

THE  
CHRISTIAN BANNER.

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"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."  
"This is love, that we walk after his commandments."

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VOL. XI.

COBOURG AND BRIGHTON, APRIL, 1857.

NO. 4.

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DR. SHEPARD REVIEWED, No. 2.

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For the Christian Banner.

Pursuant to promise I now resume the farther consideration of Dr. Shepard's address published in the Dec. No. of the Banner. That part of the Dr's address which I shall take up at present is to what he says about church authority. Dr. Shepard says page 369 "the church has no authority." As I differ from Dr. S. I shall now produce my reasons, but before proceeding, I would say that it is freely granted here, that the Lord Jesus is king on Zion's hill, and the sole Lawgiver in His kingdom, and that no church, no man, nor class of men, has any authority to add to, alter, amend, or set aside, any one of the laws of the kingdom, without incurring the king's displeasure. But while this is freely granted and even contended for, I also contend that the Lord Jesus (being now absent in body) has committed to the churches a certain amount of power and authority, to be by them exercised in His absence, in accordance with the laws of the kingdom, see Rev. 2: 5, 16, chap. 3: 2.

I shall now enumerate some of the things which in my opinion the church has authority to do. 1st, The churches have authority to receive members into their communion, upon a confession of their faith in Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of sinners, and professing a willingness to conform to the laws of the kingdom, and also to reject persons seeking admission into the church, if these are known to hold sentiments subversive of the truth contained in the christian scriptures. 2nd, The churches have authority to exercise a certain amount of super-