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THE  
CHRISTIAN BANNER,

A

MONTHLY

MAGAZINE.

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EDITED BY  
D. OLIPHANT.

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VOLUME VIII.

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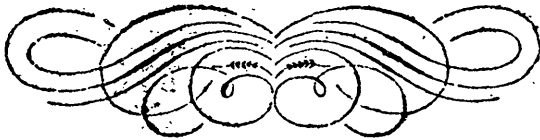
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INDEX.

|   |     |  |     |
|---|-----|--|-----|
| Address to readers in the east . . . . .      | 53  | Faithful Witness, a, . . . . .               | 73  |
| "A Baptist" and Elder Fitch . . . . .         | 69  | Friends and localities in Wisconsin          | 77  |
| American Christian Bible Society . . . . .    | 159 | Free Churchman, a, . . . . .                 | 151 |
| Advice, good, . . . . .                       | 191 | Foundation of Union . . . . .                | 171 |
| Address of Dr. Shepard . . . . .              | 229 | Fields of Labor . . . . .                    | 192 |
| Artillery against party walls . . . . .       | 241 | Friendly correspondence . . . . .            | 266 |
| Apostolic Epistles . . . . .                  | 275 | From Okolona . . . . .                       | 269 |
| Another of the excellent left us . . . . .    | 280 | Fraternal epistle from the South . . . . .   | 270 |
| American Bible Union . . . . .                | 305 | Grapes and Graces . . . . .                  | 123 |
| American Readers . . . . .                    | 308 | Grande Leigne Mission . . . . .              | 142 |
| A Soliloquy . . . . .                         | 317 | Guardian and Mirror . . . . .                | 247 |
| Basis of Christian union . . . . .            | 31  | Gift, Christmas, in advance, . . . . .       | 273 |
| Bazaars, Episcopal and Wesleyan . . . . .     | 57  | Home missions and money . . . . .            | 37  |
| Bible Society, Upper Canada, . . . . .        | 76  | Holmes, N.L., and falsehood . . . . .        | 187 |
| Bedini and Italian refugees . . . . .         | 70  | How they educate in Russia . . . . .         | 302 |
| Bible Union in Canada . . . . .               | 133 | Have we a pure speech in Canada . . . . .    | 327 |
| Baptists, why leave them? . . . . .           | 143 | How Wesley and Wesleyanism                   |     |
| Brethren! look at this . . . . .              | 164 | were viewed . . . . .                        | 328 |
| Banner Postage . . . . .                      | 164 | Intelligence, religious, 55, 82, 114,        |     |
| Bishops of Lombardy and Bible . . . . .       | 176 | 140, 163, 195, 225                           |     |
| Bible Union, not sectarian, . . . . .         | 193 | Inconsistency of professors . . . . .        | 85  |
| Budget from Okolona . . . . .                 | 220 | Invitations . . . . .                        | 81  |
| Banner and Sower . . . . .                    | 263 | Inconsistency of Infidels . . . . .          | 149 |
| Book, first printed . . . . .                 | 272 | "I can" . . . . .                            | 303 |
| Bascom the preacher . . . . .                 | 307 | John Fletcher against John Calvin . . . . .  | 20  |
| Bible in Turkey . . . . .                     | 310 | John Knox' Daughter . . . . .                | 85  |
| Banner, circulation of, . . . . .             | 335 | Jews, the promises concerning them . . . . . | 106 |
| Christian Union . . . . .                     | 10  | Jews, societies to christianize, . . . . .   | 178 |
| Catholics and Bible Reading . . . . .         | 42  | Jews, the . . . . .                          | 333 |
| Circular—Grand River Baptists . . . . .       | 87  | Labors of Evangelists, 25, 195, 276, 396     |     |
| Children of Abraham, by flesh and             |     | Light of nature, . . . . .                   | 28  |
| faith . . . . .                               | 110 | Liberty of Speech . . . . .                  | 154 |
| Criticism on baptizo . . . . .                | 219 | Life of faith in Son of God . . . . .        | 169 |
| Charity, stringent, . . . . .                 | 226 | Letter from the South . . . . .              | 190 |
| Church Society . . . . .                      | 227 | Morality of bargain-making . . . . .         | 59  |
| Call for the gospel . . . . .                 | 246 | Military and Clergy, the . . . . .           | 136 |
| Curiosity preaching . . . . .                 | 268 | Money, ministers, and missions, . . . . .    | 152 |
| Chalmers' evidences of christianity . . . . . | 213 | Meetings in June . . . . .                   | 222 |
| Disciples and military duty . . . . .         | 71  | Meeting in Wainfleet . . . . .               | 254 |
| Deacons—Elders—Evangelists, 163,              |     | Million Testaments for China, . . . . .      | 280 |
| 145, 199, 253                                 |     | Mr. Miller, unfortunate end of . . . . .     | 298 |
| Disciples, &c. in St Louis . . . . .          | 120 | Men and Monks . . . . .                      | 323 |
| Dr. Duff in Edinburgh Assembly . . . . .      | 205 | New Year's Gift . . . . .                    | 3   |
| Disciples alleged to be persecutors . . . . . | 249 | New Altar . . . . .                          | 14  |
| Death of Mother Mason . . . . .               | 253 | New version, meeting of friends of 29        |     |
| Eighth volume . . . . .                       | 30  | New method of regeneration . . . . .         | 45  |
| Epistle from Pietou, by Quartus . . . . .     | 112 | Note from R. Richardson . . . . .            | 80  |
| Exchanges, notice of new . . . . .            | 165 | New Testament and immersion . . . . .        | 125 |
| Enemy, not one, . . . . .                     | 168 | Note to D. S. Burnet . . . . .               | 161 |
| Evangelists' fund . . . . .                   | 225 | Note to N. L. Holmes . . . . .               | 187 |
| Epistle from J. A. Butler . . . . .           | 248 | Novels, who write them . . . . .             | 293 |
| Editing and Evangelizing . . . . .            | 251 | Napoleon and Mrs. Judson . . . . .           | 329 |
| Editors, controversy among . . . . .          | 292 | Note from a Millenarian . . . . .            | 335 |
| Education in Russia . . . . .                 | 302 | One of the interviews . . . . .              | 27  |

**THE CHRISTIAN BANNER.**

|   |             |  |     |
|---|-------------|--|-----|
| Obituaries, .....                             | 58, 85, 163 | Sermon from a curious text.....        | 333 |
| Oliphant to Walker.....                       | 94          | Tracts on the Spirit.....              | 26  |
| On the government of the Church.....          | 324         | Tale Bearer's confession.....          | 51  |
| Prayer and aid for Revision.....              | 62          | The cross man.....                     | 83  |
| Protestant ministers in Ireland.....          | 85          | The Three Letters.....                 | 86  |
| Prayer.....                                   | 139, 271    | Tracts and Letters.....                | 165 |
| Prayers and Good Works.....                   | 155         | Tertullian on baptism.....             | 281 |
| Pope, the, overboard,.....                    | 198         | The Eunuch baptised by sprinkling..... | 287 |
| Papal system and the Bible.....               | 255         | The Jews.....                          | 333 |
| Pamphlet from Nashville.....                  | 319         | To subscribers in the east.....        | 334 |
| Paragraph for some Readers.....               | 336         | Union, Bible, near Norval.....         | 160 |
| Query.....                                    | 168         | Union, Christian, not party.....       | 171 |
| Quartus again.....                            | 180         | United States' Catholic Church.....    | 237 |
| Queries.....                                  | 252         | Upholders—Complainers.....             | 304 |
| Religion of Jesus, No. 1, 6; No. 2, 66;       |             | Visit of Dr. Duff.....                 | 157 |
| No 3, 117; No. 4, 183, No. 5, 237, No. 6, 283 |             | Various Reports,.....                  | 222 |
| Reuchlin, Erasmus, Luther.....                | 24          | Walker on spiritual union.....         | 91  |
| Repentance, an allegory.....                  | 81          | War, the Russian and Romanism,.....    | 115 |
| Revivals.....                                 | 252         | Words of encouragement.....            | 162 |
| Religious aspects of Methodism.....           | 331         | Wesley's spirit.....                   | 169 |
| Schoolmaster, our,.....                       | 122         | Weslevans in Canada.....               | 189 |
| St. John, N. B., the cause in,.....           | 141         | World's conversion & sectarianism..... | 209 |
| Support ministerial,.....                     | 151         | Walker again.....                      | 212 |
| Secret of happiness.....                      | 169         | Words, a few to friend Walker,.....    | 216 |
| Saints, perfecting of,.....                   | 172         | Wickliffe.....                         | 289 |
| Success of failure.....                       | 276         | Who write our novels?.....             | 293 |
| Sprinkling the Ethiopian.....                 | 287         | Work out your salvation.....           | 330 |
| Speakers and speaking.....                    | 396         | What think you of it?.....             | 334 |
| Stander.....                                  | 309         | Zeal, Preaching,.....                  | 167 |



# THE CHRISTIAN BANNER.

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."  
"This is love, that we walk after his commandments."

VOL. VIII.

COBOURG, JANUARY, 1854.

NO. 1

## NEW YEAR'S GIFT FOR EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY FOUR. ADDRESS TO EACH PROFESSOR IN CANADA.

Intelligent professor: are you by religious profession a Presbyterian? Are you a Baptist? Are you a Congregationalist? Are you a Wesleyan or Episcopal Methodist? or do you choose to be called by some other name? Whatever be your profession, will you allow a friend, with a friendly design, to ask you four short questions:

First. Does not the Lord our Saviour teach that all his friends should be united? When he prayed as no one ever did either before or since, which prayer is recorded in John xvii, his words were and are, "I pray . . . for all who shall believe on me . . . that they may all be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee." Ponder, dear reader, these neglected but solemn words from the lips of the Author of Eternal Life.

Second. Can you satisfy yourself that it is honouring to the Redeemer to be known by a name or to accept of a name, not authorized by his divine oracles? Jesus is worthy of "all honour." Paul, though an apostle, would not permit any one to take even his name and make it a Christian badge. Examine, courteous reading friend, the first chapter of 1st. Corinthians from the 10th to the 13th. verse, also chapter third, 4th verse, and then candidly decide whether an inspired ambassador of Christ will uphold you in receiving or using your present religious title. The fondness for the various names of our times is a sure indication of religious disease: because if the Lord's teaching in all things was received, and therefore every one was taught by Christ, all would equally love to be called by that name or those names which the Great Master has approved. The evil is not so much in the names themselves, but each name indicates some doctrine or practice contrary to the wholesome authority of the Lord, resulting in keeping up division and effectually preventing union.

Third. What are you attempting to do in order to discourage division and promote union? While it is true that some have very great influence, and are therefore very largely responsible, it is nevertheless true that every man is personally accountable to the Lord for what influence he possesses, and hence, are you, respected sir, as a professed friend of Jesus, acting in behalf of a restoration of religious union according to the power that the Lord has given you? If the whole world were divisionists, and if all men beside yourself were on

the side of existing ills, your duty would still be the same, to combat division and contend for the "one body" of Christ in the "unity of the Spirit."

Fourth. Considering the present divided state of Protestants—considering the numerous and grievous evils engendered and perpetuated by these divisions—considering the sacred sanctions of Christ and his apostles to plead for union—and considering that Christianity is wounded nigh to death by hatred where love should reign; strife where there should be peace; bitterness where the sweet joy of heaven should dwell—will you not from this moment arouse and lift up your soul on this topic, and join with celestial spirits, holy apostles, and hallowed saints to give Jesus his rightful honor—pleading and working for the oneness of his doctrine, the oneness of his institutions, the oneness of his people, and the oneness of his purpose by the gospel?

Thinking reader! religion can never triumph over the world, neither can it be perfectly enjoyed by the professing community, until division ceases and union takes the place of dissension. Division is but another name for corruption. Pure men, with the pure word and doctrine of Christ, never divided. They never could divide.—You must corrupt men, or what is the same thing, alienate them from the pure teaching and sacred institutions of the Lord Jesus, before you can disunite or divide them: as long as they are Christ-like, receiving in humble simplicity his soul-saving models and commands without addition or subtraction, they stand united and harmonious, as clusters on one vine or as grapes on one cluster. And can a divided, impure, flesh-striving people persuade others to join the Lord and receive his pure doctrine?

Reader! division is therefore a sin—a grand crime before high heaven—an insult to the Redeemer—a vital offence against the Author and Lord of our holy religion; a transgression which he must visit with his own righteous indignation and divine displeasure—How much of this evil rests with you? Examine yourself! It is the counsel of a well-wisher in the name of the religion of Jesus: for just in proportion as you uphold or countenance division among the professed adherents of the Great King, in the like ratio are you thwarting his purpose to convert mankind and arresting the legitimate means he has devised to build up his people, bless them and make them a blessing throughout the world.

Christian Professor, let not a remnant of the sin of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin, rest upon you. The Holy One of Israel cursed Jeroboam for making or keeping up a division among his people; and can you look for a blessing in giving the slightest countenance to a division among the people of Christ, whom he prays for that they may all be one.

There is one Head, and one Lawgiver, and one Sacrifice for sin, and one Mediator, and one Gospel, and one Faith, and one Spirit, and one Baptism, and one Life in Christ, and one Body or Church, and one Hope, and one Salvation, which is Eternal Redemption;—and there is one Inspired Volume showing us the one will of the one Divine Master in reference to this oneness in things Spiritual and Eternal.

O reader! where are you? Can you blow the trumpet of discord and party triumph, or will you give the true and certain sound for holy harmony and inspired union?

The world, it has been affirmed, will not and cannot be converted to Jesus until there is union among his professed people. Here are some of the reasons:

1. Error is the root or source of division. Truth does not alienate men. Division is hence an infallible symptom of carnality or corruption. Intelligent men of the world, infidels, and moralists see this; and they are determined to stand aloof from religion if this be it.

2. While the Presbyterian is excluding the Independent, and the Baptist the Methodist, and the Episcopalian the whole of them, their force is weakened against the world, so-called; for instead of directing their energies against the unconverted community, they are hot at work keeping up their own metes and boundaries, and frequently attempting to rise above each other as parties. Every one fully intent on making it most evident that his party is the true church.

3. The Lord designed that the undivided harmony of his people should be a marked testimony to all the world that he was Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of men; and by the endless and confused jangles of the current professions, this capital evidence in respect to Jesus being the Christ is practically lost to the world.

4. Whatever truth there is among religionists, is, by reason of disension, neutralized by a spirit so different from the spirit of Christ, that even when efforts are made to convert men, there is too much feebleness and too little spiritual vigor to make what is done effectual.

5. Yet if all the world were even to yield to existing systems of religion in what is called christendom, many of these systems would have to be overturned and the religion of the only Saviour introduced in their places. Before it could be affirmed in truth that the world was turned to the Lord.

It may therefore be pronounced a shame as well as a sin that there are such divisions as at present exist among men who say they are following Jesus the only Redeemer. For not only are the enjoyments and living fruits of christianity mutilated, minced, and murdered among professors themselves, but the world is stereotyped in unbelief by reason of these shameful, Christ-dishonouring, and perdition-leading strifes. With one of the distinguished men of the last century let us therefore say, "Would to God that all party names, and unscriptural phrases and forms, which have divided the christian world, were forgot; and that we might all agree to sit down together, as humble, loving disciples, at the feet of our common Master, to hear his word, to imbibe his spirit, and to transcribe his life in our own!" These words are no other than the words of John Wesley: words which should find a ready admittance to every heart, and which, too, should have the practical effect of loosening party ties and begetting the true desire and active resolution to unite upon the broad principles of biblical truth.

D. OLIPHANT.

## THE RELIGION OF JESUS, NO. I.

## FIRST PRINCIPLES, NO. I.

No one knows the Lord Jesus but as he learns him. No one loves Jesus, but as he knows him. No one obeys Jesus, but as he loves him. We first learn—then we love—then we obey. This is heaven's order. Jesus is taught and we learn him; we thereby see his love, and hence love him; and we discover his authority in his love and therefore obey him. Unsaved friend! allow your understanding, your heart, yourself in full, to be addressed on the subject of Jesus' Religion in its first or elementary principles.

The religion of the Lord being more human, it needs more than a human teacher to teach it. The lessons of heaven must be taught from heaven and with the authority of heaven. An English teacher can teach the English language; a Frenchman acquainted with his own national tongue is capable of teaching French; a common science can be taught by any one who studies and understands it; and indeed every subject, object, science, art, or system properly belonging to the present world, can be taught by men who are of the world.—But to learn Divine lessons we need a Divine teacher. A human teacher for earthly things—a Divine teacher for heavenly things.

Jesus therefore teaches his own religion. "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." So the great reformer, John the Baptist, tells us, as reported by John the apostle, chap. iii. A master in Israel might therefore with great propriety call the Lord Jesus "a teacher sent from God." Even his rankest opposers were constrained to testify, "Never did man speak like him." The "words of God" are the words he speaks. "He that hears me," says the Messiah, "hears him that sent me." The religion of Jesus therefore is to be learned from himself; and since no other teacher is competent, he kindly condescends to become the Great Teacher of the sons of Adam. What a thought!—Jesus a Teacher, and men his pupils!

But who is Jesus? "Who do men say that I, the son of man, am?" is a query full of divine pathos which originated with the Lord himself. Yes, the question urges itself in the weight of its mightiness upon us, Who and what is Jesus? True, indeed, he is the Teacher sent from God, speaking the words of God, and declaring God; but he is more. He is the Father's Apostle to the world; but he is more. He is the Christ of God; but he is more. He is the Sacrifice for sin, the Ransom for all; but he is more. He is the Mediator between God and man, the High Priest who has passed into the heavens, the true Holy Place, but he is more, much more. He is the Word who was made flesh, Emmanuel, God with us; but he is more. He is the Conqueror of



Satan, and holds the keys of death and hades ; he is the Resurrection and the Life ; he is exalted a Prince—a Saviour ; he is the Judge who has jurisdiction over living and dead ; he is the Head of the Church ; the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls ; Lord of all lords Heir of all things ; he Opens and no man shuts, he Shuts and no man opens ; his sceptre endureth forever ; he controls all things by the Word of his Power ; by Him and for Him were all things created ; in him all the fulness of the Godhead dwells ; he is the First and the Last ; he is the only Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy ; he is the Lord of All, sharing the Throne at the right hand of the Majesty on High, angels, authorities, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers being subject to his Supreme Rule. He is the Divine Hero who goes forth conquering and to conquer. He is the Lord of Life ; he is the King of saints ; and he is the Propitiation for our sins, the Redeemer of sinful men.

Rejoice, O reader, be glad O sinner, the same Jesus whom we speak of as Supreme Teacher, whose authority spans heaven and earth ; and whose Majesty is worshipped by the highest and noblest in the celestial realms, “ is the Author of an eternal salvation to all who obey him” for “ in him is life,” and “ through him is preached the forgiveness of sins.”

Though crowned Lord of lords, and King of kings, a Priest, a Prince, a Saviour, a Lawgiver Supreme, he assumes the humble office of Teacher of men. We sit at his feet and hear him speak and teach. It is an inexpressible privilege. The Lord grants and approves it. In tones of heavenly sympathy the invitation graciously proceeds from his own mouth, “ Come”—“ *learn of me.*” What a call ! It is the voice of the Lord ! “ I am meek and lowly of heart” says the Divine Speaker ; draw near, learn of me, I invite you. “ I and my Father are one.” “ O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee. . . . I have declared thy name, and will declare it.” “ This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” What learning and knowledge there is therefore with Jesus ! He teaches us himself, and in hearing and learning him, we hear and learn the Father. And mark the scope and purpose of this knowledge. How boundless, how blissful ! It is in order to life eternal. He in whom are “ all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” becomes our Teacher to teach us God and himself, to give us everlasting life. It is therefore divinely appointed that we obtain “ all things pertaining to life and godliness through the knowledge of him” who thus calls us to b.

partakers of his glory. Hence God our Saviour wills "all men to come to the knowledge of the truth," because through it is the life, the righteousness, the happiness he offers to man.

Truly then shall we not call this great knowledge, by a Great Teacher, for a great object. When therefore the Lord says, "Come, learn of me," who can or will say nay? Rather, shall we not say with a prompt pupil and disciple, "Lord, to whom shall we go?—*thou hast the words of eternal life.*" Jno. vi. 63.

But is there no medium through which the religion of heaven may be known, loved, and realized but by learning it? Must we have lessons, hear them, acknowledge and own them; and is there no other way of realizing the religion of Christ and its blessings? What, then, shall we say of the sermons and sermonizers of the times that tell us of the influences of heaven and the joys of religion in the heart without teaching? Paul doubtless answers this question, when, in speaking to Titus, he charitably says that "there are many vain talkers and deceivers . . . teaching things they ought not." Every popular teacher, indeed, expects his teaching to be honored, and looks for full confidence in himself by what he affirms; but, though asking and expecting this for his own teaching, he unaccountably throws the darkest uncertainty upon the teaching of the Lord Jesus, and boldly declares that the religion of Jesus is not fully taught by Jesus!—There are many, alas! too many, in the present year of grace, who are thus "teaching things they ought not" as says Paul in his epistle to the evangelist in Crete.

Paul's charity, as he thus speaks, is much needed in this generation. The spiritual instructors of the nineteenth century have more assurance than those of old, and rely more perfectly on current traditions, when they zealously affirm that the knowledge of the Lord Jesus comes from other sources than from himself. And here it should be said that the whole of the Christian religion consists in learning Jesus. To know him is to know all. And no one can disown Jesus more effectually than to disown him as the Teacher of his own religion. But the ancient doctors of the law rejected Jesus in one way and the modern doctors reject him in another. The first refused to hear him as the Great Teacher, because they admitted not his claims as Messiah; their brethren in this age professedly acknowledge him to be the promised Christ, but recognize him not as the sole and all-sufficient Teacher to unfold to us his own religion. Jesus, therefore, was rejected and is rejected by the doctors, who had and who have "a zeal of God, *but not according to knowledge.*"

"Hear him" says the voice of the Father as he speaks directly

from heaven : " this is my beloved Son ; hear him." See Mat. xvii. Yet Jesus is not heard. Who, in these traditionary times, hears him as the Infallible Teacher ? The voice from the Excellent Glory dies upon the ears of men, and the Lord Jesus speaks but his word is disregarded. The proclamation from the Eternal Throne says, ' Behold, Jesus is my Son, my Beloved ; he speaks all my will, hear him : '—Moses resigns his commission as heaven's only true teacher, and in prophesy testifies, " A Prophet like unto me shall the Lord your God raise up . . . him shall you HEAR *in all things* : "—the ancient prophets, one and all, gave their evidence, Peter says, that he is to be believed (therefore HEARD) in order to salvation through his name :—the wonders and miraculous works he performed while in the flesh all witness for him that he ought to be HEARD ; " the same works that I do " says he " bear witness of me : "—the living Spirit as it unveiled mysteries and opened out and illustrated the whole message of divine truth lent the weight of its utterance and the energy of its power to make good the capital announcement that Jesus is to be HEARD :—the apostles spent their lives in attesting that the *voice of Jesus* IS THE VOICE OF GOD, and that to hear, learn, and honor him is to hear, learn and honor heaven's whole will ;—and yet, though the Father thus declares, though Moses thus testifies, though all the prophets thus speak, though Christ's own miracles thus evince, though the Spirit thus witnesses, though the apostles thus plead, yet, notwithstanding all, Jesus the Sovereign Lord is unheard and dishonored ; in other words he is not heard, heeded, and honored as the all-sufficient and alone sufficient Great Teacher of the religion of this dispensation.

Why, respected reader, do we dwell on this theme ? Why insist on learning Jesus by hearing him, and hearing him as the Teacher who came down from heaven, whose abode is heaven, and the only Teacher in universal realms who can teach us the way of life ? Because doctor A. says, ' Hear Moses ; ' and his brother doctor B. says, ' Hear the prophets ; ' and clergyman C. speaks up with a full voice, saying, ' Hear the wisdom of Solomon ; ' and minister D. devoutly exclaims, ' Hear the Psalmist David ; ' and preacher E. testifies and says, ' Hear God as he confers with Abraham ; ' no, says the ordained F. we must ' Hear the law at Sinai and the gospel too ; ' bishop G. draws down his brow and adds, ' Hear also the canons of the Episcopal Church ; ' at this the " Reverends " H., I., J., K., L., and M. together with N. and O., speak all at once and say, each for himself, with loud voice, ' Hear our creed ; ' the zealous and lately converted P. says, ' Hear a voice in the field or in the woods ; ' brother Q. with as great emphasis says, ' Hear that dream ; ' and says professor R., ' Hear that revival-

ist; and exhorter S. adds, 'Hear the Bible in general, the converting vision, the revivalist, our discipline, and the experience of the good;' no, interposes Mr. T. in a different key, 'Hear Baron Swedenbourg; and says friend U. in a slow and respectful voice, 'Hear George Fox and the Spirit;' never mind who you hear, says moralist V., 'Hear the precepts of moral goodness wherever you find them;' and adds W., 'Hear everybody, and have charity, and good feelings, and piety, and heaven is sure;' but X, who is full second cousin to a skeptic, says, 'Hear the volume of nature as well as revelation;' but Mr. Y., who is an out and out fashionable christian, whispers, 'Hear whatever is popular and travel to Caanan respectably;' you are all wrong, rejoins the ecclesiastical Z, 'Hear the fathers, and the Father of fathers in Rome,—hear our church and be saved.'

Can Jesus be recognized as the teacher while christendom is thus map'd, divided, and led?

Reader, amid this unsatisfactory clashing and babelic rivalry of authority, wherein we find Paul's prophecy fulfilling when he testified that "the time shall come when they shall heap to themselves teachers," it devolves upon us to enthrone the Lord Jesus in our affections as Master supreme, and look to him solely and only for lessons on christianity. The Patriarchs, the Jewish lawgiver, and the Prophets have their place, and we may view and use them as our Great Teacher authorizes; but he is Lord of All, and it is our high privilege to hear him both as the author and teacher of the new institution.

D. OLIPHANT.

*Victory, N. Y., Dec. 29th.*

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### CHRISTIAN UNION.

*(Concluded from Nov. No., page 286.)*

The next instance of creed-making was in the reign of Henry VIII. and his immediate successors. This is said to have formed the dawn of the Reformation, which has eventuated in the formation of the Episcopal church in England and in these United States, with which also the Methodist Episcopal church is identified.

After having been married to Catharine of Arragon for a number of years, Henry VIII. became attached to Anne Boleyn, and petitioned the Pope to divorce him from Catharine that he might marry Anne, which the Pope refused or delayed. He then obtained a sentence annulling his marriage from Bishop Cranmer. The Pope rescinded Cranmer's sentence and excommunicated the king. This induced Henry and his parliament to pass an act abolishing the Pope's power in England, and by another act they declared the king supreme head of the church, and all the authority of which the Pope was deprived in England was vested in, and assumed by Henry.

Edward VI. the son of Jane Seymer, Acceded his father, Henry VIII. to the throne, when nine yearsold. He was a good little boy, and friendly to the Protestants. He and his bishops did something towards forming and improving the church of England. Mary, daughter of Catharine of Arragon, succeeded him, restored the supremacy of the Pope of Rome, and beheaded Cranmer and others. After Mary, came to the throne Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn, who restored the ecclesiastical order appointed by her father, and was the first female Pope of England; for she "arrogated to herself that ecclesiastical supremacy over the faith and worship of her subjects which before was supposed exclusively to belong to the court of Rome." The bishops and clergy were so far from having any hand in forming the present established church of England or in ordaining its rites and articles of faith, that it was done not only without them, but in actual opposition to them. The parliament and the queen alone established her supremacy and the common prayer-book, in spite of all opposition from the bishops in the House of Lords; and the convocation then sitting was so far from having any thing to do, in those church articles for reformation, that it presented to Parliament several propositions in behalf of the tenets of popery, directly contrary to the proceedings of parliament.

Such is the pure spiritual origin, if I may speak ironically, of the Episcopal church of England and of these United States. Are there not many of the marks of the Beast upon it? In the church of Christ he is the sole head, founder and lawgiver; all authority and jurisdiction are in him and flow from him; but in the church of England the king or queen is "supreme head, possessing all power to exercise all manner of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and archbishops, bishops, and archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical persons have no manner of jurisdiction ecclesiastical, but by and under the king's majesty, who has full power and authority to hear all manner of causes ecclesiastical, and to reform and correct all vice, sin, errors, heresies and abuses whatever." 29th Henry VIII. ch. 1. 37th Henry VIII. ch. 17, 1st Eliz. ch. 1. The bishops for these United States, after the Revolution, could not be ordained in England without the consent of his ecclesiastical supremacy, George III. and it was with difficulty that the succession could be obtained on that account.

In consequence of this supremacy, the king or queen has power to excommunicate from, or re-admit into the church, independent of, yea, in direct opposition to, all its bishops and clergy. They revoke, if they please, any spiritual censure; suspend or excommunicate any bishop or other clergy; and by proclamation, without repentance, can restore the vilest offenders to the bosom of the church. They have power to forbid all preaching for a time, as did Henry VIII. Edward VI. queens Mary and Elizabeth; to limit, instruct, and prescribe to the clergy what they shall and what they shall not preach, as did Elizabeth, James I., Charles, and king William. Such is the channel of legitimacy through which Episcopalians allege that the apostolic succession has been handed down to them, who, with the Roman Catholics, assume the exclusive right to preach the word of God and to administer the ordinances of the new Testament by virtue of this

pure spiritual legitimacy, a <sup>sin</sup> this, too, in these United States! Can that be the church of Christ, with such a head to it, which exalts itself above all that is called God!

He who reads Jones' History of the Church of Christ, the history of that society of christians which we see described in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Apostolic Epistles, which has been persecuted since Constantine by such secular ecclesiastical establishment as that of the English episcopacy, will readily perceive that the church of Christ is quite a different thing from such hierarchies, and that their creeds and confessions have no claim to divine authority, but are reprobated by it. It will be seen that that which has been described by Moshoin and Milner as the church of Christ has been the beastly persecutor of his church.

*The Methodist Society* and system was first formed in 1729 by the association of John and Charles Wesley and some other persons, for religious exercises and their own improvement in reading the scriptures. Their regularity and seriousness procured for them the name of *Methodists*. Mr. Wesley gives us the following account of Methodism:—"The first rise of Methodism (so called) was in November, 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford; the second was at Savannah, in April, 1735. twenty or thirty persons met at my house; the last was at London on this day, (viz. May 1, 1738.) when forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to a free conversation, begun and ended with prayer." From 1760 to 1790, several persons of Mr. Wesley's society emigrated from England and Ireland and settled in various parts of America. During the war between England and America all communication between the two societies was cut off. This was very much felt by the American Methodists. Mr. Asbury, the senior minister, was importuned to take proper measures that the societies might enjoy the privileges of other churches, by the ordination of ministers. This he refused because of his attachment to the church of England. On this, a majority of the preachers separated from him and chose out of themselves three senior brethren, who ordained others by the imposition of hands. Mr. Asbury prevailed on them to return, and by a vote at one of their conferences, the ordination was declared void. After the war Mr. Wesley drew up a plan of church government, &c. for the American Methodists, and ordained Dr. Coke a *joint superintendent* with Mr. Asbury over the Methodist connexion in North America. The reason Mr. Wesley assigned for this measure was the following, which he gave in answer to a question put to him by William Jones, a chaplain of lord bishop Horn, in the following words: "Whether it was true that he (Wesley) had invested two gentlemen with the *episcopal* character, and had sent them in that character to America?" "As soon," said Mr. Wesley in answer, "as we had made peace with America, and allowed them their independence, all religious connexion between this country and the independent colonies was at an end; in consequence of which the sectaries fell to work to increase their several parties—and the Anabaptists, in particular, were carrying all before them.—Something was therefore to be done, without loss of time, for this *poor people* (as he

called them) in America; and he had therefore taken the step in question with a hope of preventing further disorders." Thus Mr. Wesley, who was only a presbyter, consecrated two bishops, which was complained of by bishop Horn in his charge to the clergy of Norwich. See Jones' Life of Horn in Horn's works, vol. i. q. 161. and vol. iv. q. 52.

I frankly confess that Mr. Wesley had as much of a divine right to ordain bishops, to form a creed, to make a book of discipline, and to ordain and establish rites and ceremonies in the church as the pope of Rome and all his cardinals had; or as had Henry VIII. and pope Elizabeth with their parliaments and bishops; or as had parliament with the Westminster Assembly, who made the Presbyterian Confession of Faith; or as had the seven Baptist churches of London, or the one hundred churches who composed the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. In behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the one lawgiver and head of the church, however, I aver that all these powers have been exercised without right, and in opposition to his authority; and any man who submits to them as authoritative in religion, worships the image of the Beast and bears his name.

The Westminster Confession of Faith was formed by the Westminster Assembly, which was convened as an ecclesiastical council of parliament in 1643. The ordinance which convened them stated that they were "to be consulted with by parliament for settling the government and liturgy of the Church of England." Its professed design was to reform Episcopacy to the standard of former times. But the interests of parliament, in opposition to king Charles I, became so reduced that they were obliged to call in the aid of the Scots. Their aid was offered on condition that the Parliament and the Westminster Assembly would abandon Episcopacy, and attempt the establishment of Presbyterianism, which at length they advanced into *jus divinum*, or a divine institution, derived expressly from Christ and the apostles. On the 17th of August, 1643, the Solemn League and Covenant, embracing these objects, was delivered into the assembly by Dr. Henderson. It was adopted by parliament and sent over the three kingdoms to be sworn to and signed. The objects stated in the covenant were to "promote the extirpation of popery, prelacy, heresy, schism, scepticism, and idolatry, and endeavor a union between the kingdoms in one confession of faith, one form of church government, and one directory of worship. They took an oath to be orthodox in doctrine agreeably to the word of God; and in discipline to do what they should conceive would be most to the glory of God and the good and peace of the church." The Westminster Confession of Faith was the result of this holy alliance. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in these United States, say, in their minutes of 1824, in reference to the Westminster Assembly, that "its members were full of the Holy Ghost" when they produced that Confession.

The Baptist Confession of Faith was published in London in 1643, not under the name of a baptist confession, but "of seven congregations in London." "The name of baptist," as is observed by Adams in his History of the Religious World, "is only of modern date and of

local application." Anabaptists and anti-paido-baptists had been the usual epithets by which christians who believed that the immersion of believers was baptism, had been called by their opposers. They professedly published the confession of faith for the information and satisfaction of those that did not understand what their principles were or had not entertained prejudices against them, and persecuted them, on account of sentiments which they did not entertain.

In their confession they say: "We confess that we know but in part: to show us from the word of God, that which we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful to God and to them. But if any man shall impose upon us any thing that we see not to be commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should, in his strength rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, and if it were possible, to die a thousand deaths, rather than do any thing against the truth of God, or against the light of our own consciences." They did not assume or bear the name of baptists, but professed themselves to be baptised congregations.

### THE NEW ALTAR.

A WESLEYAN'S TESTIMONY AGAINST IT!

*Athol, 12th Dec., 1853.*

TO THE PEOPLE WITHIN PICTON CIRCUIT:

RESPECTED FRIENDS, ONE AND ALL:—When on the beginning of last month, I addressed a letter to friend McFadden, it was to be expected in the natural course of things that my frankness in comparing the customs of men with the institutions of Jesus would not be well received, at least by those who think it wise to mix and intermix the counsels of earth with the counsels of heaven.

I am not therefore surprised that all the preachers on the Picton circuit, both travelling and local, as far as known to me are more or less engaged in the work of diverting the minds of their favorites from the substance and sentiment of said letter, and zealously intent on casting odium on my name by reason of being its author and publisher. It seems that it is thought to be easier to create a hostile feeling towards the writer of the letter than to review and answer what is written. It appears that it is more convenient to call me by some obnoxious name than to enlist the voice of scripture to uphold the modern converting altar. It costs little, and is thought to be quite religious, to say that Oliphant has made an unchristian attack, has written maliciously, is a speculator, and that every disciple lives by agitation and battle; and it demands neither talent nor learning to ridicule the principle of honoring the same cause now that Peter and others honored some eighteen centuries ago;—but it is a severe tax upon the friends of the new altar, adopted within a few years, to cite a word from either Old or New Covenant in its favor, or show in any way that God has appointed or approves it.



Yes, yes—it has long been considered a pious and speedy way of disposing of a man who pleads the authority of the Lord against the authority of men, to call him a heretic and hence burn, stone, crucify, or falsely accuse him. This, it must be confessed, is a shorter mode of answering his arguments than to appeal to God's law. Stephen of old, full of the Spirit, was replied to in this manner; the stones that shattered his body and sent him to a happier world were the hard arguments that his opponents gave him in return for what he spoke in Jesus' name. Herod's sword was his only effectual argument against James. And the reigning emperor of Rome was more than a match for Paul according to the same logic; for the weapons of the apostolic champion were mighty only through God to the pulling down of the strong holds which could be taken and subdued by truth, but the Roman Ruler had power to keep the apostle in chains and finally award him the martyr's doom. And the active citizens of the great Babylon have always regarded Bible men as worthy of dungeons, prisons, bars, or well kindled faggots, and so free themselves of these troublesome members of the community. And as the lovers of traditions are the most appropriate judges of what will promote their interests, and know best what will preserve the wares in which they deal, why should any man who loves the truth murmur at being buffeted because of it?

But, courteous reader, whatever may be said in favor of Mr. McFadden or against D. Oliphant, remember that both these persons will shortly pass off the stage of action and go to an unchanging reckoning with the great Lord; and forget not that you also have a solemn account to settle with the same Master. He who will examine and cast up our account, rendering to "every man as his works shall be," has been mercifully pleased to let us all know how he will reckon with us. He will judge us by the gospel that Paul preached, as he intimates in Rom. ii. 16; and hence the cardinal importance of every man being acquainted with apostolic truth, not only in order to the present salvation, but also that salvation which is to be realized at the Lord's coming. The gospel as developed by the inspired Twelve is every way safe—authoritative—effectual; for Jesus the Lord is its author. If this be so, it needs no help from doctors who deal in newly-devised bye-laws. If this be so, it needs nothing taken from it by regulars who bleed and blister. The gospel therefore, as the medicine of the soul, demands no addition and allows no subtraction. It is to be taken at its par value, "the power of God"—the power of God for what? Let the apostle answer, "the power of God unto salvation." What! is the gospel God's power to this end? Do you mean to say,

P that the gospel is the divine instrumentality for the purpose of saving men who believe it?—and what then shall we do with the anxious seat, the altar of Minister McFadden and others at East Lake, Bloomfield, and Picton? O, beloved apostle to the Gentiles, will you not, in the Lord's name, allow the protracted meeting altar in addition to the gospel? Or otherwise will you not permit this altar to be used in place of some portion or part of the gospel?

Listen to Paul's answer as he begins with the inspired David's words: "Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered," and this blessedness, says the apostle, "is of faith" or of the gospel which is the subject of faith, and "to him that believeth on Him that justifies the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness," and hence we are "justified by faith" and "have access by faith into this grace" of the Lord Jesus. Now faith is conviction and confidence by the word of the living God. Therefore Jesus being preached as the Justifier—his justification being received through faith—this faith being the reception of him as Teacher, Sin-offering, Mediator, Lord, Lawgiver—and hence this faith being only as long and as broad as the divine testimony, the new altar is excluded: for the divine testimony does not include it: rather the apostle says in terms clear and expressive "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." For these scriptures see Rom. iv. 5, 7, 16; v. 1, 2; xiv. 23.

To make the foregoing still more plain, or at least to impress its plainness, let us particularly consider Jesus in his sublime attribute of Teacher, the Great Teacher, the sole True Witness, as pertaining to spiritual and eternal life. Truth and life—life and truth—are equally with him; and all truth—all truth which is life-giving, proceeds from him. Our hearts take hold of this truth by faith; and our faith, thus resting in his truth, stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Our faith is in Jesus by his truth, and his truth we have seen comes only from himself as the Great Teacher. But in his truth there is nothing said about a converting altar; therefore those who have faith in it or by it have not faith produced by Jesus' truth, and therefore not being produced by his truth it has nothing to do in connecting us with him as the Redeemer. You see, reading friend, that Christ is Teacher as well as Redeemer; and hence anything he has not taught is no part of his will; and therefore as the modern altar has not been taught by him, faith in it is not faith in his truth or faith in him by his truth.

The altar however is not simply worthless. It is a species of rebuke to Jesus: for it virtually says that he is not an infallible

Teacher and failed to say enough regarding the means to be employed to convert men.

A means so important to convert sinners as the altar is considered, ought not to be thought and cannot be thought a trifling affair. Let us look at this altar and its uses: 1st. The Spirit is said to come down at this altar; 2nd. Professors are to pray with peculiar effect for the conversion of souls at this altar; 3rd. The struggles of inquirers are supposed to be more powerful and successful at this altar; and 4th. The anxious and the sin-distressed, in answer to their own prayers and the prayers of their teachers and helpers, obtain, it is understood, the blessing of pardon at this altar. This, then, as will be perceived, is no trifling altar; and assuredly no man, whether a friend or a foe, should be backward in speaking of its claims and enquiring into the grounds on which it rests. An altar where the Spirit descends—an altar where professors pray with greater efficacy for sinners—an altar where inquirers wrestle acceptably to God—an altar where the sinner that mourns and prays finds his guilt removed and his sins remitted—is an important place; and not a man on the face of the globe should be ignorant of such an institution.

But how comes it to pass that the friends of this means to regenerate are so dumb when the authority of the Lord is asked for it? Nay, why does Mr. Miller, a co-minister with Mr. McFadden, testify against the recent institution by intimating that there is no precept for it in the inspired Book? Friend Miller, in a public interview, both at Cherry Valley and at a meeting east of it, gave his witness strongly against Mr. McFadden and the altar by testifying that there was the same divine authority for it as for a printing press. This is a capital admission on the part of a ministerial friend of this modern place of conversion. The religion of Jesus Christ, in all its fulness and power was developed to Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, full fourteen hundred years before a printing press was known; and the last apostle wrote his last letter at least thirteen hundred years before the Germans erected a press to print it—abundant proof that there is neither precept for, nor example of, using a printing press in the scriptures. Mr. Miller, then, graciously tells us that Mr. McFadden followed the apostles at the East Lake altar just as much as the apostles printed! That will do, friend Miller, thou hast said enough—pronounced sentence against yourself and Mr. McFadden too, and all who worship at the new altar. Thank you for your assistance in overthrowing the altars which are not of divine appointment. See Deut. vii. 1-5, also Deut. xii. 1-3, and also Judges vi. 25-31.

From various quarters and by divers persons I hear of a comparison being made between the press and the new altar. It is apparently considered good sound argument and excellent divinity to convert men by a way unknown to the apostles because we use the press, which they used not. Let "us condescend to men of low degree" and answer the argument of these reasoners. A few sentences may suffice. The religion of Jesus is fourteen hundred years older than printing presses. A press therefore cannot be any part of that religion. No one, so far as known to me, regards a printing office as an institution of the Christian church. Jesus would be found in every printing office were

it an institution appointed by him ; for he is, authoritatively, in every ordinance or institution he has been pleased to appoint. The press, like the telegraph, is a valuable human art, a mouth-piece of immense power, employed sometimes for good but often for evil ; but neither of these arts is considered by any intelligent man as an institution of the Lord. To convert men by telegraph !—to make saints by composition and press-work ! O ye wise men, tell it not in Picton, publish it not in Cobourg, lest the Philistines in Canada turn your wisdom into laughter.

But the religion of the Lord Jesus, was established by his own inspired preachers. The apostles give a precept for, or an example of, every institution in order to the enjoyment of Christ's favour—every institution necessary to the conversion of sinners and the upbuilding of saints. *All who bow down to an altar of modern authority in effect deny that the apostles delivered all precepts and all examples requisite to conversion and edification.* They treat the appointments of the everlasting Lord as though they were not perfect when they came from him, and as though they were like the arts and sciences to be modelled and improved by men !

Even in the good work of writing the apostles and evangelists of inspired memory have left us an example. No less than eight of the holy heralds of the Lord's truth employed the pen. We are all privileged to partake of the benefit of their labors. They wrote to the world at large, and they wrote to the congregations of the saints. The truth concerning Jesus given by Matthew in writing, first published among the Jews, was, doubtless, as offensive to many of them as a letter of mine has been to numerous friends of a new altar. Did the apostle attack the chief priests and the Jewish nation by his written narrative ? He must have done so, if some late logic be valid and reliable. Or did Paul attack the whole people of Athens when he spoke pretty plainly respecting on altar he found among them ?

We will not, respected reader, forget the all-important point, that the protracted meeting altar must stand or fall by divine sanction, and this divine sanction is the will of Jesus as he has expressed it, and this expressed will is through Peter and Paul, John and James, and and their apostolic brethren. These inspired men hold in their hands a measuring rod to test all things claiming to be religious. The Holy Spirit spoke all truth by them, and they have sent all truth to us that they were intrusted with. The scriptures, then, are the measure of apostolic truth, and this apostolic truth is the whole truth as it is in Jesus.

Now, when we ask an honest Roman why he confesses to the priest, he frankly tells us that the Roman church has enforced it, and he says, and he says like a man, that the sanction of his church is all-sufficient. The church, he believes, is superior or at least equal to the scriptures ; and hence he sincerely appeals to the authority of the church. Well, then, he is safe, according to his own principle, without the sanction of the scriptures. He asks not, Do the scriptures teach it ? but he asks, Does the church appoint and sanction it ? Devoutly and sincerely he rests in his belief. But Protestantism has accepted the Bible as a guide instead of the laws of the ecclesiastical

fathers. And Mr. Wesley was a full-grown Protestant when he affirmed concerning the Book of divine truth, "Whatsoever is not found therein, nor proved thereby, is not to be required of any man." I respond heartily to the sentiment, that nothing is to be required of any man but what is either found in the Book in express terms or made good by a comparison of different passages.

But is it so that the Lord has ever acknowledged an altar which was erected by a conjecture—an inference—a far-fetched deduction? Is so important a part of the means to convert sinners as the anxious seat is said to be—is such a "means of grace" left to be ascertained by a mere linking together of mental conclusions? Did not the Lord, for over four thousand years, invariably describe in express terms every altar he desired to be erected? as well as reveal how to worship thereat? And is light receding from us and darkness taking the place of light, so that it becomes us, in these days of the christian age to find out one of God's altars by mere inference? Will a man risk his soul at an altar that the Lord has not expressly commanded? What says the Lord to the Jewish ministers, the "Reverend" Doctors and Pharisees, when they complained of him not teaching his disciples more reverence to the customs of the times? Hear his reply as he quotes one of their own prophets, "In vain do they worship me [notice, they did worship] teaching doctrines the commandments of men." Reader, this passage you will find in our orthodox Bibles!

One reason why my letter of last month gave such uneasiness to some, is, that they feel conscious that the scriptures afford no evidence in favor of the new way of conversion. It is hard to say that it is not taught in the Book of life when proof is sought—it is not pleasant to say to a Bible reader that it is a good institution although not found among heaven's rules—it is very distasteful to say with the sincere friend of the new St. Peter that it is to be used because it is sanctioned by authority of the church—it is difficult to show that it has been revealed from heaven since the christian religion was instituted—it is distressing to yield so far as to class it among traditions—it is not safe to affirm that it is right because many have felt happy at it, for the disciple of Mahomet feels happy in his mosque. Verily, then, my letter is a very ungracious instrument; for it testifies that the altar, if of God, must have his authority; and reflecting people will see that there is no such sanction for it. As Noah's dove found no rest for the sole of her feet while the earth was yet flooded, there being only one safe place—the ark, so the friends of the recently made place for convert-making, find themselves at a loss for something to prove that they are not on the wing, as it respects God's authority. Still, the altar is loved, though unauthorized of heaven, and hence I may turn to its ardent adherents and join Paul in asking, "Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?"

Yet said epistle, it ought to be remembered, may be pressed into the service of the altar, because it furnishes a favorable ground-work for its defence and the realization of its claims. Let the volume of eternal truth be opened; and let the batteries of the Lord be brought to bear upon my "attack," and let the altar be rescued from the hands of the Philistines, if indeed I am the Philistine and friend McFadden

be the true Israelite in this matter. But why ask this? Look again at Mr. Miller's evidence.

Reader, care not whether my letter be an attack or not. If indeed any one persuade you that it is an attack, reflect that the worst that can be said of it, is, that it attacks what a Wesleyan minister says is not revealed in the scriptures. It therefore simply strikes at a human device, used as a divine institution; and as the Lord has always honored those who honor him, and accounts himself honored when his word is revered and obeyed, neither you nor I need fear to bear a decided yet respectful testimony against this newly created institution. "Well done, good and faithful servant," will be said to those who in all things honor Jesus by honoring his authority.

It should however be added, that the new place and new means of conversion result in a new order of converts. I grant indeed, very joyfully grant, that "the inward present salvation" originally preached by Methodist reformers was a step toward the truth, especially in view of the unfeeling outward mockeries of a state church. Let all the people say *amen* to a salvation that is "inward" as well as outward, a salvation "present" as well as future; because the holy Book so teaches. Christ's religion is spiritual. It is received by the gospel which is addressed to the whole man to conform him to Jesus, heart, head, and hand—body, soul, and spirit. Yet how much of this gospel of the kingdom is understood, received, realized, obeyed, enjoyed at the altar of which we speak? Does not the machinery of this "confusion of tongues"—this young babel—prevent gospel knowledge, gospel faith, gospel spirituality, gospel peace, gospel obedience, gospel hope, and gospel attachment to the Lord's house with all its sacred and sanctifying furniture? "The true tabernacle, which the Lord pitcheth, and not man," is that for which we plead; and let all to whom these presents come examine our testimony and compare it with the Lord's measuring reed, his own word, which lives and abides forever.

Friend Woolsey, now on the circuit, is preaching I am informed, both from the pulpit and from house to house, against my epistle of last month. He has, I learn, much to say against the devil; and he intimates that the letter I have published is in some form connected with that bad personage. I have a query for friend Woolsey. If an agent or messenger of satan recommends the Book of God more than a preacher, where will the preacher be when the Lord comes?

With love to all, but supreme love for truth.

D. OLIPHANT.

### JOHN FLETCHER AGAINST JOHN CALVIN.

Hear what the celebrated Fletcher, co-operant with Wesley, says in his "Scripture-Scales":—

REASON should alone, one would think, convince us that St. Paul, in Rom. ix. does not plead for a right in God so to *hate* any of his unformed creatures, as to *intend, make, and fit them for destruction*, merely to shew his absolute sovereignty and irresistible power. The apostle knew too well the God of love, to represent him as a mighty

potter, who takes an unaccountable pleasure to form rational vessels and endue them with keen sensibility, only to have the glory of absolutely filling them, by the help of Adam, with sin and wickedness on earth, and then with fire and brimstone in hell. This is the conceit of the consistent admirers of unconditional election and rejection, who build it chiefly upon Rom. ix. Should you ask, why they fix so dreadful a meaning to that portion of scripture; I answer, that, thro' inattention and prejudice, they overlook the two keys, which the apostle gives us to open his meaning, one of which we find in the three first, and the other, in the three last verses of that perverted chapter.

In the three first verses St. Paul expresses the continual sorrow, which he had in his heart, for the obstinacy of his countrymen, the Jews, who so depended upon their national prerogatives, as Jews; their church privileges as children of Abraham; and their pharisaical righteousness of the law, as observers of the Mosaic ceremonies, that they detested the doctrine of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Now if the apostle had believed, that God, by a wise decree of preterition, had irreversibly ordained them to eternal death, "*to illustrate his glory by their damnation,*" as Calvin says; how ridiculous would it have been in him, to sorrow night and day about the execution of God's wise design! If God from the beginning of the world had absolutely determined to make the unbelieving Jews personally and absolutely vessels of wrath, to the praise of the glory of his sovereign free-wrath; how wicked would it have been in St. Paul to begin the next chapter by saying, My heart's desire and prayer to God for unbelieving Israel,—for the obstinate Jews, is, that they might be saved? Would he not rather have meekly submitted to the will of God, and said like Eli, "It is the Lord: Let him do what seemeth him good." Did it become him:—nay was it not next to rebellion in him, so passionately to set his heart against a decree made (as we are told) on purpose to display the absoluteness of divine sovereignty? And would not the Jews have retorted his own words? "Who art thou, O vain man, that repliest against God," by wishing night and day the salvation of "vessels of wrath,"—of men, whom he hath absolutely set apart for destruction!

"But if the apostle did not intend to establish the absolute, personal preterition of the rejected Jews and their follow-reprobates, what could he mean by that mysterious chapter?" I reply—He meant in general to vindicate God's conduct in casting off the Jews, and adopting the Gentiles. This deserves some explanation. When St. Paul insinuated to the Jews, that they were rejected as a church and people, and that the uncircumcised Gentiles [even as many as believed on Jesus of Nazareth] were now the chosen nation,—the peculiar people and church of God, his countrymen were greatly offended: And yet, as the apostle of the Gentiles, to provoke the Jews to jealousy, he was obliged peculiarly to enforce this doctrine among them. They generally gave him audience till he touch upon it. But when he waxed bold, and told them plainly that Christ had bid him depart from Jerusalem, as from an accursed city; and had sent him far thence unto the Gentiles, they could contain themselves no long-

er: and lifting up their voices. they said, " Away with such a fellow from the earth." Acts xiii. 46. xxii. 21.

When St. Paul wrote to Rome, the metropoli of the Gentile world, where there were a great many Jews, the Holy Spirit directed him to clear up the question concerning the general election of the Gentiles, and the general rejection of the Jews: and this he did, both for the comfort of the humble, Gentile believers and for the humiliation of his proud, self-elected countrymen; and being provoked to jealousy, they, or at least *some* of them, might with the Gentiles, make their *personal* calling and election sure, by believing in Christ. As the Jews were generally incensed against him, and he had a most disagreeable truth to write, he dips his pen in the oil of brotherly love, and begins the chapter by a most awful protestation of his tender attachment to them, and sorrowful concern for their salvation; hoping that this would soften them, and reconcile their prejudiced minds. But if he had represented them as *absolute* reprobates, and vessels of wrath *irreversibly* ordained of God to destruction, he would absurdly have defeated his own design, and exasperated them more than ever against his doctrine and his person. That he told them with one breath, he wishes to be accursed from Christ for them, whilst with the next breath he insinuated, that God had already absolutely accursed them with unconditional, personal reprobation, is a notion so excessively big with absurdity, that at times Zelotes himself can scarce swallow it down. Who indeed can believe, that St. Paul made himself so ridiculous, as to weep tears of the most ardent love, over the free-wrath of his reprobating Creator? Who can imagine, that the pious apostle painted out the God of all grace, as a God full of immortal hatred to most of his countrymen; while he represented himself as a person continually racked with the tenderest feelings of a matchless affection for them all; thus impiously raising his own reputation, as a benevolent man, upon the ruins of the reputation of his malevolent God?

Come we now to the middle part of the chapter. St. Paul having prepared the Jews for the disagreeable message which he was about to deliver, begins to attack their pharisaic prejudices concerning their absolute right, as children of Abraham, to be God's church and people, exclusively of the rest of the world, whom they looked upon as reprobated dogs of the Gentiles. To drive the unbelieving Jews out of this sheltering place, he indirectly advances two doctrines: " 1. That God, as the Creator and supreme Benefactor of men, may do what he pleases with his peculiar favours, and that he had now as indubitable a right freely to give five talents of church-privileges to the Gentiles, as he had once to bestow three talents of church-privileges upon the Jews. And 2. That God had as much right to set the seal of his wrath upon them, as upon Pharaoh himself, if they continued to imitate the inflexibleness of that proud unbeliever; inexorable unbelief being the sin, that fits men *for destruction*, and pulls down the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

The first of these doctrines he proves by a reasonable appeal to conscience: 1, Concerning the absurdity of replying against God, i. e. against a Being of infinite wisdom, goodness, justice, and power:



And 2. Concerning a right which a potter has of the same lump of clay, to make one vessel for honourable, and another for comparatively *dishonourable* uses. The argument carries conviction along with it. Were utensils capable of thought, the bason, in which our Lord washed his disciples' feet [a comparatively *dishonourable* use] could never reasonably complain, that the potter had not made it the cup, in which Christ consecrated the sacramental wine. By a parity of reason, the king's soldiers and servants cannot justly be dissatisfied, because he has not made them all generals and prime ministers. And what reason had the Jews to complain, that God put the Gentiles on a level with, or even above them? May he not, without being arraigned at the bar of slothful servants who have buried their talents, give a peculiar, extraordinary blessing when he pleases, and to whom he pleases? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Shall the foot say, Why am I not the shoulder? Or, to allude to the parable of the labourers, If God chooses to hire the Gentiles and send them into his favourite vineyard, blessing them with church privileges as he did the Jews, shall the eye of the Jews be evil, because God is good to these newly hired labourers? "May he not do what he pleases with his own?"

With peculiar wisdom the apostle dwells upon the still more striking instance of Isaac's sons, Esau and Jacob, who had not only the same godly father, but the same free and pious mother; the younger of whom was nevertheless preferred to the elder without any apparent reason. He leaves the Jews to think how much more this might be the case, when there is an apparent cause, as in the case of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, Jacob's three eldest sons, who through incest, treachery, and murder, forfeited the blessings of the first-born; a blessing this, which by that forfeiture devolved to Judah, Jacob's fourth son, whose tribe became the first and most powerful of all the tribes of Israel, and had of consequence the honour of producing the Messiah, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. St. Paul's argument is masterly, and runs thus: If God has again and again excluded some of Abraham's posterity from the blessing of the peculiar covenant, which he made with that patriarch concerning the promised Seed:— If he said, in Isaac, Jacob, and Judah, shall thy Seed [the Messiah] be called, and not in Ishmael, Esau, and Reuben, the first-born sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; how absurd is it in the Jews to suppose, that merely because they are descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they shall absolutely share the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom? If God excluded from the birth-right, Ishmael the scoffer, Esau the seller of his birth-right, and Reuben the defiler of Bilhah his father's wife; why might not *Israel* [his son called out of Egypt] his first-born among nations, forfeit his birth-right through unbelief? And why should not the Gentile world, God's prodigal son, inherit the blessing of the first-born, if they submit to the obedience of faith, and with the younger son in the parable, return from the far country to their Father's house; whilst the elder son insolently quarrels with God, reproaches his brother, absolutely refuses to come in, and thus makes his calling void, and his reprobation sure?

The apostle's argument is like a two-edged sword. With one edge

he cuts down the bigotry of the Jews, by the above-mentioned appeals to the history of their fore-fathers. And with the other edge he strikes at their unbelief, by an appeal to the destruction of Pharaoh; insinuating that God, as Maker, Preserver, and Governor of men, has an undoubted right to fix the gracious or righteous terms, on which he will finally bestow salvation.

### REUCHLIN, ERASMUS, LUTHER.

It is sometimes quite difficult for one, in looking over the deeds of great men, in connection with great events, to tell who did the most important service. It is so in respect to these men, and though Luther bore off the palm of the Reformation, and is justly memorable, yet the names of Reuchlin and Erasmus should by no means be forgotten.

Whatever Luther might have done, the Reformation never could have proceeded without the means furnished by these scholars. The spirit which Reuchlin awakened for biblical studies was the blood that gave life to the body of Reformers. He was the man chosen under God to *revise* the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which work might almost be said to be the foundation of the Reformation. On account of this work he was branded with infamy by the "standing order" (the Dominicans,) who threatened his life—*revisers are unlucky men!* Then appeared Erasmus, who being educated at the University of Paris, was well prepared in mind for what God had prepared him in body. He was a man of great power and ability, and made the most constant use of his talents. He used to compose while riding upon his horse and write out his thoughts while the animal was feeding. In this way he prepared his celebrated "Praise of Folly" while on a journey from Italy to England. This was a powerful means of stirring up the dormant monks, but Erasmus did more than satire their folly. He labored long and hard to turn divines from the study of scholastic theology to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and in this was quite successful in many instances. Some have depreciated his influence upon the Reformation, and others have raised it quite too high; but none can question that in these labors he did something and none can tell how much. Who will venture to say that these efforts did not tend to bring on the Reformation? Erasmus was a scholar, but alas! for him, he was given to pride and vanity—that cursed, foolish sin that often spoils the best of men, and greatly weakens those it does not spoil; yet Erasmus did a great work for the Reformation. This was the work of *revision*. Reuchlin *revised the Vulgate*, and thereby, says the historian, "took off seals from the ancient Scriptures." Erasmus, says the same historian, "published the New Testament; the first, and for a long time the only critical edition." He says also that he accompanied it with a Latin translation, wherein he boldly corrected the Vulgate. "Thus Erasmus did for the New Testament what Reuchlin did for the Old Testament"—in other words, he revised it as Reuchlin "*revised the Vulgate*." The New Testament of Erasmus was issued the year previous to the bursting forth of the Reformation. It seems evident from this, that they were

not fully prepared to begin the work until the Word of God was "revised" and brought up to the standard of the age; until it was striped from the obscurities which had fallen upon it by the lapse of ages, and the changes of languages. Against this the "standing order" (the monks) clamoured and fought, threatened and menaced. They said, "he had attempted to correct the Holy Ghost;" but the New Testament, thus revised, shed its light, had its place and exerted its power through all the long spiritual war of Reformation.

Through these means Erasmus led up to the field of contest some of the most zealous actors of the Reformation, while he himself, not a reformer in spirit or make, shared none of the glory of conquest. He took the screen away from before the light and poured it upon the eyes, and with it stirred the hearts of many who afterwards wielded with such signal power the sword he had furnished; but, unfortunate man! he was a *reviser*! It was truly said "Reuchlin and Erasmus gave the Scriptures to the learned, and Luther gave them to the common people." Erasmus was a reviser, and though Secundus Curio could not find him in either of his heavens, the reason probably was, he was then a spoke in the wheel of the Reformation, which accounts for "his wheeling in never-ending eddies between them both."

Reuchlin and Erasmus were the revisers, Luther was the preacher and expounder; hence Luther said of Erasmus "he knows very well how to expose error, but he does not know how to teach the truth."—Reuchlin and Erasmus trimmed the lamp, and Luther held it up to the world.—*New York Chronicle*.

### LABOURS OF EVANGELISTS.

[1.]

As long ago as May last, an invitation was extended to me to speak on a funeral occasion at the Baptist chapel five miles west of Brighton on the front road. By request two more appointments were made and filled at the same place, and through these efforts invitations came from several localities within a few miles, asking the public proclamation of the word. A meeting was held in Cramahc, four miles north of the Baptist chapel, early in the month of June; and another meeting at Well's School House, township of Brighton, one mile in the rear of Brighton village. Five discourses have been delivered at the latter point since the beginning of June, and three discourses at the former place. Whole mountains of prejudice have been removed from the minds of the friends in Cramahc who have heard for themselves, and in the Well's settlement near Brighton some of the highest peaks of hostility to what is termed 'our doctrine' are evidently in a fair way of being levelled. The Author of the gospel of salvation be praised.

At Cramahc I have formed the acquaintance of Joel Wynn, an excellent Baptist brother, who loves and lives upon the oracles of God,—nephew of Joseph Wynn, now deceased, who was the first Baptist preacher who settled between Kingston and Toronto, and for a time the only preacher of that order within the bounds of the province, if I am correctly informed.

Recently more than usual interest has been apparent among the 'hearers of the word' in Athol, near Picton, where I have laboured occasionally during the summer and autumn. The third week of November, while discoursing at the East Lake, three came forward to put on the Lord, and they were accordingly immersed in the divine name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Many saints will now pray that these, with all others who have thus confessed Christ, may be kept by the power of God through faith unto that salvation which shall be revealed at the coming of the Lord our Resurrection and our Righteousness.

D. OLIPHANT.

[2.]

Continuing my labors at the East Lake, Athol, and the adjoining township, Hallowell, six more were immersed in the name of the divine three—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—having made the confession before men and angels that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. The brethren were encouraged, and numbers who in times past heard the truth as though they heard it not, now witnessing the power of the gospel in those who put on the Lord, were unusually impressed both by what they saw and heard. Meetings were held from three to five times per week, and each succeeding assemblage seemed larger and more attentive to the things spoken. I was suddenly called from the field of this labour and success, but trust to resume labouring there (if the Lord will) in a short period.

D. OLIPHANT.

*Victory, N. Y., 26th Dec.*

P. S. It should be added that one who had been previously baptized, but who had walked with our Methodist friends in Hallowell, resolved to be no longer "on the Class Paper," but be numbered with the disciples of Christ. Some others, it is understood, "feel" "by faith" like withdrawing from the influence of the "Class" and the "Paper" that binds them to it. The Lord of truth and Author of life in his abounding mercy grant that very many may clearly perceive his requirements, and learn to distinguish the things that are merely human and therefore religiously dangerous from the things sanctioned by divine appointment.

D. O.

### THE TRACTS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The tracts published in the December Number, will, in all probability, bring a renewed amount of odium from the lovers of the current teaching of the times. It is hopeful however, that, though the sentiment may be bitterly opposed, the language may be regarded as in good part respectful. These pages on the office and power of the Spirit have one direct and several indirect objects. Their direct purpose, as will be seen by perusal, is to throw out scriptural hints in reference to the workings and energy of the Divine Spirit. But they are written in order to subserve other purposes indirectly. We are in

sundry sections of the land met with the unholy charge that we are Arians; and these pages are so written that it will be difficult for discerning men to peruse them and afterwards honestly say that we have the slightest relish for Arian philosophy. Again, the simple principles of the gospel of Christ are very sparingly found and very imperfectly understood in our beloved country; and we have edged in the plain truths and claims of the gospel as occasion served while preparing these tracts. Will the friends therefore give them a free circulation? Hundreds of them are already spoken for, but a respectably large edition is printed in order to supply many other orders. One package has been ordered from and for New York state. Both tracts in one, making a sheet of sixteen pages, we dispose of at the low figure of one cent and a half, or not quite one penny currency, each. Brethren, what think you of giving them a mission throughout the Province? Who will take stock in distributing them?

D O.

ONE OF THE INTERVIEWS.—A non-descript interview was held between Mr. Gilbert Miller, Wesleyan minister, and the writer, on the evening of the 7th Dec, near Cherry Valley, East Lake, Prince Edward County. Not far from the close of Nov, I discoursed to the people at the Valley, and friend Miller, with my letter to minister McFadden in his hand, rose at the meeting was concluding and read sundry extracts from said letter, made various statements, and asked a number of questions. He was informed that if he would name a suitable time and place his queries would be heard and considered. This he declined. But the next week, after seeing Mr. McFadden, he sent a note signifying that he would meet me on the evening of Dec. 7th. I complied. From what friend Miller said during the two hours of our interview, no one is able to determine what was his main object; but it seemed to be, as far as I could gather, to have an opportunity of showing how heartily he disliked my letter to Mr. McFadden, and its writer, and the disciples as a people. Friend Miller doubtless feels easier after discharging so much bile, yet whether the Methodist friends will eventually thank him for vomiting as he did is not so certain.—This interview has, by some, been erroneously called a debate. I had no debate with Mr. Miller. There was an interview between us, as will be seen by the announcement in the *Picton Sun*. There is a Proposition before parties who debate; but we discussed no proposition. My principal purpose, first and last, was to evince good will to the Methodist community and to show a kind and christian spirit; and it is a pleasure to learn that I succeeded to some extent even in the midst of the ungentlemanly outpouring of the spirit of friend Miller. Shall we modestly advise our friend to kneel at the *Christian altar* to receive a *holy Spirit*?

D. O.

## MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF A NEW VERSION.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—I am requested to forward for publication in the *Christian Banner* a circular addressed to all who love a pure version of the word of God.

To all who love a pure version of the word of God, this circular is addressed :

RESPECTED FRIENDS :—It is near half a century since the British and Foreign Bible Society was instituted in London, for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures not only in our mother tongue, but also for their translation and circulation in foreign languages. The above Society with all kindred ones that have sprung from it, have been perfectly satisfied with the present English version of the scriptures, (or King James' version as it is called) while a number of those in giving the inhabitants of other countries a translation of the living oracles have given confessedly purer rendering than does obtain among us. Many have become dissatisfied and insist that the English reader as well as others ought to have the word of God rendered pure and entire. For the carrying out of this glorious object a number of persons have associated together under the name of "The Bible Union" and are prosecuting their labors to a happy conclusion, amidst much opposition. In view of assisting this society in this laudable undertaking a meeting of those friendly to the cause will be held near Norval, township of Esquensing, commencing on the last Friday of February next.

Friends, this is a grand and glorious work. Let us then "work while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work."

By order,

JAMES MITCHELL.

*Eramosa, Jan., 1854.*

The above is a most worthy movement. We trust that the meeting will be numerously attended. Though the friends who meet will not have the prayers or sympathies of many of the zealous in our country. The following is from the *Toronto Guardian*, organ of Wesleyanism in this Province. The editor seems not to be advised of the efforts of the Bible Union, and the great success the friends of this Union are meeting with in securing a new translation. We trust that many Wesleyan ministers will live to see the new translation of the English scriptures in the hands of all Bible readers, and that they will heartily acknowledge that Dr. Cone, instead of heading a movement to "falsify the oracles of God," has been instrumental in giving English readers a more perfect view of the mind of God as originally expressed through Christian prophets and apostles. But let us hear the *Guardian* :

D. O.

"It is known to many of our readers that some time ago the Baptists in the United States made application to the American Bible

Society for certain grants to defray expenses incurred in translating portions of the Scriptures into foreign tongues. The appeal made was not responded to, because the translators, among other liberties taken by them, invariably translated the term baptism into immerse. This caused a secession from the original American Bible Society of a great part of the Baptist denomination, who forthwith organized themselves and assumed the style and title of the American and Foreign Bible Society.

Lately the Rev. Dr. Cone and some others undertook a new translation of the Scriptures into English. This they completed, and, hurried on to procure stereotype plates. The principal feature of the translation was in every case to make the term baptize into immerse, and nothing else, wherever it occurred in reference to the ordinance of baptism. They submitted their proceedings to the Board, hoping, that having gone so far, the Board would concur therein. But, to the credit of the Board, the whole affair was repudiated, and strong condemnatory resolutions were passed by them. No one who thinks and feels aright, can do otherwise than reprobate any attempt at tampering with the Holy Scriptures. Some few verbal improvements, perhaps might be made; but if a beginning be tolerated who can predict the end? For every necessary purpose, it is on all hands admitted, the present version is as good as can be desired. The alteration contemplated by Dr. Cone would certainly be everything but an improvement, falsifying the oracles of God."

**THE LIGHT OF NATURE.**—The celebrated Mr. Hume wrote an essay on the sufficiency of the light of nature; and the no less celebrated Robertson wrote on the necessity of revelation, and the insufficiency of the light of nature. Hume came one evening to visit Robertson, and the evening was spent in conversing on this subject. The friends of both were present; and it is said that Robertson reasoned with unaccustomed clearness and power. Whether Hume was convinced by his reasonings, or not, we cannot tell; but at any rate he did not acknowledge his convictions. Hume was very much of a gentleman; and as he was about to depart, bowed politely to those in the room, while, as he retired through the door, Robertson took the light to show him the way. Hume was still facing the door: "O, sir," said he to Robertson, "I find the light of nature always sufficient;" and he continued, "Pray don't trouble yourself, sir," and so he bowed on. The street door was open; and presently, as he bowed along the entry, he stumbled over something concealed, and pitched down stairs into the street. Robertson ran after him with a light; and as he held it over him, whispered, "You had better have a little light from above, friend Hume." And raising him up, he bade him good-night, and returned to his friends.

~~RE~~ Correspondents will be honoured. Let no one who writes suppose he is neglected because his epistle or essay does not immediately appear.

D. O.

## THE EIGHTH VOLUME.

The *Christian Banner* has, thus far, been well received. Evidences come to us from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, that our labour through this medium is not in vain. To sound our own trumpet of praise, is, as the readers of the work already know, not our practise "We have no such custom." Yet it is neither boasting nor self-flattery to refer occasionally to the usefulness of labours in the name of the Lord by certain instrumentalities.

Not a month has passed since the beginning of last year without bringing us new names for our subscription list. This, together with a word of encouragement from numerous and various sources, has, amid sundry obstacles and opposing elements, kept our hope at a fair average and cheered us in our onward efforts. We trust to make the current volume better than any that has preceded it. Not that we have better intentions, but because of increased opportunity, all things concurring, to command more attention and time to devote to its interests, and because, too, of the capital truth that "practise makes perfect."

To "hold forth the word of life," then, and to "speak the things that become sound doctrine" for the encouragement and upbuilding of those who have received the word of life, will be, the Lord willing, our supreme aim in every monthly issue while preparing another volume to be read by our fellow pilgrims to the eternal world.

D. O.

The "appeal to every friend of Jesus" in the September Number of volume seven has been well received. It has in some measure answered the purpose designed; and it is devoutly to be trusted that the appeal has not simply had its effect for the time present, but that it will produce fruit continuously and increasingly.

D. O.

Those prompt and considerate friends of the *Christian Banner* who have already paid for vol. 8 will please receive the choicest thanks of the editors. We are assisted to meet obligations punctually when our friends thus deal with us. Such helpers we hold at a premium; and as they "freely give" of their means, may they "freely receive."

It is our aim to mail the *Banner* about the middle of the month; but we are a few days late in issuing the number for January.

"Copy" from St. John not received as yet.