

*For the Witness of Truth.*

### TRIALS OF THE CHURCH.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—Having for some time entertained a thought of writing to you in reference to the late trials connected with the church in Wainfleet, I have at length concluded to impart information respecting them. It is known to you that a certain clergyman of the Free-will Baptist connection, having delivered a few discourses in the vicinity of that church, expressed a desire to speak for, and commune with, the disciples on the first day of the week. Being recommended by his congregation in Illinois, and having spoken of our brethren in this Province and the United States in terms of respect and affection, the request of course was readily granted. We rejoiced much in receiving help so unexpected; for you know our desire is to unite and co-operate with all who acknowledge “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all”

We listened to a few of our friend’s addresses with a sort of pleasure—intermingled, however, with some regret in discovering that he was not so near the “primitive platform” as he imagined or we expected. Still a degree of forbearance in such cases is required, and in this instance it was largely and sufficiently exercised by the brotherhood. The aspect of matters, however, threatened a revolution, and your visit contributed no little to its accomplishment. Some who had previously expressed a desire to obey the Saviour, now came to the conclusion to do so, and were baptized by brother Thomas Bradt. This encouraged the elder, who by and by commenced talking of separation, notwithstanding his declaration in public that “all he accomplished should be considered as done for the disciples, as he had no desire of erecting a party of his own.” It was evident to many that a crisis unlike any hitherto witness by this church was inevitably approaching. The brethren wishing to avoid all harsh and hasty measures were desirous of pursuing the most prudent course to successfully meet the threatening storm. All doubts relative to the intended course of the elder were at length removed by the startling announcement made by him that in a discourse soon to be delivered he “would draw the line of demarcation and show who were Christ’s disciples in the church.” In the meantime he appeared sedulously employed in sowing the seeds of disaffection amid certain of the church with whom he associated—saying, that “many were dissatisfied, and therefore a division ought to take place.”

The time having arrived for the delivery of the discourse referred to—spirited opposition ensued—in which the elder’s crude and contradictory opinions were promptly met and fully exploded by the scriptures, presented and applied chiefly by our firm and intelligent brother Bradt. Being somewhat confounded, the elder promised on the Sunday evening following (Dec. 31) a more full examination of the differences existing between us—stating that they were greater than he anticipated—adding that he “wished to create no disunion or confusion in the community to which he was divinely called to preach.” The hour for