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THE CHRISTIAN.

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CONDUCTED BY W. W. EATON.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.—*Peter*. On this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it — *The Lord Messiah*.

REFLECTIONS

AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE NEW-YEAR.

“The bell strikes one : We take no note of time,
But from its loss. To give it then a tongue,
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke
I feel the solemn sound ! If heard aright,
It is the knell of my departed hours ;
Where are they ? With the years beyond the flood ?
It is the signal that demands despatch ;
How much is to be done !”

YOUNG.

UNLESS a man be sunk in the very dregs of humanity, he must occasionally indulge in a retrospect of the year that is gone, and in anticipation of that which has now dawned upon us. Eighteen hundred and forty is now forever past, and its successor will as rapidly follow : but whether we shall witness its departure, or whether our *own* race shall previously terminate, is alike unknown to us all. The sweet singer, whom we have quoted above, exclaims in another part of his *Night Thoughts*,

“’Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,
And ask them what report they bore to Heaven,
And how they might have borne more welcome news.”

An important question, truly—whatever may be the reply of an ever wakeful conscience ; that conscience which minutes all things in her diary, to be proclaimed to assembled worlds !

To dwell upon the past, however, is useless, compared with a becoming consideration of the *present* and the *future*. Many of us, it is to be hoped, commenced this year with what are termed “good intentions.” This is commendable : but we must not lose sight of the old Spanish Proverb which tells us that “hell is paved with these same ‘good intentions.’” The earth, in fact, might be paved with them too ; for we cannot entertain an opinion so derogatory to the human family as to suppose that there is a person who does not entertain some of them. What a great and glorious world would this be, if it were to be estimated by *intentions* ! Even amongst the humblest (I had almost said the *worst* of us) what fine, what *laudable* intentions we are sometimes forming ; and especially at this time, when another short era, as it were, in our very

short earthly existence has just commenced. But, alas! the very thief, the day before his being captured, had excellent intentions. The abandoned sinner, the hour before he was struck by the mortal disease which removed him from this world, had some of the noblest *intentions*—the most virtuous, perhaps, never had better. Oh that we could all be judged by our intentions! Now it is a plain and undeniable truth, that mere intentions are the most pernicious things in the world. If a man had *no* good intentions he would know that he was decidedly wicked, and that he might have a chance of being some day roused to a sense of his unrighteous state, and thereafter becoming reformed: but the man of good intentions goes dreaming on from the beginning of one year to the close of another, constantly absolving himself from his unholy deeds through the efficacy of this pretended virtue. Far honest, and indeed far safer, is he who does not pretend to conceal either from himself or others that he is what he ought not to be, than the mean coward who sneaks into a good character with himself, and at the same time deceives the world by an assumed and deceptive merit. In fact every good intention, not in proper time carried into effect, is an *offence*, and by no means a trivial one; for it only tends to supplant the performance that might have otherwise taken place. Good intentions lull the conscience to sleep, and then carry their victim in blind and fatal security, to destruction. As “all men think all men mortal but themselves,” so also do all men think all men liable to moral rebuke but themselves. When, for example, we hear some fervent pulpit admonitions, we think that these are all very proper for people in *general*, but never once suppose that we, in particular, are at all in need of them. Just so, many individuals who read these New-Year’s reflections will say, “How just the writer is upon many *with whom we are acquainted!*” But not one in ten, perhaps, will bring the moral home to himself, and enquire to what extent he may have been guilty of only *meaning* well, even during the course of the year that is just ended. This, however, should be done—then might many of us awake from the dream of last year’s good intentions, and endeavour to *do*, this year, what we have heretofore contented ourselves with *designing to do*. Expel every symptom of an intention which is excluding a performance: for we cannot be ignorant that while we go on doing many things which we ought *not to do*, we content ourselves in a great measure by merely *intending* that which we ought to do. Let us reflect on the millions who died in eighteen hundred and forty without performing their several duties in life. Before the seat of the eternal they will be interrogated respecting their *deeds*; and how will the gauze of intentions, when they hold it up, appear in that mighty eye, if *deeds* be wanting to prove the reality of those good principles which they professed? But stop. Does not the uncertainty of life shew us that we are liable, in one moment, if it so pleased God, to be in the same awful predicament with those who departed during the last year? For already the word may have gone forth respecting each one of us, “This year thou shalt die.”

In prosecuting these our reflections at the commencement of the year (the most important to *ourselves* that ever commenced) we shall ponder

for a moment on the words of the wise man: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." To be prompt in action is a most invaluable qualification. The man who is constantly indulging in doubt and delay is incapable of performing any thing aright. His knowledge may be extensive, his penetration quick, his understanding enlarged, his imagination vigorous, still he is worse than useless in action. With such an one the end of all is the hopeless exclamation, "What to do I cannot tell." In the mean time, opportunity flies; and he enters upon the consideration of some other matter with the same unprofitable waste of thought. So much for *indecision* as pertaining to the things of this life. The consequence is apparent to all: and if we apply the same reflections to the things which are not seen the inference will be precisely the same. "Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears the palm, that all men are *about* to live, for ever on the brink of being born."

We might pursue these *reflections* to the close of this new-born year, and then find ourselves in our present position, both with respect to time and to eternity. 'Tis *action*, decisive and immediate action, that is necessary. To trifle, is not to live. To purpose to lead a new life in the course of the next year, the next month, day, or hour, is to leave it undone for ever. *Time*, we should remember, is *eternity*. The question then arises—How shall I proceed? Where is my chart? Where is my directory? Ask the mere worldling,—he will point me to the path which leads to aggrandizement and earthly pleasures. Ask the Christian, (by which of course we must understand the *follower* of Christ) and he points me to the Bible, and to the directions therein plainly laid down by its divine author. The Christian will tell me never to be easy until I have inwardly and heartily taken that for my guide through life. He will tell me to put a high value upon precious time; to devote the earliest and best part of it to the interests of eternity; and to look upon the loss of it as greater than the loss of all worldly things.

"Throw *years* away?
Throw empires and be blameless! moments seize—
Heaven's on their wing. a moment we may wish
When worlds want wealth to buy."

The Christian tells me that man stands every hour at the door of eternity, and if I step in without the "one thing needful," I am eternally undone. To consider, and to *believe* this is a blessing above all price. He tells me moreover to begin and end, not only this year but this day, and every day with God. Yes—these are the simple but sublime teachings of every real Christian. Happy they, and they only, who improve thereby.

We close these meditations by wishing the reader, indeed and in truth, a "happy n w year," reminding him at the same time, that if he expects to find happiness in any thing short of the Redeemer, he will be grievously disappointed in his search. Therefore let us all, as the year glides silently and rapidly by,

"Beware what earth calls happiness, beware
All joys but joys that never can expire
Who builds on less than an immortal base,
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death."

ALPHA.

ORDER AND DISCIPLINE OF THE HOUSE OF GOD.

Nothing is of greater importance to the congregations of the Lord, professing to take the word of God for their guide, than scriptural views of the order and discipline of the Church of God. We have had several queries on this subject which ought to have been answered long since; but procrastination, that "thief of time," has caused us to be silent until now.

We have observed that when the Ancient Gospel is first preached in any place, by a competent proclaimer, much excitement and controversy are generally its attendants: churches are soon formed, and suddenly set in order. In the excitement many unite without much consideration and soon fall away, and some fall in with the sentiments advanced without fully understanding them, and others unite because they dislike some society that opposes the newly formed community. With such a combination of discordant materials, it would be a miracle if there was not a reaction! Hence the necessity of getting the church in good order, and exercising prompt and righteous discipline. Instead of this, too many communities make no preparation for offences and cases of discipline until the difficulties occur, and then the church is wholly unprepared calmly and dispassionately to examine the scriptures relative to the order and discipline of the house of God.

Although young in years, and in the christian kingdom, we have been under the painful necessity of witnessing many difficulties in religious communities; and all those which have been of long duration have invariably been occasioned by incorrect views of discipline or inattention to correct views.

When a church gets into scriptural order, and then is able to pass the first violent reaction from within and without, in future it will experience a gradual and healthy increase. We have lately noticed that those churches of our brethren in the "west" which have in a scriptural manner set in order the things that were wanting, are in a far more prosperous condition than those who are inattentive to these things.

For our own part, we are warm advocates for a presbytery or eldership in every church, for the purpose of settling all difficulties that may occur. We shall not have room in the present number to argue this subject. We hope the brethren, however, will think on it until the next month, when we shall lay before them a contrast between scriptural and unscriptural discipline in the church of God.

Bishops or Elders, and Deacons, are the officers of the church. Their characters are well defined in Paul's Epistles to Timothy and Titus. Will the reader turn to these epistles and read them? If any church professing to take the word of the Lord alone for her guide is now destitute of at least *two* competent Elders and Deacons who fill up the measure laid down by the Apostles, they are most affectionately exhorted forthwith to elect, by universal suffrage on the part of the Church; at least the above number—and let them "first be tried," and then use the office, being found blameless. Many may say, what shall we do if we cannot find such men as Paul points out? We answer—

get those who come nearest to the standard, and put them on trial, until they do fill up the measure. It is better for a church to be without *ordained* Elders and Deacons than to have those who do not possess the qualifications pointed out by the Apostle. Let those who desire such an office, by watchfulness and prayer, by study and attention to their duties, fit themselves for the high, holy and laborious duties of an officer in the Church of God.

While the brotherhood are endeavoring to fit themselves "for all the work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in the Lord Jesus," we will assist them by submitting for their consideration two chapters; one on the duties of Bishops or Elders, and the other on discipline from an able pen.

THE DUTIES OF BISHOPS.—BY A. CAMPBELL.

They have no legislative power, and therefore lawgiving is no function of theirs. The Messiah was careful to repeat that he only taught what he had heard and learned from the Father. The Apostles were peculiarly attentive to inculcate that they had received from the Lord whatever they taught the disciples; and the primitive elders and bishops gave all attention to inculcate only the commandments of the apostles of the Lord and Saviour; and James says there is but ONE LAWGIVER, who is able to save and to destroy.

1. As they are required to be apt or fit to teach, it is their duty to teach the whole counsel of God. In doing this, they are to regard the church as consisting of little children, young men, and fathers—as consisting of masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, and subjects of political government. As to the manner of this teaching, they are to have the Scriptures read in the congregation, applied to all contingencies, and diligently examined and considered by all the disciples. They are to call forth all the gifts and talents of the congregation, and to give directions concerning reading, exhortation, and prayer. It is not presumed that they are to be the only readers, teachers, exhorters, intercessors, or singers in the congregation. But they are to preside over all, to give directions to all, as far as public edification is concerned. They may call upon A to read; upon B to expound a difficult word; phrase, or passage; upon C to pray; upon D to sing; upon E to preside at the Lord's table; upon F to exhort; or they may give a general invitation to all to minister to the general edification. But no one is to read, speak, teach, or exhort in the congregation without a special call or leave of the bishop presiding for the day. They will deliver didactic discourses, admonitions, and exhortations as the exigencies of the community require. And they will occasionally labor in the word, or preach the gospel where the presence of unbelievers makes it necessary. The elders who thus labor both in the word and in teaching, as Paul teaches, are worthy of the highest honor.

2. They are "*to rule well.*" Presidency and ruling, though much akin, are not identically the same. To preside may sometimes imply no more than preserving order and decorum in the regular proceedings of a public worshipping assembly. But "*to rule well*" has respect more immediately to the disorders which are incident to every earthly commu-

nity, from which the church of Jesus Christ never has yet been fully exempt. The discipline of the church is as essential as its doctrine: for no church can be prosperous or happy, however zealous for the doctrine according to godliness, if there be in it lax discipline, or if transgressors of the law of Christ are suffered to pass with impunity.

To rule well is one of the most difficult attainments. It calls for meekness, candor, firmness, courage, patience, and indefatigable attention to the first indications of remissness or delinquency. So peculiar is the assemblage of attributes requisite to ruling well, that they are more rarely to be met with than the gifts of eloquence and the highest didactic powers.

To anticipate and prevent transgression, delinquency, or actual apostasy, is much more desirable and profitable than to reprove and punish it when actually consummated. He that rules well his own family is best prepared to rule well the church of God; and he that rules well his own family needs not be informed that more depends upon *watching* the dispositions and frailties of his children, and guarding them from error and disobedience, by removing them from temptation, or by removing temptation out of their way, than in correcting them for actual offences. Much the larger part of all the errors, follies, and faults of children and of disciples might have been prevented under a discreet and attentive administration. Truly remonstrance, counsel, and the interposing oneself between temptation and the occasions of error in practice, are the great secrets of a good administration, and require degrees of wisdom and devotion seldom to be met with. More youths and more disciples have been saved from ruin by the judicious watchings of those entrusted with their fortunes, than have ever been reclaimed by corrections and rebukes. On this point a hint must now suffice: for we only aim at a full developement of what is meant by ruling well. On the subject of discipline we shall have a better opportunity to illustrate good rule as contrasted with bad rule.

3. Besides the teaching, presidency, and ruling well in the public assembly, there is a class of duties comprehended in constant visitation, of paramount importance to the edification, good order, and growth of a congregation. Private, is often much better than public teaching; and reproofs, corrections, and instructions are frequently given with greater effect by the fireside than in the synagogue.

Paul, in his exhortations to the Ephesian bishops, gives his own example as the best illustration of what he would enjoin. Speaking of the class of duties to which I now allude, he says, "For the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears." Again, he says, "You know how I have been conversant among you all the time, from the first day that I entered Asia, serving the Lord with all humility, and with tears"—"teaching you publicly and privately"—"watch, therefore, remembering" these things, &c. Well might this Apostle say, "He who desires the office of a bishop, desires a *good work*." A *work*, indeed, which if not divided among a plurality of persons, will require much of the time of an individual or two, even in a congregation of one hundred members.

They are the most useful and successful preachers and teachers of Christ who go from house to house, and mingle with the people in their daily and constant avocations. In sickness and in health, in business and in leisure, in the most intimate social intercourse, they will find numerous occasions of doing good, and of speaking with effect, which will not occur in the meeting house or public assembly.

When the Apostles in Jerusalem, though all present in one church, and aided by many such men as Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas, found it expedient to give themselves up to the ministry of the word and to prayer, and to have persons appointed to attend on the tables of the widows and the poor; may we not learn that the word of teaching and preaching Christ, of presiding over a christian congregation with dignity and profit, of ruling well, requires a devoted heart and an undivided attention, and that every business ought to have some persons set over it?

To go into all the particular duties of the christian bishop, would require us to transcribe much of the epistles; we therefore dismiss the subject, having noticed the three classes of duties already stated.

ORDER AS RESPECTS DISCIPLINE.—BY A. CAMPBELL.

Good discipline is as essential to the moral health, peace, and prosperity of the church of Christ, as good doctrine. Without it no society can long subsist. The theory of discipline is not discipline itself; and, therefore, it is not discipline in the book, nor in the letter, but in the church, of which we speak.

There are no laws, human or divine, which have as yet been divulged on earth, that can benefit mankind only in so far as they are obeyed. That lawgiver is yet to be born who can promulge a code of laws which will bless society whether obeyed or disobeyed. Jesus Christ has not done it. He promulged, or caused to be promulged, confessedly on all hands, the best system on earth; yet these laws improve and bless mankind individually and socially only so far as they are obeyed.

It belongs to the whole christian community to submit to his government as supreme. To have his law magnified and honored by every citizen in his kingdom, is the paramount obligation of the whole church. Its obligations and loyalty to Jesus Christ as King and Lawgiver, most solemnly and perpetually bind the christian community to unreserved obedience.

The church, in selecting bishops, has this ostensibly in view. She has as much respect to the *ruling* as the didactic talents of those she honors with the episcopacy. She argues well, when, with the Apostle Paul she declares, by his choice, that the man who rules not well his own house, ought not to be trusted with the affairs of God's house. In ordaining her overseers, she lays her hands upon them as much to preside and rule over her, as to teach her more perfectly the way of the Lord. For this purpose, more than for simple teaching, it behoves her to have a plurality. One may sometimes teach, and one may at a single meeting preside with all dignity and propriety; but one cannot scripturally rule a congregation, if ruling be scripturally understood.

“To rule well,” be it observed, is not to legislate for the church, nor is it to lord it over God’s heritage. It is not to command with authority, as an absolute sovereign—it is not to dictate, as a pedagogue; but it is to have all the laws of the Absolute Monarch fully and faithfully executed. It is to have the apostolic canons supremely regarded, and all their commandments exactly and constantly obeyed. It is to have all things done decently and in order.

But, as has been observed in a former part of this essay, “to rule well” comprehends all the duties of watching over the flock, as well as correcting and removing offences when they occur. It may, perhaps, be said that watching to prevent the errors of the brotherhood falls not within our conceptions of ruling. But does it not fall within our ideas of authority? Who may watch over a flock without authority derived from the flock itself, or from the proprietor of the flock, and acknowledged by the people? And if the people confer authority on any persons to watch over them and to admonish them, the administration of that authority is with propriety regarded as a part of the duties of their office, as much as the application of the law to transgressors.

The best physicians are they who *prevent* diseases. In the same sense are they the best rulers who prevent errors and apostacies. The sovereign who, by his wisdom and kindly precaution, prevents a revolt among his people, is more worthy of esteem than he who permits it to occur, though he should finally succeed in putting it down. They are the best bishops, who, by their watchful attention to the occasions of falling or apostacy, anticipate and prevent delinquencies—more to be admired and loved than they who even reclaim the sinner from the error of his way, or exclude the incorrigible offender from the communion of the faithful.

To the actual discipline of the church, in its social and public capacity, belong only the offences which are committed against the whole community. Private trespasses between two or more individuals are not to be laid before the congregation until they become public offences. The commandments of the Saviour found on this subject in the 18th chapter of Matthew (and they are in accordance with our very best conceptions of propriety and expediency) go to prevent, if possible, private trespasses on the rights of individuals from becoming public offences. When those directions are faithfully regarded, it is but seldom that a private trespass comes before the congregation, or terminates in a public offence.

By a *public offence*, we mean every transgression that puts the congregation to shame—every transgression which brings a reproach upon the Lord or his people. Of course such transgressions are generally more or less known to those without the community. But should they not be known to any out of the church, if they be such, as when known, would bring reproach on the holy religion of the Redeemer, then are they to be regarded as public offences, and to be treated accordingly.

The christian church is “the pillar and support of the truth,” the patroness of piety, righteousness and holiness. She must never lose sight of her “high and holy calling;” and must, therefore, have “no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.” She must not only be pure

in doctrine, but irreproachable in character. Her profession and her works must agree. That she may sustain her moral dignity, she must never display any partiality for evil doers, nor leniency for transgressors. She must never pity the sinner so much as to forgive him to the dishonor of her Lord. Those who put her to shame, she must put to shame before she receive them into the bosom of her sympathy and affection. She must have inscribed upon her shield, and displayed upon her ensigns, as her motto, "*Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.*" She is to cultivate, to exalt, and to refine her sense of propriety, and to be highly sensitive touching the honor of her beloved. She will remember that one of the highest encomiums that Jesus addressed to the Ephesian church was, that she "could not bear them who are evil;" and one of the greatest censures pronounced upon the church in Thyatira, was her suffering immoral and ungodly persons to remain within her communion.

When a church has ordained to itself elders, no case of discipline can be laid before the community but through its presbytery. It is the province of the eldership to prepare the case and to choose the time for its consideration, should it be one that requires the action of the whole church. That congregation which allows any and every member when he pleases to introduce a case of discipline, will always be insecure against scenes of confusion and disorder. Their meetings for worship will often be converted into theatres of debate, not only upon the case presented, but also upon the nature of offences in general, the rules of discipline, and the propriety or impropriety of the various measures proposed.

In many cases when complaints are made to the elders of the congregation on the delinquency of brethren, it will be possible for them to have such matters adjusted without the necessity of laying them before the whole assembly. But in case of unequivocal public offence, the elders will have the facts and documents, the accusation, and the witnesses to sustain it, so digested and prepared as to place it before the congregation matured for their action.

In those cases it will be in good order simply to state that such a charge has been preferred against a brother; that certain witnesses have so and so testified; that the transgressor has made no defence, or such a defence: that he has to admit so much; that he is impenitent, or unwilling to make acknowledgment; and, upon the whole premises, they doubt not his defection.

The church then is in full possession of the case, and little more will be necessary than to act upon the report, except the accused deny the facts alleged in the report. If he do not, the church by its vote separates him from its communion. But if he deny the facts alleged, the church will hear the witnesses, and then decide first whether in its judgment the facts are sustained; and on deciding in the affirmative, will separate him from its fellowship.

But in such cases as the offender himself acknowledges his fault, or when it is proved against him in the presence of the elders, and he affords clear evidence of penitence, report is made to the church, he appearing before it, and on being publicly rebuked and admonished, is restored to his standing in the congregation.

The elders of the church will not retain in the church, nor restore any transgressor who has been convicted of a public offence, or who, of his own accord, confesses a fault, but by a public rebuke: for, says the Apostle, "them that sin *rebuke before all*, that others also may fear." They will not, through the yearnings of pity or sympathy, "save the feelings" of a delinquent to the dishonour of Christ. They will, with christian firmness, sustain the honor of the christian institution, lest the way of the Lord should be traduced or evil spoken of. Dear as the feelings of a christian brother may be, dearer far will be the character and feelings of the Saviour of the world.

In administering a rebuke it rarely happens that it will be in good order for a junior brother to reprove or admonish a senior. It will generally be the duty of the senior elder to attend to this solemn and responsible service. In rebuking a penitent offender he will not fail to expatiate on the nature and tendency of the offence, and the occasion or temptation that led the way to it; and will also, with all earnestness and affection, admonish, beseech, and exhort to that watchfulness, meditation, and prayer, which alone can give him strength to moderate his passions, restrain his appetites, and overcome temptation.

The Apostle Paul allows the church to appoint a committee in some cases of misunderstanding among brethren, whose judgment of the points at issue shall be final. These secular seats of judicature are necessary when the church in the aggregate are so unacquainted with the matter as not to be able to decide with judgment. Persons competent to arbitrate the case are selected by the parties or by the congregation. To these the matters in debate are referred. Their report when presented to the church, and approved, must be final. So Paul taught the Corinthians, in his first Epistle, chap. vi. 1—5. The party that will not acquiesce in the decision of one or two committees thus chosen and appointed, is worthy of censure.

The difference between misrule, ruling ill, and ruling well, cannot fail to be most apparant, and to be fully appreciated in the respective effects of a good and a bad administration. Under a prudent and righteous administration of the affairs of the church, the purity and excellency of the christian institution will be sustained—offences and apostacies will be of rare occurrence. The congregation, like a well ordered family, will move in harmony and affection—will not only grow and increase in the knowledge of God, but in favor and usefulness among people. Its numbers will be increased, and its influence in the community will be sensibly and extensively felt. The imputation of licentious and unsound doctrine will be impotent, and the ignorance of foolish and wicked revilers will be put to shame and silence.

But when every one does what is right in his own eyes, and feels himself responsible to the oversight of no person; at liberty to absent himself from the brethren as often and as long as he pleases, despising government and the restraints of Christ; mingling in the society of them who profane that sacred name which he professes to worship and adore; indulging in loose behaviour and inattention to the study of God's Book; preferring the company of the enemies of the cross, the world that cru-

cified his Saviour, to the society of those who fear God and keep his commandments, and still regarded as a brother in Christ; the zeal of Paul and the eloquence of Apollos would fail to sustain the gospel in the midst of such disorder and licentiousness.

Add to this the incompetency and unfaithfulness of those who preside, winking at open transgression, and strongly sympathizing with what they "charitably" call the frailties of their brethren, fearful of exercising discipline; and when some flagrant outrage occurs, allowing to be brought into the congregation as a subject of inquiry and discussion, putting the law to vote whether it shall be executed, instead of proving by testimony the fact, and faithfully applying the law; disposed rather to commiserate the offender and connive at his offence, than to honor the King and sustain his law; and, perhaps, in the absence of the delinquent, judging his case by proxy; and on some slight concession putting to vote the propriety of receiving him without a public acknowledgment or admonition, displaying more passion or feeling than judgment, good sense, and faithfulness to God or man; and worse than all, either putting into office, or retaining in a conspicuous station in the church, those who have, not many months or years since, been a scandal to the christian name by some gross immorality. Were the twelve Apostles to preach the gospel to a community intimately acquainted with such an administration of affairs, they all could not make a single convert. Profligacy and drunkenness do not more certainly lead to bankruptcy and ruin, than such a weak and unfaithful administration to the utter extinction of the light of the gospel and final dissolution of the church. Well might Paul say, "Let the elders that *rule well* be counted worthy of double honor:" and wisely did he admonish the christian community "to salute," "to remember," and "obey them *who had the rule over them*, and to *submit themselves*, for they *watched* for their souls"—inasmuch as without this good government and subordination, the best constituted church could not long be pure, honorable, and prosperous.

REMISSION OF SINS.

No. 2

ALL THE ANCIENT FATHERS AND THE MODERN CONFESSIONS OF FAITH
ARE IN FAVOR OF BAPTISM FOR REMISSION OF SINS.

In a previous number, the former part of this proposition was clearly proved. Not one of our readers, we presume, will for a moment question but that the ancients, not only believed but practised baptism for remission of sins. The only modern author quoted yet is Dr. John Paley, and not a writer among us have written more clearly and decisively in favor of the proposition than has the Doctor.

We shall now submit the sentiments of popular sects and eminent men; after which we shall carefully analyze the testimony of men who spoke, wrote and acted as they were moved by the inspiring power of the Holy Spirit.

Hear first the sentiments of the

MORAVIANS OR UNITED BRETHREN,

on the design of baptism copied from their litany on baptism.

Question.—“Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, by whom are all things, and we through him?”

Answer.—I do.

Q. Dost thou believe, that he is thy Lord, who redeemed thee, a lost and undone human creature, purchased and gained thee from all sin, from death, and from the power of the Devil, not with gold or silver, but with his holy precious blood, and with his innocent suffering and dying?

A. I verily believe it.

Q. Dost thou desire to be cleansed from sin in the blood of Jesus Christ, and to be buried into his death by holy baptism?

A. That is my sincere desire.

Q. Dost thou desire to be embodied into the congregation of Christ, by holy baptism, which is the laver of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and in his kingdom to live under him and serve him in eternal righteousness, innocence and happiness.

A. That is my sincere desire.”

While the congregation sing :

“Unto him, O Lamb of God,
Open thy salvation's treasure—In rich measure,
Graciously his sins forgive,—*Him* receive,
Grant *him* peace and consolation;
Join him to thy congregation,
As the purchase of thy death.”

“The water flowing from thy side,
Which by the spear was opened wide,
Be now *his* bath; thy precious blood
Cleanseth *him*, and bring him nigh to God.”

The candidate kneels down, and the following question is put to the congregation :

“Ye, who were baptized into Christ Jesus, how were ye baptized?”

Answer.—Into his death.

Minister.—Into the death of Jesus I baptize thee N. N. in the name of the Father, &c.

During the imposition of hands the minister continues: “Now art thou washed, justified and sanctified by the blood of Christ: therefore live, yet not thou, but Christ live in thee! And the life which thou now livest in the flesh, live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved thee and gave himself for thee.”

The baptism of Adults from the heathen is very similar, only that the questions are more particular: for after asking the candidate if he believes that he is a sinful creature and deserves the wrath of God—that Jesus, though innocent, died to reconcile sinful creatures to God—that he purchased, by his blood and death, remission of sins, life and happiness; the candidate is asked:

“Wilt thou in this faith be baptized into the death of Jesus, and be washed from thy sins in his blood?”

Answer.—“That is my sincere desire.”

The minister then prays that he may be cleansed from his sins in the blood of Christ—delivered from the guilt, punishment and dominion of sin—raised to newness of life, &c., and then he is baptized as before named.

The reader has here, then, the sentiments of the United Brethren in their own language.

By all denominations these “Brethren” are considered the most persevering, pious, self denying people in the world. “Greenland’s icy mountains,” and the barren and inhospitable reigon of the Esquamaux testify to their zeal and devotion in the cause of human redemption. And the celebrated Wesley considered himself under the dominion of sin, though he had been preaching to others, until he learned the true doctrine of the Lord from Peter Bohler, one of these preachers.

EPISCOPALIAN.

The clergy are ordered, before proceeding to baptize, to make the following prayer.*

“Almighty and everlasting God, who, of thy great mercy, didst save Noah and his family in the Ark from perishing by water; and also didst safely lead the children of Israel thy people through the Red Sea: figuring thereby thy holy baptism; and by the baptism of thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ in the river Jordan, didst sanctify the element of water, to the mystical washing away of sin: we beseech thee, for thine infinite mercies, that thou wilt mercifully look upon *these thy servants*; wash *them* and sanctify *them* with the Holy Ghost; that *they* being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the Ark of Christ’s Church; and being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally *they* may come to the land of everlasting life; there to reign with thee, world without end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*”

After reading a part of the discourse with Nicodemus, they are ordered to make the following exhortation.

“Beloved, ye hear in this gospel the express words of our Saviour Christ, that except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Whereby ye may perceive the great necessity of this sacrament, where it may be had. Likewise, immediately before his ascension into heaven, (as we read in the last chapter of St. Mark’s Gospel,) he gave command to his disciples, saying, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. Which also showeth unto us the great benefit we reap thereby. For which cause St. Peter the Apostle, when upon his first preaching of the gospel many were pricked at the heart, and said to him and the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? replied, and said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: for the promise is to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many

* Common Prayer.

other words exhorted he them, saying save yourselves from this unward generation. For, as the same Apostle testifieth in another place, even baptism doth also now save us, (not putting away the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience towards God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Doubt ye not, therefore, but earnestly believe that he will favorably receive *these present persons*, truly repenting, and coming unto him by faith; that he will grant *them* remission of *their* sins, and bestow upon *them* the Holy Ghost; that he will give *them* the blessing of eternal life, and make *them partakers* of his everlasting kingdom."

This, I need not add, is in accordance with the sentiments advanced in this essay. What a pity that the Episcopal Church does not believe and practise her own creed!

PRESBYTERIAN.

The Presbyterian Confession, on Baptism, chap xxviii. sect. 1, declares that—

"Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church; but a'so to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his engraving into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life; which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in his church until the end of the world."

"*A sign and seal of remission of sins!*" This is much nigher the truth than this church seems to be apprized of. However, she cannot believe her own creed; for she does not believe that a baptism is a sign and a seal of remission of sins, nor of regeneration, in her own sense of it, to her baptized or sprinkled infants. But in paying any regard to the Scriptures, she could not say less than she has said. It is no wonder that many sectaries cannot be persuaded to think, the Scriptures mean what they say: for they are so much accustomed to say what they do not mean, that they cannot think God does mean what he says.

METHODIST.

The Methodist Creed says—

"Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, (and that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and they that are in the flesh cannot please God, but live in sin, committing many actual transgressions:) and that our Saviour Christ saith, None shall enter into the kingdom of God except he be regenerate, and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost: I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous goodness he will grant to *these persons*, that which by nature *they* cannot have; that *they* may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy church, and be made lively *members* of the same."

Then it is ordained that the minister say, or repeat the following prayer:—

"Almighty and immortal God, the aid of all that need, the helper of all that flee to thee for succor, the life of them that believe, and the re-

urrection of the dead : We call upon thee for *these persons* ; that *they* coming to thy holy baptism, may receive remission of *their sins*, by spiritual regeneration. Receive *them*, O Lord, as thou hast promised by thy well-beloved Son, saying, Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you, so give unto us that ask ; let us that seek, find ; open the gate unto us that knock ; that *these persons* may enjoy the everlasting benediction of the heavenly washing, and may come to the eternal kingdom which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. *Amen.*—*Dis. p. 105.*

Thus the Methodist Creed and Church are nearly as scriptural as the church from which they sprang. She prays for those to be baptized, but in baptism they may receive remission of sins ! Does she believe what she says ?

BAPTIST.

Chapter xxx. Section 1.—“Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized a sign of his fellowship with him in his death and resurrection ; of his being engrafted into him ; of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.”

The Baptist follows the Presbyterian church as servilely as the Methodist church follows the English hierarchy. But she avows her faith that immersion is a *sign* of remission. A sign of the past, the present, or the future ! A sign accompanying !

The Confession of Bohemia.—“We believe that whatsoever by baptism—is in the outward ceremony signified and witnessed, all *that* doth the Lord God perform inwardly. That is, he washeth away sin, begetteth a man again, and bestoweth salvation upon him : for the bestowing of these excellent fruits was holy baptism given and granted to the church.”

The Confession of Augsburg.—“Concerning baptism, they teach that it is necessary to salvation, as a ceremony ordained of Christ : also, by baptism the grace of God is offered.”

The Confession of Saxony.—“I baptize thee—that is, I do witness that by this dipping, thy sins be washed away, and that thou art received of the true God.”

The Confession of Whittenburg.—“We believe and confess that baptism is that sea, into the bottom whereof, as the Prophet saith, God doth cast all our sins.”

The Confession of Helvetia.—“To be baptized in the name of Christ, is to be enrolled, entered and received into the covenant and family, and so into the inheritance of the sons of God ; that is to say, to be called the sons of God, to be purged also from the filthiness of sins, and to be endued with the manifold grace of God, for to lead a new and innocent life.”

The Confession of Sueveland.—“As touching baptism, we confess that it is the font of regeneration, washeth away sins and saveth us. But all these things we do understand as St. Peter doth interpret them. 1 Peter iii. 21.”

Westminster Assembly.—"Before baptism the minister is to use some words of instruction—showing that it is instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ; that it is a seal of the covenant of grace, of our engrafting into Christ, and of our union with him, of remission of sins, regeneration, and life eternal."

The Roman Catholic and the Greek church say, "We believe in one baptism for the remission of sins."

Calvin makes remission the principal thing in baptism.*

"Baptism," says he, "resembles a legal instrument properly attested, by which he assures us that all our sins are cancelled, effaced, and obliterated, so that they will never appear in his sight, or come into his remembrance, or be imputed to us. For he commands all who believe to be baptized for the remission of their sins. Therefore, those who have imagined that baptism is nothing more than a mark or sign by which we profess our religion before men, as soldiers wear the insignia of their sovereign as a mark of their profession, have not considered that which was the *principal* thing in baptism; which is, that we ought to receive it with this promise—"He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."

The ancient christian church, from the highest antiquity, after the apostolic times, appears generally to have thought that baptism is absolutely necessary for all that would be saved by the grace of Jesus Christ."†

"Most of the ancients concluded that baptism was no less necessary unto salvation than faith or repentance itself."‡

JOHN WESLEY.

Notes on the New Testament.—Relative to which a Wesleyan Clergyman of this city, on being asked, how a person could learn the distinguishing doctrines of the Wesleyans, answered, "Mr. Wesley's Notes on the New Testament and his Sermons!" To these then we appeal for not only his sentiments, but also for the sentiments of that large, respectable, and popular religious denomination in this City and Province.

On Matthew iii. 16. *And Jesus being baptized*—"Let our Lord's submitting to baptism teach us an holy exactness in the observance of those institutions which owe their obligation merely to a divine command. Surely thus it becometh all his followers to fulfil all righteousness.

Jesus had no sins to wash away. And yet he was baptized. And God owned his ordinance, so as to make it the season of pouring forth the Holy Spirit upon him. And where can we expect this sacred effusion, but in an humble attendance on divine appointments?"

Here, Mr. Wesley teaches the necessity of baptism in order to the reception of the Holy Spirit!

Mark xvi. 16. "*And is baptized*—In token thereof [his faith.] Every one that believed was baptized. *He that believeth not*—Whether baptized, or unbaptized, shall perish everlastingly."

John iii. 5. *Except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.* "Except he experience that great inward

* Inst. l 4, c. xv p. 327. † Vitringa, Tom, 1. 50. ii. c. 6. 9

‡ Owens on Justification, c. ii. p. 183.

change by the Spirit, and be baptized (whenever baptism can be had,) as the outward sign and means of it. See also his remarks on Titus iii. 5. Acts v. 11. *The Church*—"Here is a native specimen of a New Testament church; which is a company of men, called by the Gospel, *grafted* into Christ by *baptism*, animated by love, united by all kind of fellowship and disciplined by the death of Ananias and Sapphira." Acts x. 47. *Can any man forbid water, &c.*—"He does not say, they have the baptism of the Spirit; therefore they do not need baptism with water. But just the contrary: If they have received the Spirit, then baptize them with water. How easily is the question decided, if we will take the word of God for our rule! Either men have received the Holy Ghost or they have not. If they have not, *repent saith God and be baptized*, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. If they have, if they are already baptized with the Holy Ghost, then *who can forbid water.*"

Acts xxii. 16. *Be baptized and wash away thy sins.*—"Baptism administered to real penitents, is both a means and a seal of pardon. Nor did God ordinarily in the primitive church bestow this [pardon] on any, unless through this means."

1 Peter iii. 21. *The like figure, or antitype whercof, baptism doth now save us*—"The thing typified by the ark, even baptism, now saveth us. That is, through the water of baptism we are saved from the sin which overwhelms the world as a flood."

TRACTS ON BAPTISM.

"It is the initiatory sacrament, which enters us into covenant with God," (Works, vol. xiii. p. 396, edition of 1812, in 16 volumes.)—"What are the *benefits* we receive by baptism is the next point to be considered; the first of these is the washing away the guilt of original sin, by the application of the merits of Christ's death," (p. 398) "Baptism, the ordinary instrument of our justification." (399.) "By baptism we are admitted into the Church, and consequently made members of Christ, its head." (p. 400.) "By baptism we are made the children of God. And this regeneration, which our Church in so many places ascribes to baptism, is more than barley being admitted into the Church—being 'grafted into the body of Christ's Church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace.'" "By water then, as a means—the water of baptism—we are regenerated or born again, whence it is also called by the apostle 'the washing of regeneration;' our Church, therefore, ascribes no greater virtue to baptism than Christ himself has done: nor does she ascribe it to the outward washing, but to the inward grace, which added thereto makes a sacrament; herein a principle of grace is infused which will not be wholly taken away unless we quench the Holy Spirit of God by long-continued wickedness," (400.) "In the *ordinary* way there is no other means of entering into the church or into heaven," (401.) "Christ came to save all persons by himself; *all* who by him are *regenerated* unto God—*infants*," &c. (Irenæus, quoted in a tract on infant baptism, extracted by Mr. Wesley from a larger work by some other writer,) vol. xiii. p. 420. "The word regeneration is the name of baptism," (Clemens Alexandrinus, p. 400.)

Thus testifies the Venerable Wesley. Some are, however, ready to say, but by baptism he always means sprinkling or pouring. That he did believe and practice sprinkling we do not feel disposed to dispute; but our readers will bear in mind that when he was a missionary to Georgia he *refused* to sprinkle a child, alleging that the child was in good health, and *therefore should be dipped*, and for this refusal with some other things as justifiable, he was brought before a court of justice! If any doubt this let them read his Journals. Andy et those who profess to be Wesleyans in this city ridicule immersion—call it indecent, and say there is not a word in the scriptures concerning it!

O shade of the departed Wesley, is this the way thy followers treat thine instructions, (after in a most public and solemn manner) pretending to take thy notes, on the New Testament, as their sentiments, and then so publicly condemn them! Let them but once more turn to Romans vi. 3. and read thy notes on the expression, "*we are buried with him in baptism,*" and hear thee say that the Apostle is here "ALLUDING TO THE ANCIENT MANNER OF BAPTISING BY IMMERSION."

CHARLES G. FINNEY.

This celebrated revivalist gives testimony to the same doctrine. He is one of the leaders among the "New-school Presbyterians;" and one of the first who advocated the use of the "anxious seat." On the design of baptism, he remarks (in his 14th Lecture on Revivals, when advocating the necessity of something like the "anxious seat.") "The church has always felt it necessary to have something of this kind to answer this very purpose. In the days of the Apostles *baptism* answered this purpose. The gospel was preached to the people, and then all those who were willing to be on the side of Christ were called out to be *baptized*. It held the same place that the anxious seat does now, as a public manifestation of their determination to be Christians." (p. 248.)

DR. JACOB, Vice President of King's College, New Brunswick. This gentleman holding a high station in the Established Church, gives testimony to the same doctrine. In a discourse on justification, he observes—

"Some are probably anxious to learn *what precise steps* they should take, *what specific acts perform* to enter into possession of their Christian privileges."

"A determinate act was appointed by Christ, and in the primitive church was performed amidst such circumstances as in most instances actually rendered it *an evidence of justifying faith.*"

"This was baptism, a public washing with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by which the convert declared to the world that he renounced all the defilements of his former state, and entered into the new and holy society of the Christian Church."

To conclude for the present. We would remark that the language of the Moravians, the Church of England, the Methodists, Calvin, Wesley, &c., is so evidently in favour of our views, that they need no comment. The Presbyterians and Baptists, however, may say, "our articles only recognize baptism as a sign and seal of remission of sins, regeneration, &c. &c." Do they mean by this language, that baptism is a sign of the

past, the present, or the future? If their language is taken in its obvious signification, it must mean a sign accompanying! Is not the signing and sealing of any and every instrument the last act of the parties? Are not all notes, bonds and deeds, &c., incomplete until they are signed and sealed? Then does not their creeds as plainly as the others declare that baptism is the consummating act in the work of conversion?

Brother Eaton,—The following letter was sent to Mr. TEMPLE, one of the Editors of the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, with a request that he would publish it in that periodical, and also that he would furnish me with the advice and instruction which he thought I so much needed. But he has not done so. I send a copy of it to you, knowing that you will not only insert it, but also give any person an opportunity of questioning, in the pages of the *Christian*, the scripturality of the positions therein assumed.

E. BARNES.

(For the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine)

Saint John, December 16, 1840.

DEAR SIR,—Permit me to acknowledge, through the medium of your popular Magazine, the great benefit you, as an individual, have conferred on me, by the good advice given on last Thursday evening. You will remember that at the door of the lower vestry, you accosted a young man who was questioning the propriety of so much noise and confusion in a religious meeting, although it should be a time of revival. I am the individual.

You explained and sanctioned the noise and confusion by quoting the language of the Lord Jesus—“*The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force.*” Really, Sir, the meeting appeared to be a literal application of that scripture! After expressing your fears that I had “run my head against Calvinism,” you gave me the good advice to go home and read my New Testament. This advice was much needed; for had I been there instead of at your prayer-meeting, much more good would, no doubt, have resulted to me. Well, Sir, I did return immediately home, and have since read my New Testament very diligently; and I now, Sir, beg leave to submit the result of my researches, which I wish you to examine; and be so kind as to continue your instructions, for I confess I need advice and instruction every day.

I began my researches, concerning the “Kingdom of Heaven;” for I was extremely anxious to know if it was through the supplication, alone, of mortals, that we were to enter this kingdom; but I was stopped at the very threshold of my inquiries by the phrase “*the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*” If at hand, said I, it could not then have come and been established. I found that John the Baptist; the Lord Jesus, after his baptism; the twelve and seventy; all preached, that the “Kingdom of Heaven was at hand.”

The Lord Jesus promised the keys of the Kingdom to Peter in the

future—"I will give unto thee the keys," &c.; so that I found the Kingdom was not then come. I also read, that the Lord sent the lepers to offer for their cleansing the sacrifices required by Moses; and also commanded his disciples to hear and obey them that sat in Moses' seat: I, therefore, concluded from this, that the Church or Kingdom had not then come, for it did not appear to me reasonable or scriptural that God would have two different Churches on earth at once; and this would be the case if the Church of Christ or the Kingdom of Heaven was then organized; for it is certain that the Lord Jesus recognized the Law of Ceremonies then in force.

I read again: the Lord said to the people at one time—"There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, until they shall see the Kingdom of God come with power." Mark ix. 1. This proves that it had not *then* come, but that it was soon to be established. I proceeded, and further learned that just before the Lord Jesus departed, he represented himself as going to receive a Kingdom; and afterwards said that he would drink no more of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God had come.

These things led me to the inquiry—When, then, did the Kingdom of God under Moses pass away? I turned to Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, who answered—"He (Christ) took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." There, said I, that question is settled. This much, then, have I learned, that during the reign of the Lord he did not establish his Church. Why not? Paul says that he was a "minister of the circumcision;" and also that he was the chief corner-stone in the edifice. I, therefore, came to the conclusion, that the foundation of his church was laid when he was offered on the cross; and thus, with the poet, I began to praise him that our hopes were laid in "oaths, and promises, and blood." Paul also taught me—Heb. ix. 16, 17—"That where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." This settled all my queries; for I have ever been taught to bow implicitly to the word of God. I must now look for the commencement of the Kingdom or Church of Jesus Christ, here on the earth, after his death. I was then led to inquire—Where did the present Gospel Dispensation commence? When and where was the Gospel first preached? Paul, to the Galatians, said that it was preached to Abraham! I found it necessary then to compare the Old and New Testaments; and I began by asking the meaning of the word Gospel. By comparing Isa. lxi. 1, and Luke iv. 19, I found that what one called the Gospel, the other called glad tidings—and my conclusion was that the Gospel always meant *good news*. What, then, was the good news preached to Abraham? I found it to be the promise of the seed "in whom all nations should be blessed." I am, therefore, induced to believe that the Gospel to the patriarchs and prophets was the promise of the Messiah. But I read of the Gospel preached by John and Jesus! What was that? It was that Christ had come, and that his kingdom was *at hand*. After his death and resurrection, the Gospel was that Christ died for our sins—that he was buried—and that he rose again; and by

this gospel the first disciples were saved. So testifies Paul, 1st Cor. xv. 13.

Now, said I, if I can learn when this was first preached, then I shall learn when the gospel of the Kingdom was first announced for salvation; that is, when the good news was first communicated, which taught a sinner the only way of salvation, and the necessary pre-requisites to the personal enjoyment of pardon and the Holy Spirit. If the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ were the facts announced in the gospel, then these *could not* be proclaimed until after they took place. The Apostles never preached these things to the world, until after the Lord had ascended on high. How could they? for they believed them not. In my researches, I found that not one of the Apostles believed that Jesus had arisen until they had seen him. They could not preach the present gospel—that by which we are saved, until after his resurrection. But if they could they were forbidden to do so; for the Saviour told his disciples “to tell no man that he was the Christ.”—Matthew xvi. 20, and also in the vision on the mount of transfiguration, he charged them to tell no man until he was arisen from the dead.—Matthew xvii. 9, and Mark ix. 9, 10. So that they were not only unable to preach that he was the Christ, (which I am persuaded is the very soul of the gospel,) before his resurrection, because of their unbelief, but they were positively forbidden to do so. The conclusion to my mind was irresistible,—that I must study that part of the New Testament recording transactions which transpired subsequently to the resurrection, to ascertain whether indeed I was really in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ; and if not, the way by which I could become a citizen.

I opened then to the Acts of the Apostles, and heard the disciples inquire, “Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” The Lord told them that that fact was not yet revealed to them, but it should “be not many days hence,” when they should “receive power from above,” and then “they should be his witnesses,” &c. He commands them to “tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high.” They did so, and when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they received that power, and for the first time preached to the world the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus; and also informed inquiring penitents what *they* should do in order to obtain pardon, and consequently enter into the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. For several reasons, I was led to the conclusion, that on this day the kingdom came *with* power. One is, that the King of Glory had then entered heaven, and, no doubt taken his seat on the Throne: he had sent down the promised spirit; he had sealed the commission of his ministers; he had prepared them to preach to all nations in their own languages, and thousands became obedient. Here, then was a King, Minister, Laws, and willing subjects. Another reason is, that it was *fifty* days from the eating of the paschal Lamb in Egypt to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, amidst thunderings and lightning; and ever after this the Jews kept that day as the Feast of Pentecost. I, therefore, drew the conclusion that the first Pentecost was typical of the one under consideration; the first shewed the Jews how they could be members of the Mosaic

dispensation; and the last how *all* men could be members of the kingdom of Messiah, and enjoy pardon and the Holy Spirit. The former came with terror and consternation, and the latter as the sound of a rushing mighty wind; but the instructions from God succeeded each: to one, the law was announced—to the other, the Gospel of salvation, the way to eternal life.

But, Sir, time would fail me to recount all my reflections concerning the Kingdom of God. This for the present must suffice to acquaint you how I was led to believe in the establishment of the church of Christ. But when I had followed your good advice thus far, it opened a wide field before me; for I then began to inquire how those persons became members of the church of Christ! This brought me back to the scenes which had preserved themselves to me in your meeting. Persons in that meeting, by their grief and sorrow, in silent eloquence, if not in unutterable groans, said to their teachers and others, what must we do? And what was the answer—"come here and kneel down; and we will pray that God may have mercy upon and set your souls at liberty." If not in so many words, this was the instruction given. But, Sir, I could not find this in my New Testament—no, not one word of it. Not one word about preachers or laymen taken heaven by violence in prayer to God—nothing about meetings to pray for penitents, or any necessity of begging and pleading with God to forgive the sins of any, unless in *obeying* his commands. From all that I could discover, it appeared to me that God was always more willing to bless and save a sinner than he was to be saved. And the Saviour taught "that it was not every one who said Lord, Lord, but he who should *do* the will of his father."

From a contemplation of your meeting, I turned to that of thousands on the day of Pentecost. Here, I learned that the Spirit filled not the multitude but the Apostles, and them it enabled to preach in all languages; and when the people were convicted of their sins, they ask—"men and brethren what shall we do?" Peter said "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" Acts 2d chap. 38th verse.

Here, then, I was forced to the conclusion that the people—1st Heard and believed; 2d, They repented; 3d, Were baptized; 4th, For remission of sins; 5th, They then received the Holy Spirit: and through all the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles, I found this to be the invariable rule by which they entered into the Kingdom of Christ. Such persons are addressed as being "once under the power of darkness, but now translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son."

Now, Sir, be patient with me. As I desire to obtain information, be so kind as to answer me these questions:—

1st, Is it not very plainly proved from the foregoing portions of the New Testament that the Kingdom of Jesus Christ was not set up until the day of Pentecost?

2d, Is it not as evident that none became citizens, until after they had believed, repented, and had been baptized?

3d, Is there a promise of justification here, or eternal life in the

world to come, made over to any (that have come to the years of understanding) who do not hear, believe, repent, and submit to be baptized?

4th, Would not Peter, think you, were he in your meetings, exhort the penitents to be baptized for remission of sins, that they might receive the Holy Spirit?

5th, From all this, is it not evident that your whole plan of bringing members into the church of Christ is unprecedented and untaught in the Oracles of God?

With sentiments of respect and gratitude for good advice, I subscribe myself your obedient servant,
E. BARNES.

TRUE BAPTISM.

BROTHER, are you a husband and the head of a family? Do you daily and constantly read the scriptures and pray in your family? Do you bring up your children in the correction, instruction, and admonition of the Lord? Are you spiritually-minded, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God? Do you often meditate, and carefully examine yourself? Have you your behaviour without covetousness, and are you intent on making your calling and election sure? If so, baptism verily profiteth you: if not, it is no better than baby sprinkling.

A. CAMPBELL.

WILLIAM HUNTER.—Brother Hunter has been lecturing in New York City on Human and Divine Governments. By a New York paper I learn that his Lectures are highly spoken of. Several very flattering resolves have been passed in their favor; and a committee appointed to wait on him with a request that he would furnish a copy for the press. With this desire he is about complying. By a letter from him of the 15th ult., he says that when printed, they will make a book of from 250 to 300 pages, large duodecimo—long primer—very good paper, and neatly bound in cloth, at \$1 per copy.

☞ *Subscribers' names received at this office.*

The following notice of his lectures copied from the Baptist Advocate, will give our readers an idea of the contents of the forthcoming volume.

LECTURE I. The necessity and reality of a Divine Government among Men. Its existence coeval with the human race. Its form, order, and history, during the Patriarchal and Jewish Dispensations.

LECTURE II. The origin of Human Government. Its different forms, principles and history, anterior to the Christian era. Founded upon a radical and fatal mistake.

LECTURE III. The claims of India, China and Egypt to dynasties, records, medals, monuments, inscriptions, &c. more ancient than the Mosaic account of the Creation, considered and refuted.—Moses vindicated.

LECTURE IV. The Christian Dispensation of the Divine Government.—The Lawgiver.—The Constitution and Laws.—The Officers.—Their different offices. Their qualifications, duty, and authority.—Who are subjects of the Divine Government under the Christian Dispensation?

LECTURE V. All the important changes that have since taken place whether in the Constitution, Laws, Order or Officers.—When.—Where.—By Whom.—To what extent.—For what purpose and upon what principle.—The necessity of once more returning to the original landmarks.

LECTURE VI The History of Human Government since the Christian era.—How much it has borrowed from the Divine Government.—How it now sustains itself.

LECTURE VII The true source of the authority of Human Government—Its legitimate objects and limits—Its present condition, future prospects and final destiny.

LECTURE VIII. The true source of the authority of the Divine Government.—Its legitimate objects and limits—Its present condition, future prospects, and final destiny among men.

MR SLEEP has furnished his criticism on our article on being born of Water and Spirit, and some further remarks relative to other matters affecting Methodism; but they did not come to hand until the 31st ult. when the copy for this number was all prepared and part of it in type. He shall have a hearing in our next.

KRITIKOS has furnished an excellent article on his query in the last number, but it was unintentionally crowded out.

Our regular articles, viz. the address to the brethren and the "Christian Connexion," have also been crowded out to make room for the article on order and discipline. Our readers will be patient, and we will attend to these things soon.

Communications from Brother Winans are also on file.

At present there is quite an excitement in the City on religious subjects. I understand that the Wesleyans are receiving large accessions, mostly from their Sundry School. The Baptists have had frequent baptisms lately. We have also immersed six within two weeks. At our last baptising we had the pleasure of meeting Elders Robinson and Beckwith at the water, and uniting with them in the services.

SPECIAL NOTICE TO OUR PATRONS AND FRIENDS,
Particularly those who have not yet paid for the Christian, and those who desire its continued existence.

I have not yet received *one dollar* for my labour in conducting the Christian; of this, however, I do not complain; but even the first volume has not yet paid the publisher, and he has received every pound that has come to hand, and the second volume is not yet half paid for! This ought not so to be. I do not solicit donations or aid from any but those who have received the value of their money. There is plenty due to cancel all demands, and a little over.

I am alone responsible to the publisher; this, therefore, is to inform all who take an interest in the work, that, unless the debts contracted for publishing are cancelled before the first of May, the work must be discontinued until further encouragement be given for its continuance.

W. W. EATON.

Full sets of both Volumes on hand at the original price.

First Volume neatly bound for 6s.

A communication from Elder Doyle in our next explanatory of his remarks in No. 4.

AN EXCELLENT MEDICINE FOR A COUGH.—Equal quantities of *Sarsaparilla* and *Liquorice Root*—about an ounce of each—well steeped in water. Add Molasses enough to make it palatable—a few spoonfuls to be taken warm, just before going to bed, and once or twice in the course of the day, if the cough is hard.—TRY IT.