

cordance with a wire-drawn theological system, will interpose almost insuperable barriers to the free action of the members.

It is much easier to see these things than to propose a cure for the evil, and it is impossible to oppose these systems without in the frailty of human nature doing more or less injury to the general interests of religion. These considerations no doubt prevent many who see the evil from attempting to arrest its course or destroy it. It is a work of time; these systems were not made in a day, and they will not be destroyed in a moment. The work I am persuaded will be gradual, and it is better that it should be so for the general interest. Man is always hasty and impatient—always sure that himself only is right. I feel it needful to be very diffident and to strive against the self-will, self-love, and forwardness of my own spirit.

I am persuaded that the great work now to be done, is to diffuse information on the nature of a Christian church. Great efforts should be made to convince the Christian people that the churches were independent in the days of the Apostles and for nearly two centuries afterwards—to show them that these associations of churches which are governed by a central authority are unscriptural—and that it is a sin against Christ for any church to give away its rights to others and thus nullify the Headship of Christ. Now whatever else is to be done I am convinced that this is the first and great work. The other matters cannot be arranged until the independency of the churches is secured. The people will not think for themselves when they have others to think for them; and the authority of lordly Bishops—venerable Synods—and Conferences—will be quite sufficient to keep the members of the churches quiet until they are fully convinced of their unscriptural pretensions, and under the fear of God and regard for Christ are constrained to assert their rights.

There is a question which you will pardon me for putting to you. My reason for doing so is this. In letter fifth to Elder Davidson, you state what seems to me to be *open communion* views; that is to say, that where there is love to Christ, a difference on the questions of adult or infant baptism need not prevent a free communion at the Lord's table. In reading the letter to a Baptist friend, he assured me that I was mistaken, and that you were as close on the communion question as himself,—that is, would not commune with one who had been baptized in his infancy. I would like to know your sentiments and those of your brethren generally on this subject.

With kind regards,

I am, My Dear Sir,

Yours Sincerely,

THOS. RATTRAY.

Mr. D. Oliphant. }

ANSWER.

Oshawa, Feb. 2d. 1850.

RESPECTED SIR:—Numerous engagements have occasioned an unexpected delay in my reply to your favour of last month. At length