

NO COMMUNION WITH CAMPBELLITES.

The above is the title of a pamphlet of forty-nine pages, written by A. P. Williams, D. D., and published by the American Baptist Publication Society. It is now being circulated in Freeport and other places in Digby County. We would deem it hardly necessary to notice the pamphlet were it not for the fact that there are those in Digby County who are unacquainted with the Disciples of Christ, and who are honest in believing there is such a people as "Campbellites," and that what is said in the pamphlet concerning the Disciples is true. The statements of the little book are so glaringly false that they refute and condemn themselves among those who have any acquaintance with the Disciples of Christ.

The name "Campbellite" is not a friendly term, and is used only by those who know us for the purpose of creating an odious sentiment against us. The author of the little book admits that we discard the name "Campbellites," and in the next sentence says that we regarded Mr. Campbell as an oracle. Strange, indeed, that we should regard him as an oracle and refuse to accept his name! A mere child can see if we discard the name we must reject him as an oracle; both of which is true. The virtue of our plea—"to speak only where the Bible speaks,"—compell us to exclude every human name. As much as we may have loved the man, we would not destroy the authority of Christ and the genius of the Christian religion by calling ourselves after Paul, or Apollos, or Campbell, or even John the Baptist. Such a spirit, says the Apostle, is of the carnal mind. It cannot, therefore, be of Christ, as the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God. (See Romans viii. 6-8.) Let this be well understood by those who are honestly inquiring about us—that we discard all human names, because they are both unscriptural and anti-scriptural when used in the denominational sense.

We find in the pamphlet another admission, *i. e.*, that we accept of no creed outside of the Bible, which is most certainly true. But then it goes on to say that this is not true, that we have another creed—"the interpretation we put upon the teachings of the New Testament" is our creed, which is to say that others know better what our creed is than we know ourselves; or, in other words, "Don't believe what I say, but rather what others say about me." But what is still more strange, the writer of the pamphlet tries to make out that our interpretation of conversion is baptism only, that all the conversion needed is to be baptized. To prove this he produces quotations from Campbell and Lard's writings; and instead of letting the quotations speak for themselves, he draws his own conclusions and calls it their interpretation. Take one case for an example as found on the 28rd page of the little book. Mr. Campbell says they who gladly received the Word were that day immersed; or, in other words, that same day were converted or regenerated or obeyed the gospel; these expressions denoting, when applied to persons coming into the Kingdom, the same act. In this quotation and others of like character, the author says is taught conversion by baptism only. Those who will carefully read the quotations will see that faith and repentance is also mentioned, making baptism the last act in conversion instead of the only act. This is what Campbell Lard, and others have said the Bible taught. That persons who come into the church of Christ must believe and repent and be baptized is the plain teaching of God's word, and not any one's interpretation of it. The very ones who try to avoid the force of this position practically admit it. Ask them if they don't believe the church of which they are members is not the church of Christ, they will answer that they do believe it; then ask them if any can get into it without baptism—their answer is no. Well then, does this not teach that baptism is necessary in order to enter the church?

This is what the Disciples teach: That baptism is the act that brings the alien into the Church of Christ, or in the language of Scripture, "Baptized into Jesus Christ." (See Rom. vi. 3. Gal. iii. 17.)

Only in this sense of a change of relation can Baptism be called conversion, and this is all the writers above mentioned meant in relation baptism conversion. A change from one relation, that of the kingdom of darkness, to the relation of the children of God into the church or kingdom of light. And that before this change takes place there must be a change of heart by faith, and a change of life by repentance. This change of heart and of life and of relation is taught in every recorded conversion in the Scripture. Those three thousand who turned to the Lord on the day of Pentecost believed, and were commanded to repent before they were fit subjects for baptism. These changes of conversion are in complete harmony with all that has been written on the subject. It is strange indeed how a person could allow himself to twist and turn the writings and practice of a people as well known as the Disciples of Christ, into the doctrine of salvation by water alone, and still more strange that the same ones who so represent us, are ready to receive in church fellowship, those whom they say were never converted. How is this to be explained?

Much more might be said by way of correcting many other mistakes of the little book, but enough has been said to show every candid mind that terrible work has been made of the truth, and that the whole tenor of the pamphlet is conspicuously inexact. Let all who read the pamphlet investigate what they read, and not be satisfied until they have heard both sides of the question. May the Lord give us wisdom and grace to speak the truth and nothing but the truth, and to ever manifest the Spirit of the Master who sought the good of all, who refused none.

H. MURRAY.

THE DISCIPLES.

(From Dio Lewis' Monthly.)

The religious movement inaugurated near the beginning of this century by the Campbells and others, has not received that careful attention from the people of the Eastern and Central States that so important and successful an innovation would seem to deserve.

Starting with but a handful of adherents in an obscure corner of Virginia, early in the nineteenth century, the Disciples have, within half a century, increased their membership to about 600,000 and their hearing to about 1,000,000 in the United States. Besides there is a considerable membership in Canada, Great Britain and Australia. The Disciples publish a large number of periodicals, and have twelve colleges and many other educational institutions.

The movement originated in a desire to unite all Christians in one communion. Fifty years ago sectarian strife was very fierce. So bitter was the feeling that Thomas Campbell was censured by a Synod for inviting other Presbyterians than those belonging to his particular kind to the communion.

To correct these abuses and bring all Christians into loving fellowship was the aim of Campbell and his co-laborers.

OUR FAITH.

The various denominations had presented certain philosophical views of religious truth that they regarded as essential to salvation and had made these their "Confessions of Faith." Persons desiring to unite with such churches must assert to these articles.

The Disciples require no faith in *dogma*, but only belief in a *person*. The sinner is asked to believe in Christ. The gospel is to be preached to everybody, to the ignorant as well as to the educated. All cannot reason on metaphysical questions, but all can believe in a friend. Christ is presented as a friend. This is the creed of the Disciples—*The Messiahship the Divinity of Christ*. He takes the place of Articles of Faith. Those who believe in Christ, loving Him with all their hearts, and obeying Him with all their powers are Christians.

Another salient feature of this movement is the recognition of the exclusive authorship of the Bible. The Disciples adopt the language of Chillingworth in practice as well as in name,—“The Bible and the Bible alone the religion of Protestants.”

This leads to another prominent characteristic of the movement—*simplicity of Bible conversions*. Jesus preached to the people; they heard the gospel with its evidences and receiving Christ as thus presented—a Divine Saviour—they yielded a hearty and ready obedience to Him in the institution of baptism, thus giving themselves to Him in an everlasting covenant, and receiving, by faith in His promise an assurance of remission of sins. Then we rid ourselves of those mysterious dreams and revelations of forgiveness that have left so many in the “slough of despair,” as the feelings ebbed and flowed, now hopeful and now despondent. On the moral teachings of the New Testament the Disciples are in accord with all the other orthodox churches.

THE PROBABLE RESULT.

There is evidently a constant advance toward union among Christians of all denominations, as is shown by the friendly feeling between them by their working together in the Y. M. C. A., and in Sunday-school Conventions and Associations. And this approach to union is in the direction above named, *viz.*, simply as laws of Christ. How much we, as a people, have done to bring this about, I do not care to enquire.

J. C. GOODRICH.

[Among the prominent adherents of the “Disciples,” we may mention the late Judge Jeromiah Black and President Garfield.—*Ed.*]

RANDOM NOTES.

A small insect resembling a fly is devastating the fall-sown wheat of Oregon, eating the blade down to the ground.

The well-founded rumors of the discovery of an improvement in the telephone give promise that before long distance will be practically annihilated by it. Conversation in low tones has been readily carried on between Chicago and New York by means of it.

“Don't you know, my son,” said a kind father, “that it hurts me worse to whip you than it does you? I would much rather receive the punishment; but I whip as an example for the other children.” “Then let me give it to you,” the boy replied, “and we'll explain it to the other children afterward.”

The Churches that are lax in the matter of foreign missions will soon be made ashamed of themselves, for even the secular papers are now urging increased subscriptions for that work, on the simple ground that Christianity is the gauge of the world's progress toward universal civilization and tranquility.

There are reasons to hope that during the present year slavery will be completely abolished in Cuba. Sixteen years ago there were 385,355 slaves on that Island. A law was then passed providing for their gradual emancipation. In many cases the planters have anticipated the action of the law, and already over 235,000 slaves have been set free.

This laconic but sensible German ought to be sent out to lecture among the people: “I shall tell you how it was, I drink mine lager; den I put mine hand on mine head, and dere was von pain; den I put mine hand on mine body, and dere was anoder pain; den I put mine hand in mine pocket, and dere was nothing. So I jine mit de demperance. Now dere is no pain more in mine head, and the pain in mine body was all gone. I put mine hand in mine pocket, and dere was dwenty tollars. So I stay mit de demperance.”

It is not generally known, and so may be worth repeating, that Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, the English infidel lecturer, has a brother who is an earnest believer in Christianity, and a devoted worker for Christ. He does not despair of his brother's future, but holds unfalteringly to the belief that prayer will yet be answered in the conversion of his brother to that faith which he has denied, and to a personal trust in that Saviour whose name he has so often reviled.