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T H E

WITNESS OF TRUTH.

VOL. III.

OSHAWA, JANUARY, 1848.

NO. 1.

P R E F A C E .

YEARS of labour are necessary to effect a movement in society resulting in a religious improvement. In a day of apostacy, there are many impediments to reformation. Time is required to lay before the community a sufficiency of facts, arguments, and expostulations calculated to excite and move. Time is required for the examination and consideration of all that is thus offered. Time then is required for action after conviction; and even after the reform pulse begins to beat, and develops itself in the strength of real life, time and patience are still requisite in order to see anything like maturity or permanence.

For these reasons, besides many others, a movement for the better, without calculating upon extra opposition, must be pushed forward with unabated and unabating perseverance, energy, and self-sacrifice. No single effort ever produced a reformation. A state of things worthy the name of reform, has invariably been earned by great labour and great patience. It is so, and has been so. Luther spent a life in maturing and executing the plans and purposes which laid the foundation of the reformation produced through his instrumentality. Calvin's labours commenced when a lad, and terminated upon his death-bed. Wesley numbered his days, the days of a long life, in giving to the world the system of reform which bears his name. Anything, too, that has been done by the friends and advocates of reform in the present century, has been purchased at a great outlay of toil, energy, and perseverance. And indeed christianity at first, in its establishment, aided and assisted as it was by spiritual helps extraordinary, was not published among men nor recommended to the world without a constant

draft upon the courage, durance, patience, zeal, and self-denial of its advocates and promulgators.

Reformation, then, is not the effect of a single impulse, nor the result of one act, nor the fruit of one effort. It has a price; a long price—a broad price—a great price. Liberty is always costly, whether we speak of it being procured or preserved; and religious liberty is not secured nor maintained at a cheaper rate than the liberties of the nations.

We are not, therefore, to expect too much at once, nor indeed are we to expect anything, unless we are prepared to make a sacrifice. He, then, who is in haste, and he who would be at ease, had better desert in time; for such will have no honor in this war. Our King requires, and the present posture of things demand, brave, whole-hearted, true men, regardless of toil and fearless of fatigue.

But while we speak with unqualified certainty of the necessity of bold enterprise and self-denial in accomplishing a work of this important nature, we also point to objects and allude to motives happily adapted to dispel all doubt respecting the course best for us to choose, and which also impart fortitude equal to any and every emergency. One glance at the past, and one intelligent look into the future, can never fail to give all necessary encouragement. The great Nazarene Reformer finished his work upon a cross. The twelve apostles were martyred. Many also of the choice of the human race have given their lives to advance the same cause. To be like them is most honorable, nay, enviable. Thus, from the past, we gather strong resolution, great consolation, and strength to endure rude opposition; and, turning ourselves to see the things that shall be hereafter, in the light of revelation, we behold heaven opened, and the seats of honor in the mansions of bliss, and the triumphs of the righteous conqueror, and all the glories of the better world.

Dear brethren, therefore, "let us not be weary in well doing." Nothing can be surer than the promised reward; and it is ample. "In due time we shall reap if we faint not."

CONDUCTOR.

THE TIMES.

No. I.

THE world's inhabitants are a living volume, and the world's events are so many chapters of instruction, to be read and studied by all who

have the hearing ear and the seeing eye. The times are, therefore, always full of interest, and always worthy of critical observation. Books of novelty are earnestly sought and eagerly read, because of their amusing variety of style, and the constant current of wonder they excite; but here is a volume as wide as the world, as varied as all people and all languages, as rich and interesting as wisdom itself, and as true and useful as the needle pointing to the pole, or as the sun upon the dial.

To any one who is even partially acquainted with the bright side of the world's history, since Guttenberg first began to move his metallic type in 1436, and since Luther boldly raised his voice against the overgrown papacy in the early part of the fifteenth century, the world, at the present moment, has a most favorable, prosperous, and flattering appearance. To look only at one side, we might almost say, "old things are passed away, and all things have become new." Science has prospered; the arts have flourished; education has been extended: knowledge has increased; the Bible has been circulated; liberty of conscience has been tolerated; religion more generally professed and respected; and all the refinements and improvements of society greatly advanced and multiplied. From the minutest rules of private life, to the highest and most public political and religious laws, embracing the whole circumference of social existence, a well defined renovation has taken place, and every old custom, opinion, and practice which has been exchanged for new, has left further room for advancement, and prepared the way for additional improvement.

Printing and protestantism have wrought a mighty revolution. Light has streamed forth copiously from science and the bible, through the printer's art and the protestant movement. Society at large has received a new stamp, a new spirit, a new soul. It is no longer the same world. Every thing is changed—dress, manners, commerce, politics, literature, religion. Hence the last three hundred years bear no more comparison to the three centuries preceding, than Martin Luther is to be compared with Peter the hermit, or John Calvin is to be ranked with John Gilpin

Not to acknowledge the progressive spirit, the refinement, and the improvement of past years, would be not only a sin against popular faith, but a palpable sin against fact. There is, however, another side of the picture, as well marked and as strongly colored, which the popular assembly and the general multitude seldom see and never contemplate. A grand counterpart to all the light, glory, splendor, and

superiority of the times in which we live, may be found in almost all forms, phases, aspects, and conditions of society. A deep under current of iniquity pervades every variety of rank in the entire circle of the social compact, notwithstanding our civil and ecclesiastical exteriors wear a pleasing and beautiful aspect, and seem decidedly weighty in the scale of moral dignity. There is, indeed, throughout christendom, an outward polish—an external refinement—a graceful appearance of sterling excellence; but the realities of the inner temple, valued impartially according to merit, although modified and changed for the better, are nevertheless far behind when contrasted with parading exteriors, dressed up for the eye of the common beholder.

The times are very peculiar. The world, at present, is a riddle. Was there ever a period, since Adam left paradise, wherein there was so much knowledge, and so much ignorance; so much folly, and so much wisdom; so much elegance, and so much ruffianly rudeness; so much that is dignified and noble, and yet so much that is trifling and vain? "To what shall we compare this generation?" "Boys in the market-place?" More silly and inconsistent still; for the Jews, to whom this figure is applied by the Saviour, were not favoured with half the light, and opportunities of knowledge, and means of wisdom, theoretical or practical, as we moderns.

It would be amusing, was the subject not so grave, to hear some friendly people speak of the inutility of doing anything in the matter of religious reform at this day, since we have arrived at a position so enviable as respects religious change, comparing things that are with things that were. To oppose this idea seems invidious and unfriendly; for these well disposed and charitably inclined folks are ready to assert, in common with all protestants, the great necessity for a reformation in the days of the darkness of Catholicism. If, indeed, the doctrine of protestants be the doctrine of the bible, and the name protestant be a sufficient safe-guard against all religious error, it must be confessed that those who cling to protestantism, with all its variations, as a complete antidote for every unhealthy opinion, doctrine, and custom, are nearer the truth than those who oppose them.

But it will be perceived by the intelligent, that if the fact of protesting against papal corruptions be a just guarantee for evangelical doctrine, it involves the conclusion that all protestants, from the irreverent Socinian to the frantic Mormon, are upon grounds equally salvable and scriptural; and this is a conclusion, which, although perfectly consistent with the above reasoning, no one is willing to subscribe.

Apart, however, from any sort of logic, other than the logic of facts, we are assured, "by many infallible proofs," that the times call for increasing energetic effort and searching vigilance in the way of religious reformation. Listen, candid reader, to the language of the following extract, copied from a paper published in the city of Quebec:—

"The ceremony of the new Bells for St. Rochs Church, took place yesterday afternoon. The Church was crowded to excess, and many strangers of respectability were present. The bells, richly dressed up, were placed in the choir. The following are the names given to the bells:—*First Bell*—'Marie-Annie-Judith.'—Godfather, F. X. Paradis, Esq.; godmother, Mrs. Joseph Tourangeau. *Second Bell*—'Marie-Josephene-Delphine.'—Godfather, T. C. Lee, Esq.; godmother, Miss Bruneau, daughter of Judge Bruneau. *Third Bell*—Catharine-Caroline Elizabeth.'—Godfather, Mr. Gaspard Garneau; godmother, Mrs. J. J. Nesbitt. After the ceremony the audience was permitted to ring the bells, and we learn the amount collected on the occasion is about £200, besides the dresses of the bells, which are adapted for church ornaments, and cost nearly £100."

The baptism, ordination, and dedication of bells in the nineteenth century, may be considered by some as a touch above the ordinary; but the sober truth is that this whole affair must be viewed only as a slight commentary upon many other practices equally farcical to intelligent men, and equally aside from the oracles of God. Another extract, taken from a New York paper, reveals the same spirit:—

"The Very Reverend Doctor Power, will deliver a sermon, to-morrow evening, at 7 o'clock, for the benefit of the poor. Subject: 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism.' Tickets, 25 cents."

We are prepared to admire the overflowing benevolence of this *very reverend* sermonizer, who would condescend to speak a whole discourse to the poor, for a quarter of a dollar per head!! But, speak as we may, we verily believe this may be set down as a true specimen of clerical philanthropy. However, we can treat our readers to something still richer, although to obtain it we move a little further from home:—

"In the Catholic churches in Madrid, the capitol of Spain, the following religious advertisement is posted on the walls: 'The sacred and royal Bank of Piety, since its foundation in 1720, to November, 1826, delivered from purgatory one million, thirty-nine thousand, three hundred and ninety-five souls; and from November, 1826, to November, 1827, eleven thousand, four hundred and two souls more. The entire sum effecting this, amounts to 43,000,000 francs.'" (\$6,000,000 dollars.)

The city in which these churches stand, exhibiting on their walls the happy fruits of the Bank of Piety, is a city of no inconsiderable extent, containing, in round numbers, two hundred thousand inhabitants,

nearly ten times the size of our own Toronto. Still, it will be said that these are not protestant but Catholic samples of the religious sentiment and religious practice of our times. This we are happy to acknowledge; but we have some documents illustrative of what protestants can say and do, which we reserve for a future essay.

CONDUCTOR.

RELIGIOUS EFFORT.

MAN was made to work. All the powers of his body, and the faculties of his mind, indicate his predestination to toil. To be a working man—to exert his varied powers in work, in righteous and useful work—is the true end of his being; in this he finds his true developement, his true dignity, and his true happiness.

Christianity, adapted to man's nature, and conducive to his developement, dignity and happiness, imposes work upon him; it assigns to every man a task; it demands effort from all. There are no drones, no idlers in the church of Christ; they may be there, but they are not of it; they are out of their place. This is a great truth, greatly overlooked by christians. The gospel makes every one, whom it converts, a working man in its service; it converts him the moment he is proselyted, into a missionary, a preacher, a teacher—anything, everything, in which he can subserve the cause of his Saviour, and the salvation of a world. It bids him go to work in the service of God, with the same energy that he formerly evinced in the service of the devil. Thus, as it progresses, does it raise up for itself a host of propagators, by whom its triumphs are to be still farther extended—onward and onward, until its light shall illumine all lands, and sin and misery shall be banished from our world.

Christian, what are you doing in the midst of all this vast activity of earth and heaven, for the salvation of a perishing world?

The gospel has apprehended you; it has enlisted you in the service of heaven's King; it has articed and bound you to a high and holy vocation—are you at work? are you about the King's business? or stand you all day idle, with folded arms, vainly deluding yourself that there is no task for you?—*Protestant Unionist.*

[For the Witness.]

USEFUL CAUTION.

We insert, with pleasure, the following article from an able pen:—

“Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy——.” This word of caution, uttered by the apostle Paul, has never ceased to be

one of value. We are all apt to be pleased with our own productions, whether mechanical or intellectual, fanciful or philosophical. We live in a day of *religious philosophy*; or more aptly speaking, of *philosophical religion*. Hence the many kinds in the world—"many men of many minds" is certainly well illustrated. We are no longer willing to receive the simple truths of the gospel, and believe them as they are delivered to us, but we must make them pass through a burning furnace, so that we can get the *pure* doctrine.

That Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God," and the foundation of the christian church, is too simple and common-place for this enlightened age. *How* he is the Son of God, whether by eternal generation, filiation, &c. &c. is now the only thing worthy of consideration on that matter. We must have a philosophy of the matter, and make this philosophy the test of orthodoxy. So of almost all things—so of the commandments of the gospel. That repentant sinners should be baptized in the name of Jesus, for the remission of sins, is the clear old fashioned declaration of the good book; but I see that the philosophy of Canada, as well as the United States, assenteth not to its soundness. That "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life"—that "God commends his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us"—are declarations of God's Book;—but these have no comeliness when compared to our *refined* "VIEWS" and "SENTIMENTS" in this *refined* age. But enough. These may serve as examples of our improvement in the divine science since the days of, old.

Now, the upshot of the whole matter is, that the present order of things may make men of philosophy, but it cannot make men of *faith*. And we all ought to know that God has many times commended *men of faith*, but never the other class. We have *too much* philosophy and *too little* faith in our day.

I hope the "Witness" will continue to insist on a return to the ancient waymarks which God has laid in Zion: endeavour to lead the wanderers back to Jerusalem. The work of Ezra and Nehemiah was a great work. In looking over an article the other day in the "Witness," I thought I discovered a little danger that some, in coming from Babylon, were so much in earnest, that they would not stop at Jerusalem, but pass by towards Egypt. Let every scribe be as careful and faithful as was Ezra the scribe.

A. P. JONES..

Bennington, N. Y., 12th Nov., 1847.

SUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO PRODUCE LIFE.

Eramosa, 7th October, 1847.

DEAR BROTHER:—A most interesting meeting was held here on the 17th, 18th, and 19th of last month, some account of which I shall now attempt to furnish, presuming it will be acceptable to yourself and some of your readers.

From the time occupied, you will perceive we intended to have a "big meeting;" but by reason of your absence from Pieton, the notice of it was not published, and therefore comparatively few were aware of our design. This, together with very unfavorable weather, prevented the meeting—especially during the first two days—from being by any means a big one. The brethren and sisters however, who did attend, realized that it was good for them to be there.

As one of the chief objects of the meeting was to ascertain the *cause* and *remedy* of the lukewarmness so alarmingly prevalent among the professors of the present day, the most part of the time was employed in familiar conversation upon this subject. Every one present was encouraged to lay aside all unnecessary formality, and to speak without reserve whatever he thought proper on the occasion. In this way a tolerably full expression of sentiment was obtained, and a number of exceedingly interesting and important truths were exhibited in a most familiar and practical style; the whole agreeably and profitably intermingled with singing and prayer.

Our conversation proceeded somewhat thus;—One assigned a particular cause, or reason, for the evil complained of, showing, in a few remarks, the nature and extent of its operation. A second confirmed, and added something to the remarks of the first. A third exhibited the same truth in a different light. A fourth adduced another reason, and so on, until each had an opportunity of expressing himself fully on the subject.

The various topics thus introduced, in connexion with what you would call—the *capital point*, were the following: 1st, The want of scriptural organization, especially as regards the appointment of bishops and deacons. 2nd, Worldly-mindedness. 3rd, Want of self-denial. 4th, Lack of faith. 5th, Want of christian confidence among professed brethren. 6th, Vain philosophy. 7th, A false standard of judgment. 8th, The practice of getting in debt. 9th, The admission into the church of improper characters. 10th, The dullness of public speakers. 11th, The want of religious conversation among brethren.

To attempt to give even the substance of what was said upon each of these particulars, would occupy too much space. It may be sufficient to state, that what was spoken, appeared to make a deep and solemn impression.

All these items, cannot, of course, be regarded as so many separate causes, producing the same result; but they are all connected, more or less, with the point in hand, and furnished abundant material for very interesting and profitable conversation.

There were also four discourses delivered. First, on *the promises of*

God, by brother Anderson, in his usual animated style. Second, on *the resurrection*, also by brother Anderson—a most eloquent and thrilling address. Third, on *the means by which our calling and election may be made sure*, by brother Kilgour, in his very interesting and acceptable manner. Fourth, by brother L. Parkinson, on *the various offices which Jesus Christ fills, in the economy of heaven*,—deep, solemn, sound.

Thus ended our meeting, — all the brethren expressing an anxious desire to attend a similar one as soon as practicable. I have something further to say, but anxious to avoid tediousness, I will draw to a close for the present.

Very affectionately,

WILLIAM OLIPHANT.

PROPRIETY OF LARGE MEETINGS.

Eramosa, Oct. 25th, 1847.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—What I have further to say concerning our late three days' meeting, is in reference to certain objections which have been brought against it; and presuming that these objections are intended to apply to all meetings of a similar character, I shall try to shape my remarks accordingly.

First, The inquiry has been made, of what *use* are such meetings? The use of any meeting depends, of course, on the manner in which it is conducted, and on the matter introduced; and possibly some who keep aloof from "such meetings," might make them still more useful by attending, and by taking part in their proceedings.

But is it indeed the case, that the christian religion, in all its height and depth—in all its aspects and bearings, in regard to things past, present, and future—is so perfectly understood, and so fully practiced, that a meeting of three days, for the purpose of mutual improvement—is unnecessary and useless? And what if some who attend the weekly meetings of the brethren, make little or no progress towards perfection, and others renounce their profession? Shall we thence conclude that weekly meetings are useless, and therefore abandon them? If the saints under the Law—in addition to their several annual protracted meetings—"met often and spake one to another," with the special approval and commendation of the Lord, shall the saints under the gospel inquire, What is the use of so doing? With the beloved brother Black, I must confess, "I do not understand such a question coming from a christian."

Second, "But such meetings create enthusiasm." Indeed! But how can this be true? Enthusiasm is defined to be—the heat of imagination, and, if speaking *the truth in love*, produces enthusiasm at a two days' meeting, will it not also produce enthusiasm at a one day meeting?

But perhaps protracted meetings are opposed because they are also held by Methodists. I have more than once heard such an *argument* as this,— "it is just like the Methodists;" as if the approval of that party

were a sufficient warrant for us to condemn, without further inquiry ! Surely this is not the best way to prove all things, in order to know as well as to hold what is good. For myself, I freely confess that I regard the zeal and devotion of some Wesleyans, as worthy the imitation of some others. A certain Methodist not far from this place was in the habit of daily visiting the emigrant sheds, for the purpose of reading the good book and praying. Would any one "called a brother" suppose that he dishonored his profession by acting "like a Methodist" in this particular? I hope not. Surely the Saviour and his apostles did not employ their lives so actively and self-denyingly, to teach, that the chief duties of a christian, are, to take care of himself and family, and to meet with his brethren, once a week, when convenient—when the roads are good and the weather pleasant.

While then there is "the religion of excitement," which ought to be avoided, there is also "the excitement of religion," which ought to be cherished. A christian is not required to be a cool calculating critical philosopher, who can listen unmoved to the sublime and soul-stirring themes of *redeeming love*. There is a certain fervor of spirit—an earnestness of purpose—an intensity of devotion—a deep and all pervading spirituality of mind—an ardent attachment to the person and government of our Lord and Saviour, by which every child of God should be distinguished ; but of which, alas, many of our modern and moderate christians are so greatly deficient. Is, then, any, or all of these, is the enthusiasm which "big meetings" create, by all means let us have big meetings and such enthusiasm.

Third, But it is further urged that "a big meeting is not one of the institutions of heaven, but, on the contrary, is designed to supply some supposed deficiency in the arrangement of Christ's house." I confess I know not what is meant by "the institutions of heaven," in this objection. I am aware indeed that our gracious Lord, has, in infinite wisdom, ordained that his people should meet together on the first day of the week, to edify each other and to hold forth the word of life ; and no meeting—great or small—held on any other day, can answer the same purpose. But does any one deny that a religious meeting can be scripturally held on Monday? and if on that day, certainly on every day of the week, so far as authority is concerned. I have always understood, that the Lord's free men were at perfect liberty to meet as often, and in as great numbers as they pleased, provided two conditions were complied with. 1st, that their meeting did not too much interfere with other duties ; and 2nd, that the time was properly occupied when together. In regard to the first of these items, each individual will decide for himself. The indifferent *saint*, the worldly minded *christian* will feel one meeting a week amply sufficient ; while the man of God will desire to enjoy, like the saints in Jerusalem, the privilege of *daily* meeting to praise the Lord.

The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light ; and therefore, while all classes of the community are actively engaged in perfecting themselves in their several professions,

the children of light very prudently conclude that any special effort of theirs, in this way, will be adding to the institutions of heaven. May such wisdom speedily come to naught.

Affectionately,

WILLIAM OLIPHANT.

A CHRISTIAN REQUEST.

Esquising, 13th Dec., 1847.

BELoved BROTHER:—If father Menzies was as good a scribe as some of your correspondents, I think he would trouble you as often as some others. I do not know if any one reads the "Witness" with a more critical eye than he does.

There is a paragraph in brother J. M. Shepard's communication in the eleventh number of the "Witness," that appears to him objectionable. That to which he dissents is the following: "But I wish all from Canada to the ends of the earth, to understand that there is a wide difference between the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Christ."

Will bother Shepard be pleased to tell us what the apostles Paul and Peter mean by the term "Spirit of Christ?" Or will he make the "wide difference" *more clear?* as *some of us* at present do not see it so wide, when we read the 10th, 11th, and 12th verses of the 1st chapter of 1 Peter. Wishing you and the cause of truth all success,

I remain, beloved brother,

Yours in love,

J. A. MENZIES.

I am gratified to learn that the worthy and aged brother Menzies, whose son writes the preceding, has, through much mercy, recovered from a severe and dangerous illness; and I wish him great success in looking with a critical eye over the pages of this work. It is written for inspection; and it is to be received, rejected, refuted, or corrected, as it accords with, or as it departs from, the holy oracles, to which we appeal as the only equitable umpire in every case of controversy. The criticism, then, of father Menzies, who it may almost be said, has the whole Bible, Old Testament and New, within the circumference where the phrenologist professionally puts his fingers; the criticism, I say, of one who is thus familiar with the sacred Book, is of more than usual value. We trust that brother Shepard will respect the grey hairs of this venerable brother, and favour him with a few explanatory observations. I offer no answer myself, for various reasons. As was said on a certain occasion, so we say of brother Shepard: "He is of age, ask him,"—he is able to answer for himself.

CONDUCTOR.

THE GOSPEL.

No. XIII.

LETTERS TO A FRIEND—No. 1.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—You say that you believe the gospel; but have not obeyed it, and, still more, have no disposition to obey. This, to me, is not easily reconciled: for, with my views of faith, a person might as well show me an ocean without water, as point me to an individual who believes the gospel, and yet refuses obedience. Allow me to ask you a question. Did the christians of whom we read in the New Testament, possess a faith which they could prove, or a faith which they could not prove? Are you prepared even to conjecture that there was, in the days of pure doctrine, a single convert who was incapable of evincing all the faith he possessed? I am almost willing to answer the query in your behalf, and say for you, vouching for your endorsement, that no one who lived cotemporary with the messengers of Jesus had the very smallest grain of faith but what both could be and was proved.

Then, my friend, you will be wise in looking critically into your own case, to ascertain whether you are practising an imposition upon yourself. Imposition, in any thing, is bad enough at best; but the worst of all imposition, in my opinion, is, to have something thrust upon us, or to thrust something upon ourselves, religiously, which is untenable, unsafe, and untrue. You are aware, that, in so speaking, I am not making an effort to encourage contention, to arouse excited feeling, or to alarm you falsely; and I may appeal to yourself, whether, if our views were reversed, I with yours and you with mine, you would not develope your friendship by an attempt to convince me of error, and put me in the possession of truth. Yes, the electric fluid of your friendly regard would gush spontaneously through this channel. Yet how popular is it for a man to be branded as an enemy, when he has the friendship and the philanthropy to give men truth for error.

The point, however, forming the object of this letter, must be kept in sight. I am led to enquire what faith was, and what faith is, in view of the singular position I regard you as occupying. To call you a faithless man of faith, or a man of faith without belief, would not perhaps be so polite; but if I should speak in this style, it would in part reveal the contradiction that seems to linger in my mind, when I think of a person believing the gospel, and yet living regardless of its claims.

With me, faith is not a mere sentiment. There is a power in faith that is operative. It is a living and quickening principle—a principle of action, proving itself in action. If I may be allowed the expression,

there is something in faith which "lives and moves," as well as has a "being." Can I illustrate? Let me try:—

You and I, we shall suppose, are upon the American side of the river Niagara. We walk its banks. Both of us have homes in Canada, and we converse upon the propriety of an immediate return. Now we shall suppose also that there are two bridges crossing the Niagara river; and while we are on the way to cross one of them, a passenger, a little before us, in attempting to cross, is plunged headlong into the raging river by the breaking of the bridge. Agitated and perplexed, forgetful even of the man's life, in your anxiety to reach home, you turn and exclaim, 'We are undone; we cannot return; this bridge is broken, and the other is weaker.' To quell your sudden and sensitive emotion, I reply, 'The other will bear us. I crossed it this morning, in company with two others. We should be safe upon it, although half the people of Queenstown were with us.'

My word is professedly believed. You walk with me to the crossing place, hastily stop, and decline further advance, alleging that it would be dangerous. A third party, overhearing what had been said, and also knowing the circumstance of the other crossing being destroyed, having likewise a home in Canada, steps forward and crosses with me to the Canadian side. The double question, therefore, is, simply, Who, in this case, had faith, and what was its power? You perceive that the individual, in this simile, whom I regard as possessing faith, not only entertained a mental conviction that my words were correct, and what I said was true; but he also experienced a confidence, or whole-souled trust, which induced him to cross the planks with me as boldly as if he were treading upon solid rock.

But here the old assertion comes up like dry bones from the valley, that you had faith, although you were not able to overcome all your doubts; your faith not being of the doubt-removing and work-producing description. Well, truly, if you had not borrowed this idea from the venerable ministers, or if I were less deeply concerned for your spiritual state, I would treat this old-fashioned fantasy with a little of the spice of sarcasm; but, since you are grave in receiving this divine sweatmeat of clerical confectionaries, I will be grave also, and view the subject with as much candor as the nature of the case and the nature of my own mental and moral composition will permit or warrant. Perchance, however, you will not be disposed to credit me for benevolence in thus attempting to place my pry under your castle, in order to overthrow the comfortable foundation upon which you have built: for assuredly it is to

be regarded, not only as a soul-saving, but also a labour-saving faith, which enables you to live as politeness or pleasure dictates, requiring no act, no sacrifice, no obedience whatever. Such a faith, I am aware, is of the right model, and of the proper dimensions, to be popular; and hence we are not to wonder why the medical clergymen have a large supply of this commodity always on hand. As the speculator says, "it takes well." It pleases human nature. The demand therefore is in like proportion; and the religious doctors know it.

I have to write only a few sentences to prove that the doctrine of various faiths, and the doctrine of faith and doubts, assorted like needles and buttons, are not merely untenable, but contradictory. All agree that faith means trust, or that faith implies trust. You will agree with me that faith, in religion, is not an abstract trust, since it has reference to a Saviour, between whom and the saved there must be a connexion. These two things conceded, the next step brings us to the proposed issue. The Saviour has a will; in which will he declares himself in relation to man's salvation; and in the articles of which will he asserts his own authority, and specifies the manner in which this authority is to be acknowledged.

For the sake of simplicity, and lest you cannot so easily match them together as I suppose, it may be proper to sum up these statements like figures in arithmetic, beginning with the last and ending with the first. *Jésus, you admit, has a will, and this will authoritative. Trust in this authority or will is required. And this trust is found in faith. Do you not see, then, without additional argument, that no one can have faith and still disregard the will of Christ? And this one idea points with a deadly weapon at two kinds of faith, and also at the mixture of faith and doubts. But I must amplify at another time, for my paper is full.*

Believing with the poet who touched the harp of Israel, "Let the righteous smite me, and it shall be a kindness;"

I am, with continued friendly respect,

Yours,

D. OLIPHANT.

VIEW OF A REVIEW.

BROTHER OLIPHANT—Dear Sir:—On the 3d inst. I was present at a meeting conducted by the Universalists, in the school house, by the East Lake in Athol, and heard one Mr. Kibby, a Universalist preacher, deliver what, I suppose, he called a complete exposure and total overthrow of the article published in the Witness of Truth, and also separate pamphlet, entitled, "Anti-Universalism, or a Tract for Universalists."

After making some preliminary remarks, relative to the subject, and the business of the day, he commenced by reading the text as given in the "Witness," and remarked quite emphatically upon the words, "lately improved," as though he rejoiced very much over the improvement, and thought the doctrine it taught a very convenient doctrine to live by in this world, and if true, a much more convenient, and more glorious one for the world to come.

However, he denied being one of the party that made the improvement, and charged you with being its originator, and very sarcastically stated that you was welcome to it with your glory.

Leaving this part of the subject, he read, with here and there a passing remark, until he came to the following interrogations:—"Is Christianity and Universalism the same system or institution, differing only in name? In other words—Was universal salvation preached first in Boston, or at Jerusalem? or, Did Mr. Balou first preach this doctrine? or, Was it first preached by the apostles?" Here he flattered himself, and with lengthy arguments, very rhetorically delivered, endeavored to make the people believe, that Balouism and Christianity are the same system, differing only in name.

One argument was, that Balouism began to be preached as early as Abraham's day. The Lord said to Abraham—"I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee, and in thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." He placed great emphasis on the words, "all nations of the earth,"—about such emphasis as a Universalist always places on the word *all*, when it is used in reference to salvation. "The same promise," he said, "was made to Israel, and confirmed to Jacob." And I would infer from his reasoning, that in the days of Jacob and his twelve sons, the nations were so exceedingly multiplied, beyond the ordinary vision of Universalists, that Balouism, or Universalism, if there were any such ism at that time, must have then received its name.

The next of much consequence, that Mr. Kibby attempted to examine, was the following:—"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." A more ungenerous and dishonest perversion of scripture, I think I never heard. This, and nearly all other passages where the kingdom of heaven is spoken of, he treated in the same manner. He made them speak a language like the following:—Those who are in possession of the kingdom of heaven here, in this state of existence, are blessed with being the subjects of the kingdom here; but they will not hereafter be blessed above those who do not possess the kingdom in this life. Those who do not possess the kingdom here, will be just as happy, and possess equal blessings with those who do. All will be blessed alike. Thus answering the query in the latter part of the paragraph, "Did the Saviour mean to say, none are blessed above others," in the affirmative.

In reply to the next paragraph, he said, that it was the will of God that all men should be saved, and that his power was equal to his will; that he sent not his Son to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

"Now it is the Lord's will," said he, "that all men shall be saved. Do you not think that God told the truth? Do you not think that all men will be saved? If not, God will be defeated in his purposes?" His argument amounted to about this: That the whole human family is a curious kind of machinery, so ingeniously constructed, and so perfect in its movements, that, unlike all other machinery, it will never suffer injury. And when a sufficient quantity of divine power is poured forth for the purpose of propelling part of this grand intellectual machine, it will begin to move in universal regularity.

Passing along, he forgot to read Matt. vii. 21, as quoted in the "Witness," and the paragraph following; and for some time found no particular fault with the picture; at the same time, he wished to make the people believe that you was a very good Universalist, only he frequently upbraided you for stupidity. He dwelt with great emphasis on the passage, "he came to save his people *from* their sins, not *in* them." But the gentleman said not a word about Christ's saving from their sins those who are not his people. While reading the little pamphlet, entitled "Anti-Universalism," which contains a complete confutation of his system, he was very cautious to skip every passage of scripture, and every argument that weighed in the least against him, unless he thought he could reason by ridicule. This he labored very hard to do.

One more remark, and I will leave Mr. Kibby to fight the remainder of the battle. He denied the assertion made in Bloomfield, by a Universalist preacher, that he would *rather* die a sinner than live one. He improved it by saying, it is *better* to die a sinner than live a sinner. This was about the last remark made by Mr. K. upon the pamphlet, entitled "Anti-Universalism."

One remark, however, I will make in reference to his discourse. It was composed of assertions. Every passage of scripture, quoted by him, was torn from its connection and perverted in a ridiculous manner. He closed, by exhorting his brethren to walk in all the commands and ordinances of the Lord blameless, and in order to prevent any gainsaying, referred once more to the good book, (Prov. xxvi. 4,) "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."

Should Mr. K., or any other Universalist, wish to know who wrote the above; they may understand it was written by

A HEARER.

Prince Edward District, Oct. 23d, 1847.

CO-OPERATION.

Eramosa, Dec. 7th, 1847.

DEAR BROTHER:—Our co-operation meeting was held here on the 5th inst., agreeably to adjournment. The President, brother Stephens, in a very appropriate address, showed the weighty obligations under which the disciples of the present day, are laid, to diffuse the light of truth. In addition to the express authority of our Lord, it was strikingly

evinced, that the numerous blessings enjoyed by the whole community through the excellency of the knowledge of christianity, were sufficient to stimulate to vigorous efforts in sounding out the word of Life.

Along with other matters, it was resolved to urge the brethren to make more strenuous efforts than have hitherto been made, for the purpose of supporting Evangelists. We desire to procure the services of a suitable Evangelist, and shall thankfully receive from you, or any brother, such information as may assist us in this matter.

In love,

W. OLIPHANT, *Secretary.*

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LOST—WANTED—FOUND.

THERE is less fiction than fact in the following curious advertisement, whose place of nativity is the "far west." Through the help of various friendly editors, it has travelled from west to east, and from south to north, until we find it in the latitude of Montreal, in the columns of the *Register*. It appears that a pious Presbyterian minister, in Chicago, Illinois, observing the members of his church, as he considered, too fully absorbed in worldly concerns, took occasion to rebuke them publicly, in manner as follows:—

"LOST—By many Presbyterian christians of Chicago, during the last week, a large amount of valuable instruction given to the two churches in this city when they were absent.

"WANTED—In this city, and in the various churches throughout Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa, a large number of faithful men and women, who will keep their covenant vows to seek the purity and peace of the church, and to watch over each other in love; and who will likewise admonish each other, and the impenitent about them, on the subjects of repentance of sin, and faith in Jesus Christ.

"LOST—By a large number of professing christians—'first love' and 'assurance of faith.' The articles were first missed soon after forsaking closet duties—and were, without doubt, lost in the path of disobedience, as the owners were eagerly running after the world.

"WANTED—A good conscience for a number of christians who have recently broken the Sabbath; spoken evil of their neighbors; and done numerous other things whereby the conscience is defiled.

"FOUND—On the broad road that leadeth to destruction, a package containing a ball of selfishness, so hard that it cannot be broken or melted by any human means. A list of objections to the gospel of Jesus. A large amount of prejudice against truth and holiness; and a bottle of self-conceit, which, being cracked, has dyed the other articles in the package. The finder has deposited the package in his heart, and unless the same is claimed by Diabolus, the owner, it will eventually become his, by the law of limitation."

[From the Mothers' Magazine.]

### PARENTAL INFLUENCE.

THE ties of affection which bind parents to their children, are among the strongest and tenderest which God has implanted in the human breast. How early does it begin to operate! How does it stand uninjured by the thousand shocks which it receives, not chilled by unkindness, not weakened by time!

Whence comes this—this feeling, so strong and unaccountable? God has engraved it upon the human heart; and by doing this, he has communicated his intention, that the parent should be, to a great degree, responsible for the happiness of the child. By fixing this feeling so indelibly in the heart, he has meant to be understood as *reposing a trust and assigning a duty*.

I shall take it for granted that all the parents whom I now address are aware of the greatness of the obligation under which they are thus placed. I shall presume that they are satisfied, that among the innumerable connexions which exist in this world between mind and mind, there is not one which exhibits more influence on the one side, and more dependence on the other, than that which binds the parent to the child. Consequently, if there shall be a single case on the great day, in which the blood of a ruined soul shall be required at the hands of its watchman, that case may be expected to be one of a child lost through the neglect of its father or its mother.

The task of watching the mind and giving direction to its powers in the early periods, devolves chiefly upon mothers. I address myself, therefore, principally to them; and as I mean to be clearly understood, I shall be under the necessity of resorting to a familiarity of illustration, which, on ordinary subjects, would not be necessary.

I would also remark, that parents cannot take a single step to advantage in endeavoring to train up their children to piety, without first obtaining their *unlimited, unqualified, entire submission to their authority*. The *very first* lesson to be taught the child is to *submit, to obey*. There are various methods of obtaining this ascendancy. In some cases it is to be done by kindness, in some cases by severity; but in some way or other it must be done. Your children must be habituated to do what you command, and to refrain from what you forbid; not because they can see the reason for it, but because you *command* or *forbid*; submission, not to your *reasons*, but to your *authority*. If a child is in the habit of disregarding parental injunctions—if it is necessary to repeat them—or if obedience is slow, or reluctant, or ill-humored—I mean if this is so *habitually*—there

is something radically wrong in the parent's management. No parent can, under such circumstances, expect success in any efforts to promote piety; for be it remembered, insubordination is the essence of irreligion. I repeat it—*insubordination is the very essence of irreligion*. Men are not willing to submit to God. The mother, therefore, who habitually tolerates, and thus encourages disobedience in any of its forms, and yet hopes for success in her religious instructions, is pulling down with one hand while she is endeavouring to build up with the other; and judge ye how the edifice of piety will advance under such circumstances.

It is important that precisely what I mean by obedience should be understood. A mother sees a child playing with something which it ought not to have, and commands him to bring it to her:—

“Oh, mother, I want it,” says the child, turning with an imploring look towards its parent.

“I cannot help that—you must bring it to me.”

“Why,” says the child, “do let me keep it a little while.”

“No,” insists the mother, “you must bring it to me immediately.”

“Well,” says the child, yielding a little, “I will go and put it where I got it.”

“No,” repeats the parent, slowly and decidedly, “I tell you that you must bring it directly to me.”

The child advances towards the mother at last, and reluctantly allows the plaything to be taken out of its hand.

This, now, is the kind of obedience which, it is to be feared, a vast number even of christian parents exact from their children; but it is not obedience—it is *gross disobedience* and contempt of parental authority. The mother who is accustomed to see such slow, and reluctant, and tardy compliance with her wishes, may be sure, either that she is entirely ignorant of her duty as a mother, or else that she greatly neglects it. Until those who are under your care obey your commands *with cordial and ready alacrity*, you may be sure that the first step in christian education is not yet taken.

But some one will say, I shall alienate the affections of my children by governing them with too strong a hand. Never. There never was a child alienated from a parent by means of a steady, just, and efficient government. If you seek for a family of alienated hearts, you will find it where government is lax and obedience never required: and peace and happiness, and mutual affection reign where parental authority is most highly maintained. It is so with men as well as with children. There never was a commander more popular among his soldiery than

Napoleon; and was his a flexible or a trembling arm? No. Be kind and uniform, and act, not from irritation or momentary impulse, but from steady principle, and you need not fear; but if this part of your duty is neglected, there is no hope for the rest. If your child is ungoverned at your fireside, the question of salvation or ruin is as much a matter of mere *chance*, that is, as much under the control of circumstances, fortuitous, so far as human agency is concerned, as anything can be which takes place in this world.

The ascendancy, above described, being obtained—the great duty which you have to discharge, is to establish and to maintain a constant intercourse between the heart of your little one and its Maker. A child is capable of maintaining this intercourse, and enjoying the happiness which springs from it, at a very early period; perhaps before it is old enough to understand half of the fundamental truths of the gospel. There are *some* truths, indeed, which must be fully comprehended and felt, as a preparatory step. If these are understood, the child may be a child of prayer; his morning and evening offering may ascend acceptably to God, from a renewed spirit, while in regard to many of the great truths of the christian dispensation he is entirely uninformed.

One of the first subjects to be presented to the mind of the child, is its dependence on its Creator for life and all that it enjoys. And this is to be impressed, not by making *general* statements, but by pointing to *particular facts*. Direct his notice to his beating pulse, and let him observe that he has no power over its movements, and while his attention is absorbed by the subject, say to him, “You cannot live unless your pulse continues to beat. It is God who keeps it in motion. If he lets it stop you will die.” Or interrupt his breathing for a moment, and let him notice the inconvenience and suffering occasioned. Then say, “If your breathing should cease for a little longer time, you would die; and who is it that continues it while you sleep?”

A few simple instances of this kind will make a far more vivid and permanent impression upon the mind of a child, than any labored and general description of our dependence upon the Creator.

The next truth to be taught the child as a preparation for leading it habitually to God, is, that God is *holy*, and that he is consequently displeased with sin. This, too, like the former, is not to be *first taught* by the general language of a creed or catechism; for this language, however logical and accurate, and however valuable for other purposes, is not suitable for *first communicating the idea*. The child must

obtain its conceptions of sin by first looking at a particular and striking instance.

The first step is to make it feel that it has itself done wrong in a particular and striking case; then that *others* do wrong and offend their Maker; and the general truth that God is displeased with sin, expressed in comprehensive terms, will *conclude* and not *commence* the process. To impress a child then with a sense of its accountability to its Maker, we are first to convince it, that in one clear and decisive instance it has itself displeased God by committing sin. Let us suppose such a case.

A child quarrels with her younger brother at play. The mother interposes to quiet the contention, and then leaves them with a sorrowful countenance which tells them that she is displeased, but without any direct reproof. The day passes away; the child forgets the occurrence, and supposes that the parent has forgotten it.

When the evening approaches, and the calm and still hour which precedes the time of rest has arrived, and all the excitements of the day are allayed, and the mother, alone with her child, is about to leave it for the night,—she says, in a serious, but kind and gentle tone, “My child, do you remember that you were angry with your little brother to-day, and that you struck him?” The sin thus called to the recollection, will come up distinctly to view, and the fact that the mother remembered it so many hours, invests the transaction with an importance in the mind of the child, which no language could attach to it. The time and the circumstances, too, in which it is recalled, open the whole heart to the impression which the parent desires to make. “God saw you do this, my child,” continues the mother, in a kind but serious tone, “and he is much displeased with you. How can you go to sleep to-night without asking him to forgive you?”

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#### SPECIAL NEWS.

*Pelham, Niagara District, Nov. 8th, 1847.*

DEAR BROTHER OLIPIANT:—This morning I depart from Canada for Ohio. I have now spent four weeks in the province. The lateness of the season urges me to hasten homeward. After the meeting in Wainfleet, and a few discourses in Jordan, I went to meet an appointment at Bronte, at the outlet of the “Twelve,” Gore District. Here the plea has never been made for the restoration of primitive christianity. We had little prejudice to contend with, and the people came out with one accord to hear the word of the Lord. Better attention to the hearing of the gospel I never saw. Five discourses awakened much

interest, and the people expressed great anxiety to hear more. Two elderly persons, *both heads of families*, receiving the word with all readiness, were buried with the Lord in baptism. You must come if possible and continue the work which seems to be so favourably begun. But on that subject you will probably hear from our dear brother Bradt, who now resides there, and who will take a care over the cause in that vicinity.

From thence I returned to Jordan again, where the brethren gave as much attention to the meeting as the weather would permit. There was good attention; but none obeyed the word. The brethren here have much strength, and if they go to work to "strengthen the things that remain," the light of the gospel will again shine with a commanding influence in that region.

Finally, brother Oliphant, nothing is wanting to give success, constant, prevailing success to the word of the Lord in this part of the province, but "labourers in the vineyard." Do the brotherhood here "pray that the Lord of the harvest may send forth labourers into his vineyard?" It seems to me a little more effort, a little more unity and energy, would call forth the abilities of the elect people. Why not have a system, if no better can be introduced, of *church visits*? Once, twice, or thrice a year, let one church, all of its members, make a religious visit, holding meetings, with a neighboring sister church. Such gatherings might become seasons of refreshing in the presence of the Lord.

But home I go. When shall we see you there? I am much gratified that you found time to give me a letter in answer to mine. I could not really expect it. Editors, by some law editorial, perhaps in view of the fact that their station calls for so much writing, seem excusable for not answering all the letters addressed to them. The reception of yours, therefore, I regard as a matter of special kindness and brotherly love. May the Lord preserve you and make you a blessing.

I should have said above, that I regret much, not having been able to visit the saints at Cooksville, at Norval, and its vicinities, and *Oshawa*. But if the Lord will for a future visit, I shall endeavor to see them.

In much haste, and be assured, brother O., with

Sincerest brotherly regards,

Yours, A. S. HAYDEN.

Wainfleet, Dec. 14th, 1847.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—I have joyful news to tell you. Last Lord's day a worthy young sister was immersed by the writer in the

name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. If rejoicing angels,—  
 “Gently on their pinions flying,”

carry the transporting news to heaven of one sinner's return, why may not the saints in Canada rejoice by the same intelligence received through your very interesting and edifying paper? May the Lord preserve his church in this place.

Your brother,

A. CLENDENAN.

*Bennington, N. Y., 12th Nov., 1847.*

We have had eighteen additions to the congregations in this region this fall. May the Lord preserve them to his coming and kingdom.

A. P. JONES.

There was a baptism in Erin, reported some time since, which has not until now been chronicled. A few days before leaving Picton, we were favoured with the opportunity of immersing one. The church in Bowmanville has received two or three additions within a short period.

D. O.

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### SORROW AND SYMPATHY.

LIKE a cooling draught to a weary traveler in the scorching waste, so is the sympathy of friends in time of trouble. We feel thankful when we meet with those who can forget their own ills while they administer to others.

We need not expect a life of continued sunshine; it would be unnatural. We must have clouds, rains, and even desolating storms; these are as necessary, mentally and morally, as physically, to the production of a healthy existence. But evils, though necessary, are seldom so great as at first they may seem to be: our interests are not so conflicting as they appear, and often through misapprehension we are grieved by that which if seen in its true light, would be the cause of mirth, or a fit subject for ridicule.—*Extract.*

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### OBITUARY.

On the 11th of Nov., 1847, sister MARY PAYN, wife of F. O. Payn, of Hillier, after an illness of some years, has at last sunk into rest. But I cannot suppress the sympathetic tear, when I think of her last sufferings, which were almost inexpressible. Being related by marriage, I and my wife would occasionally visit her; and I would talk with her upon the blissful existence of the faithful in Christ Jesus. I would speak of Christ and his government; of his love to man; of his goodness; of his sufferings on the cross; of our pardon through his blood; of the resurrection, immortality, and eternal life.



She expressed a desire to live only to train up her children, whom she loved dearly, "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

She was a christian. Every disciple who was acquainted with her, cannot but say, we have lost a sister who "adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour." But she is not consigned to eternal death. The time will soon come, when

"Gabriel's last great trump shall sound,  
And call the dead from under ground."

O may we all be of that happy number who shall walk the streets of the New Jerusalem; and around the throne of God, praise him for ever and ever.

HANNIBAL THOMPSON.

*P. E. District, 22d Nov., 1847.*

My last visit while in the District of Prince Edward, was to this sister, and, as we gave each other the parting hand and the parting word, I felt that our next meeting would be in a new world. The messengers of the monster were at hand. Death, however, contemplated in the light of christianity, although always unwelcome, and seldom viewed without apprehension, is not an enemy in every respect: for we know who has said "the sting of death is sin," and when by the gospel "sin no longer has dominion over us," we can ask with Paul in triumph, "O death, where is thy sting?" But will this be any consolation to brother Payn? Yes! for if we are all journeying to our final rest, and death has power only for a limited time, there is the expectation of a resurrection, the certainty of meeting not again to part, and the never dying delights of heavenly glory, to comfort, tranquilize, and soothe the man of faith.

D. O.

### KINDNESS.

"One word in soft tenderness spoke,  
Nay, but a kind glance of the eye,  
Conveys to the heart a sweet hope,  
And banishes many a sigh."

Commencing with a new year, with new life and zeal, in a new office, in a new locality, we trust all who are friendly to this work will make new efforts to co-operate with us in its circulation. We shall say little about temporalities. We dislike it: especially in religious papers: for it argues one of two things; either, 1st, that the subscribers are unrighteous, or, 2nd, that the editor is more or less covetous. Neither of these, even if both were true, shall be heralded to the world by the conductor of the "Witness."—Every work, good and great, since the world began, so far as known to us, has been urged forward and accomplished by a few devoted, disinterested, and closely-allied friends and co-workers, who have adhered to each other and to the work proposed, with all fidelity and energy. Religion, Christ's religion, pure from the oracles, has a few adherents in this province; and we trust they will stand together and go forward together in unbroken phalanx while attempting to achieve anything through the medium of the press.

D. O.

Articles from brother J. Buchanan, Esq., Niagara Falls, and brother H., Athol, in our next.