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# THE CHRISTIAN.

Vol. II. } SAINT JOHN, N. B., OCTOBER, 1840. } No. 5.

CONDUCTED BY W. W. EATON.

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

## REGENERATION.—LETTER FROM M. WINANS.

JANESTOWN, OHIO, 7TH OCTOBER, 1840.

Dear Brother Eaton,—Had I never seen any other account of you than that given in the "Christian Messenger," by Samuel Robinson, I should have been led to believe that you practised baptism upon men, like sheep shearers practice upon sheep—without letting them know any thing of the design. He represents you as baptizing men who are ignorant of the resurrection of Christ, and who have not repented or prayed. In short, he represents you as baptizing men without faith, and consequently without repentance or prayer, for "how can a man call on him of whom he hath not heard?"

If the Baptist Teachers and Preachers of the British dominions in North America are as ignorant of what the Apostles teach, as they are of what A. Campbell and others, including yourself, teach, it is no wonder they represent the Apostles as teaching regeneration by the Spirit, in order to Faith.

These Teachers generally confound regeneration and the new-birth; they seem not to know that generation must necessarily precede a birth, and in like manner that regeneration must precede a re-birth. By regeneration they mean the new-birth, and in this their error consists. If they were to teach that which I conceive to be regeneration in its proper sense, as preceding faith, I think none would object. I will therefore define regeneration.

1. The Holy Spirit dictated the word to Apostles and Prophets.
2. These Apostles and Prophets proclaimed the word to men.
3. The word, when understood, is retained in the mind—then they are impregnated by the word of truth, and being thus impregnated, they are begotten of the Spirit by the word, which is, properly speaking, regeneration.

The effects of this regeneration is—1st, Faith; 2d, Reformation of life, and 3dly, Baptism—thence they are born again, and not till then.

The whole process being finished, they are then manifested in the visible kingdom or church of God. Faith is an effect of regeneration, just as quickening is an effect of generation; and repentance is an ef-

fect of faith, just as motion is an effect of quickening; and baptism brings the regenerated into the kingdom or church, just as the birth brings the generated into the world; so that baptism is to the regenerated what the birth is to the generated. But sometimes the whole process is included in the expression of a part, as, Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, &c. In these examples the begetting is put for the whole process of generation, including the birth; at other times it is said, "a son is born unto him." In this example the birth is put for the whole process of generation, and in like manner the regenerated may be put for the whole process, including the birth of water—and the birth may be put for the whole process of regeneration, including the begetting by the spirit through the word.

From the foregoing you will see, that according to my definition of regeneration, *it is the understanding of the word of God, dictated by the Holy Spirit*, and must necessarily precede faith, repentance, and baptism, so that none but the regenerated are fit subjects of baptism. In this sense I am a Baptist, just as Paul was a Pharisee by believing as Pharisees did in the existence of Spirits, and in the resurrection of the dead.

I hope when you and Brother Robinson understand each other, you will have nothing to contend about.

Affectionately your's,

M. WINANS.

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#### REMARKS ON THE ABOVE.

Brother Winans is one of the most original and acute reasoners who stand forward in defence of the Apostolic Gospel. His articles are always acceptable, as they are all prepared for the times, and well calculated to elucidate, defend or oppose subjects under consideration before the community. This remark, we hope, will not be construed by any as an attempt to flatter him; but rather an incentive to activity on his part to furnish, as he has in times past, articles suited to the present state of society. All the publications coming under our inspection, which plead for the ancient faith and practice, are benefitted by the plain independent labors of Brother Winans.

In the above article he has unquestionably used the word regeneration in its literal acceptation. In our letters to Mr. Robinson we used the word as synonymous with birth. This is the meaning attached to it by the most of writers. We think that we shall be benefitted by his very sensible remarks, and also hope that they will not be lost on our esteemed friend Robinson.—ED.

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From the Christian Messenger.

To the Rev. W. W. Eaton, Editor of the CHRISTIAN, Saint John, N. B.

LETTER 3.

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*Dear Sir,*—The design of my two last letters was to show that the faith which the Scriptures require to qualify for the ordinances of Christ is inseparably connected with the holy feelings, the place and

importance of Christian baptism, and in what sense remission and washing away of sin is applied in God's word. In this I would examine the duty of Ministers and Churches in receiving persons to the fellowship of the Church of Christ.

To receive persons to baptism and the Lord's supper without true piety, is the greatest injury we can do to their immortal souls; for it is well known that when Ministers of the Gospel receive others into fellowship (particularly young persons) as subjects of grace, they will soon think of themselves as others profess to think of them. It was the complaint which God made against his ancient people, Jer. 6, 13, 14—"From the prophet even to the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughters of my people slightly, saying peace, peace, when there is no peace." I have showed in my last letter that the faith of Christ is connected with holy feeling. Why should religion be the only subject in which we must not be allowed to feel. Yet it is the duty of Ministers and Churches to be governed not so much by a person's feelings, as by what appears to be the motives that produce those feelings. When we attend at the funerals of the dead, where children are weeping over a beloved deceased father, the sympathies of our nature lead us to participate in their feelings of grief and sorrow. And when we witness persons deeply affected with sorrow for sin, as humble penitents, or rejoicing in a newly found Saviour, as young converts to religion, we cannot, from the laws which govern our nature, but feel with them. Such feelings arise from the excited temperament of our minds. In the scriptures we never read of any of the primitive Christians rejoicing in those feelings, but in the Gospel of Christ which caused them. Such truths as the following were the cause of their joys, and the life of their comforts. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." "And he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him." "The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth from all sin." These divine truths which moved the hearts of the ancient saints of God, seem to lose their charm, and many want something else; the elevation or depression of their sorrows and joys, is with them their favourite themes. How many will say they will be baptized, and unite with the Church, when they feel it their duty, while others who have professed their interest in the Gospel of Christ, in the absence of religious feelings, give up family worship, the meetings of the Church of God, and the important duty of secret prayer. All such are moved to duty more by the impulses of the mind, than by the word of God, the commands of Christ, or even by the affecting story of Calvary, the highest of motives to induce us to take up the cross of Jesus.

In receiving persons to the ordinances of Christ and the fellowship of the Church, we should never expect the same account from all, as it respects the true manner or occasion of their conversion to God. These circumstances are under the control of sovereign wisdom. Some are called in early life, others in middle age, and some, though few, in old age. Samuel, John the Baptist, Jeremiah and Timothy,

were called of God from the morning of their existence. The same difference is apparent in the manner of the sinner's conversion to God; while some are awakened by strong terrors, others are broken down by melting sorrow; some are convinced and converted under the same sermon, and others under the gradual work of years. Some are called by the preaching of the Gospel, and others are brought to God by awakening providences, such as sickness or death. No definite rule is laid down in the Scriptures as it regards the time, the manner, or the occasion of the sinner's conversion; but the scripture gives us the evidences of a converted state, and the true works of one born of God. Such as humility of heart, sorrow for sin, entire dependence on Christ, love to the people of God, joy in God, and love to holiness.

It is our duty, when persons present themselves as candidates for baptism, to inquire, has the change they have professed to have met arose from principle, such as the exercise of the judgment and understanding in discovering their condemned state as sinners, and the plan of salvation throughout Christ, as the only remedy by God provided, or has their professed change been only in the excitement and impulses of the mind.

Again it is the duty of Ministers and Churches not to lay a cross on young converts which Christ has not laid on them, nor to appoint any thing as a pre-requisite to baptism which Christ has not appointed.

The practice of requiring persons before they can be baptized to stand up before the whole church, and there profess their faith in Christ, by giving a reason of their hope, I cannot vindicate as an appointment of Christ, or as a prerequisite to baptism. I know many think it is taking up the cross; I would only wait to inquire, is it a cross imposed by Christ on his followers? I do not find a precedent in God's word for the practice, and consequently I cannot acknowledge it as a test of discipleship, or an evidence of true faith. But, Sir, it would appear from your last letter that you disapprove of either Church or Minister judging the qualifications of persons wishing to be baptized and becoming members of the Church of Christ. That your views are inconsistent on this subject, will appear, if you apply them to your own practice. Suppose a universalist demanded baptism, saying he believed; if you made any inquiry about his faith might he not retort and say that you or the church had no right to judge, that you were no court to try his case. Why, sir, you must rather be guilty of the criminal practice you charge on the baptists, or receive him as a true believer. Still farther, if a pious person was to come to you who thought he had the true baptism of the Spirit, and believed in no water baptism, and wished to become a member of your church. You told him the church could not receive him, or they did not consider his baptism scriptural. Might he not also say you were trying his case. And if on your principles the church is not to judge the qualifications of persons wishing to become members by baptism you must receive him as a baptized believer. In short, if every man entering into the church of God is to be his own judge in matters of faith and practice, then we must admit all as true believers who think they are such, and

every thing as baptism which men may think as that ordinance. The church has not only a right to be satisfied with the qualifications of persons becoming its members, but it is accountable to God for receiving and retaining improper persons in its communion, Rev. 3, 14—  
 “But I have a few things against you, because thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, which thing I hate.” Private judgment is every man’s birthright and privilege considered as an *individual*. But every voluntary Society that is accountable for the members it retains must, in order to be accountable, have the right of judging the qualifications of the members it receives. From the above scripture, a church is such an accountable society, and therefore has the right of judging the qualifications of persons becoming its members.

You may inquire if the persons joining our churches are not examined before or by the whole church, how is the church to be satisfied with these qualifications. I would answer, the age, wisdom, and experience of the church should be called into requisition for that purpose. The Pastor, Deacons, and some of the experienced members of the church appointed with them, meeting alone with the persons wishing to be baptized and to join the church, could obtain the most correct knowledge of their repentance and faith in the Redeemer, and when satisfied with their piety and moral character they could report them to the church as fit subjects for the ordinances of Christ, and members of the house of God, the Pastor making the inquiry if any member had any scriptural objection against such persons, if not they would be considered received. Thus the fellowship and union of the church would be secured without laying a cross on young converts, which Christ never laid on them, or without making a law the King in Zion never made. It is well known that a person speaking feelingly and acceptably before a church, often arises more from the temperament of the mind and the courage of the individual, than from his strong faith. Many from the circumstance of their speaking, for the first time, before such a large body of christians, feel deeply so as to make others feel, but soon after give evidence that their religion was only excitement by their laying down all christian duty in the absence of such feelings.

If such had been examined alone, their state might have appeared different. Others who may be truly pious, yet, if called before a large church, may be so confused as not to be able to give that satisfaction required. But visit those persons alone, they manifest so much knowledge of the heart, and consistent views of the way of life, through a crucified Redeemer, and humble dependence in that way, and love to the Saviour as to remove every objection. Again, sir, does not common sense, as well as scripture, condemn the practice of young christians acting in those matters of church government which require experience and age to manage. Much of the schisms which have troubled our churches, have arisen from this course. It may be well to remark that there are two great questions which God in his word has left to be settled by the suffrage of the whole church. First the electing of officers, Acts 6, 2. Look ye out brethren. The second, the

exclusion of members, 2 Cor. 2, 6. Sufficient unto such a man, is the punishment which was inflicted by many.

You must be acquainted with the fact, that our aged Baptist ministers did not consider it requisite in all cases that persons must be received by a church before they were baptized, and that the above is the practice of nearly a thousand Baptist churches in England.

My dear sir, I have frequently and without reserve given you my views on the important subjects discussed in our letters, and on the place and importance of baptism. I have not been governed either by the practice of our churches, or by consulting the standard works of the day, but by the fountain of truth alone, the word of God.

I requested the Messengers containing my letters to be sent to you, and sent your letters to be inserted in the same paper, if the Editor saw fit so to do. You find fault with me for putting my letters in the Christian Messenger and not in the Christian.

The Christian Messenger being the organ of the denomination, and your letters, being against the Baptist denomination, and not against me, I was bound to publish my letters in that paper.

Praying that you and I may ever be kept in the spirit that becomes the Gospel, I remain yours, in Christian esteem,

SAMUEL ROBINSON.

#### EXAMINATION OF MR. ROBINSON'S THIRD LETTER.

*My dear Sir,*—You give as a reason for publishing your letters in the "Messenger," that my letters were written "against the Baptist denomination." And is not *your* third and last letter also as much against the practice of the Baptist Churches as mine? If it is not, then am I wholly ignorant of their practice. I rejoice to hear, sir, that in your conclusions you have not been "governed by the practice of the Baptist churches," or "the standard works of the day." Notwithstanding this, your letters are highly prized by all the Baptists, so far as my acquaintance extends. Names, very often, give passport to exceedingly conflicting theories. Precisely the same sentiments as announced in your letter before me have been advocated, for the last fifteen years, by many of our brethren in America, and the Baptists have opposed them. My brethren will all feel grateful for your timely aid in showing that "the practice of requiring persons before they can be baptized to stand before the whole church, and there profess their faith in Christ, by giving a reason of their hope," cannot be vindicated as an "appointment of Christ," and that it has no "precedent in God's word for the practice." I am much pleased that these plain declarations are found in the Messenger. As your letters are now before the Baptist community, I hope they will profit by your instruction, and give up a practice which makes a church, in the reception of its members, more like a political debating society, with a human constitution, than a congregation of the Lord with an unerring standard of faith and practice.

The Baptists of America are evidently reforming, both in faith and practice. Whether the difference in their preaching has originated in a conviction that their former sentiments were erroneous, or for the purpose of making proselytes, I shall not pretend to determine; but that such is the fact, no person that can remember what he heard preached ten years since, will question. Perhaps their sentiments are the same, but their progress in literature is such, that they are able to keep those points most obnoxious to other societies more in the back ground than formerly. At all events, the articles of faith remain the same, if I am rightly informed, in all the Baptist Churches of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. These articles say that "God has fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass;" but where is now the preacher amongst you, sir, who dare advocate this sentiment, as you were wont some few years since. This was once the favorite theme of your greatest preachers; if it be true, it now should be; but you are all aware that should you now preach this for Gospel, pew rents and preacher's salaries would be fore-doomed, if not foreordained, to sink at least one hundred per cent! I have heard many Baptist Ministers in the United States, but from none did I ever hear the doctrine of "unconditional election" proclaimed; but I have often heard them, in "protracted meetings," tell sinners that they might all be converted before they left their seats, if they would just "give their hearts to the Lord." Now, it is not possible that all these conflicting theories can be right—they may, however, all be wrong. Some of your Provincial preachers have been educated in the United States, and from that quarter much of this "Arminianism," as the old preachers term it, has unquestionably been imported. These, sir, are contaminating the rest, and, consequently, that which was heterodox a few years ago, has become orthodox now. One of your brethren, deploring this state of things, and the new doctrines, introduced particularly what he called "Fullerism;" and contrasting the preaching of a young man before and after he had been to a New England Seminary, said, "he went down to Jericho and fell among thieves, who had robbed him [of the doctrines of the Gospel] and sent him home half dead!" Now, sir, I am finding no fault with these changes. I shall not pretend to say whether they are right or wrong; but as the Baptists accuse us with preaching blasphemous doctrine, and do all in their power to injure our influence and prevent us from getting a hearing, you certainly will not consider me impertinent if I do solicit you to resume your pen just to request that you will let us know whether we are to draw our conclusions relative to the sentiments of the Baptists from your letters, the Baptist articles of faith, the preaching, or your general practice? Now, sir, I do not make these inquiries for the sake of writing a sentence. I do desire to approve of all your sentiments so far as I can. And, although many think that I am fond of controversy, yet it is not a fact. My heart would beat with joy could I see the Christian who would make greater sacrifices for the union, peace, and harmony of all the disciples of the Lord than myself. Yes! so much do I desire this that I would unhesitatingly agree to cease speaking and writing forever on



any thing that is not essentially necessary to the present and future salvation of my fellow-creatures.

The Baptists say we "deny the Spirit." To this charge we plead *not guilty*. If to disbelieve that men are immersed in the Holy Spirit, and enabled to speak in foreign languages—that they have new revelations and supernatural power direct from God, be denying the Spirit, then it is a fact. But, that every intelligent Baptist would be found with us on this question you will not hesitate to admit. If, however, by the spirit you mean a divine influence which fills the souls of those who love, serve, and obey God with all the heart, then, in me, sir, you have as zealous an advocate for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as there is in any Baptist church in the land.

We have and do oppose the idea of an abstract influence of the Spirit, an influence without words, means, or motives; and are not you aware of the fact that some of the most intelligent, pious and influential Baptists in St. John: (I mean your own fellow-laborers) have said more publicly and privately against the "abstract influences of the Spirit," and the "special call to the ministry," than ever we have done? And if reports are to be credited the President and principal professors of your own "Queen's College," also deny the Spirit, for it is said that they publicly oppose the old fashioned special call to the ministry. Here now, brother Robinson, are your fellow-laborers. How then can you oppose us and fellowship them! Now you know these are facts. Do you say that it is not on account of the doctrine of the Spirit, but because we baptize for the remission of sins? Here again you are in the same dilemma. Not only do you admit that baptism, connected with faith and repentance, is for remission of sins; but the aforesaid brethren have often advocated it in my hearing, and recognize no individual as having obtained pardon until immersed. You have no idea, sir, how our sentiments are spreading in all your churches where they come in contact with those who plead for the sentiments advocated by the *Christian*. A short time since, the Deacon of a Baptist church in the country being in the City, (supposing me to be a "Free-will Baptist,") said, in relation to several of his brother Baptists in St. John, "Why, they have become Campbellites!" This is also the case in Nova Scotia. An individual was awakened under the preaching of one of our brethren. He had once promised that if ever he joined any church it would be a Baptist. He now felt that he was a sinner, and desired to be baptized for remission of his sins. The resident Baptist minister—one of the oldest in the Province—heard his request, and complied with it according to his desire. You would, no doubt, have done the same. If, sir, regeneration and remission of sins, are synonymous terms, which, I believe, are the sentiments advocated by the Baptists, *did not that aged minister, and would not you, baptize a penitent sinner that he might be regenerated and born again?* If this be answered in the affirmative, then I hope you will never oppose us on this point. Why, I ask again, are we represented as holding and propagating blasphemous doctrines? Is it because the sects in St. John have agreed to call us Unitarians, and assert that we deny

the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ? Never were charges more wicked and unjust. They are as false as God is true. There have been so many falsehoods, calumnies and slanders, uttered in relation to myself, on this subject, that should I hold up their authors to the public in the light in which they might be, too much space would be occupied in "the Christian; and should they receive their just deserts from my pen, persons unacquainted with many things which it would not be proper to commit to paper, might think that I owed them some personal ill-will; but I do not. I leave them at present to their own reflections. The great day of the Lord Almighty will bring us all before the great white throne, where a clergyman's coat, a broad brimmed hat, and a sanctimonious face, will be poor apologies for falsehood and detraction.

In relation to the charge I would, however, observe, that we have rejected the doctrine of the Trinity for the same reasons that we have Calvinism, Arminianism, Universalism, &c., just because the word of God said not a word about it. It may or it may not be true. But that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are equally divine, and that they are one in the work of Creation, Providence and Redemption, is a doctrine of which I never entertained a doubt. To go farther into these speculations, although I have in former times, I cannot now.

On this point, however, for your own satisfaction, I refer you to your Brethren in this City, who have often frequented our meetings, and with us have celebrated the dying love of him whom we adore, as the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. If, then, we are not disfellowshipped in consequence of these sentiments, why then are we so obnoxious to the Baptists? It must be from one of two causes; either because we oppose creeds and confessions of faith, or in consequence of our preaching that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man! And even on these points the Baptists are not agreed, even in these Provinces! The conclusion, then, of the whole matter is: the Baptists receive and approve of members in abundance, who believe, teach, and practice, precisely as we do ourselves, but we are opposed by them with more zeal and rancour than by any other denomination: meeting houses and school houses, under their control, are closed against us, and many of them I really believe would much rather their children and relatives would live in the practice of the most odious vices than become members of our communion. What I have seen in several places put these facts in my mind beyond a doubt. You, sir, see not only the folly, but the wickedness of such conduct. I appeal, therefore, to you as a mediator; as one who has influence in the Baptist community, to show them the necessity of pursuing a different course of conduct, for their own credit, for the peace of Zion, and the salvation of our fellow men.

The preceding remarks have very little to do with your letter; but I have taken this opportunity to lay these suggestions before you.—There are a few things in your letter that I wish to notice, not to oppose, but that you may understand our practice. You seem to think that we "disapprove of either Church or Minister judging of the qualification of persons wishing to be baptized." Here you are mistaken, for we permit any person to judge. The course pursued is usually the following:

After we have laid the Gospel facts before a congregation, with its blessings and promises here and hereafter, with the way of life and salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ; we say, "All who believe the Gospel with all their heart, who are convinced of sin, righteousness and judgment, who truly repent of their sins, and by the grace of God are determined to forsake them—we now exhort to obey the Gospel. 'Be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" If the house is crowded, we invite such characters to manifest their determination by rising up in the assembly; but more generally in the City we invite them to take the front seat. If these persons are well instructed in the principles of the Gospel, we say little else to them than to call for a distinct confession of their faith in the Lord Messiah; if they are not, in our estimation, so well instructed as they should be, we show them that to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is to place implicit confidence in the record that God has given of his Son through Prophets and Apostles; to repent is to be sorry enough for their sins, to turn from them, "to cease to do evil and learn to do well," and that the benefits of Christ's death are applied to those who being "baptized into him, are baptized into his death."

We do not call church meetings for this purpose; but in all our meetings where we have reason to suppose there are those who will volunteer for heaven, we proffer the invitation. When they do come forward, they are if possible forthwith baptized.

The Minister or any member of the Church ask any question they choose. Some imagine that this course would often call forward many unworthy persons; but I have no reason to think that it will any more than the course pursued by Baptists, or that proposed by yourself. The Apostles baptized Ananias and Saphira, and we cannot expect that all who are received into a Church will prove more devoted to God than those received by the Ambassadors of Christ. You judge of them by the narrative they give of their *feelings*, and we by the declarations they make concerning their *faith* and *determinations* for future conformity to the Lord Messiah! "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest," said Deacon Philip, and so say we.

But, suppose a Universalist should come? What then? Why treat him just as we would a Calvinist! The former would say he believed that all would be saved, live as they list, but he desired to be baptized—for what? If he acknowledged that he was a sinner, and declared his faith in Jesus, and desired baptism, that he might enjoy pardon, fully determined to walk in all the ways of God, I would baptize him. Would not you? But if he should declare that he only desired to be baptized to make a profession of Universalism, I would not receive him. The Calvinist I would treat precisely in the same way. If he should confess his opinion in the decrees, and that God had determined the salvation of a part of the human family, and the damnation of the other, I should be very sorry to baptize him into such a faith; but though he should thus believe, if he declared that he trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation, and desired to be baptized, that he might enjoy the benefits of Christ's death, I should not dare to "forbid water." So with all others. It is none of my business what people's particular opinions are, if they

believe in Christ, obey him, and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit. They belong to Christ, and they are my brethren.

These articles are closed with the same benevolent feelings which actuated me in their commencement. I have sought for the truth, and I have endeavored to lay it before the world. A few of what I considered the most prominent errors in the practice of the Baptists, I have laid before you. There are a few things that I exceedingly regret, but benevolently hope that you are in no way culpable. The non-appearance of those articles in the "Messenger," to which yours purports to be a reply, and your reasons for not publishing your letters first in "The Christian," are matters on which all our readers will form their own conclusions. The incorrect quotations made by you, and the erroneous conclusions to which you have led the readers of "The Messenger," relative to the sentiments advocated in my letters, are points to which I would now call your special attention. I hope the high opinion which I have formed of your character and independence will not be lessened by permitting these things to stand against you; but I do hope that your estimation of the Christian and Ministerial character, will induce you to say at least to the editors of "The Messenger," that you have misunderstood my sentiments, and through haste (or for what cause you know), have made quotations, supposed to be from my letters, which did not in reality exist there.

With an ardent prayer to the great author of the glorious system of salvation, that he will make all that each of us have written subserve the true interests of Zion, and that you may enjoy the consciousness of doing his will here, and eternal life beyond the tomb, I remain, respectfully and faithfully, yours,

October 27th, 1840.

W. W. EATON.

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## SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

This is an eventful year. Many important questions, religious and national, appear to be verging towards a crisis. In the opinion of some of our friends in New England, the period of the Messiah's second advent is near at hand. Great religious excitements have been the result of a discussion of this question. If any subject demands, and should call forth excitement, it is this.

Is there an intimation in the oracles of God, that Christ will appear personally again on this earth? There certainly is! And can we give the question a thought, and not take a deep interest in it?

At present we can only find room for a few remarks, which are designed to place the subject clearly before the readers of *The Christian*.

On this, as on all other questions, there are many conflicting sentiments; and, consequently, various classes of controversialists. Relative to the latter, there are

1st. Those who believe that Christ's coming again, so frequently spoken of in the New Testament, took place at the destruction of Jerusalem. This is the general sentiment of Universalists.

2d. Those who think that "revivals of religion" will extend until the whole world shall have been converted to God, and that the whole

earth shall remain in that state for a thousand years, and that then Christ will personally appear as the Judge of all the earth.

3. Another class advocate the restoration of the Jews to Canaan—Jerusalem rebuilt—sacrifices and oblations renewed, and the whole nation, the ten tribes included, settled in the Holy Land, amidst unparalleled splendor. This state of things is expected to arouse the cupidity of the nations, who shall combine their forces to destroy Jerusalem. After the capture of a third part of the city, and the destruction of many, the Lord Jesus shall descend in person on the top of Mount Olivet, and fight for Israel, and deliver them; then shall the Jews be brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles, and Christ shall reign on earth a thousand years.

4. But another theory is now afloat, which proposes making shorter work than this. At its head is a Mr. Wm. Miller, and judging, from reports, a pious, zealous man. He contends for the personal appearance of the Lord in 1843, at which time the Judgment will commence, and conclude in one thousand years.

There are many other sentiments growing out of these, and forming other classes, but may properly be arranged under these four. The "Signs of the Times," noticed in our last, is devoted particularly to the advocacy of the fourth view of the subject. Relative to the question proposed by Brother Himes, (noticed in our last,) we have time and room at present just to say—

I have nearly completed reading Mr. Miller's Lectures, Mr. Begg on the Prophecies, and also Mr. David Campbell's pictorial work on the same subjects. As soon as time will permit, I shall endeavor to weigh them all in the balances of the sanctuary, together with the signs of the times, and then, and not till then, shall I dare to give my conclusions.

As to the question, "What think you of the second coming of the Lord Messiah?" I have at no time, since I became obedient to the Gospel, had a doubt in my mind on this subject. There is no subject plainer in the oracles of God. When the Lord was ascending, two angels informed the disciples, that, "that same Jesus who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven." He said himself that he should come in the clouds, and the closing portion of the revelation of God says, "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." One article of my faith is the personal coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the same manner in which he was seen to go into heaven. Therefore, in the performance of my duties as a watchman, I have proclaimed the coming of the Lord Messiah. But as to fixing upon the year; of this I have always been doubtful. "The day and hour," the Saviour declared, "knoweth no one, not the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only." I have never doubted but this referred to his coming again. Far be it then from me to assure a sinner that the coming of the Lord will be delayed till the year 1843, or even another day! That this coming will be sudden, and unexpected by the great mass of the human family, is to my mind also clear. It shall, therefore, be my constant endeavor to receive and elicit all the information possible on this momentous and interesting theme, and induce as many as possible

to watch and be sober, to have their lamps trimmed and lights burning, always ready for the return of the master: so that when the cry shall be heard "Behold the bridegroom cometh!" it may fill our hearts with joy and holy exultation.

EDITOR.

### "THE CHURCH REFORMER."

Such is the title of a monthly sheet, published in Boston by *Dow & Jackson*, and edited by S. HAWLEY, at the small sum of *half a dollar* a year.

The work appears to be devoted to the union of all religious parties.—We have seen only the second number. The perusal of one paper would hardly fit us to speak with certainty as to the grounds which are assumed for the union of Christians. We, however, hail with joy every publication which has for its object "peace on earth and good will towards men."

Christian Union is, with us, a favorite subject—to all who have had their hearts armed with the love and benevolence of our Divine Redeemer, it is a delightful theme. Who, that ever tasted the sweets of redeeming love, would not rejoice to see all christians forming one holy band of brotherhood. How soon would the glorious song of salvation be sung from the green hills of Van Dieman's land to the cold plains of Siberia, were Christians united; the giant Patagonians of Cape Horn and the Esquimaux of Greenland would join in the song of triumph, and as the disciples of the Saviour, would be united in their exertions, sounding out the fame of "him who by the grace of God tasted death for every man."

During the last year we saw with pleasure an account of a Union Meeting held in the State of New-York, at which meeting many excellent sentiments were advanced, and many potent arguments were recorded, against creeds and confessions of faith as bonds of Christian Union. The "Reformer" before us is altogether filled with an account of a similar meeting recently held in *Groton, Mass.* The name of *L. Myrick*, who figured as a prominent individual at the former meeting, appears to be such at the latter, together with the names of *Hazen, Russell, Martin, Himes*, and others, who are really advocates of Christian Union. We hope their labors will not be in vain in the Lord

With great grief, however, we perceive that some of the speakers at the convention contended for a union of believers and unbelievers, rather than a union of Christians! A man, styled the "Rev. Mr. Parker," would have a union with men whether they believed any thing about the new testament or old, the atonement, baptism, or any thing ritual! He informs us that when man, "loves man as himself and God above all, then—the dogmas about miracles, the ascension, the inspiration of the apostles, will be subjects of speculations for the curious, but which will have as little to do with our *religion* as a farthing candle has with the shining of the noon-day sun." Such sentiments as these forcibly remind us of the language of an Apostle—"What concord hath Christ with Belial, or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel." A union with such men is not desirable. The calm—the peace formed with such gentle rejectors of Heaven's best boon to man—the word of God, would be like a deceitful calm of the tropics—a preparation for a more tremendous

concussion of the winds of Heaven. Let such a combination as that recommended by Mr. Parker, be formed and the number of sects will be multiplied ere one year passes over. Men must be bound together, religiously by something more than a human cement. Unless they love God, and prove their attachment to him by obeying his commands it is a political union; to be severed as soon as party interests, or sectional jars come in to disturb their peace.

Faith in God and an open humble submission to his will are not only essential to peace of mind but must precede all rational attempts at Christian Union.

The latter convention began by defining sectarianism, this was well, but had they opened the Volume of Heaven and ascertained the pre-requisites of Christian character they would have done better.

Will Mr. Hawley give us his views of what constitutes a Christian?

EDITOR.

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### SUCCESS OF THE ANCIENT GOSPEL.

S. Strickland, Fayetteville, Arkansas, June 6th, gives an account of the confession and conversion of twenty.

M. Cole, Charleston, Indiana, June 24th, writes, that during a short time upwards of a hundred had been baptized and added to the congregation of the Lord within the bounds of his labours.

T. M. Allen, Boone Co. Missouri, June 25th, informs us, that the labours of himself and his fellow soldiers in his region of country had been blessed in the conversion of one hundred and fifteen.

Chester Bullard, Pulaski, Co. Va. July 8th, gives an account of the organization of a church, and the baptism of two.

S. E. Jones, Pike Co. Missouri, July 7th, says, that two churches had lately received fifty-six additions.

Thos. Potts, Henry Co., Tenn., July, 7.—“Last Lord's day I was called on to immerse my father, a soldier of the revolution, between three score and ten and four score years of age; he has been a member of the Methodist church, first the Episcopal, and since the Protestant, more than fifty years, and nearly forty years a preacher!” He also gives an account of the immersion of a young man who was in the last stage of existence, one too who had lived an infidel, but in his last sickness became convinced of his need of salvation. He sought and found it in obedience to the Lord.

J. T. Johnson, George Town, Ky., July 30.—He and a fellow labourer, B. T. Smith, had taken an extensive tour of five weeks, and had gained “one hundred and twenty-nine noble additions.”

D. M. M'Cann, Martinsburgh, Knox Co., Ohio, August 5th, writes, that through the labours of a few brethren, thirty or forty had been added since June.

A. G. Ewing, Salem, Monroe Co., O., Aug. 12th, gives a very interesting account of the organization of five churches—the restoration of hundreds, and the baptism of sixty-eight.

J. A. Gano, Centerville, Ky., July 22d. gives a short sketch of his labours, and the immersion of fourteen or fifteen.

Asbury Gardiner, Boonesville, O., July 22d, says, that between fifty and sixty had been added to six congregations by immersion within a few weeks.

Wesley Lanphear, writes August 5th, that seventy five had been added during this year to the church in New Lisbon, Ohio.

B. F. Hall, Louisville, Ky. June 22d—He and Brother Taffe had within a short time immersed twenty. He states that the Methodists in that region of country are compelled to immerse their old members to keep them. Twenty-five of them were immersed in Nashville, Tenn.

Wm. Hays, Mt. Vernon, Knox County, Ohio, Aug. 9th, informs us that he had

just withdrawn from the "Christian Connexion"—baptized six "for remission," and organized a church of thirty members.

B. Franklin, Henry Co., Ind. Aug. 4, writes that additions to the number of fourteen have been made to the cause in his vicinity.

J. M. Harris, Russellville, Putman Co., Ind., July 27th, complains that too much attention is being paid to politics by the disciples; however, he reports twenty-two accessions.

J. H. Dunn, Adamsville, Tenn. Aug. 5th.—He and brother Gist preaching in company, had seen in the course of a few months fifty bow to the Messiah.

M. P. Willis, Boone Co., Missouri, Aug. 1, says—"There has been seventeen accessions recently in Callaway Co.—Some in other meetings—about one hundred and fifty since spring.

L. M. King, M'Connellsville, O., Aug. 17, says that the disciples in an adjoining town had had an accession of fourteen.

A. Baird, Wabash Co., Ill. Aug. 2, says—"Our worthy brother Pool has baptized about twenty-five—and prospects are good for many more."

S. Downes, Boone Co., Ia. July 7, writes that the cause had been languishing, but recently seven had been immersed and prospects better than usual.

A. Kendrick writes, that in company with two other brethren at two meetings, they had baptized eighty-seven.

J. Paul, July 27, Louisville, Henry Co., Ind., says that eight brethren went into order last spring—they now number forty-seven.

J. B. Warrin, writes from Warren, Missouri, that forty-three had been immersed there after hearing the Gospel.

W. C. Bramwell, reports from Scipio, Ind., that to three congregations one hundred and thirty-five had been added within a short time.

G. T. Harney, Ladoga, Ind., July 13, writes that during the last six weeks, eighteen have been immersed on Haw Creek.

G. W. Smith writes from Winchester, Ind., July 8th, that he and the brethren had baptized six, and organised a Church of ten.

J. F. M'Mahon, Williamsburgh, Mo. 13th July, writes, that during the last month they had eight additions.

H. Wilson Lewis, Co. Ky., writes, that the Church on Cabin Creek had received during the last month eighteen.

J. B. Lucas, Wilmington, O., writes, that sixteen had just been added to the Church in that place. He and Brother Pinkerton had within a short time immersed upwards of one hundred.

James Cann, Decatur Co., says that he has immersed several within a short time, and that his prospects are prosperous for large accessions.

F. Olt, Clay Co. Ind., writes that himself and eleven others were recently immersed, and that Elder Winter had organized a Church of thirty or forty members at the same time.

F. W. Emmons, Noblesville, Ind., May 28th, informs us that a protracted meeting held there, had issued in the conversion of nineteen.

John Read writes from Kenton, O., that in Franklin Co. twenty had lately been immersed.

W. H. Whittington, Woodford Co., Ky., writes, that thirty three were immersed in South Benson, and three added from the Baptists.

J. A. Gano, Bourbon Co., Ky., August 14th, reports the immersion of fifty six by himself and fellow laborers within a short time, in that vicinity.

The Editor of the *Heretic Detector* gives us the above intelligence, but in a more extended form; and then adds, that the congregation of which he is a member had just closed a meeting attended by several Brethren, in which they received by baptism six, and "the good cause received an impetus, which will tell for time to come."

J. M. Mathes, Bloomington, Indiana, July 28th, writes, that he had immersed twelve persons in Monroe County.—*Christian Preacher*.

The *Christian Publisher* reports a "Big" meeting held in Charlottetown, Va., held from fifty-six Churches. Eight or ten were immersed during the meeting



The readers of "The Christian," from the foregoing sketch, can see what is going on in the West amongst the Brethren advocating the sentiments which we endeavor to present to them from time to time.

MEETINGS IN CORNWALLIS, FALMOUTH, NEWPORT, &c.—We had the pleasure of being in attendance at these meetings, and the happiness of meeting many excellent brethren. We purposed taking particular notice of some things wanting among us to make us more efficient in spreading the truth, but time will not permit. Articles on these subjects may be expected in our next.

The Brethren were very much disappointed at not seeing our Brethren Smith and Cook, as was announced and anticipated. I am not able to acquaint them with the cause. More pressing duties I presume prevented their attendance.

This number contains but 16 pages in consequence of the previous one containing 32. Our absence from home is the cause of the great delay in the issuing of this Number.

The "Christian Messenger," of Britain, has come regularly up to September, except *April*. Will Br. Wallis furnish that if convenient?

Some of our opposers say that the cause we plead is on the wane!—Will they read the summary of religious intelligence in this No. taken from only two of our publications?

QUERY.—"Is the Universalist discussion to be continued?"

J. M., Upper Canada.

ANSWER.—The "Trumpet" has not yet published our reply to Mr. Taylor. When it does, as fast as we can make room for Mr. Taylor's articles in "The Christian," we shall examine their merits.—ED.

A letter from Upper Canada, which we should not have taken from the office—postage not being paid—had we not been expecting money, states that the postage on one number of "The Christian," sent to Dundee, North Britain, cost 2s. 6d. sterling. There must be some mistake relative to this. The Postmaster there must have supposed the publication to have come from the United States, and therefore charged letter postage. Our informant thinks there must have been something written on it. I pack every thing with my own hands. There was not a word written on the pamphlet, not even the name of the person to whom it was sent, and both ends of the envelope were open. The postage on a lot sent to Strabane, Ireland, mailed in Liverpool, England, to which place the Dundee No. was sent, cost my correspondent there but 5d. per No. The Postmaster here says, they ought not to cost any person in Britain, when sent by a private ship, more than 1d. or 2d.

HYMN BOOKS.—About the middle of September, a package of Hymn Books was sent to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, for Mr. Uhlman. Since then, I learn that he has taken up his residence in Halifax. Will Brother J. Stevens, Sen., of New Glasgow, or some other Brother, take charge of the books, and dispose of them as directed in a letter attached to the package.

RECEIPTS.—Mr. Bradt, £3. B. Howard, £8. But more money is wanted. Will our friends send on what is due as soon as possible?

ERRATA.—In the last number, page 101, 11th line from top, for "not," read now.