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DIVINITY

ON THE OFFICES OF THE SPIRIT.

"Quench not the Spirit." *Thess. v--10*

It appears to have been a custom universal among the ancients, especially the Israelites, to convey their instructions to their several audiences by parables, where things apparent, and familiar, were brought in illustration of the moral to be taught. The Scriptures abound with examples of this happy method of instruction: and, in fact, our Lord seems to have adopted this method as the one most familiar, probably, to those to whom he, at first, communicated the riches of the 'gospel of the grace of God;' and it is said that 'without a parable spake he not unto them.' The Apostles, also, it appears, took the same course of illustrating *Spiritual* things by *natural*, instances of which may be seen by referring to the 9th ch. I Cor. from the 23d. verse to the end of the chapter: also, I Tim. vi-12, in both of which places, as well as many others in the writings of the same Apostle the Christian's course is compared to the Isthmian games, the manner of conducting which, was perfectly familiar to the Corinthian brethren, to whom the first passage quoted was addressed. Our text appears to be of that character; as in it the Spirit of God is compared to *fire*.

In noticing the text, under present consideration, we shall consider,
FIRST, the analogy.

SECOND, the doctrine inferred, viz. that the Spirit may be quenched.

THIRD, how the Spirit may be quenched: and,

FOURTH, offer some reasons why it should not be quenched.

The *analogy* existing between *fire* and the *Spirit* is peculiarly striking! and a more fitting figure could scarcely have been conceived. Some of the peculiar properties of this element are well known to all; not excepting the most ignorant of our fallen race.

1. One of the properties of *fire* is, to dissipate *darkness*, and to diffuse *Light*: and, what the natural world would be without light, so is the *moral condition* of man without the SPIRIT. What the natural Sun is to the Solar System, the Spirit of God may be said to be to the soul of man. As the former was before "God said let there be Light," so is the latter until that Spirit which "lighteneth every man that cometh into to the world" move upon the darkness of the understanding, and diffuse some ray of light to the soul. The

author of our text, the Apostle to the Gentiles, when writing to his brethren, at Ephesus in respect to their former condition, when they were "aliens from the common wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" says "ye were sometimes darkness. but now are ye light in the Lord." That man, by nature, is in darkness—a darkness which enervates and degrades him, is a fact which no one, who believes the Bible, or will open his eyes to the evidence of sense, will deny. Of this truth the present state of the, yet, uncivilized nations of the earth, is a proof which cannot be done away. Not being favoured with the written Law they cannot, fully, comprehend the *will* of the, to them, "unknown God whom" they "ignorantly worship;" and, though the *light* of the SPIRIT may shine upon that darkness, yet, it may with much truth be said that "the darkness comprehendeth it not." And, even in Christendom where the Gospel has shone in its greatest lustre—where the rays of the Son of righteousness have fallen, with unobscured brilliancy on the land, there are many, who are in *darkness*, and whose eyes have been blinded by the god of this world, if the declaration of John be true, who says "he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes," and who that lives can disbelieve this? But, it is the province of the Spirit to *enlighten*. The Apostle Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, observed, "the Spirit searcheth all things;" by which we understand that it so operates upon the dark, and benighted understanding, as to convince the mind of its origin, and its end. The same inspired penman, when addressing the Ephesians, after having prayed that the "Father of glory" might give unto them "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation," observes, "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened that ye may know what is the hope of his calling."

Again: our Lord himself observes, when speaking to his disciples, "The comforter, which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." It is, then, by the *divine illumination* of the Holy Spirit, that the dark soul of man is convinced of its depravity—and is made acquainted with its obligations, and accountability to God. —But,

2d. It is another property of *fire* to *warm* whatever bodies it may be applied to. So, too, with the Spirit of God! Wherever its enlightening influences are felt, and cherished. it warms the naturally cold, and obdurate heart; when the soul becomes enlightened, as we before observed, it is made acquainted with its *obligations*. The man thus awakened, sees in how many instances the kind Parent of all his mercies has protected him in the hour of danger—how many perils he has brought him through, and under a sense of these mercies the heart relents—its coldness and apathy ceases—its icy stubbornness begins to yield; & the heart is made warm and tender under the gracious influences of the blessed Spirit.

3d. Fire, also, has the effect to *expand*, or enlarge whatever bodies it operates upon: so, wherever the Holy Spirit is not restrained in its operation upon the heart, its faculties become enlarged; they cannot remain the same, this is impossible! The understanding having become enlightened, and having thereby been enabled to comprehend more of God, by the communication of the same Spirit: the heart has been made tender—has been warmed. And now that it does understand and feel more, it is enlarged to

receive still greater light; and swells unutterably full of gratitude, of love to God: but, as brevity is necessary, we shall notice in the

4th. Idea; that fire possesses the property of separating metals—of dividing and separating the pure metal from the grosser particles of the ore. So, also in this respect, is the spirit of God like fire. The soul, by nature, is like ore in the bed! It is emphatically “a pearl of great price”—above all value, but it is mingled with much of the dross of sin, and covered deep in the bowels of the earth. Though this be the Natural condition of man, yet, by the atonement made by the Lord himself, the ore may be said to have been brought to the surface, where it may be operated upon by that power which is calculated to separate the good from the bad, the grosser from the finer particles. Hear what the spirit itself saith! “who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? for He is like a refiner’s fire, and like a fuller’s soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the son of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver that they may offer unto the Lord an offering of righteousness.” Hear the same spirit again through the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah. “I will ease me of mine adversaries and avenge me of mine enemies, and I will turn my hand upon thee and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin!” yes, if the spirit be allowed to remain in the heart, and be not quenched, it will effectually cleanse it from every dead work, purify it and make it meet for the master’s use.—But, again:

5th. Fire, or heat is absolutely essential to animal or natural life; without the presence of this element the body would immediately become a lifeless lump of inanimate matter, like a log or a stone; distinguished from either, only by its form. As heat, or fire is to the *natural man* so is the Holy Spirit to the *moral*. “It is the spirit that quickeneth the flesh profiteth nothing” and the spirit giveth life. “A man out of Christ is morally dead—Dead in trespasses and sins,” at least so the Scriptures declare him to be. And to set the declaration beyond a controversy, the Apostle to the Gentiles observes that “to be *carnally* minded is death, but to be *spiritually* minded is life, and peace.” We come now to notice the next general idea arising from the text which is:—

SECOND, The doctrine infered, viz. that the spirit may be quenched—we are not insensible to the fact, that some, and those men of talent and piety, have contended that the spirit could not be by all entirely or effectually quenched. This idea seems to grow out of that system of divinity which teaches that God has, unconditionally, elected and by an irresistible, and special influence of the Holy Spirit, brought some sinners to the enjoyment of eternal life, while the residue are left without that spiritual influence, and are required to perform certain conditions in order to the attainment of that which was given *unconditionally* to another. This sentiment is so perfectly derogatory to the character of JEHOVAH, and so at variance with his *revealed will*, that we do not deem it necessary to occupy time or space in counting it; unbiassed reason, under the enlightening influences of God’s blessed spirit, must reject such an absurdity; as it is opposed to common justice. We would, however, just observe that if the spirit cannot be quenched, we can see no manner of propriety in the injunction of the text. The Apostle

* Eph. ii 1. & Col. ii. 13.

was cautioning his brethren against the doing of what was actually, according to such a theory, impossible. But we will leave this doctrine for further consideration, and pass to notice in the

THIRD Particular, How we conceive the spirit may be quenched. It may be quenched by the unconverted, but awakened sinner.

1. By light and trifling conversation. Many who are unwilling to avail themselves of the enlightenings of the heavenly monitor, hurry from the house of God, or the more private circle of praying friends, to the haunts of the giddy and the gay; by which means the light becomes more and more dim, until entirely extinguished,—leaving the mind in a far more gloomy, state than at the first. And,

2d. Though the person be formed for habits of sedateness, or gravity of expression, or countenance, as many are who ‘quench the Spirit,’ yet these, by associating with ungodly companions, are sure to suffer loss! The Spirit will not dwell in that heart where the world, in any shape, or degree is allowed a place. The Scriptures truly remark that “evil communications corrupt good manners;” and, that “likeness begeth likeness”—how true! An awakened, but unconverted, man can rarely, if ever, associate with the thoughtless, and scoffing traveller to hell, without being more fatally cataminated than before. His former good resolutions are shaken—he feels ashamed of his covictions, and strives to quiet the faithful monitor in his heart by promises of future amendment; or, perhaps, substitutes the cup of pleasure for the *water of Life*.—But

3d. As fire ceases to burn without fuel, or without being frequently replenished with some combustible matter upon which to act, so the *fire of the Spirit* may be, and often is, ‘quenched,’ or put out by carelessness, or inattention to its dictates. We are not to expect that the Spirit will enlighten, warm, expand, purify and bring to life the dead soul, without some exertion on our part. No! we are not only not to ‘quench;’ but we are to cherish, and encourage ‘the Spirit.’ We are to ‘work out’ our ‘salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure.’ Again:

4th. If the Spirit can be ‘quenched’ by a careless and apathetical state of mind, how much more readily will *obstinacy* and *self-will* effect this extinction of that light, which would otherwise lead into all TRUTH? Of such it may be said “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart, and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your Fathers did so do ye.” But, the awakened sinner is not the only one who can, and does, ‘resist the Holy Ghost’ or “quench the Spirit.” The young *convert* is, we think, equally as liable, if not more so, than the former character, to ‘quench the Spirit.’ We shall, therefore, point out, as well as we can, the danger to be avoided, and show wherein those who have felt the gracious visitations of the promised ‘Comforter’ may lose all, and be shrouded in darkness more intolerable than natural death itself.

[Continued on page 262.]

MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Advocate & Journal.

CENTENARY ADDRESS BY G. G. COOKMAN, WASHINGTON CITY.

Mr. Chairman and Christian Friends,—It was, if my memory serve me, on a beautiful evening in the summer of the year 1821, that three young gentlemen might have been seen standing in Epworth churchyard on the tomb of Wesley's father. They had gone on a pilgrimage to the village of Epworth, the birth place of John Wesley. Above their heads arose that venerable pile, the parish church of Epworth, in which he was presented at the baptismal font by his illustrious mother, and consecrated to God, the Church, and the world. In the neighbouring distance might be seen the site of the ancient parsonage in which he first drew his breath, and around the green fields with their rich and verdant landscape, in which he spent the joyous days of infancy and childhood. And on the very tomb-stone they were now occupying, they recollected Wesley himself had stood upward of half a century before, and preached to listening thousands the unsparingly rich of Christ. O sir, it was an hour of hallowed inspiration, never to be forgotten. One of the young gentlemen involuntarily exclaimed, "May the spirit of Wesley descend upon us!" Whether that exclamation were prophetic it is not for me to say, but certain it is that within a comparatively short space of time these three young gentlemen were called by the spirit to the work of the Christian ministry. One is now a missionary in Canada, another a minister of the Baptist denomination in England, and the third the humble individual who has now the honor to address the meeting.

Sir, upward of 18 years have passed away since your speaker stood upon that sainted spot, yet the sublime and holy enthusiasm of that moment lives and burns in this heart as intensely as ever, and surely if any circumstance might give expansion and vigor to the emotion, it is the in-

spiring fact, that he who stood 18 years ago on the tombstone of Wesley's father, now in this, the 100th year of Methodism, finds himself standing in *John street church*, the birth-place of *American Methodism*, surrounded by a multitude of its warmest friends. What hath God wrought ! Surely, sir, we may sing,

"When he first the work began,
Small and feeble was his day."

Yes, sir, while in the imagination's bright creation, I see the parsonage of *Epworth* on fire, and in yonder window a little boy envelope'd in the raging flames, & crying aloud for help, I involuntarily exclaim, "Who is that boy?" and the reply is, "Yon is little *John Wesley*:—yonder is the boy who will set the world on fire; yonder is the boy that, under God, will make a stronger impression upon the public mind, the public morals, than all the philosophers who have ever written, or the legislators who have ever governed." For, sir, the little plant of Methodism which was placed by his hand as a root in a dry ground, amid the scoffs and persecutions of the world: has become a most magnificent tree, throwing its wide spreading branches over the continents of the earth and the Islands of the sea, and in this, the first centenary, more than a million happy rejoicing Methodists, from "Greenland's icy mountain to India's coral strand," will, beneath its friendly shade, raise the loud and triumphant song of "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men."

It is not my intention to pronounce any panegyric on Mr. Wesley but rather to glorify the grace of God in him. We regard him as an eminent instrument employed by Divine Providence for the good of mankind. The history of methodism, as identified with that of *John Wesley* is a bright page in the mysterious book of Providence. Was it not providential that he descended from an honorable and pious ancestry; that he was the happy son of so excellent and talented a mother; that like most great and good men, he had a great and good mother; and although in speaking of Mrs. Susanna Wesley, we are not prepared to go to the same length with Dr. Adam Clark,

“that she was the greatest of the daughters of Eve,” yet we may affirm that the *Methodism* of Mr. Wesley’s mind and habits was laid by the early systematic training of his mother. And sir, it is no inconsiderable proof of the hand of an overruling Providence, that Mr. Wesley had the advantages of an academic and collegiate education, I thank God, sir, that John Wesley was a *college student*, that he *sharpened his wits on the Oxford grindstone*, that in the great emporium of British erudition he forged and polished those weapons of intellectual warfare by which in future he was able to reason with the lofty prejudices of the stalled prelate, or detect the sophistries of the skeptic. For, sir, it ought to be remembered, that Mr. Wesley was not only one of the most *successful preachers*, but one of the most *industrious writers* and *extensive publishers* of his day. He wrote largely on almost every subject—history criticism, philosophy, as well as theology, and wrote well; and wrote not for fame, or for money, but for the illumination and elevation of the mass of the people. He could appear to advantage in a two penny pamphlet, or in a royal octavo from his little tract on “*Primative Physic*.” to his *Christian Library* in fifty volumes, we see the versatility of his taste the comprehension of his views the energy of his application.

Nor is it unworthy of a passing remark that *Methodism* came into existence in the *Augustan age of English literature*, that Mr. Wesley was contemporary with Dr. Samuel Johnson, with the Burks, the Goldsmiths, the Garricks, the Chesterfields, of that remarkable period, with several of whom he enjoyed a personal friendship, and thus *Methodism*, so called had to pass the fiery ordeal of powerful and penetrating genius.

Well, sir, it was in the commencement of the eighteenth century that a handful of Oxford students come to the conclusion, that if the Bible were true, *real Christianity* was a very different thing from the popular religion of the day. To promote the one grand object they laid down rules for reading the Scriptures, conversation, prayer, meditation, fasting, and visiting the sick. Their precision attracted the attention of a wag of a student, who facetiously remark-

ed one day, "A new sect of Methodists has arisen among us," and from this satirical remark, a *by-word*, a *nick-name* arose this famous cognomen, "METHODIST." But what's in a name? "a rose would smell as sweet with any other name."

It was no inconsiderable link in the chain of second causes that Mr. Wesley should have been so early associated with that singular man, Mr. Law, the author of the *Serious Call*. The *Law* was a severe but salutary *school-master* to bring Mr. Wesley to Christ. Full of strong convictions, and honest zeal, and good intentions, behold our *young Churchman* embarking for Georgia to convert the North American Indians, and before half way across the Atlantic, discovering through the aid of a few pious German Moravians, to his consternation, that he was *unconverted himself*. Finally, behold him, led on by Peter Bohler, the Moravian, *his spiritual father*, from one step to another, until finally he says, while at a meeting in Aldersgate-street, London, as one was reading Luthers preface to the Galatians, "*I felt my heart strangely warmed.*" That, sir, was *Methodism!* there was the kindling of a fire which, I trust, will glow and run until

"Heaven's last thunder shakes the world below."

And in all his subsequent history, in his expulsion from the Established Church in his out-door and field preaching, in the origin of Class meetings, the employment of lay preachers, the settlement of the Poll Deed, securing the chapels for ever to the *Itinerancy of Methodism*, thus perpetuated the system, binding it equally upon preachers and people, we see not the wisdom and policy of man; but the wisdom and power of God.

What is Methodism? To this oft repeated question, and to the many explanations which have been offered, permit us to give a definition of our own. And first, we would answer the question negatively by remarking 'Methodism,' *so called, is not a sect*. The announcement of Mr. Wesley at the outset of his career was *anti-sectarian* and has been fulfilled to the very letter, "THE WORLD IS MY PARISH." Mr. Wesley ever disowned all idea of forming a mere sect. He intended that Methodism should be a nucleus to radi-

ate light and heat throughout all the Churches. And then it was no uncommon circumstance for persons to be in communion with the established Church, or of the dissenting denominations, and yet meet in class among the Methodists. Thus Mr. Wesley lived and died a member of the Church of England, nor have the Wesleyan Methodists ever formally withdrawn from the Establishment. Our pulpits and alters are anti-sectarian, admitting all Evangelical ministers to the former, and members of other churches to the latter setting forth on this subject an example of *Christian liberality* which it would be well for some Churches to imitate who charge us continually with sectarianism.

Methodism is not a form. It has always adapted itself to providential circumstances, and practised the doctrine of Christian expediency. Less anxious about non-essentials, it has labored at the substance of religion. It has waved a controversy about forms, but contended manfully for the power of godliness. It has laid less stress on the straight coat, and smooth slippery bonnet, but more upon the right state of the heart within, and the evidence of the life without. Mr. Wesley was no ways scrupulous: he could preach at St. Paul's or St. Bartholomews' Fare in a mahogany pulpit, or on a horseblock, under a tree, or upon a mountain. And his sons are like him. They can preach in a surplice, or in their shirt sleeves, in pewed or free churches, with notes or without. It is of very little consequence to them, *they know Methodism will and must go*, either on foot or on horseback, by steam or on wheels, no matter. And here let me animadvert upon a certain class of deplorable *croakers*, who, looking at mere forms, are forever complaining about departures from what they are pleased to call good old Methodism. *Good old Methodism indeed!* And is good old Methodism susceptible of no improvement? If our noble fathers, in the days of their poverty, *walked*, is that any sufficient reason why we, their sons, now that we can afford it should not *ride*? What! sir, shall we be so wedded to *old* prejudices that we must travel in the old Pennsylvania waggon, at the rate of two

miles an hour, when all the world is flying by steam? Shall we like the redoubtable navigators of "New-Amsterdam," creep along by day; sleeping by night, and making the Atlantic voyage once in three months, when the modern steam ship makes the passage in thirteen days? No, verily! put Methodism on the railroad, let it have steam power, and fly with the foremost to the very ends of the earth. I trust, sir, Methodism will ever repudiate all such prejudices, and keep pace with the spirit of the age.

Methodism is not an opinion. It demands no previous test of opinions, but one only condition, "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." The magnanimous language of Mr Wesley was 'away with opinions, if thy heart is as my heart, give me thy hand.'

What then is Methodism? And we answer

Methodism is a spirit it is a spirit of Bible truth and Christian charity embodied and defined in the mind, the heart, the character, the habits, the labors of that remarkable man, John Wesley, and from him extended to upwards of a million other minds and hearts, making upon them the imprint of his sentiments and doctrines, the light of his example, the impulse of his zeal.

And what is this spirit? We answer, 'Now the Lord is that spirit, and where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.' That, Sir, is Methodism.

What is Methodism? Methodism, Sir, is a *Revival of primitive New Testament religion*, such as glowed in the bosoms and was seen in the lives of the Apostles and martyrs. *It is a revival of the vital fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith.* It is a *revival of Original New Testament organization*, particularly in the itinerancy and brotherhood of the Ministry, and the right administration of Church Discipline.

It is a *Revival of the social spirit*, the free and ancient manner of social worship.

It is, above all, a *Revival of the missionary spirit*, which not content with a mere defensive warfare upon Zions walls goes forth *aggressively* under the eternal promise to the conquest of the world.

Sir, I can never think of that great revival of religion which took place within the Church of England one hundred years ago, without having before me the image of some ancient cathedral, with its lofty aisles and vaulted roof, and in the very centre of the marble paved floor I see a few shivering decrepit old people endeavoring vainly to warm themselves over the flickering embers of an expiring fire, and, while indulging feelings of pity and commiseration, I see a brisk sprightly little man enter, and with characteristic promptitude and zeal, he begins to stir up the fire—that little man is John Wesley. While he is thus engaged I see the saintly Fletcher approach with an arm full of faggots and throw them on the brightening flame, and presently I see approach with eager steps a bluff and portly personage: his name is George Whitfield and he begins to blow, and blow mightily, and the fire begins to kindle; and, as the towering flame illumines and warms the Church, I see Charles Wesley, the sweet singer of Methodism, take his harp and as he touches the strings with a more than mortal inspiration, I hear the joyous strain,—

“See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace;
Jesus’ love the nations fires,
Sets the kingdoms in a blaze.

To bring fire on earth he came,
Kindled in some hearts it is:
O that all might catch the flame,
All partake the glorious bliss.”

Methodism repeats the word of command through all her ranks, first issued by the great Lord and Captain of the “sacramental host;” she says, “Go—go ye into all the world. And, blessed be God her sons obey and march.

If, then, sir, this be a true version of Methodism, and I am still pressed with the questions, “What is the grand characteristic, the distinctive peculiarity of Methodism?” I would answer, it is to be found in one single word, ITINERANCY. Yes, sir, *this* under God, is the mighty spring of our motive power, the true secret of our unparalleled success. *Stop the itinerancy, let congregationalism prevail for only twelve months, Samson is shorn of his locks and we become as other men.* Sir, here I would make a central posi-

tion here lay the utmost stress, This is a vital point, in the maintenance of which we, as a people, stand or fall. In the establishment of this position allow me to borrow the light of an illustration.

In considering some time ago that beautiful text, "All things work together for good," I found the apostle explaining in a chapter, *how* the "all things" worked. He says, "tribulation *worketh* patience, and patience experience and experience hope." Now, sir, it occurred to me that these things all worked to a delightful result, after the manner of *wheels* in beautiful co-operation, as in Ezekiel's vision. *Tribulation* may be compared to the great *iron wheel*, where, by the divine blessing, the gracious power is first felt and attained. To this great *iron wheel* there is attached a smaller *brazen wheel*, which we may denominate patience, and as the great iron wheel moves around *lo*, the brazen wheel begins to move, also to this we see a *bright silver wheel*, which is styled *experience*, which moved by the two former, commences and continues its bright and rapid revolution; and yet beyond all these there is a *splendid golden wheel*, which is fitly styled hope, and over this is thrown the gospel rope of exceeding precious promises, upon which, if a man hold fast and never let go, it will wind him up to glory. Now, sir, let us apply this to Methodism. The great iron wheel is the system of Itinerancy, and truly it grinds some of us most tremendously; the brazen wheel attached and kept in motion by the former, is the local ministry, the silver wheel, the class leaders, the golden wheel the doctrine and discipline of the Church, in full and successful operation. Now, sir, it is evident that the entire movement depends upon keeping the great iron wheel of Itinerancy constantly and rapidly moving round. But to be more specific, and to make an application of the figure to American Methodism. Let us carefully note the admirable & astounding movements of this wonderful machine. You will perceive there are 'wheels within wheels,' First there is the great outer wheel of Episcopacy, which accomplishes its entire revolution once in four ye ars. To this there are attached twen-

ty eight smaller wheels, styled annual Conferences, moving around once a year; to these are attached *one hundred wheels*, designated *Presiding Elders*, moving *twelve hundred other wheels*, termed *Quarterly Conferences*, every 3 months: to these are attached *four thousand wheels*, styled *Traveling preachers*, moving round once a month, and communicating motion to thirty thousand wheels, called *Class Leaders*, moving round once a week, and who, in turn, being attached to between seven and eight hundred thousands wheels called *members*, give a sufficient impulse to whirl them round every day. O, sir, what a machine is this! This is a machine of which Archimedes only dreamed; this is the machine destined, under God, to move the world to turn it *upside down*. But, sir, you will readily see the whole success of the operation depends upon keeping the great iron wheel of *Itinerancy* in motion. It must be as unincumbered and free as possible. To accomplish this has ever been our main difficulty and hindrance, and, if ever this machine stop, it will be because the *great iron wheel* is clogged. The provision for the support of the ministry is insufficient, the funds for the support of the worn out preachers, meager, the temptations to locations strong and pressing,

Let me furnish you with a startling fact. At the close of the second volume of that excellent History of the M. E. Church, by Dr. Bangs you will find the names of all the preachers who were admitted into the conferences between the years 1767 and 1813, and the names of those who have located. I took the trouble the other day to count them up, and find, in a period of 46 years, that 1616 were admitted. Now how many of these left the ranks of the ministry? Why, sir, it is hardly credible, but we have it in figures, an undeniable but astounding fact, that 8191 of these located, leaving only 797 in the regular ranks. Now, sir, will any man tell me that these men had less devotedness and zeal than our transatlantic brethren, among whom locations are delightfully rare? Was it because they were tired or ashamed of the work? No sir it was *necessity, dire necessity*, arising out of the feebleness and inefficiency of our financial system. They found it im-

possible, out of their poor pittance, after feeding and clothing their families, to educate their children; in many cases to furnish their houses, and in all to purchase their own horses. Thus, in deciding the sad alternative between the *disgrace* of retiring from the ministerial ranks & the *disgrace* of being in *debt*, they chose the former. Sir, it is not so much the actual pressure of want, as the *apprehension of want*, if not for himself, at least for his helpless widow and fatherless children, which drives many a Methodist minister into location.

Now, sir, I ask, shall these things be? Shall we, at this memorable epoch, the hundredth year of Methodism, suffer the 'great wheel' to be clogged a moment longer? Can we offer to God, his Church, or the world, a more acceptable centenary gift, than by contributing to the creation of a permanent fund which shall free the itinerancy of all anxiety for the present, all apprehension for the future; a fund which shall provide for the education of the preachers' children in the establishment of manual labor, Kingswood, and Woodhouse Grove Schools, and which shall spread the missionary flame to the very ends of the earth.

Here, then, let us raise our Ebenezer; here let us build our centenary monument of gratitude in the sight of heaven, to be admired by generations yet unborn. Let its *base* be *itinerancy*, and on that broad, deep, pedestal let us inscribe the words of Wesley, "*The best of all is, God is with us.*" Let its *columns* be *education*, let their architecture be classically chaste, and on its lofty summit rekindle the *hallowed flame of missionary zeal*, which, as a beacon light, flashing its bright beams across the deep dark sea of this apostate and tempestuous world, may guide many a forlorn wanderer safe home to the land of rest, and peace.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

GOOD NEWS FROM AUGUSTA CIRCUIT.

Extract of a Letter to the Editor of the REPOSITORY.

I will now tell you what the Great Head of the Church is doing for us in this part of our Zion. The formation of the Rideau and Matilda circuits took off twelve appointments from the Augusta circuit, which left our field of labour quite circumscribed. In consequence of this we have been under the necessity of entering into neighborhoods hitherto unvisited by us. About five, or six weeks ago, I paid a visit to our old friends across the swamp, and left an appointment at the Day Schoolhouse, another at Manhard's, and at a place called Colton's Mills, about three miles in the rear of Manhard's.

On the 15th. of November I commenced a protracted meeting at Manhard's School-house, which continued 18 days, and resulted in the formation of a new Society there of 28 members. I went among the people, visiting from house to house, exhorting them, and praying with them. A few rejoiced at the appointment of the meeting, but the majority were either indifferent, or felt greatly opposed. There were but few professors in the place; these came up to the help of the Lord, got their hearts warmed, and entered fervently into the work; but nothing special occurred until the seventh evening, when a number of persons came to the altar to unite in prayer with the people of God. From this period a deep and solemn feeling was manifested in the congregation, convictions were numerous; and, in many cases pungent, and the converting grace of God was gloriously displayed in the salvation of mourning penitents. The work progressed powerfully until the close of the meeting, which was on the 3rd. inst.

The most essential service was rendered by our much esteemed Brother Bullis, from the Elizabethtown circuit, who was present during a considerable part of the time, and laboured with great zeal and success; and, I trust many in that neighbourhood will praise God, in Eternity, that they ever heard his voice. Two or three of those who have united with the Church professed to enjoy religion when the meeting commenced, four or five were in a backsliden state, and all the rest were taken out of the quarry of nature; and, by the skilful hand of the Divine Artist, have been wrought into lively stones for the spiritual edifice. Of this number sixteen are the heads of families, which furnishes strong ground to hope the work will be lasting.

The best of order was observed in all the meetings, and an excellent spirit prevailed among the people, worthy of being mentioned as highly creditable to the neighbourhood. From my little experience I am convinced that the most effectual means of promoting the work of God, is to visit from house to house, converse and pray with the people, and thus bring the great subject of their salvation fully before the mind. It cannot fail of awakening serious reflection, and of producing a powerful effect, and then, when they come to the house of God, they are in some sense prepared to profit by the word preached. The Farmer uses the most suitable means to procure a crop, and he is seldom disappointed: but are not the means which God has

ordained for procuring a harvest of souls, when used according to his word, and in humble, yet confident dependence upon the Divine blessing, more certain of being attended with success, than any means which the farmer can use to obtain a crop of grain? I know it is not by might, nor by power, but by the spirit of the living God that souls are awakened, converted, and saved; but this does not supercede the necessity of attending to the outward means, neither should it lead to doubts, and fears, with regard to the result. The spirit is promised to those who *ask* for it; the promises of God are *yea* and *amen*, to them that believe, and it is wicked not to expect the fulfilment of the promise, when *we* fulfil the *condition*. May the Lord inspire his servants with all that heavenly wisdom, faith and love, which are necessary to make them successful in winning souls to Christ. Not unto us, but unto thy great name, O Lord! be all the praise.

GIDEON SHEPARD.

Brockville, 6th. Dec. 1839.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

The remarks of *A Subscriber* would be inserted, but that we fear the effect would be rather injurious than otherwise. We are ever glad to receive communications, from any who may feel disposed to favour us in this, on subjects calculated to promote the welfare of the religious community; but for us to give place to any matter that would be likely to elicit a rejoinder, and draw us, or our friends into an unnecessary controversy, would be to depart from our original pledge. *A Subscriber*, will understand us as not condemning the *spirit*, or questioning the *veracity* of his remarks; and is respectfully requested to favor us again.

In order to save some labour, being very much drove with work, we have thrown the thirty four pages promised for this month into one cover, which has occasioned some delay in its circulation.

“Ho! ho! a religious periodical, ha! Religion is of no consequence; if it were a political paper I might give it my support.” So said an apostate when we requested his signature.

“Take the Repository, no: do you suppose I would encourage a man who is doing all he can to injure my business? If people should see that book on my premises it might cause them to go away without getting any thing at my bar, and I might loose a hundred pounds by it”—So reasoned the Inn keeper.

DIVINITY.

ON THE OFFICES OF THE SPIRIT.

"Quench not the Spirit." *Thess. v--19*

Continued from page 252.

1. This may be done by the indulgence of evil thoughts. The indulgence of an evil thought is the first step to sin; and if the enemy of the soul can obtain permission to lodge a season here, he is most sure to find his way to the tongue or to the actions, both of which are indisputable indexes of the heart. And, the absurdity of supposing that the spirit of God, and the bitterest enemy of God, can dwell amicably together in the same soul, is too apparent, to thinking men, to need a refutation. O the treachery of our corrupt hearts! how much necessity for us—for all, but the young convert in an especial manner, to watch over the thoughts. One indulgence here may lead to a total apostacy from God—may drive the spirit hence forever! awful thought! may the good Shepherd carry these lambs, and bring them eventually to the great general fold in Heaven!

2. Again: Such may 'quench' the 'spirit' by the indulgence of *worldly-mindedness*—this disposition is, perhaps, as fatal to religion as the indulgence of evil thoughts, and as imperceptibly leads the christian into a backsliden state. It arises from an undue attachment to creature good, or an over anxiety, about what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed. Such attachment, or such anxiety is not compatible with the genius of our holy religion; and would show its possessor to be either forgetful of God, or distrustful of his willingness, or ability to keep his promises. The confidence of the christian cannot be too implicit,—But, peculiar care should be taken, that presumption do not borrow the garb of confidence, and affect to trust in God for that for which no exertion has been made on the part of the creature. If this be the case, we should call it *presumption* and not confidence. We might cite the reader to examples in holy writ, where worldly-mindedness has caused the Lord to take his spirit from the people, and has left them to their own folly. But those who will take the trouble to read the word of God will find such examples, if they do not now know them; and those who have not an interest in these things sufficient to induce them to this duty will not thank us for a recital. But,

3rd. The young convert may grieve, or quench the spirit by the *neglect of positive duties*, such as watchfulness, sobriety, and prayer. Than these there can be no greater or more necessary duties imposed upon the Christian. The life of the Christian is truly represented as a warfare. The enemies of the Christian are *many*; it, therefore, requires the utmost watchfulness on the part of the Christian, to ward off a meditated attack and keep these subtle foes from this soul. And as the young convert is unacquainted with the *devices* of these enemies, he needs to be more particularly cautious that some of them do not come in the garb of a friend, and lead him captive at their will. Watchfulness is a duty which at no time can be omitted: but at the imminent risk of life. For the way to heaven is a strait and narrow way; and whoever does not watch closely, and observe the precise direction

of his course is momentarily, liable to step out of the way; and then he puts himself upon the enemy's ground.

But *sobriety* is also necessary to the young convert, in a particular manner, especially, in his pursuit after *truth*. The world is full of error and of false doctrines, and but for a strict observance of sobriety; the unwary, and inexperienced may be led into the interminable mazes of superstition, and error. *Sobriety* prevents this—It helps us, coolly, to examine the claims of *truth* and of *falsehood*, and to admit the one, and reject the other. *Sobriety* helps to place a proper estimate upon earth's blessings, and helps to a proper use, while it prevents the abuse of them. In fulfilling this duty, we are able to obey the injunction of Scripture, in not thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought, by which we are also enabled to make all reasonable allowances for the infirmities, and peculiar besetments of others. How necessary then is *sobriety*! and how important that it have a place in every christian's heart! and that it be exercised on all occasions. Watchfulness and *sobriety* are inseparable companions, Children of the same parent, and destined to the same employment. But, these, when retained in the heart are the foster parents of another great, and important, ingredient of the Christian character, which is defined *prayer*.

PRAYER, says one, "is an offering up our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, by the help of his spirit, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies." "Nothing can be more rational and consistent," says another "than the exercise of this duty." It is *rational* because we are dependent beings—and because we are also accountable. We are dependent upon God for every thing we enjoy no matter how small, and He will surely call us to account for how we improve what he bestows; this is certainly rational, and just. The Christian is commanded always to pray, and never to faint, (Luke 18. 1,) and to *ask* that he might receive—and to *seek* that he might find: and, attached to this command we always find a promise. "He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Long as they live, should Christians pray;
They learn to pray when first they live.

So sang the poet, and so responds every devout soul. It is however, by a habitual neglect of these duties, that the young convert often quenches the spirit. But, we conceive that it is also the duty of all men when born into the kingdom of grace to make a public acknowledgement of the same before the world; "witnessing," as did one of old, "a good confession;" saying, "come, and I will tell you what the Lord has done for my soul." We also think that where a new born babe in Christ refuses, or neglects, from any cause, to confess his "sins forgiven," The blessing of justification cannot long be retained. By such refusal, or neglect, the spirit is quenched; and the soul becomes morally dead—But, the awakened sinner, and the young convert, are not the only characters who require the admonition in the text. The Christian is required to make certain attainments in the divine life, in order to the possession of those blessings which are in reservation. "Be ye holy for I am holy," is a mandate from the king of heaven, which may not be treated with neglect, with impunity. A state of justification is desirable, and necessary; but the being justified, merely, will never bring us to heaven. Justification is the *pardon* of sin, and does not

effect our nature, it does not destroy the propensity—it does not change the inner man. This is an after work wrought *in the soul* by the spirit of God: and a work without which no man can see God. And every Christian who does not possess it, must be hourly admonished, by the working of the old leaven of the carnal nature, that such a work is necessary to a complete victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Psalmist David seemed to feel its necessity, when he so pathetically pleaded *with God* for a clean heart and the renewal of a right spirit within him. If therefore the christian be satisfied with the *external gift*, without the *internal change* and seek for no higher attainments, he lowers the standard of the gospel, and contents himself with the form without the power, which course can never be approved of God, or useful to man!

The spirit may, therefore, be quenched by light and trifling conversation; by associating with the ungodly, and openly profane; by luke-warmness, by obstinacy and self-will, by the indulgence of evil thoughts, or passions; by the indulgence of worldly-mindedness; by the neglect of *watchfulness, Sobriety, and prayer*; or by a refusal to acknowledge Christ as our only hope—our only salvation. But, it becomes necessary that we pass to notice in the

FOURTH particular; The reasons why we should not “quench” the “spirit”—we offer two reasons. 1. Rea. It is a direct insult to God; in as much as he has charged us not to do it, & more than intimated what the consequence would be if it were done. The 2. reason is, it will be attended with the most fatal results in respect to those who do it. We have said that as heat, or fire was necessary to animal life so is the spirit of God necessary to the life of the soul. And hence, it follows, that if the spirit be quenched, the soul must not only remain in a state of darkness; but it is morally dead. And if it remain in a dark and lifeless state, in time, can we reasonably suppose that the shade and vale of death will alter its wretched condition? no: surely not. Not only will moral, or spiritual death, be felt here, but the pains of eternal death—the gnawings of the undying worm—the burnings of the unquenchable fire—will result to such as “quench the spirit.” These considerations, therefore should operate as reasons, or motives for not quenching it.

Having thus briefly noticed the effects of the Holy spirit when suffered to operate upon the heart we come now to offer a few thoughts by way of improvement. “Quench not the spirit.” Does it move upon thy dark and benighted soul, O sinner! hast thou been taught by its influences to distinguish between that which is *right*, and that which is *wrong*, to look upon thyself as lost, eternally lost without an interest in Jesus; without having thy life hid with Christ in God! O! let me entreat thee to cherish the heavenly messenger to give him thy heart, to subscribe his terms of peace, and thereby good shall assuredly come unto thee. As you value your soul,—as you would escape the damnation of hell, as you would secure the friendship of God, and the intercessions of Jesus Christ, do not quench the spirit!

But, have you so far cherished this messenger of mercy, as to have experienced its *refining* influences in the separation of your guilt and condemnation from you, and purging your soul from all dead works, raising you from the death of sin to the life of God—in saving you from being a child of the devil, and adopting you into the family of heaven? If you have felt it

witnessing with your spirit that you were a child of God, rejoice and be encouraged, for if you obey the voice in the text great will be your reward in heaven. But, you *must* obey it, or a fearful looking for of fiery indignation will be thy only refuge in that day, when the smoking ruins of disorganized, and affrighted worlds shall announce the obsequies of universal nature, and sleeping myriads rising from the tomb all ghastly and amazed, shall, as gathering round the Eternal Throne, pronounce "The *Judgement day* is come;—that day, for which all other days were made," is come." O! be wise to day, and "hold fast whereunto thou hast attained, that no man take thy crown."

Again: to you who have long enjoyed the enlightening, and warming, and expanding influences of this promised comforter, ye veterans in the cause of God, what shall I say? shall I intimate a danger in your case? I should not deal justly if I did not; for

"Dangers stand thick through all the ground."

And the language of Scripture is: "He that endureth to the end the same shall be saved." Again: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Methinks that caution, where there is no danger, is, not only useless, but trifling with sacred things: therefore, beware! "least a promise being left you of entering into his rest, any of you would seem to *come* short of it." For, O! brethren, how must it enhance our misery, if lost, to remember the joyous seasons we had on earth the many seasons when we took sweet counsel together; the buoyant anticipations, the confident hope which we once had of getting to heaven; but the fault we shall see was ours, we 'quenched the spirit' we were left in darkness become morally dead, made shipwreck of faith—but we pause—may God save us from such an end.—Amen.

MISCELLANEOUS.

We take the following from an Essay written by the Rev. E. Peabody of New Bedford.—Mass.

MYSTERY, REASON, AND FAITH.

Night comes over a ship at sea, and a passenger lingers hour after hour along on the deck. The waters plunge and welters and glide away beneath the keel. Above, the sails tower up in the darkness, almost to the sky, and their shadow falls as it were a burden on the deck below. In the clouded night no star is to be seen, and as the ship changes her course the passenger knows not which way is east or west, or north or south. What Islands, what sunken rocks may be on her course—or what that course is, or where they are, he knows not. All around to him

is *Mystery*; he bows down in the submission of utter ignorance.

But men of science have read the laws of the sky. And the next day this passenger beholds the captain looking at the clock, and taking a note of the place of the sun, and with the aid of a couple of books composed of rules, and mathematical tables, making calculations, and when he has completed them, he is able to point almost within a hand's breadth to the place at which, after unnumbered windings, he has arrived in the midst of the seas. Storms may have beat, and currents drifted, but he knows where they are, and the precise point where, a hundred leagues over the water lies his native shore. Here is *reason* appreciating and making use of the revelations (if we may so call them) of science.

Night again shuts down upon the waste of the waves, & the passenger beholds a single seaman stand at the wheel, and watch hour after hour, as it vibrates beneath a lamp, a little needle, which points ever as if it were a living finger to the steady pole,

This man knows nothing of the rules of navigation, nothing of the course of the sky. But reason and experience have given him *Faith* in the commanding officer of the ship—faith in the laws that control her course—faith in the unerring integrity of the little guide before him.—And so without a single doubt, he steers his ship on according to the prescribed direction, through night and the waves. And that faith is not disappointed. With the morning sun, he beholds far away the summits of the grey and misty highlands rising like a cloud on the horizon; and as he nears them, the hills appear, and the lighthouse at the entrance of the harbor, and (sight of joy) the spires of the churches and the shining roofs, and among which he strives to detect his own.

CHRIST IN THE GARDEN.

By a young Lady.

While nature was sinking, in silence to rest;
The last beams of daylight shone dim in the West:
O'er fields, by pale moon-beams, to lonely retreat,
In deep meditation, I wandered my feet.

The Triumph.

While passing a garden, I paused, to hear
 A voice, faint and faltering from one that was near:
 The voice of the mourner affected my heart,
 While pleading, in anguish, the poor sinner's part!

While offering, to heaven, his pitiful prayer;
 He spoke of the torments, the sinner must bear!
 His life, as a ransom, he offered to give,
 That sinners, redeemed, in glory might live.

I paused a moment, and turned to see,
 What man of compassion, this stranger might be—
 When, lo! I discover'd, knelt on the cold ground;
 The loveliest being that ever was form'd.

His mantle was wet with the dew of the night,
 His locks by pale moonbeams were glitt'ring and bright,
 His eyes, sparkling like diamonds, to heaven were raised!
 Whilst angels, in wonder, stood round him amazed!

So deep was his sorrow—so fervent his prayers,
 That down, o'er his cheeks, rolled sweat, blood, and tears:
 I wept to behold him, and asked his name?
 He answered, 'tis "Jesus; from heaven I came.

I am thy Redeemer,—for thee I must die!
 The cup is most bitter; but cannot pass by:"
 The cause of his trouble, to hear him repeat,
 Affected my heart, and I fell at his feet.

I trembled with horror; and loudly did cry:
 "Lord, save a poor sinner; O, save, or I die!"
 He smiled, when he saw me, and said, to me "live:
 Thy sins, which were many, I freely forgive!"

How sweet was the moment, he bade me rejoice;
 His smiles, O, how pleasant—how cheering his voice!
 I flow from the garden, to spread it abroad,
 I shouted, salvation! O glory to God!!

I am now on my journey, to mansions above,
 My soul's full of glory, of peace, light, and love;
 I think of the garden, the prayers and the tears,
 Of that lovely stranger, who banished my fears,

The day of bright glory, is rolling around,
 When Gabriel, descending, the trumpet shall sound,
 My soul, then in raptures of glory, shall rise
 To gaze on this stranger, with unclouded eyes.

 THE TRIUMPH.

By Bishop McKendrie on his death bed,

What is this that steals, that steals upon my frame?

Is it death? Is it death?

That soon will quench, will quench this vital flame;

Is it death? Is it death?

If this be death, I soon shall be, from every pain and sorrow free;
 I shall the King of Glory see:—

All is well! All is well!

Weep not my friends, my friends, weep not for me,

All is well! All is well!

My sins are pardon'd, I am free!

All is well! all is well!

There 's not a cloud that doth arise, to hide my Jesus from my eyes;—
I soon shall mount the upper skies:—

All is well! All is well!

Tune, tune your harps, ye saints in glory;

All is well! all is well!

I will rehearse, rehearse the pleasing story;

All is well! all is well!

Bright angels are from glory come, they 're round my bed, thy're in my room;
They wait to waft my spirit home;

All is well! all is well!

Hail! all hail, ye blood wash'd throng;

Sav'd by grace; sav'd by grace!

I come to join, to join your raptur'd song;

Sav'd by grace, sav'd by grace!

Farewell my friends, adieu; adieu; I can no longer stay with you;
My glittering crown appears in view!!

All is well! all is well!

Hark! hark! my Lord, my Lord and Master calls me,

All is well! all is well!

I soon shall see, shall see his face in glory;

All is well! all is well!

All, all is peace and joy Divine, and heaven and glory now are mine,
O! HALLELUJAH to the Lamb!

All is well! all is well!

CLASS MEETINGS.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS REPOSITORY.

Dear Brother:

I send you a few thoughts on the subject of *Classes* and *Class-meetings*, hoping that my remarks may be of use to *some* of those, whose duty it is to appoint the *Leaders* and regulate the classes, on their respective circuits.

There is an evil that too generally prevails on our circuits, the forming of *large* classes. I have ever been opposed to this system for various reasons, a few of which I will mention. The injurious effect of the existence of *large* classes; has been more visible to me, of late, than ever. The Discipline is against the evil of which I am speaking, as follows "Each society is divided into *smaller* companies called *Classes* according to their several places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled "*the leader*;" This is the law, "*about twelve persons*;" but, instead of 12 members in a class, we often have twenty, forty, sixty, and sometimes even a higher

number !! This, I consider, a departure from the letter of the law, yes, and spirit too,

Now for some of the evils of this undisciplinatory and anti-methodistical usage. I Where so many meet together, the meeting has to be protracted, to too great a length, in consequence of which, other duties are neglected, or if not neglected, performed in a hurried and unprofitable manner; besides, the meeting flags in the middle of it, or before its close, when it becomes a burden, and those present wish themselves somewhere else. The discipline directs that no *love-feast* be continued more than 'one hour;' and where they are properly conducted, an hour is enough for these. Surely then thirty minutes is as long as a class meeting should be held, unless it be on some very extraordinary occasion. Add to this, that much of the interest of the meeting depends on the leader, and no man of ordinary gifts, and experience, possesses sufficient variety, to make the occasion interesting and profitable, above twenty-five, or thirty minutes.

2. Where the class is so very large, the leader finds it impossible to render that service to the class, that the discipline demands. "It is the duty of the leader, to see each person in his class, as often as once a week at least." Now when members are absent the leader should visit them, previous to the time of his next meeting, that he may learn the cause of their absence, and labor with them accordingly. If he has the charge of a few souls, all this can be easily done; but, if he has twenty or more to watch over, and A's become common on his paper, the work of visiting is left undone, and the class sinks.

3. Less 'quarterage' will be collected when classes are large, for the simple reason that there are fewer collectors. It is with this, as it is with the visiting, the leader finds it impracticable to go around to all the class, this would require a day, or perhaps two, previous to each quarterly meeting; the consequence is, a few are seen, those at hand, and the leader comes to Conference with a few shillings when there could just as well be as many dollars, or pounds. In every place where there is twenty members, there should be two classes, and two leaders. Until this subject is considered, and the societies properly regulated, the Church will continue to suffer. I hope to speak so loud on this subject as to be heard in every department of the Church.

4. Large classes make small quarterly Conferences, which is an evil often felt. I hold that we should get into the conference as many of the brethren, of suitable gifts and graces, as possible, "In a multitude of counselors there is safety." All the wisdom that can be brought into exercise should, on all occasions be employed. Furthermore,—there are many burdens to be borne by the members of our Conferences,—"many hands make light work."

5. Where classes are large, and the members far apart, as is generally the case, the prayer-meetings are thinly attended; elderly persons & females will generally be absent when the weather and roads are unfavourable. But if there were two or three meetings instead of one, I mean in different places, then all could be accommodated. Every thing that operates against the prayer-meeting should be avoided; this means, to the Church, is what the mainspring is to a watch. It sets all the watch in motion; and so long as this is in proper tune, every other spring; and shaft, and wheel must move; but, let

this once be broken, or out of place, and the whole operation is silent and motionless. Just so in the machinery of the Church, keep the prayer-meeting moving, keep it properly in MOTION and all the wheels will fly, yes, the very face may be ground off of the devil. But, break up this, let it become weak, and Zion languishes—the cause goes down. Much more might be said on the evil effects of large classes, and in favor of forming the classes, as the discipline directs, but I shall forbear for the present, hoping that some person more capable of doing the subject justice, will let his ideas be known, it will be proper, however, to notice some objections here, that may be made to what is set forth on this occasion.

It will be said, “We cannot divide the brethren, they have embraced religion *here together*, and now they will not separate; they are like children of the same house and family; they donot like to leave their home. All this may appear well enough; but just such reasoning as the above has led to the ruin of many a good society. Now we ask, donot the children have to leave the house of their birth? yes, verily; “the old farm” becomes too small for them; they cannot all WORK to advantage on the premises: nor would it afford them a comfortable living, hence they ‘move’ off, and go to cultivate other fields. Let converts be taught that God expects *them* to WORK in his vineyard—Let them know that religion does *not* consist in getting ‘happy’ merely, bring them to see and feel their responsibility, & there will be no difficulty in getting them to act for the general good, and the glory of God. When it is impracticable, or impolitick, to separate a society; let them all meet together, but let them be put into several classes; give no one man the charge of more souls than he can take good care of; and, let each see to the names on his own paper. In their meetings, let the leaders take charge in *turn*, or if one be absent, another will be present, so that no disappointment will occur. It will be said again, “we cannot find suitable leaders for so many classes.” Strange! and how could Mr. Wesley find a proper person in every twelve of his members, for a leader? If the brethren are set to work, & encouraged, there will be no lack for leaders. Any brother that is *pious*, and will watch over his class well, attending, strictly, to the work of visiting and keeping his paper regular, is a good and proper person for the office of leader. I am not of that number, who think that those brethren who can pray, and speak the loudest and longest, are the best and fittest for officers in the church. Let the men be selected who take a deep interest in the affairs of the church—who *act* as if they felt themselves identified with it; and who are *willing* to DO, as well as say. •

While out on this subject I would say a few words relative to marking the class-papers. This should be strictly attended to. Where it is done the leader can, at any time, show the preacher how matters stand in his class. And when members understand that the leader attends to this part of his duty it serves as a sort of stimulant; they will have as few A’s on the paper as possible. When members habitually neglect their class, they should be expelled. I would that we were more strict on this point: for, all such members are useless lumber—rotten timber in the building;—no dependence can be placed in them, for let but a small burthen be put upon one of them and it breaks, when, often, good and sound pieces are torn out with the bad.

• None other will be of any service to the Church, or themselves, or the world. AD

The subject of class-meetings is one upon which *no Methodist* can think and not feel emotions of joy and gratitude. It is pleasing to meditate upon—it is glorious to enjoy this means of grace; then let us do what we can to keep this department in its proper state, and to make the class-meeting, and class as profitable as possible.

JOSEPH H. LEONARD.

Sidney, Decembeer 10th. 1839.

PS. The 'ark' begins to move on this circuit; backsliders are returning, & sinners are coming to Christ. In one part of the circuit, especially, there is a good and glorious work in progress. We shall give particulars, the Lord permitting, hereafter. We call upon all the friends of Zion to pray that the work may be continued, and that it may spread and grow to a mighty flame. May the Lord set the world on fire!

J. H. L.

REVIVAL INTELLIGENCE.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE WORK OF GOD IN THE EASTERN DISTRICT.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS REPOSITORY.

Dear Brother:

I feel it my duty to inform my brethren, and the friends of the Methodist Church, that the good Lord still acknowledges us as a people. Our ministrations are being attended with the power that accompanied our fathers; when Methodism first appeared upon the shores of Canada:—Glory to God! it has lost nothing in its influence;—souls, by scores, are running into the fold. The work, in the lower part of my district, is promising; the centre of my work, in this field, is the Waterloo circuit. Two protracted meetings have lately been held, in this circuit, by Brothers Sills and Thompson, the result of which is, about forty have been converted; and about fifty have been added to the Church, on this circuit, since our last Conference. Br. Norman has taken in a number on the Bay circuit; I donot know to what amount. The Lord is on our side! I am looking for a good harvest this year. Glory to God for a holy ministry!—a holy ministry *will* prduce a holy people; and a holy people will God have for himself.

I think the time is soon coming when the Church will be purged from her dross—when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be accomplished; then, all Israel shall be saved.

The work has been going on, on the Brighton circuit, since our July camp-meeting; particularly, in the neighbourhood where it was held. May God carry on his work to the confusion of all our enemies!

BENSON SMITH.

O B I T U A R Y .

MEMOIR OF MRS. POLLY HENDERSON.

(Communicated for the Religious Repository.)

The subject of the following brief notice, Polly Henderson, wife of John Henderson, and daughter of Ezekiel & Nabby Shipman, was born in Salem, New York, on the 25th. of February 1792. Her parents emigrated to Canada when she was but eleven years of age, and settled in Elizabethtown, where they now reside, and where the subject of this memoir continued to reside until she took her final departure from the shores of mortality, and entered into that "rest which remains for the people of God," which transpired on the 8th. of November last at half past ten o'clock A. M. aged 47 years, 8 months, and 14 days. Sister Henderson sustained a good moral character, was an obliging neighbour, an affectionate wife, and a kind parent; and she has left her aged parents, a bereaved companion, nine children, and a numerous circle of afflicted friends to mourn her loss.

She embraced religion in Nov. 1837, at a protracted meeting which was held in the vicinity of her own residence, from which time she was an acceptable member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, until the day of her death. She was favoured with but a poor state of health during the last 5 years of her life, and for 6 months previous to death, was confined to the house, and principally to her bed. She suffered much during her illness, but she bore it with great patience. She was attended by an experienced physician, and every exertion which kindness and affection could make, was rendered by her friends in order to prolong her stay among them; but all was in vain, her disease continued to progress until exhausted nature yielded to its ravages. From the time of her confinement, the enemy thrust sorely at her, in order, to destroy her confidence in God. She had lost in a measure that sweet peace which she enjoyed when she first experienced the pardon

ing love of Christ, consequently she became a prey to distressing doubts and fears. She prayed, her friends prayed—her brethren prayed; still unbelief prevailed. Sometimes she experienced a degree of peace, but it was of short continuance. She was exhorted to believe in Christ, the plan of salvation was opened to her view, the all sufficiency of Christ, and his infinite willingness to save all that come unto him. She said she tried to believe, she knew Christ was able to save, willing and ready now; but still, she had not that evidence which she desired. She frequently expressed a willingness to die, could she only know herself prepared for the great and solemn change. She enjoyed her mind much better during the last two or three weeks, but she did not obtain the complete victory over all her fears, until a little before the closing scene. We went to see her the evening before she died, and remained until she left the scene of mortal strife and entered into her Masters joy. About two hours previous to her death the Rev. Mr. Wikinson, of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, called to see her. She was sitting up in a chair when he came in, and appeared calm and composed, expressed a willingness to die, could she but obtain that calm and satisfactory evidence she desired. He spoke very encouragingly to her and then when we all knelt down, he prayed fervently for her in which she seemed to join with great earnestness. After he retired, she was put in bed from which she never rose. A few minutes after she was got in bed, it was evident that the hand of death was upon her. Her friends perceiving that she was hastening to the eternal world, said to her: "Sister Henderson how do you now feel?" she replied better than last night. She was then asked if she knew her sins were washed away, & that she was prepared to die? she answered, "sometimes I do." Her friend then said to her: "We think you dying." Her speech failed almost immediately, and we could distinguish nothing but "gone." She exerted herself much to speak, and tried hard to make us understand what she wanted to say, but finding that she could not, she calmly reclined her head, gave over her exertion, and a sweet peace settled upon her countenance which seemed

to say what her tongue could no longer utter. A friend then took her hand and said: 'sister you cannot speak but we will ask you some questions if you can say yes you may press my hand: 'Do you feel Jesus precious to you now? can you trust yourself with him? Do you feel that he is yours, and that you are his?' She pressed her hand. She then said, if you could now speak would you praise God about for salvation? Are your fears all gone? Do you feel that you will soon be in heaven? 'She, as if eager to reply, clasped her friend's hand in both hers with all the force she was able to exert. She was then asked: "Do you want to say to your children to prepare to meet you in heaven?" She again repeated the sign. Her friend again said, (not doubting but all was well with her, but anxious that she should give all the testimony in her power), "Do you still feel that your trust is in God?"

Does Jesus make a dying bed
 Feel soft as downy pillows are,
 While on his breast you lean your head
 And breathe your life out sweetly there?

She repeated the sign, and continued so to do as long as any strength remained, and when her strength failed she continued to say by the movement of her lips, and the expression of her eyes, that she had gained the victory.

Though her death was not triumphant, yet it was calm and serene & such as leaves no doubt but that our loss, is her infinite gain. She died without a struggle or a groan. "Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his."

GIDEON SHEPARD

The following brief notice, from the Niagara Ct. which has just come to hand cannot but be cheering to all the friends of our Zion.

I am now in a protracted meeting; the work of God is reviving powerfully;—the meeting commenced a week ago, and, about 20 have found the pardoning love of God. The circuit is in good condition! F. B.

TEMPERENCE.

From an item in the Canada Temperence Advocate, for December, quoted from the N. Y. Evangelist we learn that the Ohio annual Conference, which commenced its session at Cincinnati on the 18th. of September, voted, 155 to 4, in favour of restoring Mr. Wesley's rule in relation to buying, seeling, & drinking spiritous liquors: in respect to which the 'Advocate' has the following.

To the friends of the renowned WESLEY, in these Provinces, we would say, in view of the above movement among their bretheren in Cincinnati—*Why should you not follow their example?* Are you afraid to follow the indefatigable man who, during his lifetime carried on a glorious and successful warfare against iniquity in all its forms, and laid, amid prayers, and toils, and tears, the foundation of your ecclesiastical policy; the wonderful man, who with a perseverance almost supernatural, attacked the enemies of God and man in all their refuges, and exposed with an eloquence which nothing but uncandid dulness, or blind obstinacy could resist, the *iniquitous* traffic, and the ruinous effects of intoxicating drinks! Would the great philanthropist, whom you love to honour, spare you, should he rise from his dusty grave & witness the prevailing disrespect to his sentiments, with respect to the buying, selling, and using inebriating liquors? We think not. While alive, he was not the man to spare this sin in any of its fashionable modes; and it is not likely he would do it now.

We hope this VOICE will not be sent abroad in vain!

We have, of late, received several communications, some of which were designed for publication, informing us of, and animadverting upon the conduct of certain individuals, who, it would appear, are seeking to ingratiate themselves into the good graces of some of our membership; and, at the same time inveighing against our preachers. Such conduct certainly deserves the unqualified censure of all good men, as it will be visited with the signal displeasure of HIM who searcheth the heart. We have also learned from other sources that a similar course of policy has been pursued, by those unfriendly to our interest, and envious of our prosperity, in other places than those referred to in the communication before us. Had we room we should treat those who are thus *creeping* into widow's, or credulous and unsuspecting persons houses, and are seeking to lead astray all they can, as their conduct deserves; but, we are compelled to desist.

We have purposely delayed finishing and sending out this last number of the REPOSITORY that we might be able to inform our readers of our determination in respect to issuing a 2d. Volume, which we could not do until we had received returns from the several circuits. Intelligence has been received from 9 circuits upon which we have resolved to DISCONTINUE.

We, therefore, avail ourselves of this opportunity to express our gratitude to those who have cooperated with us in this well intended, but unsuccessful, enterprise: and, we entertain a hope that, tho' we sink beneath our burthen, we shall not be forgotten, by our brethren, in their seasons of communing with the Deity; and that, finally, we shall meet them in Heaven!

L. D. S. & S. S. has just been rec'd;—we will print the Address.

Sinners are being converted and joining the Church on the Camboro Ct.

J. A. R. was unintentionally omitted.

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