

conditions, have found the promise true ; therefore, with them Christianity is not merely a matter of opinion ; it is a subject of experience, and there are among us tens of thousands of living witnesses, that have felt this supernatural change, whose lives and conversation corroborate their testimony.

No man in the world is naturally disposed to love his enemies, and to do good to them that injure him ; but all men acting under the influence of nature, return good for good, and evil for evil. Therefore this religion which teaches and *disposes* us to love our enemies, and return good for evil, must be superhuman, must be divine. I have long thought that the gospel contains internal evidence of its own divinity.

It was as impossible for this anti-sinful gospel to originate from fraud, as it is for anti-republican principles to proceed from republicanism, or anti-scriptural doctrines to grow out of the Bible. That, which is opposite to corruption, can grow out of it. That, which comes against the current of corrupt nature, chastens it, and turns it into the path of rectitude, must be, *above* nature.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

NO. III.

PRESENT ADMINISTRATION.—During the personal absence of the King, he has committed the management of this kingdom to stewards. These were, first Apostles ; next in rank to them, Prophets ; next teachers ; then, assistants, or helpers ; then directors or Presidents, all furnished with gifts, knowledge, and character, suited to their respective functions. Besides these, many persons possessed of miraculous powers—gifts of healing and speaking foreign languages, were employed in setting up and putting in order the communities composing the kingdom of heaven. Angels also were employed, and are still employed, under the great King in ministering to them who are heirs of salvation. For Jesus now, as Lord of all, has the Holy Spirit at his disposal, and all the angels of God ; and these are employed by him in the affairs of his kingdom.*

The Apostles were Plenipotentiaries and Ambassadors for Jesus, and all authority delegated to them from the King. Hence every song was first taught and enjoined by them. They were the first preachers, teachers, pastors, overseers, and ministers in the kingdom, and had the direction and management of all its affairs.†

The communities collected and set in order by the Apostles were called *the congregations of Christ*, and all these taken together are sometimes called *the kingdom of God*. But the phrases “Church of God,” or “congregation of Christ,” and the phrases “kingdom of heaven,” or “kingdom of God,” do not always, nor exactly represent the same thing. The elements of the kingdom of heaven, it will be remembered, are not simply its subjects, and therefore not simply the congregations of disciples of Christ. But as these communities possess the

* 1 Cor. xii. 28 ; Eph. iv. 11 ; Heb. i. 14. † 2 Cor. iii. 6, v. 18—20.