

THE WESLEYAN.

Halifax, Saturday Morning, August 16, 1851.

THE CONQUESTS OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH.

At a meeting on the Irish Church Missions, recently held at Bristol, England, the Rev. W. Hackness stated that "whilst Popery was advancing in England it was retrograding on the other side of the water, (meaning Ireland); for every pervert in England he was sure he was under the mark in saying there were twenty converts in Ireland." The Rev. Mr. Dallas likewise stated, that in Dublin, "during the last two years a series of controversial discourses had been delivered, which were attended by large numbers of the Roman Catholics, and the effects of which had been so great that no less than four or five hundred had publicly come forward and detached themselves from the Romish Church."—Conversions from Popish errors will become still more frequent and numerous as scriptural truth extends, and is brought in contact with minds from which it has been carefully excluded. The Word of God is omnipotent in its own simplicity and divine energy; and, being opposed to all that constitutes the essentials of Popery as a professedly religious system, it at once convinces of that opposition whenever its perusal is sincerely entered upon, or whenever the deluded adherents of error come under the searching influence of evangelical doctrines. The present hope and final triumph of Protestantism lie in its scriptural character, and in the potency of the unadulterated gospel of Christ, with which it is thoroughly imbued, and which, in the appointment of God, is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." These considerations supply the only reason why Popery is afraid of the Sacred Scriptures "without note or comment." In the light of Divine Truth its darkness becomes visible—it errors and delusions stand out to the eye of the beholder with fearful enormity—its abstractions from and additions to the commandments of God, its suppression of truth and protrusion of human device are made alarmingly manifest—and the long detained captive—whose conscience was once overlaid with the teachings of men, but is now deeply awakened by the voice of God speaking in the Word—hastens to escape from oppressive thralldom and rejoices to receive the yoke of Christ which is easy, and His burden which is light. Such, briefly, has been the process of enlightenment and conversion, through which thousands of once zealous Romanists have passed in their happy deliverance from darkness, ignorance, superstition, expensive rites, and burdensome penances which have served to aggravate rather than alleviate or heal their spiritual maladies, and in their equally happy introduction to the liberty and exalted blessings of the gospel of peace. Whilst perversions, real or pretended, from avowed Protestantism to open popery, have been witnessed among certain classes of society, the subjects of which for aught that otherwise appears may have been Jesuits in disguise—their false appearance thrown off at times when it was supposed the assumption of their real character would tell most on the public mind—it is consolatory to know, that real conversions from a Christ-dishonouring system, to evangelical Protestantism, to a living scriptural faith, have been steadily multiplying among a people, whose deep-rooted prejudices afforded but little hope that such gracious changes would occur. The hand of God has been in the work, and thus we have had, in our own day, repeated exemplifications of that singular declaration of St. Paul—"the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

The Church Witness.

We are glad to see the noble and uncompromising stand which the *Church Witness* has taken against Popery as a general system and of its Anglican modification—*Puseyism*. Not however before it was necessary, did our contemporary enter into the polemical arena against these subtle antagonists of Protestantism. The seeds of *Puseyism* had found a lodgment in the minds of some of the clergy in both Provinces, and were springing up and throwing out offshoots, and ripening to a poisonous harvest. It required wisdom, in connection with scriptural truth, to retard

their growth, and a strong and skilful hand to uproot them, and implant a better seed; to this good work the *Church Witness* has consecrated his talents and best energies, and with a fair prospect of success. Every successive number deals a heavy blow upon the enemy; and the merited exposure of the dangerous errors he so ably combats, will, under the blessing of God, tend to check their spread, if not to effect their entire destruction. We admire the Protestant and Catholic tone of the *Church Witness*; we wish we could say the same of the *Church Times*. The clerical correspondent of the *Times*—J. S. of Margaret's Bay, devotes his efforts to exalt the *Church of England*, at the expense of other Protestant Denominations, delighting to (mis)represent the latter as only a parcel of "schismatics." Not so have we read the *Witness*, who, whilst conscientiously preferring the Church of his choice, is disposed to recognize the just claims of other Protestant Churches as forming a part of the "body of Christ." We suspect however that J. S. commits his thoughts to the Press for the especial advantage of his people at Margaret's Bay, who, from his account of affairs there, are in danger of being carried away by the "tide" which sets in powerfully toward "dissent." His lucubrations are at times dispatched with more haste than sobriety of thought would dictate as commendable in a writer for public instruction, as we see he finds it necessary to correct inadvertent errors (!) and supplement certain strictures with explanations to guard against wrong impressions. (!) From such injudicious friends we think the Protestant Church of England is in more danger than from the low Churchmen, of the presence and influence of which J. S. complains. We advise this writer to read the *Church Witness*, and imbibe a little more of the spirit which animated and guided the first English reformers; then we shall be spared the mortifying spectacle of witnessing a son of the English Church attempting the vain effort of un-churching Bodies of Protestants, whose piety and christian zeal are known and acknowledged throughout the world.

The Effect Traced to the True Cause.

In referring to some late clerical defections from the English Church to Romanism, the *Church Witness* says: "It can excite no surprise when it is understood that the men who have now gone out from us, had long been known as zealous Anglicans, as the adherents of that man-invented system of religion, which has recently grown up in the Church, and which inevitably leads, sooner or later, its unfortunate votaries away from Christ and His gospel, and from the pure worship and service of our beloved Church, to communion with Rome. The causes which have led to the unhappy fall of those reverend gentlemen, and the steps they have taken in their downward course, can therefore be traced with unerring distinctness; the same fondness for novelties—the same regard for forms and ceremonies and external observances—the husks and 'beggarly elements of religion,' are here presented to our view."

Margaret's Bay Correspondent of The Church Times.

Our brief notice in the *Witness* of July 19th of this writer's effusions in the *Church Times*, has called forth a heterogeneous mass of something which he purports to be a reply. We should only waste time and space to follow him *seriatim* through the labyrinths of confusion he has conjured up. One or two things, however, demand a passing notice. He says—

"There can be no Scriptural unity without visible unity."

Why then does he not go back to Rome, from whom he has borrowed this first principle?

"I know only one household of faith."

Is that "household of faith" identical with the Episcopal Church of England?—Are there other Churches embraced? If so—where is the "visible unity" of which J. S. speaks?

The *Witness* "seems anxious to have it believed that I (J. S.) anathematize all those that are without the pale of the Church of England as lost, or as beyond the hope of salvation."

"It is as well at once to say that the Word of God (see Gal. v. chap.) classes divisions among the works of the flesh, and says that 'they that commit such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.'"

"But we are also called upon 'of some to make a difference,' which charitable allowance may be extended, I (J. S.) trust, to all those whose ignorance or mental deficiencies will not allow them to see their way clear even with the Bible in their hands. Let us hope that the *Witness* is of that number." (!)

We have taken the liberty to italicize some of the above words to give them that prominence which they deserve. Our readers are now prepared to see the extent of J. S.'s remarkably "charitable allowance!" In all cases where there is not the supposed "ignorance or mental deficiencies," persons "without the pale of the Church of England" are under J. S.'s fearful anathema, and as a consequence "are lost" or are "beyond the hope of salvation!" And this invincible "ignorance" or these "mental deficiencies" must be supposed to exist in those of whom he is charitably disposed "to make a difference," solely on the ground, because—to use his own words—"so obscure an individual as J. S. really is," takes upon himself, *without one iota of scriptural authority*, to make the Church to which he belongs, the "only one household of faith," beyond whose pale, except in cases of "ignorance or mental deficiencies," there is no salvation! Were we disposed to retort, we might justly say, that no Protestant could presume to publish such a statement to the world, without he was really one of those "whose ignorance or mental deficiencies will not allow them to see their way clear even with the Bible in their hands." This would appear discourteous to a writer of J. S.'s stamp, and, therefore, we refrain from returning the compliment he has paid us, by saying we "hope that J. S. is of that number." We rather attribute his "charitable allowance" to his large mind, comprehensive views, and his perfect freedom from that little, contemptible thing, called bigotry.

A Liberal Reward.

J. S. of the *Church Times* offers the very liberal "reward of £5 to any man that will bring him a passage of Scripture to prove that there ever were two Churches mentioned in the Bible in the same place, under different names, and refusing communion with each other, and both recognized by the Apostles as Churches"

On the supposition that "any man" should fail in making this discovery what does this gentleman suppose he will gain thereby? He would simply save his money, but not his credit as a polemic. He as a high-churchman refuses communion with the Wesleyan Church; not the Wesleyans with the Protestant Church of England. He, liberal man! magnifies the "fable" of the *divine right of episcopacy*, into something which he thinks justifies him in refusing communion with a Church as sound as the soundest part of his own in Apostolic Faith and practice. Were he to offer a reward to "any man" that "will bring him a passage of Scripture to prove" that the dogma of the *three orders*, as held by high-churchmen, is plainly taught and solemnly enjoined in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, under the penalty of exclusion from the Church of Christ, he would be nearer the mark, and at the same time he might be perfectly free from all apprehensions of being called upon for the "reward."

We esteem the following testimony of the above writer as a good recommendation of our paper—"I hope I may not be again called upon to reply to *The Wesleyan* which I seldom see, and whose contents" (which he seldom sees!) "are more likely to confuse its readers than to inform them." A disinterested opinion we are quite sure, and, as in duty bound, we return him our acknowledgments for it. It will be of great benefit to us. Some, at least, will want to see the paper "whose contents are more likely to confuse its readers than to inform them," and we shrewdly suspect J. S. will be of the number.

A Timely Caution.

As a religious journalist, we feel it quite compatible with our non-political professions, to urge religious men throughout the Province, to discharge their duty at the coming elections in a manner becoming *Christian people*, who are commanded by Christ to do all that they do "to the glory of God." If at any time watchfulness and self-denial are requisite on the part of pro-

fessors of religion, they are specially so during popular commotions, and the exercise of the franchise, when party feeling generally runs high, and violent outbursts are not unfrequent. The churches have scarcely yet recovered from the disastrous effects on religious interests, consequent on the last general elections in this Province; and without due circumspection, similar evils will have to be deplored from those forthcoming. In our judgment, religious men ought generally to content themselves with quietly giving their votes, without mixing themselves up with party feuds and animosities and strifes.—They should remember that their conduct passes over to the Churches to which they respectively belong, and affects them injuriously, or otherwise, as they demean themselves on such occasions. Religious interests are paramount to all others, and every member of a Christian church is bound by the law of Christ, to guard sacredly against any course of conduct, whose manifest tendency is to imperil those interests. We are quite sure our motives will be duly appreciated in making these remarks. Our object is, to preserve, as far as our influence extends, the peace and harmony which ought always to characterize the intercourse of Christian brethren, and to preserve them from the sarcastic taunts, in which the men of the world are ready to indulge, when inconsistencies are apparent between the conduct of the avowedly pious and their sacred professions.

Make Your Election Sure.

See the unwearied efforts of candidates for popular favour to secure their election. Time and money are freely expended—sacrifices are cheerfully made—arguments are used and persuasions employed—appeals to hopes or fears, or both, as the case may be, are powerfully urged—in fact, no means are generally left untried, to obtain their object. Christian men should learn a lesson from the scenes passing around them—they should earnestly, zealously, and perseveringly strive, and "give diligence to make their calling and election sure." They are candidates for higher honours and a nobler prize, than any earth can bestow. A crown of life and of fadeless glory, an imperishable inheritance, a kingdom whose immunities are eternal, a throne in heaven, fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore in the presence of the Supreme, are the rewards which await successful competitors. To these high and ennobling blessings, persons are now called in the Gospel of Christ, and, as true believers, conditionally elected. It is therefore demanded of them, that they "give diligence to make their calling and election sure: for if they do these things they shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

"Nothing is worth a thought beneath,
But how I may escape the death
That never, never dies!
How make mine own election sure,
And when I fall on earth, secure
A mansion in the skies!"

Money vs. Principle.

In the "Religious Summary" given by the *Christian Messenger* of the 8th inst., there is reference made to the diminution in the receipts of our Parent Missionary Society, and our friend says "We hope this warning will not be lost upon the party in power." Let us ask—on the supposition that an unrighteous agitation were got up in the Baptist Church, and fostered by the most flagitious means, by some reckless, dissatisfied spirits, involving in its success the destruction of the fundamental principles of that Church, and there should be, in consequence, a diminution in the ordinary amount of funds, would those who maintained their fidelity be justified in yielding to clamour, misrepresentation, slander, violence, malice, revenge, and other bad passions, for the sake of a little money? The application may be easily made. The voice of warning ought in all justice to be sounded in the ears of those, who show such little concern for the honour of Christ, and the welfare of men, as that if their money would be the means of saving the souls of the heathen from perdition, they would withhold it, and let them perish!

Our friend, also, says—"We feel pleasure at the result," in the Holt Chapel case. We need scarcely remind him that Christian charity "rejoiceth not in iniquity." The scheme of that hardy