

Original Contributions.

O. D. ON DISINTEGRATION.

Bro. O. D. is after us on organization. Who he can be we are unable to see. But we should judge, by the careful reading of his letter, that O. D. is intended for Odd Disciple. His interpretation of I. Cor. xii:12 (the passage we gave in our former letter) is the oddest Bible exegesis we ever saw. Who but O. D. would ever suppose that because the apostle was talking about spiritual gifts in that chapter, that he was not also showing the unity and combined organized condition of the Body of Christ?

Let the reader turn to that chapter and read from the twelfth to the twenty-seventh verse, and see if he does not agree with every commentator extant, that the Apostle is showing the relation and union of the members of the Church of Christ by the natural body, that each member sustains the same relation to each other as do the members of our body. MacKnight, in his notes on this passage, says: "The apostle intimated to the Corinthians that what he had said concerning the order, the situation, and the office of the members of the human body and the union which subsists among them, and the care which they have for each other, were all applicable to the members of the Church of Christ." Clark, in his comments, says: "Though the human body has many members, and though it be composed of a great variety of parts, yet it is but one entire system, every part and all the members being necessary to the integrity and completeness of the whole. So is the church, the Body of Christ." With this agree all the commentators. Can we wonder that our Brother, in the light of these facts, and against the education of the world, saying that the apostle had no reference to organization, would sign himself O. D.?

He says there is no force in what we said in regard to the inconsistency of those who oppose the Y. P. C. E. and at the same time favor the Sunday school. We notice that there was force enough in it to bring out the admission that those who favored the Sunday school violated their own principles. To avoid the force of the inconsistency he is compelled to class the Sunday school with other societies and call them all "absurdities." Let those who oppose societies make a note of this, and understand this now, that to be consistent and to avoid absurdities they must, according to O. D.'s admission, oppose the Sunday school.

It is not necessary for us to repeat our position relative to the societies being a better condition of church organization as all that has been said against it in O. D.'s reply is his assertion that it is a "groundless assumption." This is logic (?) and argument (?) that is impossible for us to answer.

Now, we come to O. D. Disintegration, the entire destruction of the church. He is not satisfied in robbing us of the Sunday school, but must take from us the church also. Read carefully the following: "We commit ourselves entirely to apostolic precedent in evangelizing, and avoid all 'plans' for which there is no 'thus saith the Lord.'" Now, tell me if you ever saw anything more odd from a Disciple? With this view it would be impossible for a church to exist. Where would we meet to worship? We have no "thus saith the Lord" for building meeting houses. Then, again, what time in the day will we meet. Where can we get a "thus saith the Lord" for the hour to meet? What will we sing out of as we have no authority for singing books? What kind of dishes would we have at the Lord's table, wood or clay? What attitude at the table, sitting or reclining? What kind of lights? What kind of stoves? And what about many other things that are absolutely necessary in order to worship, and without which it would be impossible to sustain the work and worship of God? To account

this anti-plan idea is, as we said in our former letter, anti-scriptural, anti-salvation and anti-church. We are safe in saying that if Br. O. D. is a worshipper of the Lord he does it by ways and plans for which he has no apostolic precedent or "thus saith the Lord." Here is seen again that wonderful jewel, consistency, condemning others for the very things of which we are guilty. How plainly we can see the wisdom of our great Teacher in His lesson on beams and motes.

Our Brother is afraid we are sipping a little of the Babylonish wine. I confess this would be bad, but what is still worse is the drinking of something stronger than wine, for then we get into such an unfortunate condition that we think everybody are staggering and going wrong.

In reading the following, "There is no longer that unity and fraternal feeling which characterized Disciples of our Lord years ago" we concluded O. D. did not enjoy his company; that he must be among a poor class of Disciples. He ought to come down to our Provinces and we will make him happy. One annual meeting like we had at Westport or like the late annual at Boston would change his views in regard to the love and unity of the Disciples. Never were we more united, and never were there a more fraternal feeling among us, and it is growing better all the time. Greater success is attending our labors. We are having a greater harvest of souls than ever before. This year has been the greatest year in the history of the Church of Christ. Such results as we are having all over the harvest field were never heard of before. Every interest in church work is growing. If our Bro. O. D. is living where the Disciples are getting worse and losing their first love, he better move out, because that disease is contagious, and there is a danger of losing his life.

A word more to our readers, and we will then dismiss this subject. The fact must be apparent to all that this opposition to the great and grand work being done among us, and this looking on 'the dark side of the work are more from the constitution of our nature than from principle. There are those in life who, from their childhood days, have been taught and trained to see ghosts, and witches, and giants, and dragons where really there are none. They are ever on the sharp lookout for these terrors. Such fearful imaginations will produce the nightmare, when we will be troubled with these spectral visitors. It is quite impossible to change this dark, and gloomy, and dismal nature after it is once established. Lamb admits that what he learned in his childhood from his foolish nurse never left him, so that "night-time, solitude, and the dark, were his hell."

Our lives should be benedictions of love, joy and peace, and when we come to a supposed evil not to fall over it, but if we can't remove it, go around it, and go on our way rejoicing. H. M.

GOVERNMENT.

Government is the instrument by which society is regulated. It is the head of an administration. It is to society what the mind is to the individual. It is as rational to believe that it is expedient for man to be minus mind as it is for society to exist without government. It is impossible, therefore, for us to imagine a time when there was no government. A desire for social regulations is born within every individual, and moreover if it were not so he would not be a man. Man cannot create a desire for government—*nascitur non fit*. Seeing, then, that a desire for harmony, union and regulation is born within every individual, or given to him from above, it is necessary that it be carried out according to its design. I have made the mind of the individual analogous to the government of any society, and in my opinion it is an apt analogy. The mind controls the actions of every member of

the body, and, as government, has three-fold functions to perform—legislature, judicature and administration. The mind formulates the laws which are to govern the actions, it sits in judgment upon the fulfillment of these laws and sees they are carried into effect. Mind has been given to reflect an image of God and to regulate the actions of the individual. Government has been ordained to reflect an image of God and regulate the actions of society. As the true aim of the mind is for the regulation of the welfare of the individual, so the true aim of government should be to promote the welfare of the society or to do the most good to the many.

All forms of government have arisen from the conception of a universal ruler, and here I may state that the principle of order and harmony in any organic union is a strong proof of a universal king or Jehovah.

But of all forms of government not one has been proved to meet the wants of all classes. There is no perfect system, because the underlying principles are false. The only true basis of government is an appeal to reason, and that government only shall be lasting which in its action consults the intelligence or reason and receives a corresponding submission from society. The same result may be obtained by force, but force, while it quells, does not pacify. Force does not appeal to the consequences of men, but compels it to submission.

Hence all governments of the past ages have fallen, as they have not satisfied the demands of each individual. Christ's kingdom fulfils all the conditions of a lasting rule. It is founded on reason. Love is the dominant principle of the legislature, the judicature and the administration. There are inculcated in the heart of each member such principles as cannot be faulted. It is opposed in its principles to all human governments. Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use you. Could any such principles fail to win the approval of its worst enemies. Christ's government has within itself the means of its own perpetuation. It is the little stone that will fill the whole world. The principle of growth is given to every member of this government and each one frames from it the law of his action in society, for it is founded on right, reason and love. Let me contrast the two forms of government by an illustration that just now comes to my notice.

An Ohio farmer recently died, leaving eleven children and a tract of land valued at ten thousand dollars. Before his death he deeded the property to one of his sons.

After the funeral, the ten children discovering that they could not share in their father's estate, consulted a lawyer, who told them how useless it was to begin a legal contest and advised them to consult with the lucky brother. The advice being heeded, the lawyer, his clients and the brother met to talk matters over. The brother produced the deed and tore it into shreds. "I will take my share," he said, "and you may divide the rest among yourselves."

When the excitement, caused by the unexpectedness as well as the generosity of the act had subsided, the lawyer took the brother aside and asked for an explanation.

"I am a Christian," said this noble brother, in deed as well as in blood, "and I could not endure the thought of leaving my brothers and sisters with no share in our father's estate." The law of Christ was written on that brother's heart. The law of reason was in his soul, and part of his soul and of such is Christ's government composed. The legislature is by love, the judicature is by love and the administration is by love. May God hasten the day when such a law is written in our hearts, when all mankind shall bow before its author, which is love, and recognize no other guiding principle than this: Thou shalt love thy God with all thy mind, and with all thy soul and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thy self.