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CONTENTS.

First Principles	1
Overseers	2
Criticisms	2
The Advisor	3
A Glimpse of Glory	3
Practical	3
Worthy of Note	4
The Burial of Moses	4
The Gold Sovereign	4
Death & Co	6
The Two Sea Captains	7
Christianity and Christ	7
The Young Pedlar	8
A Skeleton in every House	9
Prayer	11
Go and Come	11
Universal Education	13
Evangelists Advices	14
Meeting at Clinton	14
June Meeting	14
Items	16

FIRST PRINCIPLES.

The discourses which have been delivered on "Christian Union" are multitudinous. Many essays, pamphlets and books have been written upon the subject, and some periodicals have been liberally sustained to promote it. The efforts made by numerous religious bodies, including the "world's convention," show unmistakably that there is a strong desire, on the part of many good and honest professors, that union should prevail. This deep felt desire for christian union is right, and this specious reasoning on the part of a few, that division is better, is absurd, suicidal and unscriptural. Did not our Saviour pray for union among his followers? 17th John. Did not the Holy Spirit through Paul teach union among christians? 4th. Eph. And did not he rebuke those who would try to start anything like division in the church? A heretic, schismatic, sect maker, or one who would cause divisions among God's people is regarded by Paul as a sinner in no small degree. Titus iii. 10.

Let us consider some of the plans adopted by those advocates of union heretofore. The

world's convention was the most popular effort of its day. The representatives of a great many denominations met in the City of London, many were very sanguine as to the results of that convention, their hopes were brightened and their hearts glowed with love to the cause for which they had assembled from different parts of the world. But ah! how disappointed; the whole thing ran off the track and its failure is a matter of history. Who cannot see a reason for this? He that *will* not. The whole convention with a few exceptions gave palpable evidence of their want of confidence in the all sufficiency of the *Bible* as a guide for the people of God. Creed makers had brought into existence many of those sects and parties, and the aforesaid creeds bound each of those and bound them to keep separate from each other, hence they acted as inseparable barriers to a union of the whole. As Bro. Anderson once very justly remarked—"it is the creed which binds the members of each sect together, if the Bible were lost, the sect would stand, because it is not the bond, but if the creed were lost, the sect would fall, because the creed is the bond." I do not mean *written* creeds exclusively, for an oral creed will be just as pernicious as far as it goes; but is certainly more susceptible of change. But the world's convention commenced framing a written creed, and who, acquainted with ecclesiastical history, could not predict its end? These creeds can never bring those who fear God together, because they have no authority further than the boundaries of the mere sect. The written creed keeps the sects somewhat permanently together, but it prevents its amalgamation with any other. The oral creed is a fruitful source of almost endless divisions. Shall we not conclude that all efforts at union by the formation or sustaining of human creeds must prove abortive.

SIMON.