discovered. I lately heard one of those men, whose wounds still look angry and appear painful, deliver a sermon, as he called it. I was very much diverted at his spleen, whilst, at the same time, I was somewhat mortified for his want of generosity and fairness. And that you may see how far that spirit of bigotry and oppression, which displayed itself so remarkably in the Redstone Association, prevails in these western regions, I will present you with a sketch of the discourse. His text is recorded in John's Testimony, ch. xi. and last clause of the 28th verse—*"The Master is come and calleth for thee."* After a usual exordium, he divided the subject according to its plain and natural order. 1st. *"The Master,"* who is he? 2d. *"Is come."* And 3d. *"Calleth for thee."* Under the first head he discoursed largely upon the divinity of our Saviour, and advanced many excellent truths; but what was most antio, was an attack which he made upon your translation, as he called it. Said he, *It is presumption, it is wicked,* for an individual, and he a *mere smatterer,\** to take the work of a translation out of the hands of *king James' translators, men so renowned for their learning and piety, who were so*

\**"Smatterer."* I did not know that this profound critic had examined the acquisitions of king James' translators, Doctors Campbell, Macknight, Doddridge, and his humble servant, so that he could with "a clear conscience" aver who was and who was not "a mere smatterer." I am bold to conjecture he never read the history of the king's translation, and that he could not tell the derivation, composition, nor declension, and perhaps not the *gender* of the term *smatterer!!!* But he can preach 49 times from one text.

*providentially protected, and who lived so much nearer the age of the apostles, that they must, consequently, have been much better acquainted with the original languages than any man can be in the present age.* Thought I, *What a great man!!!* The parts which he particularly faulted were the first of John's Testimony and the first of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The term "*it*," in John, and the phrase "*a son*," in Paul. In the first part of his subject he also dwelt quite largely upon the *trinity*; and to show you how great a philosopher he is, I will give you two or three of his principal arguments upon this head. "*Even in nature*," said he, "*it is not uncommon to find three in one. And first in the Sun, the colour, the light, and the heat; three distinct properties in one distinct body.*" To be sure, said I, and you might have enumerated *matter, gravitation, and figure*, and then you would have six distinct properties in one body. Secondly, in man, *body, soul and spirit*, three in one. And thirdly, the venerable old John Leland's *cocked hat*, which had three distinct corners in one hat!! Under the second head, ("*is come.*") he spoke of the Messiah's advent—his coming to destroy the Jewish polity—his coming in the person of his ministers, (such as the Rev. George Waller)—his coming to reign in the millennial state, and his coming in the judgment of the great day. *Who could have thought that so much is implied in so few words, even in the phrase "is come!!!"* What a fine thing to have such a preacher!! Thirdly, "*calleth for thee.*" The calls, said he, are *mandatory and invitatory*. The mandatory call is addressed to all men, first in his providence, then in his word. The invitatory is addressed only to the *elect*, who were personally destined, from all eternity, to the celestial bliss. Wonderful penetration!! Unparalleled grasp of intellect!! Which of these calls, or are they both implied in the text, "*he calleth for thee?*"

The above, I believe, sir, is a substantial compend of a sermon of the Rev. George Waller, delivered in Paris on the 12th of October, 1826.

I remain yours in christian bonds,

TITUS.

WHEN I read the above I called a little child, a girl too, who had read the New Testament once or twice through, and asked her what Martha meant when she said "the master or teacher is come and calleth for thee." She replied that she understood Martha to mean, "that Jesus the Lord had come to the house and wanted to see her sister Mary." Whether the parson or the little girl is the better expositor, judge ye!! This textuary system must go down, and we rejoice to know that its going down is with no ordinary speed. If christians will not weep it down, men will laugh it down.—*Ed.*

\* \* \*

THE following is another specimen of clerical hauteur and tyranny. The only explanation that it is necessary to give is this: A certain gentleman who aimed at the papal chair of the Redstone Association, of whose achievements and those of his



cardinals we had occasion to take some notice in October last, found in one of his former campaigns that some of the *representatives* of his churches did not *vote* in the Association as he designed them, was determined to divest this messenger not only of the office of a messenger, but of a preacher.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

*Dear Sir,*

BEING licensed to preach the gospel, and in my travels amongst the Baptist brethren having been often inquired of concerning the state of the church at Merrittstown since the association in 1825, and as they are desirous to know the truth of their proceedings, I will give a statement of her new plan on the 24th of September, 1825, and let my brethren judge how it prospers.

As this circular letter will become ecclesiastical history, I deem it necessary to be well attested, for the satisfaction or caution of generations that may yet be born.—Sympathy forbids names in full, on this occasion: therefore two or three letters must serve our purpose for certain persons' names.

*September 24, 1825.*

Church met, and after singing and prayer, opened the church book.

1st. Chose D. W. Moderator this session.

The moderator immediately declared that the church had concluded to stop G. B. C. from preaching. The recorder replied, Brethren you are out of order, what is the crime? The moderator answered, that brother B. was displeased, for G. B. C. voted against him in the association. Then the recorder said, And how can that be wrong; has not every messenger a right to vote in the council to the best of his judgment?—At this moment the moderator ordered the recorder out of the meeting house. The recorder was subject, and immediately withdrew; but in a few minutes the moderator brought him in again to his seat. Now the recorder asked, What is the decision on the case? The moderator replied, "Go on and preach; but you shall not make a record of this business, for it is W. B's doing." Seeing his weakness, I truly forgave him, even at his first asking. G. B. C. *Recorder.*

*Church Record of October 22, 1825.*

These brethren met, D. W.—J. R.—R. W.—S. A. R.—M. H.—E. C.—and G. B. C.

1st. Chose R. A. Moderator this session.

2d. Voted, That M. N.—W. V.—M. R. and E. W. take a seat, and so this church meeting ended.

At this moment, about sunset, came Mr. W. B. into the meeting house for the first time to take a seat on business, for one year and two months past, and even this time out of gospel order; notwithstanding he instantly asked R. A. saying, "What have you done?" R. A. replied, "We have done nothing." At this moment W. B. began to accuse friend G. B. C. most grievously, and railed out against him in a cruel manner, saying that he had

voted wrong, that he voted against him in the association, and that Wheeler smiled. *Secondly*, that friend G. B. C. said that we are a "little New Testament church at Merrittstown."

Then W. B. moved that friend G. B. C. be put out of the office of licensed preacher, out of the office of recorder, out of the office of being deacon, and out of the office of being treasurer. So took a vote and carried—then they restored him again by vote. By this time W. B. moved again he shall not preach. So several persons voted.

Now, at this moment, W. B. laid hold of the church book and recorded these words, instead of the charges he made against G. B. C. To wit, "On account of his having used arguments to advocate, and his influence to promote the success, of those who are opposed to the doctrine and discipline of the regular Baptists." But, dear brethren, in the truth, these are the charges W. B. laid against G. B. C. To wit, "that G. B. C. voted wrong, that he voted against him at the association, and that he said we are a "little New Testament church at Merrittstown," yea, and also that Wheeler smiled in the association and it made him feel bad."

In testimony hereof we set our hands—

*Merrittstown, Pa. Oct. 1826.*

M. H.  
E. C.

IF such things can be done in a green tree, what may we expect in a dry—If Baptist popes can thus act, who can withstand Paido popes. The names of the witnesses are withheld, they are in my possession.—*Ed.*

BROTHER CAMPBELL,

YOU will, undoubtedly, be surprised to hear of the unparalleled proceedings of "The Northumberland Particular Baptist Association," relative to the Little Muncey church. I never knew any body of men, religious or political, guilty of such glaring inconsistencies, before, Neither did I think that any body of people, who regarded even *men*, would have hazarded their reputation in such a manner. It is some time since I become convinced that confessions of faith, when used as *tests* of orthodoxy, are attended with great mischief in the church of God. Of this I was convinced by the proceedings of the above association. As soon as I was thoroughly convinced, I publicly, unequivocally, and solemnly entered my protest against them, and drew upon my head the united opposition of the sects in this country. Some declared me to be a *Socinian*. Others affirmed that I was *Universalist*. Some of the Baptists were apprized of my taking "*The Christian Baptist*," and, consequently, blamed *you* with my "*departure from the faith*." The news had no sooner reached *White Deer*, than *Thomas Smiley* said he must be put DOWN. This *field marshal* mounted his *Rozinante* and hied him away to *Shamokin*, to the largest division of this little army, and gave orders that they should be in readiness the next August when the whole forces would be collected, (or rather *represented*) in that place, to transact important business. He informed them that "*a certain*

*young man.*" who had, not long since been *ordained*, had renounced "*The Philadelphia*," and all other confessions of faith. He reminded them that they, by their delegates, had solemnly subscribed it, and concluded by expressing his hopes that they would never relinquish it. He also hoped that they would be forward to contend for it at the *next association*. Having heard that *war* was declared against me, I declined attending the association that year, as *a delegate*. I however, attended, as a *spectator*, the second day. Not long after my arrival the *generallissimo* began cannonading. I returned a few shots. Night coming on, we could not get into actual engagement. I was in hopes the storm of the battle would blow over. The next morning, however, they fired at me at least one hour with a *large gun*, which they obtained from *New Jersey*. It contained nothing but *blank charges*. They spent one hour more in firing at me with a *pop-gun* which they called *Henry Clack*. Finding that I was still on the ground, the *chief-general* concluded that he would let loose upon me. But some of the most influential members of the Shamokin church, hearing several gentlemen declare that they would leave the ground "if Mr. S—— was not *allowed* to speak," determined that I should have the next *shot*. I arose and had the satisfaction of seeing some of their *veterans* leave the ground before I concluded. The *field marshal* endeavored to rally his forces, but in vain. I knew of but one who would stand by me in the day of battle, but to my great surprise I heard a *non-commissioned* officer of the Shamokin department declare that my cause was just, and that *he* also renounced confessions of faith. "I then thanked God and took courage." There are several in this department who are disgusted with ecclesiastical tyranny; but they can't fight—I am, however, not alone. The people in this section of country, who have never been *married* to creeds, I believe, are universally opposed to them.

The fourth member of their constitution is of the following dimensions:—"4. This association claims no authority or jurisdiction over the churches, but acknowledges their independence, and disclaims any power to *decide controversies* which may arise in any particular church; but will act only as an advisory body." Was not the above decision an open violation of their *constitution*? Was it not a shameful and wicked violation of the *word of God*? But this association is capable of doing any thing they please. It matters not what their constitution says. It matters not what the word of God says. We were designed to be disgraced for affirming our belief in what *their* confession of faith declares, viz. "2. We believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are given by the inspiration of God, and protected in their purity by his providence, *and are the ONLY rule of faith and practice.*" This association can report only one hundred and twenty members, and yet "*Illa incredit regina*," she walks as a queen.

S. E. S——

Moreland, the 30th January, 1827.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

**EXTRACTS FROM MR. TASSEY'S VINDICATION**Of "*the Supreme and Exclusive Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in Religious Matters.*"

[CONTINUED.]

*Part 2, Section 3d. Page 143.* "HAVING fairly, and, we trust, impartially investigated the import and application of the word *church*, as it occurs in the New Testament, and shewn that no part of the sacred scriptures gives any countenance or support to any description of ecclesiastical representation, or courts of appeal, by whatever name they may be called; we now proceed to inquire more particularly into the *nature* and *constitution* of a church of Christ; and to ascertain, from the test of all religious truths, what are its proper officers, ordinances, and particular duties. Long as this subject has occupied the attention of christians, it appears to be but partially understood; and among those who do know it, there are but few who have the resolution to stand forward in defence of what the scriptures represent as the path of duty." In the investigation of this important part of his subject, our author evinces that believers only are the proper and capable subjects of the duties and privileges of a christian church, and that the members of the primitive churches were all considered as such; that, therefore, the constituent members of a christian church are, and must be, professed and manifest believers. He farther adds, (page 149,) that, "In order to become a member of any of the primitive churches, faith in Jesus Christ was the only essential qualification looked for, or acted upon, in that age of christian simplicity." Both these positions Mr. T. fully establishes by quotations and arguments evidently just, pertinent, and conclusive; and proceeds to observe that "We are indebted to the refinement and subtle distinctions of modern times for that long catalogue of terms of communion which the various sects have drawn up, which they oftener shut out the true child of God from partaking of the children's bread, than they do the dogs which have no right to it." How true this is, every intelligent and attentive observer of the present conduct and state of the churches must be satisfied. He also justly observes, (p. 147,) that "it is not subscription to the same creed, or confession of faith, scientifically framed, according to the philosophical or school divinity, of the day, which is to attract the disciples of Christ to one another. The true gravitating principle *here*, is the love of Christ. They must gather together in *his name*. Where this is wanting, or any other principle substituted in its place, the assembly, however designated, is not, nor can it be, a *church of Christ*. They must gather together in *his name*. Not only must his authority induce them to assemble, but their *attachment to him*, and *love to his name*, must be the grand prevailing principle which draws them together, and binds in one compact, united, and indissoluble association, every individual of them, or else they cannot be recognized as being blessed with his presence, nor

countenanced by the King and Head of his church. "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha."

Having clearly evinced that faith alone, or a belief of the gospel, that is, the belief of what the apostles testified and taught concerning Jesus, is all that can be scripturally required in order to church membership; and that love to Christ, and to each other solely on his account, that is, on account of their common faith in Christ and attachment to him, is "the true gravitating principle that is to attract the disciples of Christ one to another, and not the love of party nor of system," &c. &c. Our author next proceeds "to inquire into the particular and permanent officers requisite to a fully organized christian assembly." Of this description he finds but two, viz. the bishop and deacon; the former to rule and teach; the latter to receive and apply the contributions of the congregation to their proper objects. As for apostles, prophets, and evangelists, he shews that their offices were temporary, and could not by them be transmitted to others, because they could neither transmit their qualifications, nor yet the special commission under which they acted. That even Paul himself, though an apostle in the most strict and proper sense of the word, did not feel himself authorized to act under the primary commission given to the eleven, (Matt. xxviii.) nor did he assume it. "Christ, says he, sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." This he could not have truly said had he considered himself acting under the primary commission or as included in it; for all such were expressly commanded to baptize as well as to preach the gospel. Our author further observes that all the churches planted and set in order by the apostles were furnished with a plurality of elders and bishops; and also, as far as appears, with a plurality of deacons: consequently that each church, fully organized, had in itself an eldership or presbytery. That the terms Elder, Bishop, and Pastor, are indiscriminately applied to the same officer, and that the modern distinction of teaching and ruling elders is utterly devoid of scriptural authority—a mere human invention. P. 164. Adverting to 1 Tim. v. 17. upon which the above distinction is chiefly, if not solely founded, our author fairly shews that no such distinction can be intended; because all the elders there spoken of, however distinguished amongst themselves as to their respective talents or labors, are perfectly equalized as to office and maintenance; they all rule well, and all accounted worthy of the same double honor; namely, respect and maintenance. "Again, we remark," says he, "that as the elders who labor in word and doctrine are evidently included in the general proposition, *the elders that rule or preside well,*" it naturally follows that all the elders spoken of were of one description and although the passage plainly intimates that some may excel in one department of the pastoral office, while others may excel in another, yet they were all entitled to maintenance on account of their labor, and, therefore, were perfectly on a level—there was no disparity amongst them. But those who

ruled well and devoted more of their time to teaching and preaching, were more particularly entitled to a double portion, because their expences would naturally be much greater." Now nothing could be more reasonable than this; for, as the apostle justly alleges, "the laborer is worthy of his reward." But, as our author observes, (page 157,) "It was the spirit of ambition and domination, which is not confined to secular rulers, but which has been felt with all its diabolical results, to pervade almost every department of trust in the religious community," that gave rise to this distinction, and, indeed, to all the other ambitious and anti-scriptural claims and pretensions of an aspiring clergy. And "that under whatever shape this aspiring spirit has thought proper to appear, the pretext for introducing it to the notice of mankind has uniformly been that of supporting and maintaining *the unity of the church*. Under cover of this pretended object an aspiring prelate has aggrandized his order, and by his intrigues and largesses, has gotten himself appointed to the head of his sect or party, under the name of pope, archbishop, &c. and in him the visable unity of the church is supposed to be displayed. The Pope is the visible head of the Catholic community, and styles himself universal bishop, as if none existed besides himself. The King is the head of the church of England, and all parts of that denomination are under his control. In *him* they are united. Episcopalians place at their head some particular leader; and call him archbishop, or primate, or metropolitan; and to him they voluntarily resign their liberties as christians, conceiving that thereby they are promoting the unity of the church. And under the pretence of exhibiting this unity, presbyterians of every sect have adopted their representative system, that they might have a representative *head* to their respective denominations, inasmuch as they had become opposed to *an individual earthly head*. Hence all presbyteries, synods, and congregations, are placed in subjection to one national synod, or general assembly: which constitutes itself the bond of union, peace, correspondence, and mutual confidence among all the churches. (p. 242.) Now it must be manifest to every close observer, that there can be but little difference, in reality, between all these contending parties. Their real object, the attainment of spiritual power, is the same; their pretext the same; and the means of accomplishing their ends are nearly similar. They all aspire after an *earthly spiritual headship*. Which, wherever it is found, stands opposed to the (*sole*) headship and government of the Lord Jesus. They talk loudly of promoting the unity of the church, but it is not the church of Christ, but the unity of their particular party is meant. They are all zealous in the support of subordination and subjection, but it is that kind of it, which tends to aggrandize the head of their sect; but which, in proportion, derogates from the authority of Jesus, and from that submission which he most justly demands. The person, therefore, who most anxiously engages in promoting the unity of any one of these particular denomina-

tions, thereby proves himself to be the most zealous divider of the true church of God; and, consequently, deserves the name of schismatic or heretic, in the scriptural sense of those words. He is endeavoring to destroy the unity of the spirit, instead of keeping it in the bond of peace. For the more zealously any sect contends for its peculiarities, or those particular forms and ceremonies in which it differs from others, it thereby makes the breach wider betwixt those that adhere thereto, and other christians. It promotes and perpetuates that discord, which is the very bane of christianity, and which affords such cause of triumph to the abettors of infidelity." Our author next proceeds to animadvert upon the striking difference between the scriptural qualifications requisite for the pastoral office, and those prescribed and required by presbyteries, &c. in which, upon a fair investigation, there does nor appear a single coincidence. Almost the same, it appears, may be truly said of the whole process of election and ordination. Mr. T's conclusions upon the whole are, that "the two, and the only essential things to be considered in relation to the appointment of officers in christian churches, are, 1st. That the candidate proposed be fully qualified for the office; that he possess every requisite demanded by the spirit of inspiration, 2dly. That he be unaniously elected or chosen by the church to fill that office, for which he has been nominated. The mere ceremony of inauguration, if we may so call it, is of no consequence at all—it neither fits the candidate for the better discharge of his duty, nor does it communicate any power to him, of which he was previously possessed. It only fixes the commencement of his official duties. The moment that an undue importance is placed upon this, or any other external ceremony pertaining to the religion of Jesus Christ, we ought to take the alarm, lest innovation and superstition come in like a flood and overwhelm us. P. 178—9. Animadverting upon the assumed prerogatives of presbytery in relation to the settlement and ordination of ministers, our author observes, (p. 189,) that "these modest dealers in spiritual ware can easily make a minister of Jesus Christ, and again unmake him: can induct him into the office, and at pleasure cast him out: can ordain him to the pastoral office, and therein bind him over to their party by oaths and promises; and, anon, if he prove restive and not sufficiently submissive to their will, can dissolve this contract without the consent of either party. Nay, if the church and congregation are determined to adhere to *him* under whose labor they have reaped so many advantages, and on no account will consent to such dissolution; yet the bull (or rather bill of divorce) runs thus, "*Resolved*, That the pastoral relation heretofore subsisting between the congregation of B. and Rev. J. M. D. be, and the same is hereby declared to be dissolved." A bill of spiritual divorce! This, indeed, without the consent of either party! Strange!!! "Such is one of the documents of religious oppression and tyranny which the 19th century exhibits, and in a land in which

we boast of being freemen, and talk so loudly of the rights of conscience. Does not this very much resemble the thunders of the Vatican, and the haughty pretensions of the church of Rome? Did not the pretended successor of St. Peter take upon him to absolve subjects from their oath of allegiance, and to dissolve the most solemn contracts? And what less have some of our spiritual courts of late done? They have presumed to absolve congregations from their obligations to their pastors, and declared them vacant when they were not vacant; and thus they have done without consulting any of the parties concerned, or having the consent either of the teacher or the taught. Now this is wonderful, and bespeaks a system well digested, and peculiarly adapted to the end proposed, the subjugation of the human conscience to these spiritual dominions." Here the right of ordination is wielded as the great instrument of power; the door by which this ascendancy is introduced, and carefully shut over the intellects of men. P. 192. How improper, how superstitious is it, to make the validity of an office, of an ordinance depend upon the dreams of ecclesiastics about regular ordination! How absurd, how iniquitous is it, to take advantage of the superstitious disposition of ignorant people, in order to erect upon a visionary basis an ecclesiastical hierarchy, destructive of the union, peace, and liberties of the children of God! A system of ecclesiastical authority subversive of the authority of Christ, and calculated to rob every Christian society of the privileges which he has granted them! How domineering, how tyrannical is it, to attempt to dissolve the pastoral relation between an elder and his flock, without the consent of either parties! How false and farcical to declare a congregation vacant, which has its own regularly chosen pastor to officiate!

In treating of the ordinances, our author remarks, (page 211,) "that the Lord's supper was observed in apostolic times every Lord's day, may be established by the clearest evidence. The passage already referred to, Acts ii, 42. in Luke's account of the primitive christians, represents the breaking of bread as a permanent and continued practice in their assemblies. For their steadfastness in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and breaking of bread, can be understood in no other sense consistently with the connexion. Perhaps the best comment we can have on this passage is a statement given in the Apologetic of Justin Martyr, who wrote about 44 years after the death of the Apostle *John*. He tells us, (page 98th,) that "on Sunday all christians in the city and country meet together, because it is the day of our Lord's resurrection, and then we hear read to us the writings of the prophets and apostles. This done, the president makes oration to the assembly to exhort them to imitate and do the things they hear; and then we all join in prayer, and after that we celebrate the Lord's supper, and they that are willing and able give alms" Nothing can more expressly determine the uniform course pur-



sued in the stated worship of God than this. And the statements both of the inspired writer, and of this ancient disciple, go to prove that the Lord's supper formed as regular and permanent a part of the worship of God, as did the apostles' doctrine and prayer." Again, (p. 213,) "the same arguments that go to overthrow the weekly observance of the Lord's supper, will subvert the weekly observance of the Lord's day. For we affirm, that the evidences are of the same nature, drawn from the same sources, and consequently of the same force by which the weekly observance of the Lord's supper is proved, as those by which the first day of the week is established. What is the reason then that we attend to the one institution with an almost invariable unanimity, whilst we neglect attending to the other with that frequency which the authority of Christ requires? It cannot be supposed that this arises from any defect in the evidence. This is impossible; for it is completely and justly satisfactory in the parallel case alleged. It is prejudice, therefore, that prevents christians from following up their duty in this case as they do in the other." I am sorry that I cannot do more ample justice to the argumentative merits of Mr. T's performance, not only upon the above, but also upon other important topics which justly demand the attention of christians, and imperiously call for reformation. I could heartily wish that the work itself were only in the hands of all the readers of the *Christian Baptist*, but of the religious public at large. Though not without its faults, a few of which, with the permission of the editor, I design to point out in a future number, it calls aloud for "*the restoration of the ancient order of things.*" It is one of the many publications of the present day, that indicates the awakening of the human mind out of the letheal slumber of ages, and happily betokens the speedy approach of that radiant morning of universal light which will never henceforth give place to the darkness of superstition and error, but will shine more and more to the perfect day.

PHILALETHES.

\* \* \*

### THE TRINITARIAN SYSTEM.

Dear Sir,

IN one of your fireside conversations, when interrogated on your views of "*the Trinity*," you gave an exposition of the first verse of the first chapter of John's Testimony, with which myself, and, I believe all present were much delighted. In conversing with those present on that occasion, I found that they, as well as myself, had forgotten some of the more prominent ideas. You will confer no ordinary favor on us all, and no doubt it will be pleasing to many of your readers, to give it in writing as nearly as possible to what you spoke on the subject. Do, then, oblige us so far as to give us the same in your next number of the *Christian Baptist*. Yours, most affectionately,

TIMOTHY.

Kentucky, March 1, 1827.

## TO TIMOTHY.

Dear Sir,

YOU will recollect that when I was interrogated on that subject, I gave sundry reasons why I felt reluctant to speculate on the incomprehensible Jehovah. It was also stated that there was no topic in common estimation so awfully sacred as that of the doctrine of "*the Trinity*," and if a man did not speak in a very fixed and set phrase on this subject, he endangered his whole christian reputation and his own usefulness. At the same time I remarked that I was very far from being afraid either to think upon this subject or to express my thoughts, although it was deemed so unpardonable to depart even in one monosyllable from the orthodox views. I moreover stated that I disliked any thing like speculation upon this topic in particular, because, if I differed in the least from the orthodox, I introduced something like a new theory, or something that would be treated as such, and either approved or rejected on theoretic grounds. If, however, you will neither make a new theory out of my expositions, nor contend for any speculations on the subject, nor carry the views farther than where I leave off, I will gratify you and other friends with my views of the first sentence in John's Preface to his Testimony—"In the beginning was *the word*, and *the word* was with God, and *the word* was God."

1. In the first place I object to the Calvinistic doctrine of the Trinity for the same reasons they object to the Arians and Socinians. They object to these, because their views derogate in their judgment from the eternal glory of the Founder of the christian religion. They will not allow the Saviour to have been a creature, however exalted, because they conceive this character is unbecoming him, and contrary to the scriptural statements concerning him. They wish to give him more glory than they think the Arians are willing to do. Now I object to their making him and calling him an "*Eternal Son*" because I think that if he were only the Son of God from all eternity, is entitled to very little, if any more glory, than what the Arians give him. I wish to give him more glory than the Calvinist give him. They are as far below his real glory, in my judgment, as the Arians are in their judgment.

2. But in the second place, I have an insuperable objection to the Arian and Calvinistic phraseology—On the doctrine of the *first* relation existing between the Father and the Saviour of Men, because it confounds things human and divine, and gives new ideas to Bible terms unthought of by the inspired writers. The names *Jesus, Christ* or *Messiah, Only Begotten Son, Son of God*, belong to the Founder of the Christian religion, and to none else. They express not a relation existing before the christian era, but relations which commenced at that time. To understand the *relation* betwixt the Saviour and his Father, which existed before time, and that relation which began in time, is impossible on either of these theories. There was no Jesus, no Mes-

siah, no Christ, no Son of God, no Only Begotten, before the reign of Augustus Cesar. The relation that was before the christian era, was not that of a *son* and a *father*, terms which always imply disparity; but it was that expressed by John in the sentence under consideration. The relation was that of *God*, and the "*word of God*." This phraseology unfolds a relation quite different from that of a father and a son—a relation perfectly intimate, equal and glorious. This naturally leads me to the 1st sentence of John. And here I must state a few *postulata*.

1. No relation amongst human beings can perfectly exhibit the relation which the Saviour held to the God and Father of All anterior to his birth. The reason is, that relation is not homogenous, or of the same kind with relations originating from creation. All relations we know any thing of are *created*, such as that of father and son. Now I object as much to a *created relation* as I do to a *creature* in reference to the original relation of God and *the word of God*. This relation is an uncreated and unoriginated relation.

2. When in the fulness of time it became necessary in the wisdom of God to exhibit a Saviour, it became expedient to give some view of the original and eternal dignity of this wonderful visitant of the human race. And as this view must be given in human language, inadequate as it was, the whole vocabulary of human speech must be examined for suitable terms.

3. Of these terms expressive of relations, the most suitable must be, and most unquestionably was, selected. And as the relation was spiritual and not carnal, such terms only were eligible which had respect to mental or spiritual relations. Of this sort there is but one in all the archives of human knowledge, and that is the one selected.

4. The Holy Spirit selected the name *Word*, and therefore we may safely assert that this is the best, if not the only term, in the whole vocabulary of human speech at all adapted to express that relation which existed "*in the beginning*," or before time, between our Saviour and his God.

These *postulata* being stated, I proceed to inquire what sort of a relation does this term represent? And here every thing is plain and easy of comprehension. I shall state numerically a few things universally admitted by the reflecting part of mankind:—

1st. A *word* is a sign or representative of a thought or an idea, and is the idea in an audible or visible form. It is the exact image of that invisible thought which is a perfect secret to all the world until it is expressed.

2d. All men think or form ideas by means of words or images; so that no man can think without words or symbols of some sort.

3d. Hence it follows that the word and the idea which it represents, are co-etaneous, or of the same age or antiquity. It is true the word may not be uttered or born for years or ages after the idea exists, but still the word is just as old as the idea.

4th. The idea and the word are nevertheless distinct from

each other, though the relation between them is the nearest known on earth. An idea cannot exist without a word, nor a word without an idea.

5th. He that is acquainted with the word, is acquainted with the idea, for the idea is wholly in the word.

Now let it be most attentively observed and remembered that these remarks are solely intended to exhibit the *relation* which exists between *a word* and *an idea*, and that this relation is of a *mental* nature and more akin to the spiritual system than any relation created, of which we know any thing. It is a relation of the most sublime order; and no doubt the reason why the name *Word* is adopted by the apostle in this sentence was because of its superior ability to represent to us the divine relation existing between God and the Saviour prior to his becoming the Son of God. By putting together the above remarks on the term *word*, we have a full view of what John intended to communicate.

As a word is an exact image of an idea, so is "*The Word*" an exact image of the invisible God. As a word cannot exist without an idea, nor an idea without a word; so God never was without "*The Word*," nor "*The Word*" without God; or as a word is of equal age or co-etaneous with its idea, so "*The Word*" and God are co-eternal. And as an idea does not create its word, nor a word its idea; so God did not create "*The Word*," nor "*The Word*" God.

Such a view does the language used by John suggest. And to this do all the scriptures agree. For "*The Word*" was made *flesh*, and in consequence of becoming incarnate, he is styled *the Son of God*, the Only Begotten of the Father. As from eternity God was manifest in and by "*The Word*," so now God is manifest in the flesh. As God was always with "*The Word*," so when "*The Word*" becomes flesh, he is Emanuel, *God with us*. As God was never manifest but by "*The Word*," so the heavens and the earth, and all things were created by "*The Word*." And as "*The Word*" ever was the effulgence or representation of the invisible God, so he will ever be known and adored as "*The Word of God*." So much for the divine and eternal relation betwixt the Saviour and God. You will easily perceive that I carry these views no farther than to explain the nature of that *relation* uncreated and unoriginated which the inspired language inculcates.

These views place us on a lofty eminence whence we look down upon the Calvinistic ideas of "eternal filiation," "eternal generation," "eternal son," as midway betwixt us and Arianism. From this sublime and lofty eminence we see the Socinian moving upon a hillock; the Arian, upon a hill; and the Calvinist, upon a mountain; all of which lose their disproportion to each other because of the immense height above them to which this view elevates us. The first sentence of John I paraphrase thus: From eternity was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was, I say, from eternity with God. By him all things were made, and he became flesh and dwelt

among us. He became a child born and a son of man. As such he is called Emanuel, Jesus, Messiah, Son of God, Only Begotten of the Father.

I can give the above views upon no other authority than my own reasonings. I learned them from nobody—I found them in no book. It is true, indeed, I have held the idea for 16 years that Jesus is called *the Son of God*, not because of an “eternal generation,” (which I conceive to be nonsense,) but because he was born as the angel described to Mary. This is now pretty generally received by a great many christians. Nor would I dispute or contend for this as a theory or speculation with any body. I could, indeed, amplify considerably, and perhaps obviate some difficulties by following up farther the hints submitted; but such are my views of the import of the beginning of John’s testimony. You will remember that I make no systems, and although there are some abstract reasonings upon terms (as indeed much of our reasonings about languages are) in the preceeding, it is only for the purpose of getting into the sacred import of a style from which we have been proscribed by a speculating philosophy. I have acceded to your request with more ease than I could have done, had it not been for a few prating bodies who are always striving to undo my influence by the cry of Unitarianism, or Socinianism, or some other obnoxious *ism*. From all *isms* may the Lord save us!

Yours truly,

EDITOR.

\* \* \*

## A RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF THINGS.

No. XIX.

### THE DEACON’S OFFICE.

THE time once was that every christian congregation had a treasury. In those days they required a steward, a treasurer, or a deacon, or more than one, as the exigencies demanded. For although the terms *steward*, *treasurer*, *almoner*, and *deacon*, are not perfectly synonymous, they nevertheless express the office and duty of the scriptural deacon. The term *deacon*, as all know, is equivalent to the English word *servant*. But the word *servant* is a very general term, and in the state signifies every public officer, from the president down to the constable. They are all servants of the state. So the apostles, evangelists, prophets, and bishops were all servants of the Lord and of the church. But there was one set of servants in the apostolic churches who were emphatically the servants of the church in its temporal concerns. These were the deacons, or stewards, or treasurers of the church. For as the deacon’s office had respect to the temporalities of the church, and as these are in general some way connected with pecuniary matters, the office of treasurer and almoner is identified with, or is the same as that of deacon; so much so that some translators have, out of regard more to the application

than to the literal import of the term *diakonos*, uniformly translated it *almoner*.

The plain simple state of the case is this: Christian congregations, in primitive times, had need of money or earthly things, as well as we. They had rich and poor members. Their poor were such as could not, either through bodily infirmities, or through the inadequate proceeds of their labor in times of embarrassment, furnish their own tables. Those who had to spare were then called upon to supply their wants. And in many instances they not only contribute to the wants of their own poor, but to the wants of those of remote christian communities, in times of general scarcity or pecuniary difficulties. Contributions, generally called the *fellowship*, were stately attended to in all their meetings. So Paul gave directions to all the churches in Galatia and elsewhere to replenish the treasury every first day as the Lord had prospered them in their temporal avocations. A deacon or deacons had the charge of this treasury, and were *ex-officio* treasurers; but this was not all. They were not only to take care of the contributions, but to dispense or appropriate them according to the directions of the brethren. Thus they were *stewards*. And as the poor were those in whose behalf this fund was created, and as the deacons dispensed to them, they became, *ex-officio*, *almoners* of the poor.

As they had in those days of primitive simplicity so many different sorts of funds and officers as we have in this age of complexity; the deacons attended to all pecuniary matters, and out of the same fund three set of tables were furnished. These were the Lord's table, the bishop's table, and the poor's table. A plurality of deacons were in most instances necessary because of the attention required from them and the trust reposed in them. It was not so much per annum to the bishop, nor so much per annum to the poor, nor so much per annum to the Lord's table; but according to the exigencies of each and the ability to contribute, was the extent of the treasury and the distributions of the stewards or deacons of the congregation. In this state of things the deacons had something to do. They were intimately acquainted with the families and wants of the brethren, and in paying a christian regard to these and the duties of their office they obtained an honorable rank and great boldness in the faith, or fluency in the doctrine of Christ. Conversant with the sick and the poor, intimate with the rich and more affluent brethren, familiar with all, and devoted to the Lord in all their services, they became eminent for their piety and charity, and of high reputation amongst their brethren. Once every week these contributions were made, and as often are the appropriations made in times and circumstances that required them. Out of the church's treasury, then, the poor and distressed widow above three score, or the sick and afflicted disciples was relieved. The Lord's table was continually furnished with bread and wine. The bishops' also, according to their labors and their need, were supplied And

thus everything was promptly attended to in the Lord's institution which could afford spiritual and temporal comfort to all the subjects of his kingdom.

Amongst the Greeks who paid so much regard to differences of sex, female deacons, or deaconesses, were appointed to visit and wait upon the sisters. Of this sort was Phebe of Cenchrea, and other persons mentioned in the New Testament, who labored in the gospel. The seven persons mentioned and appointed to the service of tables, Acts vi. though not so denominated, were nevertheless invested with and fully possessed of this office. The treasury was entrusted to them—the widows' tables, and every table which required service was attended by them. The direction given to the Corinthians respecting the treasury, and the instructions to Timothy and Titus concerning the choice of deacons, also concerning the support of widows and bishops, all concur in furnishing the above views of this office and work.

But how has it degenerated in modern times into a frivolous and unmeaning carrying about a plate once-a-quarter, in all the meagre pomp of a vain world—mere pompous etiquette, without use or meaning. Often we find the office of treasurer and deacon contradistinguished, as that of a moderator and bishop in the same congregation. It is a scriptural insult to appoint a moderator where there is a bishop, and the same to appoint a treasurer where there is a deacon. The deacon is, *ex-officio*, treasurer, and the bishop, *ex-officio*, moderator or president. To appoint a president in any meeting where there is an appointed bishop, it is in effect saying that the bishop is not qualified to keep order; and to appoint a treasurer where there is a deacon, it is in effect saying he is not to be trusted, or not qualified for his office. The office itself suggests the propriety of those directions and qualifications laid down for both the deacons and deaconesses in Paul's letters before mentioned. What a wise, benevolent, and independent institution, a christian congregation is! Nothing is left out of view which can contribute to the temporal and spiritual weal of the brotherhood. They meet in full assembly once every week to remember, praise, and adore the Lord; to share in the participation of his favors. The temporal state of the brotherhood is not overlooked in these meetings. Contributions are made for the necessities of saints. The deacons are acquainted, and, through him, the whole fraternity, with the circumstances of all. Under its wise and wholesome discipline care is taken that every member capable of labor, work with his own hands diligently at some honest calling. The contracting of heavy and oppressive debts is proscribed. No brother is allowed to enthrall himself nor others in any sort of worldly speculations which incurs either anxiety on his part or inconvenience to others. The aged, feeble, and helpless are taken care of by the brethren. The indolent, slothful, and bad economist are censured, admonished, and reformed, or excluded. The Lord's table is constantly furnished. The bishops' wants and necessities always supplied, and

no one deprived of any necessary good. There are persons fitted for every service; and those who attend continually on this good service, become eminent in the faith, and after refreshing others are again in turn refreshed themselves. In this view of the deacon's office, we cannot but concur with the sayings and views of the primitive fathers who considered the deacons as the treasurers of the congregation, and as appointed to the service of tables, viz. the Lord's table, the poor's table, and the bishop's table.

EDITOR.

\* \* \*

### "TO PAULINUS."

#### LETTER III.

*My Dear Sir*—THE sentence in the Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, which to you appears objectionable, is the following: "And here let it be noted that the justification by works and that by faith, of which Paul speaks, and of which our systems speak, are quite different things. To quote his words and apply them to our questions about faith and works, is illogical, inconclusive, and absurd." When I penned this sentence I anticipated objections to it, and knew that it would be out of place to obviate them in that preface. The question then was whether should I withhold or bestow it. The fact of its appearance shews my decision of that question. I am glad you have called upon me for an exposition of it. I trust I will be able to satisfy you and others who have objected to it. We shall now make the attempt.

The 4th chapter was that portion of the epistle to which I referred in that sentence. Now it must first be asked, What were the *works* of which the apostle there speaks? It will be admitted in the case of Abraham, from whose *works* and *faith* the apostle here argues, that the faith of Abraham was a belief that his seed would be as numerous as God had promised him—"SO SHALL THY SEED BE." This promise he believed, notwithstanding all in *nature* and *experience* was against it. He considered not his own body now *dead*, neither the *deadness* of Sarah's womb. Against all hope founded on the nature of things, he believed in hope of being the father of *nations* by the aged Sarah. It was not his faith in a Messiah which was accounted to him for righteousness as our systems speaks. It was not his faith in a Messiah that constituted him the *father* of all believers. Others believed in the Messiah as firmly as he. But relying on the faithfulness and power of God alone, he was confident that his offspring by Sarah would be as innumerable as the stars, or sands on the sea shore—"therefore it was counted to him for righteousness." By a reference to the 11th Heb. it will appear that the faith by which the ancients obtained a good report was as different as their names. In other words, the faith spoken of was the belief of particular promises or revelations made in their days. Their believing was the same, but the things believed were different. In every age of the world the faith of the approved consisted in the truths revealed to them and of the promise given them. So Paul, after



speaking of Abraham's faith in God's promise to him, being accounted, to him for righteousness, adds, "It was not written for his sake; but for us also, to whom faith shall be accounted for righteousness, if we believe the promise made to us, viz. that Jesus died for our sins, and was raised for our justification." Paul argues here that not his fleshly works of circumcising himself nor his children, nor his servants justified him; but his faith in the promise, "*So shall thy seed be.*" Again, the law was not given to the seed of Abraham with a reference to Canaan. "The inheritance was not by *law* but by *promise.*" Canaan was unalterably promised 430 years before the law; or the law was 430 years after the promise—consequently no works of that law were spoken of in the case of Abraham. Neither the faith of Abraham nor the works of Abraham, *here spoken of*, are akin to our systematic faith and works. The affirmation in the above sentence is therefore *true*. But what is gained by the affirmation? I answer, *Accuracy* in noticing the meaning, and *correctness* in applying the sentiments of scripture. A loose and indiscriminating citation of scripture words, without regard to their scriptural meaning, is the cause of nine-tenths, at least, of the errors of this age. And I would not prove a scriptural truth, by misquoting a scriptural passage, for the sake of the dearest sentiment I hold. Some quote the scriptures as if they thought it right to bring every word that can be cited from any similarity, in proof of a favorite point. Now a good cause is often more injured by one misapplied text, than it can be aided by a dozen of good arguments. On this subject I would be precise even to squeamishness. I would, in other words, object as much to a citation of scripture made at variance with the design of the passage in aid of my own most favorite topic, as I would to an erroneous argument advanced by an opponent.

But again, more is at issue than has been noticed. "Good works," "trusting to works," and "justification by works," are words and sentences of general currency. Many class under the head of *good works*—prayers—praises—baptism—the Lord's supper, and all acts of devotion; and seeking to be justified by these is often viewed as seeking justification by works; and it is supposed that Paul had such works in view when he spake of *works of law* and justification by works.

Once more, "*good works*" are identified with "*works of law*" and works of human contrivance; and the consequence is, that what is said about good works in scripture is very generally misunderstood and confounded with works of law. All these mistakes can only be corrected by a minute attention to the scripture style. And, as you know, I deal much in assertion sometimes, especially when I have neither time nor room for the proof, I will assert that all works called *good* in scripture have *men* for their object; and that no act of devotion, or any work which has God only for its object, is called a *good work*. That may be an act of devotion, but a good work in the scripture style it cannot be.

The kind offices performed to the Saviour when he was poor and needy, the kind offices performed by one disciple to another, and every work which has man's comfort or happiness in view, is, in the sacred style, a *good work*. The settlement of this small matter is with some mere trifling; yet such persons admit that ten mills make one cent, and one hundred cents make one dollar, and that one dollar and one-fourth will purchase one acre of land for ever. Let the above view of *good works* be fairly established in the mind of a Catholic and he becomes a Protestant.

But what I fixed my attention chiefly upon in that passage was the meaning of the justification by faith and that works which Paul and James taught. To understand which has been with many theologians a matter of such immense trouble. Faith and works must be apprehended in the apostolic sense before justification by either can be understood in that sense.

Sinners are justified by faith and Christians by works. But this is too laconic for the mass of mankind. It is one thing, however, to introduce a person into a state of acceptance, and another to live acceptably in that state. It is one thing to enter into the married state, and another to make a good wife. Now faith in God's promise through Jesus Christ, is argued by the apostles, as that which brings men into a state of intimacy, friendship, and familiarity, or, in other words, into a state of acceptance with God. Thus faith is accounted unto a man for righteousness, by the mere favor of God. But the continued enjoyment of such a state is by the same favor made to depend on our behaviour. On this principle is predicated all the apostolic exhortations. All that is addressed to the hopes and fears of Christians is derived from this consideration. So that when Paul and James are understood there will be no occasion for an effort to *reconcile* them, as Luther and Calvin laboriously attempted. Paul speaks of the justification of sinners, and James of the justification of Christians. It is an astonishing act of favor to account faith in Jesus as righteousness to a sinner, and then to teach this justified person how to live as eternally to enjoy the favor of God. In the final judgment when men's *actions* and not their *states* will be examined, *faith is not then accounted unto any man for righteousness*. But, I was hungry and ye fed me, naked and ye clothed me, &c. These shall go away into everlasting life, &c. This is an important point. Without holiness, then, no man can enter the heavenly kingdom—"If any man, therefore, draws back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" Instead of attempting to show that these persons had not "*true faith*," let us endeavor to show that we have works. Was not Abraham justified as a *sinner* by *faith* in God's promise? And as a *servant* of God was he not justified by *works* when he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? But I must not attempt to write a treatise on faith and works. Nor need I attempt to satisfy all the lovers of systems. What rendered the faith of Abraham so remarkable was his belief of a promise which was beyond the power of nature to

accomplish, and what rendered the work so famous, on account of which he obtained a good report; was that it was an act of self denying and unreserved obedience growing out of his former belief. I am not now speaking of how the just man lives by faith; but of the faith which justifies a sinner—nor of the works by which sinners seek to be justified; but of the works which justify the faith of christians. Without faith it is impossible for a sinner to please God, and without works it is impossible for any to be justified in the day when every man shall be rewarded according to his works.

With regard to what you say of a writer in epistolary communications “expressing a truth, a maxim, a position of general application,” I would observe, that there is no incongruity, no impropriety in so doing, and I admit that the apostles frequently did so. But you will please to observe, as indeed I doubt not you have frequently observed, that these maxims, truths, and positions of a general nature, are no more general than the object he has in view, or the drift of his remarks; and that they are never abstracted from the subject on hand. But it may happen that they have a general bearing upon other subjects from analogy, and as such they are to be interpreted and applied by the most exact rules of analogy. To say, for example, that *no man is justified by his works* is a general truth. But general as it is, it must, from its context, be restricted to unbelievers, for it is just as true and as *general* that *every christian will be justified by his works*. Nothing else comes in review on the day of judgment; if the Lord’s account of the separation of the sheep and the goats is to be applied to that day. A great deal of wisdom and knowledge is requisite to the application of general truths. So sensible were the sacred writers of this that they most generally restrict those general truths either in their own exposition or application of them.

I see every day the ill effects of the two popular systems of faith and works. Some seem to be afraid of doing works lest they should trust them, and some have to use for faith nor a knowledge of the scriptures; but *talk* of doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with their God. Again others call prayer, praise, baptism, and all religious observances, good works—and dehort men from trusting in them as they would the fleshly works of the Jew or of the law.

I will be asked, Are these *bad* works, and are not all works either good or evil? To the captious or weak disciple I would reply in your sense of the terms, All works are either good or bad; but this is not the distribution of them made in the scriptures—Good works are of the following classes: “A widow well reported for good works,” of what species? “if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saint’s feet, if she have relieved the afflicted. &c. i. e. if she have diligently followed every good work.” From this style there is no deviation in the sacred writings. Acts of devotion towards


God though we may call them good works are not so distinguished in the holy oracles. To most readers these remarks will appear hypercritical; but I know, my dear sir, that you will concur with me in saying that the time will come when a pure speech will be restored, and that as by a correct speaker the pronunciation of a monosyllable is a matter not to be overlooked, so to a correct devoted biblical student every thing is of importance that throws light upon any sentence in the sacred books.

I am constrained to be much more succinct in this part of my reply than I had projected. To give the reasons is not now necessary. If, in any thing, these remarks are not satisfactory, I rejoice to know that your frankness and candor, will prompt you to write me your criticisms and objections. I wish for, and anxiously solicit from you, dear sir, all the criticisms, objections, and inquiries which you may think expedient, either on the New Translation, or on the contents of this work.

In great haste, but with much affection. your brother in the hope of immortality,

EDITOR.

**CORRESPONDENTS.**—*WE have more communications on hand, at this time, than would, were they all fully answered, make one volume of this work. We are yet amongst those long since received. As a number of these are on the same subjects, we shall classify them under different heads according to their subjects, and either select one of each kind, or condense and epitomize the whole. We do not intend, from this statement, to discourage correspondents—we still solicit their favors; and though all their communications cannot appear for the want of room, they will still be of service to the public as far as they are of service to me.*

 *I wish all letters of business to be addressed to me, to Wellsburgh, Brooke co. Va. as some of those otherwise addressed are miscarried.*

**NEW AGENTS**—*Virginia, Wilson V. Henley, James City; Nathaniel H. Turner, Louisa; John C. Taliaffero, Enfield.—North Carolina, Stephen Fox, Jordansville; N. G. Smith, Dorsettsville. Agents who have no other method of remitting, will, at my risk, remit to me per mail, addressed as above, especially those who have but a few subscribers on their list, and who live at a great distance from us.*

EDITOR.

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No. 11—Vol. IV] BUFFALOE, B. C. VA. June 4, 1827. [Whole No. 47

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*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

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### SPECULATION IN RELIGION.

BY speculation in religion we mean religious ideas that never enter into practice. Man is a religious creature, because, as an intelligent immortal and accountable being, he is dependent on God, and the more dependent he feels himself, the more religious he is, while his speculations in religion bring him no nearer to God. Man, therefore, without the knowledge of Jesus Christ as the only mediator between God and man, has no godliness. By godliness we mean, the transformation of mind, passion, and conduct to the will of God as revealed in the gospel. Speculation in religion is that which does not affect, according to the will of God, either the sentiments, passions, or conduct of the religious being.

Speculation in philosophy has been wisely discarded from approved systems. Since the days of Bacon our scientific men have adopted the practical and truly scientific mode—That is, they have stopped where human intellect found a bound, over which it could not pass, and have been contented to go no further than material objects analyzed gave out their qualities, and left the manner of their existence, as beyond the bounds of created intellect. Since men have been so wise in handling and analyzing material objects, we have heard little or nothing about occult sciences: but the sciences and the arts have advanced with increased velocity to the great good of the human kind. We plead for the same principle in the contemplation of religious truth. The qualities of matter are to be found in the great elaboratory of the material world. By inducing matter by every process to give out its qualities, and to deduce nothing from hypothesis; so religious truth is to be deduced from the revelations which the deity has been pleased to give to man. And as in the elaboratory of the material world, every truth concerning the qualities of matter is to be deduced from the matter itself; so in divine revelation we are to deduce what is practical, avoiding all speculation.

Philosophers have become wise in their generation, and, therefore, we will not even mention the hypotheses of past ages with respect to the material world, which have been scouted by science; but come immediately to our point, namely, that the men of religion have been less wise than the men of science.—A few examples shall suffice

## SPECIMENS,

*Of speculation in religion.*

God is too good to condemn and punish his creatures.

Holiness is God's darling attribute.—Mercy is God's darling attribute.

God's eternal Son.

The spirit proceedeth from the Father and the Son by eternal procession.

The Redeemer came to save the elect.

The Redeemer will only save his elect people.

The elect infants that die in infancy shall be saved.

Are there few that be saved?

The gospel is only good news to sensible sinners.

The gospel is not to be preached to sinners till they are sensible of their lost estate.

Sinners in their natural state

*Of truth.*

The Lord God is merciful and gracious,—slow to anger,—long-suffering,—forgiving iniquity—transgression, and sin,—and by no means clearing the guilty.

The Lord is holy in all his works, and just in all his ways.

The holy—offspring which shall be born of thee shall be called the son of God.—This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.

If I go not away the comforter will not come, but if I go away I will send him unto you—which proceedeth from the Father, and he will take of mine and show it unto you.

The Son of Man came to seek and save that which was lost.

This is a true saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners—the chief.

Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for I say unto you that many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

Good news to all people.

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be condemned.

Ye do search the sacred scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but ye will not come to me that ye might

*Specimens of spec. in rel.*

are dead in sin as the dead in the grave; they can do nothing—they cannot come to Christ, nor repent, nor believe, &c.

Faith is the gift of God, and, therefore, not the duty of sinners.

Unbelievers cannot believe the gospel, and, therefore, they cannot be condemned for that which they are unable to do.

Faith includes in it truth, confidence, and many fruits of the Spirit, and, therefore, a man cannot possess faith without the Spirit of Christ.

If you have real faith.

Many may believe all that the sacred scriptures say, and yet perish.

Regeneration is in inexplicable mystery.

In regeneration the soul is passive, and in conversion active.

Regeneration is the root of all goodness.

God often hides his face from his people in sovereignty.

Before that a man can ascertain that he is a child of God, he must love God for what he

*Specimens of truth.*

have life. The animal man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness to him, for they are spiritually discerned. This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.

He that believeth not the Son of God is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the only begotten Son of God.

Jesus comes in flaming fire to take vengeance on all those who believe not God and obey not the gospel.

Faith is the substance of things not seen, the confidence of things hoped for. He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life.

There is one faith.

The things verily believed amongst us. He that believeth on the name of God is not condemned.

Seeing you have purified yourselves in obeying the truth through the spirit.

They were pierced to their hearts, and cried out Men and brethren, what shall we do? Be converted every one of you.

Without faith it is impossible to please God—Purifying their hearts by faith.

Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you.

We love him because he first loved us—God is love; he that

*Specimen of spec. in rel.*

is in himself as the source of all perfection, without any relation to what he is to believing sinners.

Man shall not be justified till the last day.

Once in Christ always in Christ.

Christ has left no direct nor specific form of government for his church.

The souls of men sleep with their bodies till the resurrection.

With what body they come?

It is vain talking. We know that salvation is of God—and we know that if we strive ever so much we cannot be saved except we be elected.

It would, indeed, be an arduous undertaking to give specimens of all the ways in which men speculate in religion. The above specimens are given as an example of what is meant by *speculation in religion*. It is of great consequence to have spiritual discernment to distinguish between that which is speculation in religion and that which is truth. The more especially as such

*Specimens of truth.*

dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Being justified by faith we have peace with God.

He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved—Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Go ye into all the world, disciple all nations, baptizing them—and teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world.

Today shall thou be with me in Paradise. I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better.

Thou fool that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.—And God giveth to every seed its own body.

Who art thou, O! man, that repliest against God? To day if thou wilt hear his voice, harden not your heart. Come let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool.—Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: Let him turn to the Lord, who will have mercy upon him, and to our God, who will abundantly pardon.



speculations put on the appearance of truth, or seem to have truth for their basis. Such was the first speculation in religion, by attention to which man fell from his original state. Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil, is as true as any speculation that has been proposed since that time.

Speculations in religion may be known by this test: though they could be ascertained, they do no good; and agitated, and discussed, and acted upon, they have the most pernicious consequences. Such are the features of speculation as drawn by Paul—Foolish and untaught questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife. Of this cast was the first speculation, “Ye shall be as God.” Well be it so. What has been the consequence? Or take any of the above specimens of speculation. Say God is too good to condemn and punish his creatures. Well! agitate the question. Be emboldened in sin, and then find that he will by no means clear the guilty. Again, say that holiness is God’s darling attribute, and then have all your powers hardened in despair. Proceed again to mercy as the favorite of the Most High, and speculate yourself into hardened insensibility. Speculate again, and say that the Saviour is God’s eternal Son, and try if you can believe and act upon it, that the Son, as such, and the Father are equally eternal, as regards the Deity. Or if you try your powers upon what men call the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, endeavor to show what you have gained in knowledge of the influence of the Spirit in regeneration, and in that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Or say that the Redeemer came to save the elect only: discuss the question in all its bearings—Do you know who are the elect? or in what way are you to know your own election? Or if you contend that the gospel is only to be preached to sensible sinners. The truth leads to enquire who is the sinner that is truly sensible of his sins before he receives the gospel? Or are you such a sensible sinner as to value the gospel without believing it?

The pursuit of speculation leads further from truth and further from God. But the truth is one; always does good, and its practical tendency is happiness to the individual and benevolence to all.

The test of truth is the word of God in its plain sense, addressing itself to every man’s conscience. The word of God is itself the truth, nor is there one speculation in all the word of God.

Speculations seem to be founded on the sacred scriptures. It is, however only a false appearance. Say that speculation takes up the proposition that men in their natural estate are dead in sin, and do nothing pleasing to God, and cannot repent, nor believe the gospel without the Spirit of God. It is all true in a true sense, the Bible says the same things and much more strongly than men’s words can express; but the Bible does not say the same things by way of speculation. It speaks practically; that is, it represents man’s entirely helpless state, that he may come to the Saviour, and that in not coming to the Saviour, he may condemn

himself as a guilty and depraved enemy to God, and to the gospel, in his mind and by wicked works. Speculation always leads from practice. Men, in their speculations, even about the guilty, depraved, and totally helpless state of man by nature, become vain and proud of their accuracy of knowledge, and thereby are kept from the Saviour, while the reception of the truth of God upon the state of human nature leads to the Saviour, because it is derived from a knowledge of him that came to seek and save that which was lost.

W. B.

Philadelphia, Pa.

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“FOR THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.”

### ON EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION.—No. II.

IN my last paper it was observed that a knowledge of general christianity, the primitive churches, the apostles, and even of Christ himself, as written of in the New Testament, was of too popular, too remote a nature to consummate personal happiness; and that while those high matters concerned mankind universally, our individual comfort terminated ultimately upon a knowledge of ourselves, viz. whether we were or were not personally possessed of those graces of *faith* in Christ, *hope* of eternal life, *love* of God and man; and the gift of a *holy spirit*, which, as was observed, go to define the *unsound* phrase “experimental religion.” Of the four particular evidences of personal adoption, viz. *faith*, *hope*, *love*, and a *holy spirit*, I shall select the last for the subject of this essay—the gift of a *holy spirit*.

Well, then, by way of premises, let it be observed that the *visible universe*, the *law of Moses*, and the *gospel*, are to be regarded as so many oracles by Jesus Christ concerning the divine character, which it is his high office to reveal. These oracles set the divinity in the several attitudes of *creating*, *commanding*, *redeeming*; consequently in the *universe* we behold his physical grandeur—in the *law* we hear his moral authority—in the *gospel* we perceive him sympathizing. “Jesus wept” The universe, then, is God manifest in *works*—the law is God manifest in *words*—the gospel is God manifest in *flesh*; and thus Jesus Christ in these revelations causes the divine character to approach mankind gradually by three successive advances—from mere physical power to moral supremacy, and from that again to the intensest and most unparalleled sympathy and sensibility, sweating blood, and weeping tears and uttering shrieks at the painful idea of being shamefully hung on a cross, naked, in the presence of three millions of people. His feelings broke his heart—“*Reproach hath broken my heart.*” Ps. So much for the development of the divine character in these three dispensations of *nature*, *law*, and the *gospel*. But now in regard to the comparative advantages brought to the worshippers by the successive introduction of these economies, it will appear obvious from what has been stated that an increased degree of light respecting the divine existence and character, the origin of the universe,

the creation and destiny of man, the causes of death and of immortality, and the federal relations by which we are made partakers of these, are the chief. But this is not all; it is but the one half, for as in each of these dispensations there is a primary revelation of God round which all others are made to play, so in each of them there is a fresh advantage bestowed upon the worshipper, round which his increased responsibility is made to turn. In nature, heathens see God's physical greatness; in the law Jews hear his moral authority; in the gospel christians *experience* his spiritual power.

In the first dispensation men sinned against the invisible power and godhead by changing its glory into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four footed beasts, and creeping things.

In the law Jews sin against his moral authority, expressed on tables; but in the gospel, in which God has substituted spirit for literal sounds and natural symbols, the worshippers sin against the Holy Spirit, they grieve or quench the Holy Spirit, for the gospel is the ministration of Spirit. In the first dispensation, we see; in the second, we hear; in the last we enjoy God. But how the uncreated Spirit dwells in a created spirit, filling it with joy, we know not; but certain it is that this fellowship is set forth in the following words: "Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him and he with me." Again, "If a man love me he will keep my commandments, and my Father will love him, and we will come in unto him and make our abode with him!" Supping with Christ means joy in a holy spirit. In a word, some men are condemned because they believe not in the Son of God; and secondly, others are condemned because, believing in him, they "turn sway," "love the present world," "mind earthly things," "deny the Lord who bought them," trample under foot the blood of the Son of God, and do despite to the Spirit of Grace;" and to me it is evident that the present race of christians are to be censured not so much for their informality as their carnality and contempt of the Spirit of our God.

But now if any should ask why Jesus Christ made us to see the divine grandeur, and hear his moral authority, before he let us *taste* his spiritual power, mine answers is this, That it was necessary that the law of God should be written on stone; first, in order that fallen nature might by experiment (and we are altogether creatures of experiment) discover its inadequacy to keep it; and second, that this same written law might be for a book of reference in the days of the Spirit; in the days or economy in which power to fulfil the law is fully and freely given by God to those who believe that whensoever men sin against the Spirit which they have of God, they may be reprov'd, corrected, instructed. The scriptures are therefore said to be profitable for all these ends.

Let us, then, christian reader, walk in the Spirit, and we shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; "for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live; and if the Spirit of God dwell in us, he that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead will quicken our mortal bodies also by his Spirit which dwelleth in us. Concerning the written law as a rule of life, I should think that "Book of Reference" were a better title for it, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit is both the christian's life and the rule of it; but by the present commercial, trading race of professors, our religion is transformed into a written law, a letter, a commandment; and by men so guilty of the spirit of gain, christianity, which is godliness, will never be experimentally understood; to mean anything else than a written instrument; nevertheless to some it is the "power of God."

But some will say, When is this gift of the Holy Spirit given—before or after belief? In reference to this good gift of God, I heard it observed a few nights ago that we had turned the gospel wrong end foremost—the modern gospel reading thus, "Unless ye receive the Spirit ye cannot believe!" the ancient gospel reading thus, "Unless ye believe ye cannot receive the Holy Spirit, or to give it in the terms of Peter, "Believe and be baptized and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the promise (i. e. of the Holy Spirit) is unto you," &c. &c. Indeed it must be confessed that if we say to sinners, When ye receive the Holy Spirit ye will believe, and the apostles say, When ye believe ye will receive the Holy Spirit, that there is manifestly an inversion of the apostolic annunciation concerning the heavenly gift, the question in the primitive age being, "Have ye received the Holy Spirit *since ye believed?*" But without being *casuistical*, i. e. jesuistical in this matter, we shall drop it, and without striving about time when the gift is bestowed, let us thank God that it is bestowed at all, and glorify him by walking in it, living in it, praying in it, and rejoicing in it; for "to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Again—Some will say, What does the expression *Holy Spirit* mean? Well, in scripture it stands first for God the Holy Spirit, and secondly for the holy mind or spirit of a believer—for illustration, take Peter's words to Ananias, "Why has Satan tempted you to lie unto the Holy Spirit; ye have not lied unto men, but unto God," (the Holy Spirit.) And the Saviour says, How much more will your heavenly Father give a holy spirit (as it should be translated) to those that ask him. Again—Praying in a holy spirit. Again—Paul says he approved himself God's servant "by knowledge, by long-sufferings, by kindness, by a holy spirit," i. e. by a mind innocent of the love of gain, or commerce, or sensuality.

Now then the expression stands for both God the Holy Spirit, and for a believer's spirit made holy by him.

I shall now answer, from scripture, the following questions.—When do we know that we are born of the Spirit? I answer, when we know that our spirits are holy. But it will be asked again, when do we know this? I reply, when we behold our mind producing the fruits of a holy spirit. But what are the fruits of a holy spirit? Paul says they are, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance, against such there is no (written) law. Now how many unholy Baptists are there? how many unholy Presbyterians, how many Methodists, Episcopalians, Independents, and schismatics of every name? Well may the Editor say, we are still in Babylon! Ah me! when shall we return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God and him serveth him not? Ah apostatizing christians, grievors and quenchers of the Spirit of our God, are we not ashamed?

Now, reader, let us return to God and holiness, for without it no one shall see his face—and believe me that a disputatious mind is not a holy mind—an intemperate, unmeek, or unfaithful spirit is not a holy spirit—neither is one that does not practise goodness, and gentleness, and long-suffering, and peace—neither the mind that does not love or does not rejoice in Jesus. Ye cavillers, ye conceited few, who boast of your scriptural knowledge; but whose spirits, nevertheless, cannot move even the elements of the heavenly oracles, let me whisper to you a secret, that the kingdom of heaven is not so much in an abundant knowledge, as in an abundant spirit of righteousness, peace and holy joy.

PHILIP.

\* \* \*

O. S. Virginia, October 21st, 1826.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

Dear Sir,

ONE who wishes to see truth triumph over error in every thing, and who believes that the Christian Baptist is destined to be instrumental in bringing about this great desideratum in matters of religion, begs the favor of addressing the Editor a few lines upon a subject of great interest to one who believes himself out of the "ark of safety;" but whose supreme desire is to know the truth as it is in Jesus.

Regarding you as a teacher in Israel, I desire your aid in my researches after truth, and in the present instance I make the application with the strongest assurance of being satisfactorily answered, (If you see fit to answer me at all) as the subject upon which I solicit information once operated upon *your* mind *precisely* as it does on mine.

In your dissertation on Conscience, No. 7, vol. 3, you have *literally* told my experience. This is the part to which I allude. You say,

"I well remember what pains and conflicts I endured under a fearful apprehension that my convictions and my sorrows for sin were not deep enough. I even envied Newton of his long agony; I envied Bunyan of his despair. I could have wished, and *did wish*, that the Spirit of God would bring me down to the very verge of suffering the pains of the damned, that I might be raised to share the joys of the genuine converts. I feared that I had not sufficiently found the depravity of my heart, and had not yet proved that I was utterly without strength. Sometimes I thought that I felt as sensible, as the ground under my feet, that I had gone just as far as human nature could go without *supernatural aid*, and that one step more would place me safe among the regenerated of the Lord; and yet heaven-refused its aid. This too I concealed from all the living. I found no comfort in all the declarations of the gospel, because I wanted *one* thing to enable me to appropriate them to myself. Lacking this, I could only envy the happy favorites of heaven who enjoyed it, and *all my refuge was in a faint hope* that I one day might receive that aid which would place my feet upon the rock."

Now, sir, you cannot conceive with what intense interest I followed you through every word of this paragraph; *every word* was in perfect coincidence with my own feelings. I thought, as I read the piece, *at last* I have found a pilot who was once entangled in such quicksands and vortices as obstructed my passage, and who of course will be able to give me some important direction how to steer so as to reach the desired haven. But alas! what was my disappointment when, instead of informing us how your feet were *ultimately* established "upon the rock," you suddenly break off the thread of your narrative, and leave us in painful suspenses as to your future destiny. The sentence following the paragraph above quoted, begin thus: "Here this system ends and enthusiasm begins." I am at a loss what construction you would have us place upon these words. I am sure you cannot mean that it would be enthusiasm to wish for *supernatural aid* in regeneration, for without such aid, as I understand the matter, *no man* can be a christian. The following scriptures, I think, confirm my opinion—The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither *can* he know them, because they are *spiritually* discerned. Now as the *natural* man has not and *cannot* have this discernment, the conclusion is inevitable that it must be a *supernatural* work. Again, we are informed that faith is the gift of God, and of course I must say cannot be learned in the school of nature. But I am sure, as before said, that this cannot be your meaning—I would, therefore, fain see you resume the subject in a future paper. I want to hear again from you about the ONE thing which you *once* felt so much in need of, and which I have thought (with humility be it spoken) was the *one* thing I lack to become a christian—for my *judgment* has long since been convinced of the truth of christianity. The morality of

the gospel, its rapid propagation under its first illiterate preachers in opposition to the prejudices of the world, the accomplishment of the Old and New Testament prophecies, the miracles wrought by the Saviour, &c. &c. constitute a chain of testimonies which infidels have in vain tried to break. I believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. But how did I become possessed of this kind of faith? So far as I know, by *my own efforts*; by reading and reflection, just as I learn and believe that Rome is situated on the Tyber; and that Oliver Cromwell usurped the liberties of his country. With grief, therefore, I am constrained to believe that *mine* cannot be *saving* faith. I know of no title by which I can be more fitly designated than the paradoxical one of

A BELIEVING UNBELIEVER.

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### REPLY TO THE ABOVE.

Dear Sir,

YOUR letter has been deferred beyond my intentions, having with some others, laid off for immediate attention, been overlooked, in the accumulation of business. My experience broke off, you think, too abruptly. This may have been so for your case, but for my object at that time, which was to show *that every man's experience corresponded with his religion education*, it was conducted sufficiently far to demonstrate the point in hand. Persons educated by the apostles had no such experience as that which I related. The New Testament furnishes no such a case. The consummation of such a case is as unscriptural as is the commencement and progress through. It is not the result of apostolic but of systematic teaching. But few are able to trace their mental exercises and excitements to the proper cause. Hence divine and human causes are so completely blended together that few can discriminate the one from the other.

"Where this system ends enthusiasm begins." The system brings us down to a certain point of sadness, grief, or despair. To extricate us it is necessary that a door should be opened for conceits to arise. Hence we look for a divine interpositions of a peculiar character at a certain crisis, and as the drowning man holds fast his straw, so we take hold of a dream, or a conceit, or an impression, or an impulse, or a voice, or a particular occurrence, and by a favorable interpretation imagine it a sign or token for good, and console ourselves that Heaven has now lent its long withheld aid. We begin to rejoice in our supposed personal safety, and, by a slight but quick transition, rejoice in God for his sovereign aid or grace bestowed on us. This gives a brighter color to every thing we see. An almost sensible difference is discovered on even natural objects around on us. Now the landscape smiles and blooms which before hung in mourning. The winds whisper peace. The waters roar no more.

"*That very voice which thundered terrors to the guilty heart,*

"*With tongues of seraphs whispers peace.*"

"The swallow twittering from its straw-built shed," or the raven

croaking on the leafless tree are heard with pleasure unknown before. A thousand springs of enjoyment are open now and overflowing which before were dry.

The strong minded are longest in the gloom. Where the rational faculties are vigorous the passions are weaker, and *vice versa*. Children are proof of this. The men of strong intellect and much reflection are not so easily satisfied when in doubts or fears. Hence the system leaves many in the mire which no conceit or reverie can bring out. So much I add to my former statements in the essay referred to in your letter. To resume my experience where I left off. I rested for a while on the bare probability as possibility that divine aid would come to my relief. This I soon found to be but slender support to a troubled mind. It were long to tell, and worth little when told, how many efforts, how many hopes, and how many disappointments in succession agitated my mind. I was all the while looking for an aid which was never promised, and expecting an interposition without which I was taught I could derive no assurance of the favor of God. I was once, nay more than once, led to believe that I had received this aid in consequence of the vivid impression made on my mind in hearing a *layman* speak to me of a righteousness without law, a righteousness of God through a belief in facts attested by the law and the prophets. So soon as I imagined the aid was granted I felt a joy and peace unknown before. These feelings I afterwards saw, arose not from a belief of the philanthropy of God; but in consequence of a special interposition on my behalf. Hope and fear alternated in my breast just as I thought upon the *help* which was afforded me. If I thought it was divine aid, I had hope; if I supposed it to be altogether human, I feared I began at last to rest with more satisfaction on the proclamation, "*whosoever will.*" I reasoned thus, "I was most certainly *willing*, and God was most certainly a God of truth, and had most assuredly invited me to partake of his favor, and why should I not? But I could not boast like Athers, I had still something to fear which they had not; and this, like a worm unseen, made my leaf wither, and my head droop. Nor was it until I clearly apprehended that it was quite compatible with the blessed gospel for a person to view himself as destitute of any peculiar or personal claim founded upon any supposed favor bestowed upon him, or assistance given him, or good quality in him, and at the same time to rejoice in hope of the favor of God abounding through the gift of Jesus, that I could feel myself at all steadfast in the faith and hope of eternal life. I found ultimately that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth it, and the divine aid was vouchsafed in a way which I had not expected. I had looked for it independent of all the grace revealed in the gospel, but found it inseparably connected therewith. My experience hitherto was the experience of a misguided education, and indeed the experience of unbelief. My present peace and joy and hope arise from a firm persuasion that



in the Lord Jesus through the love of God, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, I have acceptance, and am adopted into the family of God. Of this I have assurance from the spirit of adoption which I have received, and from the love I have to all the saints. There is not a man, woman, or child upon the earth who sincerely loves the king, my Lord and Master, whom I do not unfeignedly love for his sake. And there is no commandments of the King, there is no expression of his will, to obey which, I feel the least reluctance. Such is the head of the chapters of my christian experience.

I feel myself bound to give *you* this disclosure of my experience from the spirit and tenor of your epistle. But to say that it can be profitable to others for me or any other person to tell all their agitations and describe their journey to their present abode in the favor of God, is with me quite questionable. Myriads were brought to rejoice in the Lord in a few minutes or hours, and I blame my religious education for all the darkness, and gloom, and uncertainty, of which I have been conscious. I am now in the enjoyment of the blessings of the gospel of Christ; but this I might enjoy manifold more, and might have enjoyed much sooner, had it not been for the obstacles thrown in my way by an abstruse and speculative theology. Thousands by a different road have arrived at the same hope, and may much excel me, in their enjoyments and spiritual devotion, and therefore I cannot give this narrative as a standard by which any man's pretensions to the christian character may be tested.

As to the supernatural aid afforded in any case, I have to observe that it is all supernatural, the truth believed, the good things hoped for, and the amiable one loved are all supernatural. And if by our "*own efforts*" you could believe that Jesus is the messiah the Son of God—by your "*own efforts*" you could believe in him to the salvation of your soul. That is "*saving faith*." (for there is but *one faith*.) which purifies the heart and works by love, If your faith does not work in obedience to all the Lord's commandments, it is no faith, not even of your own efforts. We can have, and we do have, the blessing of God, or the aid of God, whenever we sincerely ask it. Your references to the "natural man," and to "faith being the gift of God," would have been unnecessary in this case had you read the essays on the work of the Holy Spirit, vol. 2, page 60, 75. To these I refer you. It is one of the monstrous abortions of a purblind theology for any human being to be wishing for supernatural aid to be born again. Transfer such an idea to the first birth and to what an absurdity are we reduced!!

Be assured, my dear sir, that other teaching than the apostles has confused you. You might, at this moment, have been a believing practitioner of the commandments of the Lord, instead of a believing rebel against the Lord, had you honestly read and examined the New Testament. For there the power of God is always exhibited, and supernatural aid displayed in behalf of

every sinner who is disposed to receive it. If you have not, it is because you ask not; and if you ask and receive not, it is because you ask for an improper purpose. And no man living can now be excused for disobedience, to the faith, or will here after be excused for disobedience, because supernatural aid was withheld. It is just as sure as the genial influence of spring which now clothes the forests and the fields with verdant beauty; but to him whose fields are unprotected, and uncultivated, the influences of spring are as though they were not. You might as well tell me that you can bake a loaf by your own efforts, without flour, water, and fire, as that you can believe that Jesus is the Son of God, by your own efforts. I refer you to the excellent essay in this number on speculation in religion, written by an elder in Israel, and to that on experimental religion, by Philip.

Yours, benevolently,  
EDITOR.

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## THE SOCIAL SYSTEM AND DEISM.

### NO. II.

FROM the reception which my *Reply to Mr. D, a Sceptic*, has received—from the requests of many of my readers—from a consideration of the prevalence of scepticism in this country—and from the bold and open attacks of Deists on the Scriptures of Truth, I feel it my duty to devote a few pages of this work to the Sceptics of the present day.

Of these there are two kinds—the inquisitive, speculating, and, in his own judgement, *sincere* Sceptic, and the ignorant, impudent infidel, who never seriously read the Christian Scriptures, and who glorifies in being an unbeliever, as if it was essential to his dignity to discard *revelation*, and to blaspheme the author of the christian religion. Their case is a hopeless one. They are too ignorant to be addressed by reason—too wise in their own conceits to learn any thing, and their conscience so perfectly seared as to have become insusceptible of conviction. There are moral disorders in the human race as incurable as any of those corporeal diseases which have been for ages, and still are, considered beyond the control of all remedies. Amongst these I would place the moral distemper of this latter class of infidels. Some of this class were given up by the Great Physician himself. Miracles could not be wrought in their presence; or, if wrought, could effect nothing. I do not say that it is impossible for God to raise the dead, or to cure such infidels; but it is incompatible with the principles of his moral government to display omnipotence this way. The Saviour could lament the catastrophe of Jerusalem; but could not, consistently with his government, heal them. But there are some of the former class who may be brought to their reason or right mind, and for their sakes I think some efforts ought to be made. The weak minded christians, and the young converts too, may be strengthened and the lame may be healed. When an apostle told christians to be always

prepared to give a reason of the hope that was in them, he did not mean what the people of this time mean by these words. We in this day call our mental exercises the reason of the hope that is in us; but he meant the evidences of the gospel, and not our evidences of our interest therein. "Be always ready to afford to magistrates and rulers, when called before them, good reasons why you can believe and hope in Jesus as the Messiah." I think, too, the *New Harmony Gazette*, which, in this country, is the *focus of the lights of scepticism*, to which, as Tacitus said of Rome, flows all the *cream*, shall I call it, of *enlightened* infidelity, merits a particular attention. The conductors of that journal are amongst the most assiduous, devoted, and persevering Sceptics of the 19th century. The Bible, some way or another stands in their way, and is supposed to be inimical to some favorite scheme, or darling hypothesis of the builders of the city of Mental Independence. At all event, we have not seen a number of that paper in which there is not either a popgun or a blunderbuss discharged at Revelation. For my part I rejoice to know that so much of the reflex light of christianity shines in our political institutions that no *bastille*, no *auto da fe* await the man who vends his sceptical reveries in books or papers, or publicly declaims against the Bible and in favor of Deism. If our most pure, holy, and heavenly religion can be defended, supported, inculcated, and diffused by no other weapons than iron locks, swords, and faggots, I wish not to be in the rear or van of its advocates. No: on our banner is inscribed, *reason, argument, persuasion*.

I never censure a Deist for his eulogies on reason, but for his want of it. I have, indeed, regretted to see and hear men extol *common sense*, and immediately turn round and shew that they had not a particle of it. If there be in this country a reasonable Deist, I have not had the good fortune to become acquainted with him. Some of them, I know, talk a great deal about reason; but really, if I know the meaning of the word, they are the most unreasonable beings I have met with. But I would not get angry with them on this account, but rather I would pity and lend my aid to assist them.

I propose not in these essays to wear any suit of armor made ready to my hand, nor to panoply myself with the fashionable shields and breastplates of the famous defenders of the Bible. I know of few of them that have not in some way injured the cause they labored to defend. Nor will I direct an arrow at every pigmy who squeaks upon an oaten reed. Nor can I yield to the *liberales* at New Harmony the right of using every species of attack at one and the same time. But to drop the metaphorical and to come to the literal, I will premise a few things in this number—

1. The Bible is commonly, by friends and foes, styled the Revelation of God, or a Divine Revelation; and under this title the Sceptics attack it with the most apparent effect and raise the

loudest cry. I come not forward to be attacked through the media of other men's sophistical technicalities. I must tear them all off as David did Saul's armor. Any Sceptic that may deign me a reply, is to remember one thing above all others, that I am to be attacked only in my own style and acceptation of terms and phrases, and that I defend the Bible, and not any man's system of religion, nor his arguments in favor of its divine original. Although not so rich in *mental independence* as the conductors of the social system, I have some little property of this sort of which I would be parsimonious.

I do not believe, then, that the book commonly called the Bible, is properly denominated a Divine Revelation, or communication from the Deity to the human race. At the same time I am convinced that in this volume there are revelations or communications from the Deity to man. *Revelation*, properly so called, is an exhibit of *supernatural* things, a disclosure of things *unknowable* by any other means in the reach of mortals. *Whatever can be known by reason, or the exercise of our five senses, is not a subject of revelation at all.* But the things revealed are all reasonable when all the premises are understood. I grant that the simple statement of any thing not known before may in some sense be called a revelation. For example; the history of the French or American Revolution to a child who never read or heard any thing of it before, is a revelation, but not a divine revelation. To constitute a divine revelation, in our sense of the terms, it is not only necessary that God be the author of it, but that the things exhibited be supernatural, and beyond the reach of our five senses. For example; that *God is a Spirit*, is beyond the reach of our reasoning powers to discover, and could not be known by any human means. That *a Spirit created matter*, or that *God made the earth*, is a truth which no man could, from his five senses or his reasoning powers, discover. It is therefore a revealed truth. That man has a spirit in him capable of surviving his mortal frame, is also a supernatural truth. That man will live again, and be either happy or miserable in a future state, is another supernatural truth. That God so loved the world as to send his only begotten Son to enlighten, purify, and happify men, is a supernatural truth. Now the Bible contains a thousand things that belong not to this class. For example; Moses writes five books in which he relates many thousand historic facts and incidents, none of which are supernatural, though there are many communications in his writings which are supernatural and rank under the head of Divine Revelations. The history of the bondage in Egypt, of their pilgrimage through the wilderness, of their possession of the land of Canaan, of their judges and kings, is no more than true and faithful history. From the perusal of which the divine character and human character is developed to the mind of the reader.

This is as true of the apostolic writings as of the ancient Jewish prophets. In the five historical books of the New Cove-

nant or Testament, many thousand items are written which are no divine revelation; such as the reasonings, objections, and discourses of the Jewish priests, scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees. Many historical facts, such as the decapitation of John, the calling of Peter, the enrolment of Augustus Cesar, the death of Herod, the martyrdom and burial of Stephen, the peregrinations of the Saviour and the apostles, &c. &c. These and a thousand other items cannot be called, in our sense of the terms, a divine revelation. Many things in the prophetic books of the Jewish scriptures and many things in the epistles of the christian scriptures are of the same kind. It would be as great a misnomer to call Paul's request about his cloak left behind him a divine revelation, as to call the Inquirer who writes against the Bible, a Christian. I mean that "Inquirer" in the New Harmony Gazette who begins by pronouncing sentence, and afterwards calls for the proof. Now it must be remembered that generally both the Old and New Testament writers make a distinction such as I have made between those communications which were from God, and the other parts of their writings. The Jewish prophets were wont to call the divine communications a word from the Lord—the message or burden of the Lord, &c. And the Saviour promised two things with a reference to this subject of which we should be mindful. 1st. That the Spirit would qualify them to be faithful historians, by bringing all facts necessary to their narrative to their remembrance; and, in the 2d place, he would guide them into all supernatural truth. This is quite a different work. It is one thing to *recall* to a person's remembrance that of which they were once conscious, and another to make them know things of which they, with all the world, know nothing. The former qualified them to be faithful historians—the latter, to be ambassadors of God, or teachers of his will to men. Thus we believe Moses and all the historians in the Old and New Testament to be credible and faithful witnesses; but in reasoning upon the contents of these books we must always discriminate between what is supernatural and what is not; we must distinguish what is a Divine Revelation from what is human. Not adverting to this, has been the means of much of that nonsense called argument against the Revelation of God. Now much superstition amongst christians owes its origin to the same cause. It is in the present time an enviable path which lies midway between scepticism and superstition. Thomas Paine never would have written his *Age of Reason* had it not been that he supposed the Bible was in the way of his politics. I will not say that he might save his life by avowing such principles as would be deemed orthodox by those who controlled the guillotine; but I will say that it was because he supposed, so long as the Bible was held sacred by the great mass of the community, that it would be impossible successfully to oppose the doctrine of the *divine right of kings*: Had he ever read, or at all understood the Old Testament, he would, from the same motives which led him to oppose it, have

inculcated its authority upon the minds of the community. His devotion to a commonwealth and his dislike of monarchy which caused him to attack, would have induced him to defend the ancient oracles. For this good reason: the only form of government which God himself actually set on earth was that of a commonwealth. He permitted a monarchy for a punishment, but set up a commonwealth for a blessing to the nation which he took under his special care for special purposes.

Had the *unreasonable* author of the *Age of Reason* been better acquainted with the volume he oppugned, he would, even from his politics, have been obliged to plead its authority in his favor. *I have some misgivings that none oppose the Bible who do not think it opposes them.* And it might, perchance, be of some use to those who profess to inquire after truth, and yet oppose this book, to *inquire* amongst their other inquiries, why they at first found themselves sliding off to the opponents of Revelation. I have one great philosopher on my side in this hypothesis. He said men disliked the light that condemned them. To give it in his own words, "He that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be detected."

But I must not omit to state another preliminary consideration, with me of much consequence. It is this: It is not the patriarchal, nor the Jewish, nor the Christian Revelation in piecemeal that I am about to defend against the querulous, captious Sceptic—it is the consummation of all the ancient revelations in the mission of the Son of God. In reference to this I view the whole volume; for this is the Alpha and the Omega of the whole. The christian religion is the corn in the ear. It germinated in the patriarchal, it shot forth in the Jewish, and ripened at the christian era. It is not the bud, nor the stalk, nor the leaves, nor the blossoms, but the ripe ear which we are to eat. And it is this about which we are concerned. I know the Sceptics reason or talk as if the ripe ear should have come first; that it is unreasonable that there should be a root, a stem, leaves, and a husk. They are eccentric geniuses when talking against the Bible.

To obviate the unfounded fears of some weak minds, arising from my remarks on Revelation, I will state distinctly, though it is fairly implied in my remarks, that, as historians, the sacred writers are infalible. Not only is their record of divine communications but their narratives and episodes are infallibly correct. The account of the deluge, of the confusion of human speech, of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, are as much to be relied on as the revelation of God's gracious purposes in the mission of his Son. But many, not discriminating between the history of human affairs, such as Jacob's obtaining the blessing, and Abraham's denying his wife, and the Israelites carrying off the goods borrowed from the Egyptians, &c. &c. and the revelations from God, impiously rail against divine revelation as if these were essential items thereof.

It matters not whether these historians wrote in part or in whole from tradition, from their own observation, or from immediate suggestions, their historical accounts are to us infallible, because sanctioned, approved, and quoted by those under the fullest influence of the Holy Spirit. These things premised, I purpose in my next to come in contact with the Sceptics of the present day. And as I am determined to put them on the defensive, and to have half of the interrogations, and thus to meet them on fair grounds, I will propose them a few questions for consideration; and in order to obtain suitable answers I will answer question for question, and divide to a scruple the *onus probandi*, or burden of proving our respective positions.

*Quest.* 1. Is there a God who created all things? And, if answered in the affirmative, upon what evidence is this known?

2d. Is there a spirit in man which will survive the body or live after the animal life is extinct, and upon what evidence is this known?

3d. Is there a future state of felicity or of torment; and if so, upon what evidence is this known?

I will not be further inquisitive at present. I will reciprocate the favors demanded on principles perfectly liberal. Definite answers and rational proof is expected from some of the enlightened Deists at New Harmony. I have no doubt that it will be conceded that questions and discussions, to the great mass of mankind, paramount to these cannot be conceived. EDITOR.

\* \* \*

*Dear Sir,*

ONE of our teachers in this county has refused to have the new translation read in a public meeting because it is not the word of God, alleging that the common version is received as the word of God, but that the new translation is not considered such. Pray whose word shall we call it? Answer this, if you please, for some of us are in doubt upon this subject. Yours truly,  
CANDIDUS.

\* \* \*

### REPLY TO THE FOREGOING LETTER.

*Mr. Candidus,*

*Dear Sir*—YOUR teacher was certainly right, and you should all passively submit to his determination. For the common version is the word of God, but the new translation is not. The reason why I will now tell you. The common version was made by forty-nine persons authorized by a king, paid for their trouble by the king, and when their work was published the king ordered it to be read *as the word of God* in public assemblies and in families, to the exclusion of every other version. Now all the versions that were read before this king's reign, *ceased* to be the word of God when the king signed the decree; and from that moment the king's version *became* the word of God. You will see, then, that there are *two* things necessary to constitute any translation the word of God: first, that it be *authorized by a king*

and his court; and again, that it be furnished by *forty-nine persons*. Every translation becomes the word of God, or is more or less the word of God according to the number of persons that make it. Thus, if one hundred persons made a translation it would be doubly more the word of God than that made by the forty-nine, and four times more than that made by twenty-five, and thirty-three times and one-third more than the new version, provided it was decreed by a king. For you must remember that both are necessary, and that if a thousand men should agree to make a version, it would not when made be the word of God, because it wanted the royal approbation. You will naturally conclude, from these plain facts, that if one man or three men should most exactly and perfectly translate the original Greek and correct very many errors and inaccuracies in the king's translation, it would nevertheless still be the word of man; for all the errors, inaccuracies, and imperfections in the common version are the word of God, and the correction of them all or any number of them, by only one man or three men, would be no more than the word of man. This, sir, is not only sound, but most orthodox logic. It would therefore be a profanation of the pulpit and the holy place to read, within *thirty* yards of it, the new version. If it be read at all, it ought to be at least beyond the grave yard, or outside of all the consecrated grounds. It may be read in families, just like Robinson Crusoe or any other romance; but never with veneration of a sermon book, and infinitely less the word of God. For the sake of making this matter a little more plain, I will extract a few sentences and phrases out of the common version and out of the new, that you may see how the word of God differs from the word of man:—

### *Word of God.*

The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Baptism of repentance.

I bare record.

The witness of God.

I could wish to be accursed from Christ.

The church of God.

God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which has been delivered unto you.

Generation of vipers.

Be angry and sin not.

Time shall be no more.

### *Word of Man.*

The reign of heaven approacheth.

Immersion of reformation.

I testified.

The testimony of God.

I was wishing to be accursed from Christ.

The congregation of God.

But thanks to God, that though ye were the slaves of sin, ye have obeyed from the heart the mould of doctrine into which ye were cast.

Offspring of vipers.

Can ye be angry and not sin?

There shall be longer delay.

Now if forty-nine men, summoned and paid by a king, should in obedience to the king not translate but anglicise such Greek words as baptism, bishop, angel, church, &c. &c. and should one



or forty-eight persons, from their own better information and mental independence, translate those words into English and give us immersion, overseer, messenger, congregation, &c. &c. this version ought not to be read in a public meeting because it is the word of man; but the other being the work of forty-nine men, sanctioned by a king, should be read as the word of God. By such arguments as these, my dear sir, we prove the common version to be the word of God, and the new to be the word of man. If any man has any better arguments than these to offer, we shall cordially thank him for them.

EDITOR.

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*Allegheny county, Pa. 1827.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

*Dear Sir*—I HAVE read all the numbers of the *Christian Baptist* from the commencement, and am well pleased with your reasoning on what appeared to me dark and doubtful subjects. There is one subject I wish you to give me some light on as soon as you conveniently can—that is, the art or magic of *witchcraft*. I have always been of the opinion that it was nothing more than the cunning imposing on the more ignorant; but a circumstance has taken place in the neighborhood in which I reside which has astonished me and many more. It is this: A young woman, a daughter of one of my neighbors, has been for a considerable time afflicted in a singular manner, and of late herself, her parents, and physician, have taken it in head that she is bewitched. They have applied to a conjuror, who confirms them in their opinion, but said he could not perform a cure unless she would be baptized. To this she agreed, (if we may call sprinkling a few drops of water on the face *baptism*,) and now they have commenced the cure according to the conjuror's directions; and if they succeed I will be more astonished than ever, for the conjuror says that he by his art will bring the witch to the house and make her bid "God bless the girl," and then she will recover. Now, sir, if witchcraft is nothing more than an imposition, you may benefit many by making it appear so, in so plain a manner that all who read may understand.

A FOE TO SORCERY.

N. B. There are some people blamed for having the art, who have hitherto sustained a good moral character.

\* \* \*

REPLY.

*Dear Sir,*

I BELIEVE in sorcery. All nations are now deceived by sorceries. The sorcerers have not yet reformed from their magical incantations. I believe, moreover that the sorcerers who reform not shall have their part in the lake of fire. The dogs and sorcerers shall be excluded the New Jerusalem. The Galatians were bewitched. And amongst the works of the flesh witchcraft is the most conspicuous. Deists do not believe in sorcery, but christians must believe in it, as they believe in the existence of

a Devil. But those sorcerers in which I believe most are all of pretty good moral character. They are generally dressed in a sacred uniform, and have most influence amongst the ignorant. Some of them perform miracles—they convert bread into flesh, and wine into blood, and the people believe that some of them have the keys of heaven, hell, and purgatory. They all sprinkle with holy water before they cure. The greatest witch now on earth is Mistress Mystery Babylon, and the greatest conjurer lives in Rome. On his head there is a mitre, and his walking cane is Aaron's rod. There are a few petty conjurers in this country—not more than about ten thousand, scattered up and down amongst ten million, and not more than about one fourth of our fellow citizens have been bewitched. They have built a few enchanted castles; and their holy magnificence has astonished many. Because many old wives have been falsely accused of witchcraft, some have thought that it was all a false pretence. But this is the other extreme. While the literal witches are few, the spiritual witches are numerous. But I have a specific which never fails to cure them all. It is this:—let the bewitched rise before the sun 365 times in a year, and for one hour read the holy oracles accompanied by aspirations to the Father of lights; let them practise what they read through the day. One hour before they retire to rest let them employ themselves as in the first hour of the day. This course pursued not only cures the bewitched, but prevents all the conjurers in the land.

A believer in spiritual sorcery,  
EDITOR.

P. S. When your bewitched neighbor is cured, please let me know, and I will give you some more light on the subject.—*Ed.*

\* \* \*

### NEW PERIODICALS.

“THE Christians” are patronizing a paper called the “*Christian Messenger*,” edited by Barton W. Stone, Georgetown, Ky. This is published monthly, at the price of one dollar per year, 24 pages, duodecimo. It is professedly devoted to the cause of the Christians, a numerous sect widely extended and extending over these United States. It appears from the six numbers of this paper which we have seen, that “The Christians” have no other creed than the New Testament, and no other form of discipline than the apostolic writings. No objections can be made either against the *name* which they have chosen, against their *creed* or *form of discipline*, except *one*, and this may become a very serious one. It is this: Should they not be the same sort of people which were first called *Christians at Antioch*, and who doubtless had no other creed or rules of discipline than the apostolic writings—in that case their assumption of the name, and their adoption of an inspired creed, will be more injurious to the “*Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things*” than the assumption of any other name and the adoption of any other creed. When a people adopt the name “Baptist” or “Presbyterian,” they are comparatively harm-

less if they should not live as Christians, in comparison of those who adopt exclusively the divinely sanctioned name and creed. To say a Presbyterian or a Baptist believes or does so and so, is only a reproach on Presbyterians or Baptists. But when it is said that the Christians believe so and so and do so and so, if unapproved of the Lord, then the excellent name and the blessed cause are reproached. Edmund Waller, who loved the common version of the New Testament ever since he was *thirteen* years old, said, in the Elkton Association, when objecting to be called a Christian, "he knew that he was a *Baptist*, but did not know whether he was a *Christian*." My argument, then, is this: If a Baptist sins against his profession, the Baptist profession only is injured; but if a christian sin against his profession, he has injured the best cause in the universe, and that, too, sometimes irremediably. I hope "The Christians" will remember this, and that "The Christian Messenger" will make this consideration his pole star. Farther than this the "Christian Baptist" saith not for the present.

We have seen two numbers of "THE INQUIRER FOR TRUTH," edited by Mr. *Saxton*, Canton, Ohio, published monthly, at one dollar per year. This paper is devoted to reform, to the cause of religious liberty, and free inquiry. The matter in the first two numbers is well selected, and the editorial department well written and much to purpose.

Mr. Walter Scott, now of Steubenville, Ohio, has issued proposals for publishing a monthly paper, at one dollar per annum, to be entitled THE MILLENNIUM HERALD. The best recommendation we can give of the probable ability with which this work may be edited, and of its public utility if suitably encouraged, is, that brother Scott is the author of those essays signed "*Philip*," in the Christian Baptist. The first number to appear in July next, if suitably encouraged.—*Ed.*

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#### EXTRACT OF A LETTER,

*From a Baptist minister in Pittsburgh, to a brother in New York, published in the New York Baptist Register—March 1, 1827*

"I use the word *regular*, as Mr. A. Campbell has given this appellation to all of us, who are of the old school of Baptists, and are unwilling to throw away all our articles of faith and church order, and fall into the ranks of his undisciplined and inexperienced militia. This company a few years since appeared formidable. They marched through almost every part of this region, separated many friends, broke down and wasted many churches. It is my opinion that they will soon be so widely spread from each other's tents, and so perfectly indifferent to their own souls, or the happiness of mankind, that they will never be seen in any kind of order to attract attention."

THIS is a bundle of falsehoods. "Mr A. Campbell" never gave the appellation of "*Regulars*" to this Pittsburgh divine nor any of his friends. Some Baptists glory in this name; and when

we apply it to them it is because of their own choice. Besides, we have no evidence whatever that this correspondent is a Regular Baptist, or holds to their Confession of Faith, but I have good evidence to the contrary. It is not true that those to whom he has given the name of *undisciplined militia* either separated *many friends*, or broke down and wasted *many churches*. As to his opinion that they will "soon be widely spread and indifferent to their own souls," I think it is an opinion he formed to fill up a sentence in his letter; and as opinions are *mighty light articles*, it is *my opinion* that this writer is very badly acquainted with the subject on which he writes, and that his whole letter is an exceedingly false representation of the things on which he writes, and that he is more concerned in gathering together a collection of Baptists of every stripe for purposes which I will not mention, than he is to understand or teach the New Testament doctrine. The greater part of his letter is just as exceptionable as that noticed, but I have neither time nor room to say any thing more about it. When he writes again it will add to the credibility of his narrative to give the names of those "many churches" that have been wasted, and to specify a few facts to support his opinions. If the statements we generally see, descriptive of Revivals and Declensions, have no more truth in them than there is in the letter, the public are most wretchedly deceived who believe the hundredth part of what they read.

EDITOR.

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**CORRESPONDENTS.**—SOME communications from Virginia and Connecticut in our next. We have some on hands 6 or 8 months old. We must attend to the oldest claims, according to their importance, first. We hope in the next number to clear the docket up to the 1st of March of all that we can consistently lay before the public in this volume. We cannot yet awhile appropriate more than a half a number to correspondents.

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### NEW AGENTS.

**OHIO**—Joseph Doddridge, Williamsport; Joseph Cahoon, Dover; Elder John Secrest, Barnesville, David Newmire, Shanesville.

**KENTUCKY**—Joseph Spencer, Lebanon; E. W. Trabue, Glasgow; James Patten, P. M. Paris.

**ILLINOIS**—Dr. Benjamin Edwards, Edwardsville.

**PENNSYLVANIA**—Dr. J. Pollock, New Castle.

No. 12—Vol. IV] BETHANY, B. C. VA. July 2, 1827. [Whole No. 48

*Style no man on earth your Father; for he alone is your father who is in heaven; and all ye are brethren. Assume not the title of Rabbi; for ye have only one teacher:—Neither assume the title of Leader; for ye have only one leader—the MESSIAH.*

[Mat. xxiii. 8—10.]

*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*

[Paul the Apostle.]

➡ A POST OFFICE having been established at my residence, it became necessary to change the name of this place because of a post-town in Mason county, called *Buffaloe*. My address is now *A. Campbell, P. M. Bethany, Brooke county, Va.* All communications to me will therefore be so directed. And until the office is more generally known, care should be taken that the name of the county and state be inscribed.

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[THE following communication is presented without any comment. Our readers will find in it something worthy of their consideration; and the intelligent who may not concur in sentiment with the writer, can receive no injury from a new examination of the subject. Our motto is, "*Bring all things to the test,*" and "*hold fast that which is good.*"] Editor.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

B——, G—— county, August 26, 1826.

Dear Brother,

I WAS much pleased with the perusal of your 9th and 10th numbers of the third volume. My attention was most called to the subject of forbearance as mentioned in your replies to R. B. S. and an Independent Baptist. That is a subject which appears to be less understood than almost any other in the christian religion. But how will it be otherwise, so long as the professors of religion are divided and subdivided into so many different sects, and each sect prescribing its own bounds and infallibly deciding on what is to be believed and what is not? They go farther than that: they have undertaken to say what parts of the word of God are essential to salvation and what are not. It must have been to imitate the different sects of philosophers that the professors of religion divided themselves into so many different sects. We can easily see the reasonableness of philosophers having different and distinct sects, as their founders were their authors; but how men who say they have a revelation from God, can set themselves up as the founders and supporters of different sects, is a mystery. Now, so long as men do this, will they be kept apart from each other and from close union with God too. This subject has given me a great deal of thought as well as it has you; and I was not a little astonished to find that the

courses we had gone through were so much alike; however my mind has been made up on the subject for the last twelve years, and I have waited patiently for the truth to make its way among the followers of Jesus Christ. It does appear that prejudices are giving way, but so long as any thing else than the word of God is admitted to be a guide in any shape or form, so long will they that admit it be as blind men groping by the walls; every thing of that kind has a tendency to blind the mind to the New Testament and alienate the affections from those that we fancy to differ from us. I attributed much of the evil that exists in the church to creeds and confessions, and forms of discipline, because they keep the disciples away from the Bible; that is, they believe it through them, and that is not to believe it at all. I am astonished that some who ought to know better, blames your saying so much on that subject. It appears to me that until they are hooted from the hands of christians truth will not make much progress, and I think I see in the present struggle the last gasps of a dying monster. But to the subject of forbearance: If we are to learn what it is from what we see existing among the professors of religion, we shall see as many different kinds of it as there are sects; therefore every lover of truth will turn from the scene with disgust to look somewhere else; and where shall we go but to the word of God? There we find no room for the followers of Christ having different altars and different temples. It appears to me that a great many of those who have made long and loud cries about forbearance, have not learned the nature of it from the Bible; but it is only the exercises of their own natural disposition which inclines them to be moderate and mild. And again, a great many of these rigid sectarians when they are vending their anathemas against those who differ from them, it is not the love of truth that urges them on, but a venting their spleen and wrath against their opponents. How few there are who appear to be guided by the liberal spirit of the gospel, and take the conduct of God towards sinners as their pattern, and his forbearance with his people as their guide in dealing with their fellow creatures. Some have gone so far on the subject as to say that all Paido-Baptists should be in one society, and all Baptists in another; for we are told, with much gravity and truth too, that no unbaptized person was ever a member of the apostolic churches. That is true, but there exists amongst us a cause that did not exist then. There was no such thing then as a person believing the gospel that was not immediately baptized; then there was no difficulty on the subject. The case is now altered. Thousands are to be found who are pious and godly, who are in darkness on that subject, and wedded to another. What are we to do with such? Cast them out? There is no such thing in the New Testament. I consider infant baptism as much a tradition of men as any of those things which Paul says would *perish with the using*, and I believe that would baptized disciples shew more respect to the opinion of those who differ from them,

we should soon be of one mind. But it will be asked, How can this be carried into effect? I answer, By laying aside every thing but the Bible as a guide, and making faith in Christ the only term of communing—I mean that faith “*which works by love and purifies the heart,*” that is the faith of God’s elect, and the Bible acknowledges no other; and when no other object is held up, his people will follow him. I cannot approve of any other union among christians than their being in the same church and under the same government; and that government being the word of God, it supposes different opinions to exist among the disciples of Christ, and hence provision is made for bringing them together in the same mind. The 14th chapter of Romans and four first verses of the 15th is full on that subject, and in 4th chapter to the Ephesians the apostle says much from the 11th to the 16th verse, and 31st and 32d, and the whole tenor of the New Testament is to the same effect. It may be said, All these passages have an allusion to separate individual churches. Ah! there is the evil, that mammon spirit shows itself. No, it is the instructions of a kind parent to all his children, and they are as extensive in their operation as his children are numerous. The confining the exercise of them to the small society with which any individual may be connected, is the offspring of human wisdom; and the show of union that is now in existence among the different sects, is mocking both God and each other; for we seem bound up when in each other’s company, and glad when we get away, and tell our own company all how we acted and how bad we felt. Now much of this is the effect of association, and not because we are of one mind, for how many are there who have no mind of their own, but just believe what their church believe. This sentiment I find is not peculiar to the Roman Catholics. I know that many objections may be made to the plan proposed. I know also that it is easier to raise difficulties than to solve them; but holding, as I do, that it is an error of the worst kind for those who are partakers of like precious faith to separate into different societies, and thereby create and cherish a hard spirit among the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, something ought to be done to cure the disorder. It is either possible for christians to walk together in the enjoyment of the gospel while they think differently in some thing, or it is not. If it is not, then all christian union is at an end; but if it is, as we all know it is, who will prescribe the bounds? The liberty which each sect takes on that subject proves that none have any liberty. So long, then, as a person believes in his heart and confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus, and shows a disposition to be taught the truth of the gospel, accompany all with a holy life, though he think differently from me, even on the subject of baptism, I have no right to deprive him of membership in the church of Christ. So long as he gives evidence that God has received him, I would say as Peter said on a similar occasion, What am I that I should withstand God, seeing

he has given him the like gift, and purified his heart by faith. I have often been told, that if my views were carried into effect, the ordinances would soon be voted out of the church by a majority of the members thinking differently. But I have no apprehension of that. Those who say so forget that it is the power of God that keeps his truth alive in the world. And as I have often said on this subject, the existence of religion, notwithstanding all that its professors have done to destroy it by their divisions and subdivisions, is one of the greatest evidences that it is of God; for I do not think with those who say that it is the jealous spirit that is among the different sects that keeps religion in its purity. That heavenly plant withers at the touch of man's rude hand. I very well recollect that when the subject of baptism was first spoken of in the church of which I was a member in Edinburgh, it created a great stir. It is true some went away, but a great many remained with the few whose minds were made up on the subject. We found no difficulty in getting along; and in less than eighteen months I think all were baptized; and I believe, had they all have staid, they would have gone the same way; for the very idea of their having separated themselves produced a hard spirit that was not known among those that remained. It is to be lamented that church has not always acted upon this spirit; but I hear that they are acting upon it now, and no doubt they will be successful. I am aware that many will think me as bad, if not worse than you are, for maintaining such things. I can only say that a conscientious belief of these truths has ever induced me to teach them upon all proper occasions. It is true few think with me on the subject, but the day is not far distant when these things will be better understood and more extensively practised.

May the grace of God be with your spirit, and I remain yours  
in the bonds of the gospel, P. A.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

*Hartford, Conn. May 1, 1827.*

*Dear Brother in the Lord,*

WE have for some time enjoyed the privilege of reading your publication, and have been edified by many of its communications. It has afforded joy to a few advocates for a strict adherence to the doctrine and ordinances of the New Testament in this place, to know that the ascended Saviour is raising up witnesses in different places to vindicate his truth, and bear testimony against those traditions which make void his holy commandments.

Deeply impressed with a sense of our duty, to keep the ordinances of him who hath loved us, and given himself for us, as they are delivered to us in his word, we have found ourselves obliged to take the course you have so ably advocated, of renouncing all the diverse creeds of fallible men—all sectarian or denominational attachments, and of fellowshiping, what we un-



derstand to be the truth, and that only, wheresoever and in whomsoever we find it.

Assured of the truth and importance of our Saviour's testimony, "My kingdom is not of this world," and of the corresponding apostolical command, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," we have separated from those worldly religious societies, whose origin is so manifestly found in that wisdom which is foolishness with God. We have assembled on the first day of the week to break bread, teaching and admonishing one another, from the word of the Lord, in psalms and hymns, singing, &c. We have no desire, however, to separate from any who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity, any farther than we are obliged so to do in order to obey his commandments. We would not overlook, what we indeed conceive to be, a very important principle in our Master's kingdom, *i. e.* the law of christian forbearance; and while we desire in the spirit of meekness to come out from, and bear testimony against those things which tend to make void the laws of Zion's King, we wish to unite with all his true subjects in the observance of whatever we mutually understand to be his requirements.

With these views, you may well suppose we rejoice to cooperate in our humble measure, with those who are endeavoring to bring back the disciples of Christ to that simplicity of doctrine and practice from which they have been so awfully corrupted. We are happily agreed with the general views exhibited in the *Christian Baptist*; and if in any thing we are otherwise minded, we rejoice that your liberality has assured us of an opportunity for amicable discussion in your pages for the promotion of our union in the truth as it is in Jesus.

We wish now, we humbly hope for the truth's sake, to make a few remarks on the important and interesting subject of the character of our blessed Master. We have been perfectly satisfied with your remarks generally on this subject, as they have, like your remarks on other subjects, been obviously derived from the word of truth, and not from the systems of men. But we must frankly inform you that, in your last number, in defending yourself against the insinuations of your opponents, you have, in our opinion, adopted a phraseology, and expressed an opinion, opposed to the express testimony of our Saviour, and subversive of the great truth, that he is "the son of the living God."

You "reason thus: There is more value in one human being than there is in one million of globes such as this we inhabit. If, then, the whole assembly, or church, or congregation of purified and glorified human beings belongs, *jure divino*, or by inheritance, or by redemption to the Lord Jesus; if it be *his own*, as it is his Father's, I can conceive of no glory superior to his personal glory and majesty."

Now we believe and rejoice in the truth, that the whole redeemed church belongs to the Lord Jesus; but, that it is "his own, as it is his Father's," we cannot believe without rejecting the

following testimony of our Saviour, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which *thou gavest me* out of the world: *thine they were*, and *thou gavest them me*."—"Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as *thou hast given him*." "I pray not for the world, but for them which *thou hast given me*." John xvii 2. 6. 9. Here the testimony is plain, repeated, decisive. The saints belong to the Son *by gift*. But do they belong to the Father by gift? Who hath first given to him? They were originally, and by independent right, the Father's. "*Thine they were, and thou gavest them me*."

Moreover—to say, "I can conceive of no glory superior to (Christ's) glory and majesty," is, in our opinion, opposing the testimony of the Saviour in the following words, "My Father is greater than I." "My father which gave them to me is greater than all."

We "reason thus:" "To us, there is but one God, **THE FATHER**, of *whom* are all things;" who "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Therefore, the Father is exclusively the eternal, underived, and independent source of all being, perfection, and glory, and is worthy, and demands to be loved and adored *as such*. To us there is "one Lord Jesus Christ, *by whom* are all things;" by whom the Father creates, governs, redeems, and judges his creatures, who is the "first begotten," the beginning of the creation of God—"the image of the invisible God"—"the first born of every creature"—the only "mediator between God and man," and is worthy to be loved and worshipped as such, "to the glory of God the Father." We worship and obey the Son as King in Zion, but we worship as the "one God, the Father" who *set him* there. Ps. ii. 6. We joyfully acknowledge him as "head over all things to the church," but we believe the divine testimony, that the Father "*gave him*" this authority. Eph. i. 22. The Father "*hath appointed* (him) heir of all things;" Heb. i.—"*hath put* all things under his feet;" 1 Cor. xv. 25—and "*hath made* subject unto him angels, and authorities, and powers," 1 Peter iii. 22. We rejoice in the animating assurance that he must reign till he hath "put all enemies under his feet;" but we know that "when all things shall be subdued unto him; then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be **ALL IN ALL**." 1 Cor. xv. 28.

Now then, dear brother, we "reason thus:" If we "can conceive of no glory superior" to that of "begotten" or dependant existence—if we "can conceive of no glory," of power, or wisdom, superior to that which is derived from, and dependant on another, we must agree with you that we "can conceive of no glory superior to the personal glory and majesty" of the Lord Jesus. But if we can have any conception of a being who is self-existent, underived, (which reason itself teaches there must be) of infinite and independent knowledge, wisdom, goodness, and power; we must say that we *can* conceive of a glory superior to the personal glory and majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ. What con-

ception, we ask, have you of the words of our Saviour, "My Father is greater than I?" To suppose that he meant (without giving the least intimation of such meaning) that the eternal Jehovah is greater than a man, is, to us, inadmissible. Moreover, it was not true that the Father was greater than *he*, if *he* was the eternal God and man. Had this been true, would he not have said, My Father is greater than I am in my human nature?

Has not Jesus Christ plainly taught us that he is dependant on another, even the Father, for the highest glory he ever possessed, by praying (John xvii. 5.) for the glory he had *before the world was*? Did he not constantly declare his dependence on the *Father*, and not on the Word, or any second person in the godhead, for all things? And when the Jews charged him with "making himself equal with God," did he not repel the charge in the most unequivocal manner, by the assurance, "Verily, verily I say unto you, *the Son can do nothing of himself*?" Is it not manifest that the term God is applied to the Son *figuratively*, (as it is to beings of vastly inferior order) since it appears from Ps. xlv. and Heb. i. that *as God*, he *has a God* who "hath anointed" him? These considerations, in connexion with many others, have long since convinced us that the common principle of referring every expression of dependence to his humanity only, is a violation both of scripture and reason.

To us there is no truth more plainly revealed from heaven, than that Jesus Christ is the SON of God. In this glorious character he was announced to a perishing world, as the object of faith and foundation of hope, by "the only true God," Matt. iii. 17.—by Christ himself, Luke xxii. 70.—and by his apostles, Acts ix. 20. 1 John iv. 15. But to say that the *Son* of God is God himself, (using the term in its highest import) is as manifest a contradiction as to say that the *Son* of the President is the President himself. And as the affirmation concerning the Son of the President, that he is President, would be an implicit denial that he is his *Son*; so the affirmation concerning Jesus Christ, that he is the eternal God, is an implicit denial that he is his *Son*: and though we may "have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth," we have yet to look elsewhere for the Son of God.

We submit these free remarks to your candid examination, in the confidence that you have the pure truth in view, and are determined to advocate it, so far as you understand it, however contrary it may be to preconceived opinion, or popular systems. We should have offered much more evidence on the subject, did we not fear intruding on your liberality, by occupying too much room in your pages. Commending you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, we subscribe ourselves your brethren in Christ.

HENRY GREW,  
JAMES HANMER,

*Members of a Church of Christ in Hartford.*

THE writer of the preceding letter had not seen our essay on the Preface to John's Testimony when he wrote the above. To this we refer them as an answer to his communication. We have another communication from him on another subject, to which we will attend in its own time. [Ed. C. B.]

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.

Dear Sir,

STOP one moment and permit a stranger who feels much interest in the reformation that is now beginning to take place in the christian world, to take a short trip with you. I will not be tedious, though I may be a little troublesome. I do not expect to please the fashionable and polite, for I am neither a clergyman nor a schoolman; but, sir, you know that it takes every body to make a world, and it may be there are some like myself. If so, I may be of some use to them.

I subscribed for the new translation and the *Christian Baptist* without knowing but very little of the character of either; and sorry was I for doing so, until they came to hand. I heard much said against you in relation to your christian character—you were called every thing almost but a christian. No wonder, then, living in Babylon as I did, being enveloped in darkness and dreaming that all things were going on well, that I should be alarmed when the trumpet proclaimed, "Up! get ye out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city!" At length the *Christian Baptist* arrived. My fear increased to an alarming degree; for at the first broadside all my rigging went by the board, and I expected the next would send vessel, cargo, and all to the bottom. But after reading awhile, and finding the ship still afloat, my fear began to subside, and I at length became so calm in my mind that I concluded to examine the hull and the cargo. The rigging I did not look after. The hull I found had received no injury. I then examined the cargo. I found that fully three quarters of it was finally ruined. I got very anxious in the examination, and found that all that was damaged was *contraband*. I wish others would examine; for I do believe that there are thousands in the same situation with myself. Well for me that I examined before I got into port! If I had not, vessel, cargo, and all would have been exposed to condemnation. The christian world are dreaming in Babylon as I was. They are infatuated. They are blind respecting the "highway" the prophet speaks of; and Oh! what a poor stagger do they make in attempting to travel along that happy road. But ah! I see the cause of all their woes. They are intoxicated. They have been drinking of the wine of her fornication—the cup of her abominations which has caused all the world to wonder after the Beast. They have bought of her merchandize and have hid it among their stuff, and very few of them are willing to acknowledge their crime, or own their relation to the Mother of Harlots; and no wonder, for such is the nature of her bewitching cup, that every one saith,

"I am not drunk," a sure symptom that they have been tipping. I know that it is unpleasant to claim kin with so base a woman, but the relation we had better own until we have disposed of all her merchandize; for by that we have been detected, and we never shall, with all our priestcraft, be able any more to conceal the relation. I think there is a fire kindling among the plunder. The hay, the wood, and the stubble begin to smoke. And what makes me more sure of it is, the merchants are beginning to scold—(may God grant that soon they may have occasion to lament, saying, *Babylon is fallen! is fallen!*)—I mean the retailing merchants who live in the suburbs. The wholesale merchants live in the capitol. I am afraid they are out of the reach of your artillery. I hope, however, that you will mount your heaviest ordnance and level on the metropolis; and if it should have no effect, I hope you will not be discouraged, but continue to remember her daughters and grand daughters until they remove out of her jurisdiction.

Many are very free in spending their opinion with regard to the Christian Baptist. I also will shew mine opinion. My opinion is, that it is by far the most valuable human production that I ever saw. It not only discovers to us our errors, our maladies; but it points out to us the only antidote for all our diseases. It points us to the precious word of God. With us there are a number that have betaken themselves to the book of God as the only resort of safety, as the only standard by which they are to be governed. The church in this place have begun to tear away the rubbish, the commandments of men, and are trying to build according to the pattern left by the apostles of Christ. Some laugh, others mock and say that it will soon be at an end; but the work goes on, and we are in full belief that the church will ere long become the joy of the whole earth, though men and devils may oppose. Let all those that love God immediately lend a helping hand, and especially those that see their errors. Let no worldly interest prevent you from coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty foe. It would be better not to have known the way, than after we have known to refuse to walk in it.

I will mention one circumstance that has taken place among us, which will be a satisfaction to you. It is concerning a man who was formerly a Deist. I presented him with your third number addressed to a Sceptic. After reading it all his arguments against the Bible were blown away like chaff. He was left without hope; the distress of his mind was depicted in his countenance, and no relief could he obtain until he repaired to his long neglected Bible. Here he found relief. He now believes the Bible is from God. He now believes with all his heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He has been immersed into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is walking in fellowship with the saints, and looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. These, sir, are some of the effects of the above publication alluded

to among us. I believe it is a very good criterion to judge of the nature of things by their effects. We cannot expect that the church will come out of Babylon without great commotions in the world. Heaven must be shaken as well as earth. The shaking has begun, and we hope that it will continue until every human invention is shaken out.

Numbers appear to find fault with your style. They think that you are too harsh, and that your strokes are too severe. One person, however, does not wish to have the points of your arrows cut off; yet he appears to be a little uneasy. I suspect that they wish to have some of the *beards* taken off. If this is what they wish for, I for one should be opposed to it; for there are some which I have heard of who have been wounded, who have got rid of the spear; the scar, however, I believe they will carry to their graves. I should think that a few more beards would be very beneficial for those people, and I cannot see what harm they would be to any person; but I leave you to manage that matter as you may think proper.

With regard to the new translation, I am highly pleased with it; and the more I read it the better I like it. It does not, however, escape the censures of the priests, and many others who follow their pernicious ways speak evil of it. It is my opinion that many of those that have got into Moses' seat would make the people believe, if they could, that the old version fell down from heaven just as it came out of the hands of the king's translators. They would feign have the people believe that it is the blackest crime that a man can be guilty of, to attempt a new translation. They talk about men laying their hands on the very word of God; and yet after all their ado, I have not heard of one sentence being justly condemned. Oh what will not priestcraft do? I will answer the question; It never has, nor never will lead the people to their Bible and to their Saviour. I have heard of one man that has burnt the new translation—I think that it was a brother to one of the editors in Kentucky. It appears that he has loved the old translation ever since he was a boy. I must think that he has a greater regard for the king of Great Britain than he has for Dr. Campbell. Why he should prefer the king I know not, unless it be for this reason, that he is styled "*Defender of the Faith.*" If the gentleman should be called to part with either his creeds or the old version, I seriously fear that king James would share the same fate with the Doctors of Scotland. But after all, I think that his aim was to give you, sir, a deadly blow. Harmless, indeed, was his weapon, and so will every other one be that is aimed at truth. Their reaction, however, will be severe, for they will fall on their own pates. May Heaven shield you in the day of battle; and when your work on earth is done, may you enter into the joys of your Lord.

A FRIEND TO THE RESTORATION

*Of the Ancient Order of Things.*

Columbus, May, 1827.

**POTENT REPLY TO A WEAK OBJECTION.**

“PULLING down every thing, and building up nothing,” is an objection often presented against the *Christian Baptist*. The following reply to it from an English paper, is a perfect expression of our sentiments on the subject. The same things have in substance appeared in this work before.—Ed. C. B.

“But the charge of *pulling down and not building up any thing in its stead*, is, unintentionally, the highest compliment that can be paid to us. It is to this building up *something*, instead of what was pulled down, that we owe the evils of all pretended reformations, and it has served more than any thing else to perpetuate error, as it is a lamentable fact, that from Luther down each have set up a system of their own; not always indeed so repugnant to reason as that which they have destroyed, but so encompassed with hedges, that whoever has dared to go farther than they have done, have been considered as enemies to religion.

“*We have nothing to build up.* The fair fabric of christianity stands still as firm and conspicuous in the New Testament as ever it did; all we have got to do is to remove the walls, the buttresses, and rubbish, which prevent inquiring men from beholding it in its native purity, splendor, and loveliness; and when this is done, the superstructure will present itself to view—an object deserving of universal admiration; then nothing more will be requisite than to invite men to examine it, as it is fairly and clearly depicted in the New Testament.”

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FOR THE “CHRISTIAN BAPTIST.”

Mr. Editor,

I HAVE read many of your numbers with much interest; and believe that you have done the church of Christ essential service through the medium of the *Christian Baptist*. I have been for some years a member of the Baptist church, and have believed it to be as near “*the ancient order of things*” as any other sect of the day, and indeed nearer. Nevertheless, some of her practices I cannot approve of, for I am not so prejudiced in favor of my own sect that I am insensible to its blemishes. Permit me to mention one which has been adverted to in one of your numbers, viz. the mode of receiving candidates for baptism, on what is denominated their *experience before the church*.

The bishop takes his seat in some conspicuous part of the house, the members of the church seat themselves adjacent to him in a semicircle, and sometimes in the presence of unbelievers. The humble candidate is called upon to advance and stand or sit in their midst, and relate over his “*travels from nature to grace*,” he begins. “A great while ago, I was struck in my mind,” &c. But you know the old tale, and the whole process. This weak and trembling individual (perhaps a female) whose mind is in a state of dreadful perturbation, is obliged to give such a detail as agrees with the peculiar feelings of those present, or else she cannot be received as a candidate for baptism.

Now it is manifestly certain that such a course was not pursued by the primitive churches. Reason, the propriety of things, nor the word of God will not sanction it.

Reason will not sanction it. The candidate is so much over-awed by the presence of the bishop, deacons, the church, *en masse*, and unbelievers, that it is impossible that she could have a perfect command over her mind. She is aware that every word she utters, every sentiment she discloses, every feeling she defines, must undergo the rigid scrutiny of all present. One false step and she is rejected. Awful crisis! Portentous moment! She stands as a criminal at the bar in the presence of *her judges*, who at the end of her confession will pass the verdict of *Guilty* or *Not Guilty*. I have seen men of strong nerves, of good understanding, who could converse sensibly on the christian religion around the social hearth, and could even speak eloquently on other subjects in public, turn pale, shake like the aspin, and be perfectly unmanned in attempting to relate their experience before the church as candidate for admission. But how much more severe is the trial for the young, the poor, the ignorant, and those who have not acquired confidence by mingling in society—if ever they have known the truth, scarcely a vestige of it can be traced by them, in consequence of the ebullition that is going on within their minds. The propriety of things and the ancient order of things alike forbid this practice.

C\_\_\_\_\_.

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*Brother Campbell,*

I READ, with a great deal of pleasure, your *Christian Baptist*. Your April number was truly pleasing. On some topics, however, introduced into that work, I have doubted whether the editor has not, in opposing error, sometimes gone to an extreme. I will specify one case—that of receiving members into the church on the bare expression or declaration made by the eunuch to Philip, the evangelist. Now, that, amongst the Baptists, there are sometimes many unnecessary questions asked, and many, very many, unnecessary and enthusiastic things told, is admitted and lamented. It is also admitted that in the New Testament, there is no example of any being received into the church or churches by the relation of a christian experience. But, brother, you admit on some other cases, (and that of divine command too) that a change of circumstances and customs may justify a change of practice, where the manifest design and spirit of the practice or command of Christ and his apostles are not violated; as in the case of the "*holy kiss*," five times enjoined by the apostles, being strictly obeyed by the *christian shake-hands*, and this is argued from the change of custom and circumstances. Now that there is a change in the circumstances of the people in christian countries, when compared with those of apostolic ages, is manifest. Then the great question *was*, Is Jesus of Nazareth *the Christ*, or is he not?—Did he really rise from the dead, or did he not? The



apostles and disciples of Christ, on the one part, affirmed; the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, on the other part, denied and contradicted—and so unpopular was the bare confession, that Jesus was "*the Christ*," that it subjected the person to infamy and reproach, if not to death. Under these circumstances, a bare declaration that they did believe Jesus was the Christ, and a desire publicly to obey him, was a sufficient evidence to the apostles and brethren that there was a change of heart. Add to this, also, the notable case of Ananias and Sapphira, his wife, who, for deception, were struck dead, producing fear on all the people, "and of the rest durst none join themselves unto them."—But now circumstances are very different, (at least in some of these things;) now no great disgrace to profess that *Jesus is the Christ*; no great dishonor to *obey him*; no great fear of scourgings, imprisonments, and torturing deaths; no signal judgments on hypocrites and impostors, to make others fear. If, therefore, the apostles required the strongest evidence that *then* could be given of sincerity of heart, is it not reasonable that we should require the strongest evidence that can *now* be given of a real change of heart in those whom we invite into our union and fellowship as members of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. You will not understand me as supposing that the strongest evidence of a change of heart consists in a *systematical experience*, or that in this matter we are to measure ourselves by ourselves, or compare ourselves among ourselves; but as you admit that men must be *born again*, and that this change is more or less known, or knowable to the subject of it, in proportion to their age and circumstances, and that such change is always followed by correspondent fruits of *love* to Christ, to holiness, and to christians, with a manifest abhorrence of sin, whether discovered in themselves or in others; of *joy* in believing in Christ, and in doing his will; of *peace* with God the Spirit, in the heart, crying Abba, Father! with *men*, in seeking their good, &c. &c. Shall we not, I say, require such a confession with the mouth, as will give us a charitable conviction that they have "believed with the heart unto righteousness;" and that according to their age, or the circumstances under which they have been raised, or in which they have lived. These remarks I submit to you with the confidence of a brother in Christ, believing, when understood, there will be no material difference of sentiments on this subject. Indeed I think I already understand you, but wish you to be more explicit for general satisfaction. You can make what use you please of any part of this letter; and as my name affixed to any composition of mine will likely never bring me to great honor, I wish it always to appear. I remain your unfeigned brother in Christ Jesus our Lord.

B. ALLEN.

April 23d, 1827.

—  
REPLY.

Brother Allen—I perfectly agree with you "that we should require the strongest evidence that can *now* be given of a real

change of heart in those whom we baptize." The only question then is, What is that evidence? We must remember that we have no right, no law, nor precedent for putting off an applicant for one single day. The applicant *may*, and, indeed, *ought*, to solicit baptism the hour he believes. We cannot say to him, Go and shew us by your works for a week, a month, or a year, that you are a genuine convert. This would be a glaring infraction of every principle, law, and precedent in the kingdom of Jesus. What then? Shall we require the testimony of others respecting the character of the candidate? This cannot be satisfactory. They may tell us he is moral, virtuous, and was always so; or they may tell us that he is reformed; but still this is not sufficient evidence. Nay, should they testify that he is known to be devout, still a question arises, Why was he not long since immersed if so good a man—if so devout? We are at length reduced to a necessity of taking his own word and acting upon that. Now the question is, In reference to *what* shall we take his word? Shall we require him to declare what he *believes* or what he *feels*, or both? For the first we have apostolic example, but for no other. Suppose, however, that we have found a safer way, (the apostles were deceived sometimes,) and that circumstances have changed so far as to render the *ancient order* obsolete or unsuitable; for there is now no shame in professing, no danger of all those evils and terrors which you very properly enumerate—how shall we prove *our way* to be safer than the *good old way*? They never told their experience in order to baptism; but it is supposed that this new way is not liable to the same objections as the old way. But will you please consider that all the shame and terror which you have very properly detached from saying "*I believe with all my heart that Jesus is the Son of God,*" is also detached from a narrative of our feelings, of our "*journey from nature to grace.*" Now if the shame and terrors prevented hypocrisy then, they might, if they still existed, prevent it still. But they do not exist, either in relation to the confession of faith or the narrative of experience, and consequently can have no effect in the one case more than in the other. If, from the love of honor and absence of human terrors, men will solemnly declare a lie in professing their faith, they will solemnly tell a lie in narrating an experience which they never felt, and which, if they did feel, is to us not so sure an evidence of a change of heart as a declaration of the precious faith. For we are assured that all who believe what they confess, are born of God; but we are not sure that all who have felt as that candidate feels, are born of God. I am, therefore, dear brother, fully convinced that the good old way affords us the strongest evidence that the nature of the case admits.

A change of circumstances cannot be plead against the ancient, nor in favor of the new way—for circumstances equally affect both. Nor would I carry the argument from a change of circumstances so far in relation to the topic which you mention

against any instituted item of religious worship. A brother in Maryland wrote me a long letter in favor of *the* holy kiss, which was received after my departure from home last Fall. I had intended it for publication, but it has been jostled out. He lays great stress upon the *five* times commanded, and inveighs against my reasoning on a change of circumstances or customs. Had I published his letter, I should have illustrated one point not stated in my remarks upon "*the holy kiss*," and which would have shewn that a change of circumstances and customs was not the reasoning which sets aside a holy kiss in our country. Advocates for this usage deceive themselves by inserting a definite article and by rejecting the indefinite which always precedes the terms *holy kiss*. It is not *the* holy kiss, but *a* holy kiss. All instituted acts of religion are characterized by the definite article, as, *the* Lord's table, *the* Lord's day, &c. It is one thing to command *a* holy kiss, and another to command *the* holy kiss. The former style is decisive evidence that it was no stated institution, while the latter would most certainly have shewn it to be established—against which no change of circumstances could be plead; but as it is, a change of circumstances can be plead with good effect. This, in passing, as a caveat against a licentious principle of reasoning in opposition to plainly and solemnly ordained usages and sacred institutes.

I am willing, brother Allen, to give to your reasoning all due regard, and I have no doubt but what you have written is as much to the purpose as any man can adduce; but you will see that while we equally agree that the strongest evidence which can be adduced ought to be demanded, the only question of moment is, What is the strongest evidence?

I will admit that if there is any ground to suspect the sincerity of the applicant, or any intimation of any improper motive impelling him to solicit the ordinance, I would sift him to the bottom, and, on suspicious evidence, say to him, Go and bring forth fruits worthy of your profession. But where there is no ground of suspicion, and the person freely comes forward and solicits baptism upon a solemn declaration of what the eunuch professed, I would say nothing should hinder his baptism and no experience be inquired after. A person can have little or no christian experience until he is born of water as well as of the Spirit; and it does appear to me preposterous to demand the experience of a christian from a person who has not yet *put* on Christ, not dead by sin, nor buried, nor risen with Christ. When a person has come up out of the bath of regeneration, and has been born of the Spirit and the water, we look for the experience of a christian, but it will take more logic than all the colleges in your state possess, to persuade me that it is reasonable to demand a narrative of christian experience from a person who has never publicly confessed the Lord Jesus nor assumed his name.

Yours most affectionately,

EDITOR.

## EXTRACTS FROM A VARIETY OF LETTERS,

The number and length of which preclude the insertion of them in any reasonable time.

*Two Objections from a correspondent in Richmond, Feb. 8th, 1827.*

## OBJECTION 1st.

IT is objected to the adoption of the term *contribution* instead of the term *fellowship*, (Acts ii. 42.) "that the disciples at that time had all things in common, and consequently there was no need for a *contribution*." We admit that where a perfect community exists there is no need nor means for a contribution to create a fund. But even then there is need for a *distribution* from the common stock, and this distribution amongst the individuals is a *contribution* to their wants. But if a community of goods in the Jerusalem congregation did not divest the disciples of the means of their feasting in love from house to house, it could not supersede the necessity of statedly joining in *contributing* to the necessity of saints; either by a *distribution* from a common stock, or by a *contribution* continually augmenting both from new accessions and from the household portions of those who still superabounded. It is not necessary in order to a contribution that every individual must have something to give—there must be some to receive before there can be a fellowship in giving and receiving. The *Kainonia*, or *fellowship*, (Acts ii. 42.) is something obviously distinct from every other part of the worship and order of the congregation in Jerusalem. They had what we call *fellowship* in every thing; but there was a certain joint participation in one work of religious obedience and brotherly love which emphatically was the fellowship, contribution, or distribution. The term *contribution* we yet think is the most appropriate, because it includes in the sacred usage the idea of distributing—of giving and receiving.

## OBJECTION 2d.

"I allude to the note to Galatians iii. 20. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one." I cannot help thinking there must be an error in both translations, (or all given) and in your reasoning on the passage also; and that the error mainly consists in connecting the *mediator* with the *law*. I was, and still am, unable to see the propriety of this; and an examination of the text and context, particularly in the common translation, induced me to think that the error had arisen from a slight inversion of the words in the sentence. The term *law*, seems to carry with it nothing like the notion of an agreement of parties, either existing or proposed; but is the language of unconditional command, addressed by him who has full power and authority, to him who is bound to receive and obey. What place or propriety is there here for the office of a mediator? I can find none. The term *mediator*, however, while it necessarily supposes a variance, presents at once the idea of a proposed healing of that variance, and reconciliation of the parties—and to effect this is the great purpose of the mediatorial office. It appears to me then that the

meaning of the passage will be given thus—"Wherefore then the law? Because of offences, it was added, to be in force till the seed should come, to whom was made the promise of the inheritance; which *promise* was ordained by angels in the hand of a *mediator*; or thus—which promise, being ordained through a mediator, was made known by the hand of messengers, (Moses and the other prophets.) Now a mediator necessarily implies two parties, and without the consent of both, a covenant between them cannot be annulled: but God, who gave the law, is only one party; therefore this covenant of promise cannot be impaired by the law." The *seed* and the *mediator*, I suppose, mean the same person; and though the promise be, in form, to him, it is, in *substance*, through him, to mankind, the offenders, and one of the parties at variance; and who, by reason of sin, were disqualified (as in worldly concerns are infants and *femes covert*) to covenant in person. The apostle has argued, *that faith in Christ delivers from the law*: and to remove the apparent objection to this position, presented by the question, To what end then was the law given? he recalls to their minds the fact, that the inheritance was promised through a *mediator*; a person whose name not only infers two parties at variance, but the proposed reconciliation of those parties; that this term *mediator*, then necessarily includes the idea of the concurring will of two parties uniting and centering in *the person of the mediator*: and affirms, that the *law* was added, to operate only until the mediator should appear and the reconciliation of these parties be effected by him; and that this *law*, which was the act of only one of these parties, could not possibly have the effect of diminishing the certainty and stability of the *promise*, which could only be annulled, altered, or impaired, by the will of both parties; and proves the necessity of the concurrence of both parties, to effect any such alteration, by the introduction of the *mediator*, the personal representative of both. Thus, I think, the apostle effectually removes the objection to his position, that faith in Christ delivers from the bondage of the law, supposed by the question. Wherefore then the law? by showing that there is nothing in the nature, or end, of the law, at variance with that position—I cannot regard Moses as possessing any of the great characteristics of *the mediator*. He was a faithful servant of God, as a messenger to the people; but had none of the distinguishing powers of the mediator, no power to negotiate any permanent peace between the parties. Of this office, though faithful, he was not worthy. Nor do I believe that the term is applied to him in any instance; unless indeed, in that we have been considering, which I consider a mistake. 2d Timothy ii. 5. Paul says, "There is one God, and *one mediator* between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." And as there is certainly but one God, I suppose Paul may be regarded as affirming that there is only *one mediator*."

I have three insuperable objections to this interpretation of the passage:—

1st. It subverts the idea of the law being a covenant. This it most certainly was. It is repeatedly styled "*the covenant*;" the tables on which it was engraved are called "*the two tables of the covenant*;" and it is always kept in contrast with the *new and better* covenant, established on better *promises*; but this is not all—the whole circumstances of its promulgation make every precept a separate item of one grand national covenant. The preliminaries were distinctly stated and acceded to by the Jews before an item of it was pronounced; and when the whole was written on parchment, Moses, its mediator, by a divine command, sprinkled the book with blood, saying, "This is the blood of *the covenant* which God hath enjoined upon you." They who violated these precepts were said to have "*broken the covenant*;" and so soon as the nation apostatized to idolatry, as a nation, they broke the covenant and were given over to their enemies.

2d. It destroys the character of Moses as a *mediator*. Moses most unquestionably was a mediator. He describes his office at the time of the giving of the law most minutely, (Deut. ii.) "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. I STOOD BETWEEN the Lord and you at that time to shew you the word of the Lord." And Jesus is in contrast, as the antitype, styled "*the mediator of a better covenant*." Heb. viii. 6. The ministry of Moses as the mediator, is inferior to the ministry of Jesus as a mediator, and a correct idea of the latter can only be obtained through a scriptural view of the former. Independently of the passage under consideration, Moses is represented in the character and office of a mediator.

I beg leave to correct a popular mistake relative to mediation and the office of mediator. It never was necessary nor compatible with the relations between Heaven and Earth, that any person should be appointed both by Heaven and Earth to the office of mediator. The mediation and the mediator are gracious appointments of "*one of the parties*" only, if we may so use the term; nor is the mediation conducted on the same principles as if parties offended and of equal dignity were to be reconciled. The mediation of Moses and of his antitype are gracious appointments of the Father of Mercies, and are not to be exactly measured by our practices.

3d. It is at variance with the fixed principles of all languages I know any thing of, and most assuredly with the original, to substitute *promise* instead of *law* in the hand of angels. The word answering in grammatical construction with *diatageis*, "*ordained*," is not *epangelia*, "*promise*," but *nomos*, "*law*." To affirm that George IV. is *queen* of England, is not more at variance with our idiom, than to say that *the promise* was ordained by angels, or through a mediator. Law is *masculine* in Greek, and promise is *feminine*, and *ordained* is of the same gender with law and not with promise. I have sundry other objections to this interpretation, but these three I deem quite sufficient. I am still of opinion that the Note, No. 78, Appendix to the new trans-

lation, is the correct view of this passage. This opinion does not, however, stand the least in my way of hearing and examining any other that may be offered, nor of adopting a more satisfactory one when it comes documented with superior claims upon my reason. I have great respect for the writer of the letter from which the above extracts are made. He thinks closely on the great subject of christianity; but this passage has puzzled many commentators, and for many years I could see no meaning in it. I do not know that any commentator gives the views in the translation.—*Ed.*

THE following four Questions are from a correspondent in Essex county, Va.—

1. Has the gospel, as it now stands on record, influence or power in itself, without the agency of the Holy Spirit, to regenerate and make a man a new creature? And if it has or has not, please to tell us how that change is brought about.

2. Is not saving faith wrought in the heart by the influence of the Holy Spirit; and can a man have saving faith without that influence on his soul? I say *saving* faith, because it is evident that the New Testament speaks of two sorts of faith, let the Philadelphia bishop say what he may to the contrary.

3. What does the apostle mean when he says, "If by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace?"

4. And when he says, "Unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God," what sort of a *calling* does he here allude to?

#### ANSWERS.

1. To answer this question with a Yea or a Nay, might comport with a system already received or rejected by the querist; but either a *yea* or a *nay* would be incompatible with the genius and spirit of the inspired volume. To separate and distinguish the spirit from its own word is the radix of unhallowed speculation. What the gospel, written or spoken, does in regenerating or purifying the heart, the Spirit of God does, and what the Spirit of God does, the gospel spoken or written does. Those who resist the gospel proclamation, resist the Spirit of God; and those who resist the Spirit of God, resist and reject the gospel proclamation. Suppose I were asked, "Has the sun, the earth, the water, and the air, power or influence of themselves, independent of the influence of God, to make an ear of corn from one grain deposited in the earth, I could not answer it by a Yea or a Nay; but I could say that God creates the corn, and that the sun, the earth, the water and the air were media through which, and through which only, the divine influence was exhibited. So that they stand to the corn planted as the power of God. And if I were asked, Why does not the word written or spoken exhibit the same power in all who read and hear it, I would say it was owing to the same cause why every grain of wheat or corn which is deposited in the earth does not produce a ripe ear. The

Saviour himself justifies this analogy between things natural and moral. See his parable of the sower and his seed.

2. From the answer above given to query 1st, I am authorized to say that "*saving* faith" is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and that no man can believe to the saving of his soul but by the Holy Spirit. I wave the question about two kinds of faith. Unfeigned faith or true faith is what is meant by "*saving* faith;" and feigned faith "*false*" faith, or "*dead*" faith, are not saving.

3. Paul means that *grace* or favor, and desert are antipodes. Whatever is of the one cannot be of the other. Every thing in our salvation is of pure favor. A, by a mere act of favor, or a deed of gift, invests B. with a large farm and amply sufficient for all the purposes of life. He afterwards writes him a letter, informing him that if he does not practise temperance, if he does not take exercise, if he does not mingle labor and rest, and avoid every excess, he cannot live nor be happy. Now he that argues that B. obtained the estate by his *works*, is in error; and every one who says that, without the works enjoined by A. in his epistle, B. can live and be happy, is in an error; and every man who says that B. got the farm as a reward of his works, says what is not true.

4. Christ is the power of God to all *the called*. The term *called* is used in a twofold sense in the New Testament: 1st As descriptive of all who *hear* the word of life—and 2d. As descriptive of all those who *receive it*. The former is its *general* the latter, its *special* acceptation. The "*many called*" are all who hear, the "*few chosen*" are all who obey. The former slight the call—the latter make it certain. The former treat their calling and election as idle and unmeaning compliments—the latter make them sure and enjoy the special benefits thereof. To the latter only, to those who accept the call, is Christ the power of God unto salvation. The obedient are the "*effectually*" called, and the disobedient are the *ineffectually* called.

The writer of the above queries had not read the 2d volume of this work when he proposed them. Were it not for the extreme sensibility of some taught in human schools, either *old* or *new*, on these topics, we should exclude them from our pages, as the most fatal of all the speculations in religion which generated in the dark ages. That man has *true* faith or *saving* faith who *obeys* the Lord Jesus Christ, and he that disobeys him has either no faith at all, or a *dead* faith. He is regenerated who believes and obeys the Lord Jesus sincerely, and he is unregenerated who does not. The truth believed purifies the heart—and no heart can be purified without it. And every question, which, when answered, does not lead to some good practice, is as idle as the theory of captain Symmes. His theory of the earth is of as much use to my corn field, as the grand things sought after in the above four queries as to the soul of the querist. The next generation will admit this; but few of the present can. Many seem to be more concerned about my regeneration than they are



about their own; than they are about the many good things I am habitually calling their attention to. While I cannot but feel grateful to them for their solicitude, I should like to see them evince very clearly the purity of their hearts by a holy life; that is, by a life of obedience to the Son of God, in all the commandments and institutions of the King, whether of an individual or social character. Happy only are the *pure* in heart, for they shall see God.

EDITOR.

\* \* \*

### QUERIES FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES.

1. *WHAT is the work of an evangelist?* It was the business of proclaiming the gospel to those who had never heard it. It is the same thing still. Before the gospel was generally announced persons were devoted exclusively to this work. And now-a-days much of this work is done by christian parents to their children, and by the overseers of the churches. So that in christian countries there is not the same reasons existing for an order of persons exclusively devoted to this work as there was in the apostolic age.—See the essays on the work of the Holy Spirit, vol. 2.

2. *What should be the qualifications of those who administer the ordinances of the christian church?* “The administration of ordinances” is a popish phrase, and ought to be cashiered from the christian vocabulary. Persons appointed by the church or christian congregation, having the qualifications which Paul lays down for overseers, and public servants, or deacons, when attending their respective duties, are “administering all the ordinances” of the christian church. The election or appointment of the church is that which gives them an official right to act in an official capacity. Any person appointed by a church to baptize, has a right to do it.

3. *Did not Philip and other primitive preachers usually take “a text?”* Philip’s text was in *Isaiah 53*. when he converted the eunuch. And Paul preached in Athens from a text. This is more like a quiz upon the textuaries than any thing else. One might more easily make a pope out of Paul than a textuary. If there was any thing like a text in the case of Philip, it was the eunuch that selected it; and if answering a question upon any passage out of the Old Testament or New, or out of a Grecian poet, furnishes a model for text taking and sermonizing—then the sprinkling of bells, and the wearing of official vestments, and the laying of corner stones, and the consecrating of grave yards, can easily be proven from scriptures. This query does not merit a serious reply. No prophet nor apostle nor divinely called preacher ever took a text or made a sermon in our sense of the words, from the days of Moses till the days of Origen, the inventor of a thousand errors. The quoting of any passage or the commencing with any sentence, no more makes that sentence a text in our usage, than the preaching of Balaam’s ass made him a christian evangelist.

EDITOR.

**Many questions and extracts of letters are still, with all our abbreviations, crowded out. We shall have to let them lay over, and perhaps they will, in substance or in form, appear hereafter in the regular topics of inquiry.** Ed.

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*Articles crowded out of this Number.*

Editor Clack's Letter and the Reply—Deism and the Social System, No. 3.—A Review of Dr. Noel's Circular—Essay on the Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things. The History of Seven Churches which have attempted to get out of Babylon, will be presented in the next volume—with Notes, by the Editor of the C. B. Also, several new subjects too tedious to enumerate—Particularly Essays on Church Discipline.



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