

the subject. Epistles are received carrying with them commendation and satisfaction—others come to us primed with the spirit of murmur. We receive them all in good part !

Before we make notes upon brother "O's" present strictures, we shall turn our eyes a little further back and survey the ground from the beginning. The origin of the existing investigation, as the attentive reader will know, was the remarks we made upon the exclusiveness and closeness of close communionism while addressing a Baptist Elder. These remarks were read by an esteemed gentleman in Hamilton, Mr. Rattray, (a friend of truth who has suffered much from religious tyranny) and, in his view, we seemed to favour the principle of open communion. He wrote a letter—he propounded a query. The preface to the query in substance was, 'I apprehend you are favourable to open communion ; a Baptist friend tells me otherwise' : and the query itself was substantially—*What are your own views, and the views of those you commune with concerning the question of open communion ?* Two things being embraced in the inquiry, they were answered by these two paragraphs :—

In gathering around the table of the Lord, a privilege and pleasure we enjoy every Lord's day, we are careful, as occasion requires, to explain to all that the table is not ours, but that it belongs to the author of the new institution. We also teach that its author designed it at first, and still designs it, for those who are redeemed by his own precious blood, and that hence he invites all such to sit and partake at his own board. And while we likewise teach that those who have proved their knowledge of the gospel, their penitence, their resolve to reform, by having openly confessed Christ in baptism, maintaining a consistent character, are by the Lord invited to eat and sup with him, we further say, that if there be others present who are assured they are the Lord's people, and hence desire to participate in the Lord's feast, we will not say no. Such is our teaching, and such our practice.

Many of the disciples forming congregations take this ground in approaching the commemorative table, while others stand in doubt of this liberality. It is necessary to say here, that the brethren in Christ called disciples, built upon the one foundation of the gospel, are gathered together from various sources, from former Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Christians, as well as those of no former profession ; and although there is the utmost openness and cordiality upon first principles, and I might say all *principles*, there is to be discovered in some instances the leanings and partialities of previous systems both in churches and individuals, the same as the prejudices and differences, national and educational, that existed among Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles during the ministry of Paul, Peter, John, and James, though all believed and rejoiced in the one gospel. Meantime, we love one another as heartily and dearly in the Lord as members of the divine family, as though we were agreed in every shade of opinion ; for we have learned from the oracles that we are neither to be united nor divided for party sake or opinion's sake, but for the truth's sake.

Here was a field in which our quondam humble friend Mr. Davidson imagined he could figure to good advantage. He seized his pen and wrote. The pith of his logic when fairly brought together and clarified from all extras, was, 'Oliphant—you and other Disciples are closer than the closest Baptists, and yet you have written in advocacy