

ly speaking, exhortations—calculated to excite to the performance of duty, and to bear, with patience, the various sufferings of the present life: each of them had some relation to the others, and their combined influence was highly salutary. Is not this, said I to myself, an exhibition of what the apostle means, when he speaks of “the body of Christ edifying itself in love?” The exhortations of the brethren were followed by an address from one of the elders, in which he briefly recapitulated the topics brought forward by the members, and enforced the duties to which their attention had been called. One of the brethren was again called on to pray. After again uniting in praise, the elder, in a short prayer, implored the divine benediction on their services, and entreated the blessing of God while they attended to the fellowship of the saints. The church then sat down, when a collection was made, and the worship closed. The two hours which I thus spent with these dear people, were among the happiest and most profitable I ever enjoyed on earth. I bless God, that unexpectedly I had an opportunity of witnessing the order of a church, which commended itself to my mind, as combining all the ends of christian association, and of which I had previously formed some idea from reading the New Testament. After an interval the service proceeded, and the time was occupied by prayer and praise, the teaching of the elders, and the reading of the word of God; which last, I observed, throughout the day formed a conspicuous part of their worship.

Being under the necessity of leaving this town early next morning, I was very desirous of learning their history. Accordingly, when worship was over in the evening, I accosted a person whom I had noticed among the members: “Sir,” said I, “I am a stranger in this place, and was happily led to your place of worship to-day. Although unknown to any of you in the face, I trust I am one with you in the faith and hope of the gospel. I was very much edified with your order, and would esteem it a great favor if you would give me some particulars of your history.” He very kindly invited me to his house, and gave me the following interesting detail:—“I have no doubt,” said he, “that the motives of your enquiry are good; I shall, therefore, without reserve, give you the information you request. We have met together as a church for these six years past. The original members were intimately acquainted with one another. Each of us had, for a considerable time, been groaning under the defects of the societies with which we were then connected. We clearly perceived that they bore none of the features of the churches set in order by the apostles; but we sinfully contented ourselves with our condition. Our chief comfort, as to christian society, arose from assembling together once a-week in what is called a fellowship meeting. On one of these occasions a member spoke with some freedom on the distress he felt, arising from the cause above mentioned. This led the way to a free conversation; and we soon found that our distress was not that of an individual, but common to us all. We therefore resolved to walk together as a church in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord Jesus, diligently searching the scriptures to know his will. and fervently praying to be