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T H E

WITNESS OF TRUTH.

VOL. III.

OSHAWA, MAY, 1848.

NO. 5.

THE TIMES.

No. III.

ALARMISTS seek to operate upon the passions and excite the fears of men by a declamatory foreboding of awful events in the future. Or perhaps a solitary circumstance of some importance, or a single trifling occurrence, in the past or the present, is swelled into a world, and made the text for a commentary that develops ruin, devastation, and calamity to mankind at large. The alarmist, then, properly ranks with the novelist, being a creature of his own creation; and his claims are no better in attempting to play upon our fears than the claims of the man of fancy in his attempt to excite our wonder.

We are not therefore to be reckoned with the alarmist, in the current and every day use of this term. Yet we frankly avow that we think it high time to blow the trumpet of alarm in the ears of the people; not however to raise a breeze by our own breath, but to give warning of the poisonous winds that already prevail, and which, although unheeded, carry death with them wherever their waftings are left. When travellers in the wilderness, unsuspecting and inexperienced, are exposed to the fatal simoom that sweeps in silence across the pathless waste, no one questions the philanthropy of a voice which says, 'Beware! beware! danger is at hand!' In this case, it is matter of fact, and not matter of fiction, which is the ground of alarm. It is not an idle parade, an unsubstantial phantom, or a fanciful nothing resting upon itself; but it is a faithful voice—a voice uttered in conscious truth—to lead and deliver from real danger.

The difference between mere feelings and facts, is a difference, which, if estimated by the inch, perch, or mile, would measure the coasts of

the Atlantic; and all this difference is found in the alarm which is produced by a candid comparison of the uncolored realities successively transpiring around us, and the alarm which rests upon some tip-toe fancy that owes its birth, youth, and strength to a trifling mind, a morbid timidity, or a mental derangement.

We are, in these essays upon the times, examining the more prominent and well marked features of the Roman Ecclesiastic family—the old Lady herself, and some of her spiritual daughters. As the relatives in this connexion are numerous, and our space for notes and observations cannot be enlarged, we promise only a glance at the more striking indications of family disposition and relation. We must remember as we proceed, that we are now among those members of the connexion which people usually call protestant, and, too, it will be expedient not to forget, that the current of common opinion is altogether favourable to this new name.

The eldest daughter of the hierarchy is the mother of another daughter whose virtues in certain respects are now to come under review. She speaks forcibly and significantly through her authorized functionaries, associate and confederal, in this style:—

“Let no man, or number of men, in our connexion, on any account or occasion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do anything new, till it has been first appointed by conference.”

In reference to the time, the place, and the circumstances attending the proclamation of the above decree, we shall retain our remarks for another day. May we not ask all our readers, the friends of Methodism included, if the tones and accents of this law of conference sound unlike the tones and accents of Ecclesiastic Rome? It is no pleasure on our part to find and expose a protestant decree of such dimensions; but it belongs to our task to speak of things as they are, faithfully opening to view those points of protestantism which we have pledged ourselves to examine and expose. One thing is undeniable. If the above was not to be found, we could not find it: and hence we are culpable, not for making or fabricating, but merely for finding what is to be found.

We cannot, however, pass this very pithy restriction of conference without a word of review. Two things claim especial attention. The language of the official decree clearly indicates that the gentlemen who are its authors and finishers have the power to introduce or appoint something new in Messiah's kingdom. No member is allowed to attempt anything new, “until it has first been appointed by

conference;" fairly revealing to us, in the true spirit of the lords spiritual, that conference has the power to appoint something new—a power, too, it would seem, that it is determined to keep.

But a second item, worthy of particular notice, is, the unqualified tyranny that conference exercises among the members over which it presides. The Roman Mother never surpassed this. Think of it! Not a meeting to be called, however private or however pious, on any account or on any occasion, by any Methodist, or by any number of Methodists, different from the already established order, until it first has the sanction of the chief priests, who constitute the higher powers. If, according to the example of the pious Wesley, a Methodist Minister should rise at four o'clock, while those corpulent religious lawyers were dreaming or snoring, and call together a band of saints or sinners, and read, preach, pray, or sing to them a little aside from the regular rule prescribed by the priesthood of conference, he would truly be "in danger of the council," and be thrust "into utter darkness," away from the glory of his Church; and if he had nothing to confess, he would forever remain separated—and for what? Really for a less offence than that for which his zealous father—Wesley—was cut off from the old Episcopality of England. In view of this anti-liberal and truly despotic law, we have no reason to wonder at language such as the following:—

"Could the Methodists be invested, by some revolution, with the absolute power that Rome once possessed, there is reason to fear, that, unless checked by the genius of a more humane eye, the conference would equal Rome itself in the spirit of persecution."

And who is it that speaks thus? An authority no less than Lord John Russel, late Prime Minister to Her Majesty. We shall leave every reader to be his own commentator.

We have only room for another testimony, given us by a writer in the only paper which advocates Episcopal Methodism in this colony:—

"Our office is no ordinary one. We are ambassadors from the King of kings, and Lord of lords, to a revolted world. * * No work ever undertaken by mortals was so important, so solemn, or connected with such amazing consequences. Among all the thousands to whom we preach, not one but will make an impression from us that will never wear out. The fate of millions through succeeding generations depends upon our faithfulness. Heaven and Hell will forever ring with melted memorials of our ministry."

Yes, here we have another division of ambassadors. Now we are not to institute an inquiry for the purpose of disproving their ambassa-

dominion; but it is sufficient for our present purpose to know that they claim for themselves this authority: and by this aspiring claim on their part, we have proof enough that they are closely related to the Roman family.

But we must add a word for the exclusive benefit of some who may be inclined to complain of our wholesale disposal and denouncement of these ecclesiastic realities. A system, a government, a code of laws, may be essentially and terribly corrupt, and at the same time many individuals connected with the system, under this government, or subject to this code of laws may be upright, amiable, and worthy.—Individual members of a system, and the system itself, are always distinguishable. As in human governments we sometimes have a good code of laws, and a bad administration, and a bad code of laws, and a good administration; so, as in the spiritual world, we sometimes find a corrupt system with very superior persons connected with it; and also a good system with very unworthy members. The system is what we have been considering—not individuals.

CONDUCTOR.

BIBLE READING, BY A CORRESPONDENT.

Ermosa, March 31st, 1848.

DEAR BROTHER:—The second number of your current volume contains an article on “Bibles, and Bible Reading,” which will, I trust, in due course, be followed by a series of articles on the same subject. A more important matter cannot, in this day of unnumbered new books, papers, and pamphlets, be urged on the attention of the holy brethren. We may, I presume, as men, and as christians, lawfully read to a certain extent, and for a proper object, things new and old, in reference to matters civil and social, national and general, political, scientific, and commercial. But unless the Word of God be *the man of our counsel*, alas for us.

Of reading many books there is no end. An eager for news, can never be satisfied. He that drinks of this water shall thirst again. And to him who craves for the latest news, and the last new book, the bible story, is a tale that is told.

The Book of God is the standard by which can be correctly estimated, the value of every human production; but unless we can properly apply it, we shall be constantly deceived and imposed upon. The men of this world will not readily submit to such imposition in regard to their affairs. Every thing is weighed and measured with all possible

precision. Why should the children of this world be wiser than the children of light?

But the Bible is not only a rule, by which we can ascertain the value of all other things; it contains within itself, the pearl of great price—treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This is acknowledged, but where is the proof that it is believed? Where are they who meditate on it day and night, as did the worthies of ancient times—who search in it as for hid treasure—who teach it diligently to their children, and speak of it when they sit in the house, and when they walk by the way, when they lie down, and when they rise up? Doubtless one here and there may be found sitting at the feet of Jesus; but certainly the greater part of the christians of the present day, are by no means distinguished for a constant and prayerful reading and studying of God's Word. And wherefore? Because it is less interesting now than formerly; or that the law of Christ is less attractive than the law of Moses? Nay, verily, but because, *we savor not the things which are of God, but the things which are of men!* Here lies the deep and widely spread root of the whole matter; and hence the very great importance of the question—"Can we, or shall we, increase our relish for Bible reading?"

This is, indeed, the question; and to it I trust you will attend, not merely until your readers are satisfied that their relish for God's own Book, *can* be increased, but until they actually realize that it is "sweeter than honey from the comb, and more to be desired than gold, yea than much fine gold!"

May the Lord enable you thus to serve in His cause.

W.

(For the Witness.)

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF PEACE.

Wainfleet, April 3rd, 1848.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT.—"Mercy unto you, and peace and love be multiplied." Beloved—we desire with all diligence to write to you of a certain danger, common to all the dear disciples of the blessed Redeemer. It seems needful for us to write and exhort you, that you should earnestly contend for the spiritual safety and welfare of the saints; for there are certain men who were before ordained to this work, of binding the disciples with chains grievous to be borne, compelling them to do that which they have no desire of doing; "for the powers that be" desire the christian to engage with them in wars

among themselves for dominion, victory, glory, or something else not always clearly explained. They expect us to acquire the art of killing our fellow men, separated by rivers or mountains, which "make enemies of nations, who had else, like kindred drops, been mingled into one."

Jesus said "my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants *fight*, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." The apostle James says, "but above all things, my brethren, swear not." And we know who has said, "neither by heaven, neither by the earth, *neither by any other oath*; but let your yea, be yea, and your nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil."

From these considerations we think it necessary that the brethren petition to our Government for exemption from taking oaths and from military duty—acts which we deem opposed to the spirit of our holy religion. And would you not do well, brother, to urge this matter upon the brethren, by preparing and printing forms of petitions for the several churches, that they may lay this affair before parliament through their representatives? Mr. Merritt, M. P. P., and Mr. McFarland, M. P. P., have promised us their assistance. We pray that our Heavenly Father may bless your efforts in vindicating the Gospel, strengthening the saints, and illuminating Canada.

"The Lord bless thee out of Zion; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

In love submitted,

THOMAS BRADT,
A. CLENDENAN.

The following is also worthy to be heard:—

SHALL WE LEARN WAR OR NOT?

This is a subject of some importance which I would desire to bring under the consideration of the brethren in Canada. Once or twice, at our yearly meetings, I have proposed to bring the subject up, but did not find the good brethren prepared to meddle with it. And whether at present, I shall have the pleasure to find them generally agreeing with me or not, I have yet to learn. I shall presume, however, that we are all of the same mind in reference to the above question.

But to the remedy. How shall we avoid it? as we are commanded to be in subjection to the powers that be, and they are ready to fine or imprison if we disobey. We cannot admit that there is any discrepancy in the injunction of the apostle, and the example and precepts of the Saviour, nor would we encourage insubordination to the ruling powers, so long as they are under the influence of the Divine counsels.

I am not, in this communication, going to discuss the war question, whether it is right for the disciples of the Lord to learn military tactics, or engage in battle if called upon, either on the offensive or defensive. I will wait to see if it may be necessary, but I wish to bring under the consideration of the brethren the propriety of petitioning our Provincial Parliament to release us from military obligations, on payment of a small commutation, similar to some religious bodies, who already enjoy this liberty. It may be urged as an objection, that in so doing we shall necessarily have to be distinguished by some name which will reduce us to a sect.

It will certainly be necessary for us to come under some denominational distinction, but as the Disciples of Christ were first called Christians at Antioch, and we have no account that they objected to the name, we have some reason to conclude that it would be no disparagement to our profession; hitherto as the body of Christ, to be first called Disciples at Montreal. What think you, brethren, can we attend to this matter, and do it right. If so let us go to our next yearly meeting prepared to attend to the preliminaries, so that our petition may be laid before the next session of Parliament.

And many good brethren wish the power to affirm, instead of the usual oath in case of testimony, &c. Let us hear from you, brother Oliphant, on these questions, and may the Lord grant us all sufficient meekness to inquire whether we have not neglected a duty which will appear obvious when these measures are properly considered.

I remain, your Brother in the Lord,

WILLIAM BRADY.

Little, we think, need be said upon the preceding communications. They recommend themselves. The object for which they were written, and their christian style and temper, are alike worthy and commendable.

Argument upon these questions to our brethren in Canada West, would be almost as great a superfluity as an attempt to incur the Pope's convictions, that he ought to rule. There is, we are pleased to say, a very general oneness in reference to the duty of refraining from

“every appearance” of the evil of war. It is a question if five disciples can be found in this country who will not heartily approve of the letters in the preceding pages. Action, then, is all that is necessary.

D. O.

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COMMUNICATION FROM TROOPSVILLE.

The epistle which we give below, written long since to an aged Israelite, and not originally designed for publication, has been forwarded by an esteemed brother for our paper. It is given to the public somewhat abridged:—

D. O.

Troopsville, N. Y., February 29th, 1848.

DEAR BROTHER:—I remember our parting, and have not forgotten your request that I should write. But while busy here and there, the “thief” has stolen my time; so that out of season, and out of patience with myself, I have seated myself to mend the matter as well as possible; trusting to your generosity to excuse what cannot be otherwise remedied.

* * * * *

How uncertain is life! yet how much depends upon it. Life is a dream, eternity the hour of waking—to a destiny glorious, or awful, as our fate may be—yet *that fate* depends upon the *present*. Life is a strange possession, the more valued, the less valuable; while its value increases in the possession of those who value it least.

How differently life appears in different associations. Youth fondly dotes upon a long life, and looks upon age as far in the distance. But the difference between this expected long life of the young, and the few years that remain to the aged, when compared to eternity, is trifling—like the difference between a knoll and a hill, viewed in contrast with a huge mountain, which towers upward, and upward, till lost in the clouds that float high above us. Yet, when we take under consideration the many changes that may and do take place in our circumstances, lot, and character, during the period of our existence, life, not only appears long, but it also rises into the greatest importance.

* * * * *

When I discover the rapidity of the change and formation of human character, that which is properly termed, when rightly contrasted, “*the brief period of our existence*,” seems an *age*. The susceptibility of character, is our only hope of reformation and improvement; yet it is painful to think of the instability, not only of many who have once resolved to be, and no doubt have been better, who have now wholly

abandoned that resolution. Now they are sining, then again repenting; sometimes full of faith, hope, and love; then again they are doubting, gloomy, and cold. Some circumstances again turn their attention to the cross, and a bleeding Saviour, when they are filled with grief and penitence, and they resolve and declare in the sight of angels and men, that they will be the Lord's. But they mingle with the world—forget the Saviour—and imbibe the spirit of our Lord's enemies; till again, perhaps, some influence may awake them to their sad condition.

Would to God that all our changes were for the better. How great may be the attainments of that man, who, clothed with the christian armour, resists every evil influence, and brings all that is good to bear in the formation of his character. In view of the impressibility and flexibility of human character, may we not conclude that the aged pilgrim, who, while he tremulously leans upon the top of his staff, is filled with desire, love, and hope, has reason to rejoice that the grave is but a few steps before him. He is free from the expectation of a long life; the unhappy influence of which has lulled to sleep the consciences and fears of many a youth, till awakened by the hoarse voice of death, who gave them no time to prepare for eternity.

The foundation of all our desires and expectations of reformation improvement, and perfection, is the Gospel and its ordinances. How well calculated are these to prepare us to resist temptation, and aid us in the formation of a righteous character. Through prayer, we enter the presence of God, where we see His Holiness, and feel its influence; and we hear the voice of Him who is the fountain of light and purity, speaking to us through the Scriptures. Fasting checks the passions of our nature; watching, enables us to resist evil influences, and every inclination to do wrong; by meeting with the saints, where the influence is heavenly, we are strengthened and built up through their reproof, teaching, and exhortations; and when we approach the sacred emblems, where we are made to feel what we were, and what we are, where an agonizing Saviour is brought up to our minds, we see the love of God and Christ, and are filled with penitence, humility, gratitude, love, firmness, and zeal. The first day of the week, also, strengthens that cable by which we are held steadily and firmly to the great purpose of purifying ourselves, that we may be made like him who has gone within the veil. Who, that knows the strength of temptation, and the weakness of his own nature, will neglect the varied, yet happily blended influences of Christ's institutions?

But I must close this too formal epistle. I often think of you, and the brethren in —, and could rejoice to see you all. You often come up to my mind, when I think of the consolations that the religion of Christ must bring to the aged. I often think of the desire to spend your remaining days in preparing for eternity, which you expressed when I was last in —. In the mean time, I hope you will do all in your power to encourage and build up the little band of brethren, among whom, in your pilgrimage, you have found a home. The Lord, no doubt, will bless you in your labours of love for His name. My prayer is, that your remaining days may be full of consolation, and that the sun of your life may go down in an unclouded sky.

Yours, in hope of an unfading inheritance.

G. W.

EVANGELICAL REPORTS.

No. II.

The labours of an Evangelist, whether he labours in Canada or in China, in India or Judea, in Europe or America, are always of interest. Every man on earth has a soul—every soul needs salvation—every saving influence comes from Jesus through the gospel—every truth which the gospel contains must be heard before believed or obeyed—and what is heard must first be spoken. Hence the importance of proclaiming the word. When Paul was a preacher, “it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe;” and Paul’s gospel is still the only safe remedy for the sin-smit soul.

Yes—all have souls, and all souls are precious; but there is a charity that seems to say,—“My friends, my relations, my neighbours, should have the gospel preached to them immediately. My vicinity is the place to preach first.” Such is the voice of a love, which, perhaps, may be warm in its own way, but which neither sees nor travels far. It is well for us all that a different spirit animated the subjects of the gospel primitively. If otherwise, the name of Jesus had never been sounded out of the narrow slices of country where his friends, and the friends of his friends, were born; and all the isles of the Gentiles had still been left to their own glory and idolatry.

Proclaimers now would not only require “the gift of tongues,” but also a multiplicity of tongues, to speak several discourses at the same time, with the additional peculiarity that some of them could be heard a hundred miles as perfectly as within common hearing distance.

My former Report sufficiently detailed my visits and efforts up to the

20th of September. Within three days from that date, I was on my way to the city of Rochester, where I remained engaged until the 27th; and from the 27th of September to the 17th of October, it should be said, without entering into the minutiae, that my time was more or less occupied in a variety of matters apart from the field of labour having immediate connexion with these Reports. All who have the slightest acquaintance with the arrangements necessary to a new Printing Establishment, well know, that, during this period, little time was lost in making calculations and preparing orders.

My arrival in Picton, October 17th, was succeeded by an unusually busy preparation for the press, since two numbers of the *Witness* were issued together, within the brief space of two weeks. Hence my attention and labours were principally engrossed in this department. Still, a few discourses were pronounced. In Prince Edward District I remained until about the 5th of November. On the 31st of October, at Hillier, there was one immersion—a young woman who came forward and resolved to live henceforth to the Lord. There was, on that occasion, a full house, and, if I judge correctly, almost a *full hearing*. Brother Stone having arrived in the vicinity of Picton the same evening, I had the pleasure of accompanying him to a number of meetings within a few days—one at the East Lake, one at the West Lake, and one at Hillier—where he discoursed to the people; teaching them, not the law of Moses, but the things concerning Christ.

I was in Oshawa by the 6th of November. Expecting to be prepared for travelling and speaking within a few weeks after my arrival, I found myself retarded by a full tide of unforeseen causes. The materials for the new office failed to arrive in season. Great was the delay, and the consequent loss of time. The middle of December came before I could accomplish what I anticipated accomplishing in a day or two after hailing Oshawa as home. So fruitless, fickle, and fictitious are human hopes.

By the first week in January, I was again ready for active service—only, however, for a short period. At the solicitation of brother Bradt, in the neighborhood of Bronte, where brother A. S. Hayden had been labouring for a few days in October, I directed my steps thither, and remained long enough to speak five times to those who were interested to come and hear. The meetings, taking one thing with another, were well attended. Some attended by coming, and others attended both by coming and hearing. The effort, on my part, was never regretted. Although none were moved to confess the Lord,

it was my opinion then, and my impression still, that by the things they had before heard, and what was brought to their remembrance at that time, they were almost persuaded to be christians.

On my return I spent a Lord's day in the vicinity of Cooksville. My discourse, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, was in the Stone Chapel, a little East of the village; and towards evening I met with the little company of disciples in the house of brother Ross. But if I judge rightly, the people in that climate are not particularly friendly to the truth. A bishop with a long gown, sometimes black and sometimes white, with his head filled with the broken fragments of the Thirty-nine Articles, and a sermon before him written by a better doctor than himself, would more fully meet their wants, and establish them—that is, keep them precisely where they are during life. A popular religion, or none at all, would seem to be a motto rather too well suited to all latitudes in this day of moral torpitude and sectarian energy.

Towards the close of January, I spoke once in Darlington; once in the vicinity of Port Hope; and once in Cobourg. Almost immediately after arriving in Oshawa, subsequent to this hasty journey, a letter was written to the brethren by whom I had been appointed, giving a number of reasons why I considered it my duty to resign the office and obligations of an Evangelist; asking permission to be thus regarded; at the same time stating an unchanged willingness to labour in the cause of the gospel to the full extent of my ability and circumstances, as in years past. Said letter, written, I think, on the 6th of February, remains unanswered. How shall this be interpreted? As I have exercised patience so long, I will not now prove myself impatient by attempting to break open the mystery before the proper time. There is a defect somewhere. It will be known in due season, or it may be in undue season.

Although I might, so far as the co-operation is concerned, here lay down my pen, I have as much interest and pleasure in reporting still further, as though I was linked with a score of co-operations.

It was, if memory serves me, on the 24th of February that I made a visit—or perhaps I should say half a visit—to the brethren in Jordan. The Brick Meeting House still stands where it stood two years ago, but how many of the members have moved away from the village, I will not take upon me to state. Still it was pleasing to meet with familiar faces, and still more pleasing to find that there was yet a little spirit and spiritual life. I sincerely trust that brother Sammons and brother Palmer will not seek for better soil than the burying-place of

Jordan to deposite their limbs "when life's weary journey is done;" but remain among their brethren in the Lord, and encourage them forward in the way of life, enduring trial and continuing faithful. I remained in Jordan and at the Lake Shore only to speak on four different occasions, and so departed. My purpose was to have been there since; but I have not yet obtained the power to be in two places at the same time.

On the evening of the 2nd of March, it was my lot to be in Berlin. A fair collection of brethren and friends were present at the meeting which was then held. They all seemed to take some interest in what was said, and listened much more attentively than was expected. Happily, too, brother Lazarus Parkinson was present, and the meeting ended still more pleasantly by having brother P. to conclude. Although having determined to leave the next morning, I was under the necessity of consenting to prolong my stay till over Lord's day, the 6th. The attendance and the attention of the meeting on Lord's day afternoon, made us all feel cheerful in each other's company, and enabled us to part with a more full determination to make progress toward heaven.

A few other meetings have been summoned and held since the above, but I must postpone an account of them till "a more convenient season," if indeed such a season ever arrives.

CONDUCTOR.

Steamer "America," May 13th, 1848.

From the New York Observer.

THE ILL-DRESSED DISCIPLE.

The first time I saw him, and this was before he became a disciple, he was a ragged character to be sure. He had not an article of the christian drapery upon him. The "filthy rags" of his sinful life were a shame unto him. But they dropped off, I cannot stop to tell how, so that the next time I saw him, I perceived there had been a very great change in his apparel. A great King had taken him into his family, and there was "fine linen, clean and white," upon him, and divers beautiful garments; and such an alteration in the man that I could hardly believe he was the same I had seen in the old rags.

Time ran on, when, after long absence, I fell in again with the disciple I had often thought of the change that I had seen in him, and, as I knew it to be the case with the most in the King's family, that they went on improving in their appearance, I certainly expected to see this disciple one of the most handsomely dressed in the community. I knew

he had had a fair start, and I looked for every thing that was "comely and of good report" in the matter of his spiritual apparel.

But the sight saddened me. I could scarcely believe my eyes. "Is that you?" said I, in utter surprise. Well, it was him, and a sight he was.

When I had formerly parted with him, he had on a beautiful robe which was called charity, or love; and a good judge had said that kind of garment was a "bond of perfectness." And I do not think a handsomer garment ever was or could possibly be put upon a mortal. But that robe now! How torn, tattered and soiled. I should think malice had had a clip at it; and envy had gone off with a rag; and jealousy had pulled out many threads with her cruel fingers. And what was not ragged was soiled to a wonder. He admitted that a rude and powerful fellow, called Worldliness, had pitched him into the dust. He might as well have called it a slough, he was so begrimed. I was glad that they had not stripped him utterly of this garment. There were a few strips of the "fine linen" left; though the remnant was not clean. It was a sad dress for a disciple to be in.

And he had worn a *girdle*, and a beautiful one it had been, for it was made of "righteousness." It well became the beautiful robe which it once fastened upon the body. But the girdle was now in keeping with the tattered and soiled robe. It looked as I should judge the one looked which Jeremiah had digged out of the ground, where it had been hidden many days, which was "marred and was profitable for nothing."

And his feet had been "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;" and a most beautiful appendage to the costume it was, and very many of the saints had been shod in like manner, so that they could "run and not be weary, and walk and not faint," in the ways of the Lord. And this disciple, so long as he retained this part of his apparel, was a very spirited and animated traveller in Zion's ways.

But when I last saw him he was in a very sad plight in regard to this matter. The "old shoes and clouted" which the deceitful Gibconites wore, could not have been worse than the feet-gear of this disciple. He made sad work in the business of travelling. As for *running* in the ways of the Lord, that was over long ago. And as for *walking*; he was not even up to that. His feet were not shod with anything that enabled him to do anything but hobble, and bad work he made, and sorry progress, even at that.

For an ornament for the head, I had seen the brother with a very

fine article called "the hopes of salvation." The most handsomely dressed disciple in primitive times, even Paul wore one of this kind, only it was a good many times more beautiful. But the one I now refer to was a good article, and it gave a most dignified and noble appearance to said disciple.

But when I saw him lately I should judge he must have gone head foremost into the Slough of Despond. That once beautiful head-dress was disfigured to one's amazement. It was crushed and tattered. Whatever had been the case, it did not *now* seem that the head-dress had anything to do with salvation. David's looked very much like it about the time he wrote the fifty-first psalm; and Peter's about the time he denied his Master.

I do not know that anything more need be said, to show that the individual in question was a very poorly dressed disciple. There was not one article of that beautiful apparel which he had received when he entered the King's family, but had been made a sad spectacle to look upon. The "fine linen, clean and white," was sadly soiled, while rents and chasms in all directions, announced what company he had been in, and what usage he had received.

It was more of a pity, in that, when he received his beautiful garments,

1. He received a very solemn charge to keep every thing in nice order and worthy of a member of the King's family.

2. He as solemnly promised he would. A great many people heard him make that vow. And it is not doubted there were invisible hearers, too. And 3. He had the most pressing and urgent motives to keep himself arrayed in the beauty of holiness. The King's command was one; the King's kindness in giving him such apparel in the place of former rags was another; and the help promised him was another; and the peace of conscience it would have given him was another; and the good he could have done in promoting the moral beauty of others was another; and the shining examples of all the well-dressed disciples since the world began was another. And there was yet another. The King sent him word often, that if he did not look out for his spiritual apparel he would not be able to "go through the gates into the city," and therefore he could not be present at the the great banquet he was preparing for all who were arrayed in "fine linen, clean and white." This was now and then as a "fire shut up in his bones," but it soon burned out, and he kept on being the ragged and dingy disciple I have been describing

But if that disciple reads this article, let me assure him the great King is in earnest, and that if he keeps on refusing to give heed to his apparel, his soul will come into unspeakable trouble, and there will be the greatest danger that he will go where the "filthy are filthy still," and where ragged disciples will never find fine linnen wherewith to appear with acceptance before the Lord of the banquet, and the "innumerable company" who will enjoy it with him.

SIMON.

From the Intelligencer.

MODERN AND ANCIENT EVANGELISTS.

An evangelist is a proclaimer of the gospel—the good news of salvation to man from sin and all its consequences. When we think a little, what a character he is!—How important his office! If he be authorised to make known to man the terms of his release from the bondage of sin and death, the tyrant that has oppressed our race for thousands of years, he must be acting under the authority of some mighty power. Yes, verily, under the authority of the King of kings and Lord of lords!

The subject increases in importance the more we look at it. A man to go on this errand of mercy in the right spirit and with proper views, must have a large share of benevolence and of the 'milk of human kindness.' Philanthropy must be prominent in every action. But benevolence and philanthropy are not all that is necessary to make a good evangelist. There must be a comprehensive view of the plan of salvation, and of the life of God to man manifested in the gift of his only begotten Son; the soul must be under the influence of this love, and the spirit must be aroused to magnify this love of our benevolent Heavenly Father in making it known to men and enlisting them to speak of, and celebrate this love.

The Apostle Paul was such an evangelist. His soul was engaged, his mind enlarged, and his body rendered ready obedience to the promptings of his heart, enlarged by love to God. He goes from city to city; he delights in declaring the love of God to a ruined world; it is the absorbing theme—he undergoes privations, suffers want, perils his life, is willing to receive stripes if he can but speak to his countrymen and the Gentiles of Jesus his Lord and Master. What disinterested devotion to the truth glows in every action! And how deeply interested he is, when he sends for the Ephesian elders and charges them for the last time, and in the fear of God, to watch over the flock and

observe the things he had taught them, and which he had labored to establish among them. How do our modern evangelists compare with the models furnished us by the sacred record—Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Titus!—Alas, with the corruptions of christianity, and the degeneracy of the times, evangelists have not learned the importance and duties of their office. Ancient evangelists sought privations, difficulties and labor; the modern evangelists their own gratifications, ease and comfort, and adapt themselves too much to the customs of the age.

One young man lately appointed, is torturing his brains all the time, how he shall make a pretty speech, and make a good oration, rather than how he may most efficiently present the truth to his fellows; another, alas, is wrapped in self, and is seeking popularity by a time-serving obsequious course of conduct, rather than standing up against the vices of the age, by reproving, exhorting and presenting the unadulterated word, all with reference to some final movement that shall place him in easy circumstances. It is the duty of all evangelists doubtless to go from house to house and speak the truth; but too many of our modern evangelists preach on Lord's day, and for the six remaining days, betake themselves to the houses of brethren in good circumstances, blessed with this world's goods where they can gratify their appetites and pamper the body. This class of evangelists seldom go to the houses of brethren in humble circumstances, when they visit a neighborhood it may be a dozen times during the year, they make some excuse to avoid visiting the brethren who have little of this world's goods, and always arrange matters so as to fall in with those having the good things of this world. Yea, and this gratification of the appetite and feasting of the animal man, are carried on at the expense of the improvement of the mind. Are these things in accordance with the teachings of God's Word? Are they coming up to the duties of these once noble officers of the church of Jesus Christ?

The cause of the little success in preaching is oftentimes to be attributed to this source. There is too little concern—too great a want of deep interest—too little of the spirit of prayer and wrestling with God—too few thoughts given to this responsible office. Hence, many a sermon from one, thought to be a good preacher, is heard and has no more effect than pouring water on a rock. The body of a sermon has been presented, but it has no soul, no spirit, and consequently had as well never been preached.

To sum up all in a few words, the man who preaches to acquire the

reputation and fame of a good speaker; he who preaches with some selfish object in view, ultimately to better his circumstances; he who acts as a fashionable visitor only, or idle preacher, more thoughtful of his appetite and palate, than visiting among the brethren of all classes to promote goodness, he who spends six days in social engagements only, are all equally removed from the evangelists of the New Testament, and differ as much from them, as the name from the reality, or the shadow from the substance.

W. J. P.

THE GOSPEL.

No. XV.

LETTERS TO A FRIEND.—No. 3.

MY FRIENDLY FRIEND:—Bear with me one letter more upon the subject of faith, and if the correspondence continues, I promise willingness to give variety of topic by introducing a new one.

From what has been said in the preceding letters, you will have seen that the religion which I have the honor of recommending, is a religion that cannot be confined in the head like wine in a cask, nor carried in the veins and vessels which circulate the blood in the body. It has been variously illustrated that the religion of the new covenant is a system which has in itself life and action. My logic, illustrations, and general disquisitions have taken this direction, in order to move you, if possible, from the stakes you have set, and to which you have fastened yourself. For if it be shown that christianity be a living system, replete with demonstration and operation, and not a skeleton of opinions and sentimentals, it is not then difficult to make clean work of expelling the unclean spirits of false doctrine from the minds of those who have implicitly and without inquiry received the "like precious faith" of their fathers, that a man may have faith although he cannot give open or outward proof of it. This is the spot on the serpent's head that I wish to bruise.

"He that doeth the will of my Father," says the Teacher, is the person who shall be saved, and who therefore has the approval of Heaven. Eternal life depends upon doing as well as believing or feeling; nay, I was about to say that what is done occupies a prominent place, if indeed there be such a thing; in scripture teaching, as one part of the gospel system having greater emphasis, or a greater degree of salvation in it than another. "Inasmuch as you have done it to these my brethren, you have done it to me," teaches the Saviour, referring

to the procedure and rewards of the Judge of all on the great day. Christians, too, are responsible as the "stewards of the manifold favour of God." But I cannot suppose that you, or any man, will attempt to dispute the position, that the religion of the New Testament is a system requiring its subjects to act as well as to know and feel.

This point yielded, and all others must yield as different parts of a besieged city when the chief fortress is taken. For if there be action, it must be regulated by authority; and this authority must be regulated by the character of him in whom it is invested; and therefore according to the uniformity of this character will be the uniformity of the action required. Let us at once come to the point. Jesus is the character with whom we have to do in salvation. He has a uniform character; and his authority is therefore uniform; and the action being governed by his authority, our action must therefore also be uniform. If you see any flaw in the cords and twists of this web, please escape and tell me what injustice I have done you in attempting to dress you in a wrong suit.

The case with you stands thus: You regard the gospel as demanding both faith and action. This action is governed by the authority of Christ. It must therefore be uniform. You say you have faith. You have never obeyed—never acted. Hence, "out of your own mouth," you may be convicted of a delusion equal to a papal miracle. Evident it is that you are either in an unsaved state, or you must produce an extraordinary certificate that you are not as other men, but an exception to the general family of father Adam: for you admit that the gospel uniformly calls for action, and yet when called upon for this proof of your faith, you only answer, *It is wanting!*

Still, the chief mistake of all the mistakes concerning faith has not yet been noticed. I mean the popular source of faith. When we interpose a barrier as large as a tower of the highest class to obstruct the progress of the common theorist in his views of faith, he makes to himself wings and flies over the impediment triumphantly, and takes refuge in regions beyond the earth. Faith, it is argued, comes immediately from God, and is his peculiar and special gift; and hence, whether there is obedience or not, or whether the obedience always agrees in kind or in quantity, is a matter registered among the things not essential: for, the argument is, what God gives must be the great gift, and he would never give, directly and especially, what would not of itself save effectually. My dear friend, I am free to declare my sincere belief that this idea has been prolific of more pure mischief in

the world than a majority of the French and American novels since the first edition of Voltaire.

True, were I to hold this article for a part of my creed, I would argue as stoutly as any of them, or as stoutly as I was able, to uphold it. Why not? If God bestows faith, and bestows it for the purpose of saving the person to whom it is given, what can be the use of works of any name or character? Could I not argue that salvation is in the gift, and by reason of the gift; and hence the utter profitlessness of a dispute about the rest.

Yet I greatly and most tenaciously doubt this theology. It is one hoax built upon another. God never gave faith to any man, not even in the days of special gifts, as people now teach. He gave them then, and he gives them now, something to believe—something in which they may exercise and have faith. And the “fruits of faith,” or the “works of faith,” have always been required, and always required in accordance with the expressed will of the author of salvation. Now, therefore, to dig into the gloomy sepulchre, and pierce the coffin of an old doctor of divinity and find nothing, and then try to make something from it, seems almost analogous to a workless or non-obedient faith, such as some have who at present number among the popular. Whether a faith of this unproductive description is popular in heaven, will, I trust, be determined in your mind with the least possible delay.

If not courteously, at least sincerely,

D. OLIPHANT.

SPECULATION ON RELIGION.

There are persons, who professing a sincere love for truth, wander from it by their own speculations, and by neglecting that calm and deliberate application of the mind which is required for aiding their faith, *knowledge*. It is thus, that, in all ages, men have deluded themselves, and led others astray, by putting vague conceptions in the place of truth. To every one who would preserve himself from such delusions, the great and solemn object of inquiry ought to be, upon what ground his opinions have been formed? Have they been adduced from a full and candid investigation, and do they rest on such evidence as is sufficient to satisfy a sound understanding that they are true? We have an interesting but melancholy picture of human nature, when we endeavour to trace the principles by which minds of a serious character are influenced, in thus departing from the simplicity of the truth. In some it would appear to arise from a love of singularity, or a desire

of appearing wiser than their neighbors; in others, from an ambition to be wise above what is written, accompanied generally with a restless activity of mind, and vividness of imagination, while there has been very little cultivation of the judgment. The peculiarity in the actual mental condition of such persons is, that they look only to one view of a question. Having formed their opinions probably on slight and feeble grounds, their whole ingenuity is directed to finding arguments in support of them, instead of rigidly examining their truth; and they do not allow themselves to consider fairly the objections or the views and principles which are opposed to their own. This habit of the mind is usually accompanied with a high confidence in its own powers, and a contempt for those who differ; and the persons who are under its influence generally become, in a great measure, inaccessible to argument, and unsusceptible of the force of facts and considerations which are opposed to their favorite views. This arises from the habit of directing their attention entirely to one view of a subject, or to one side of a question, while they put away from them all that is opposed to it. For, when false opinions have once been allowed to fasten on the mind, the evil is not confined to the particular dogma which is embraced, but an injury has been done to the mental economy, which is apt to continue, or even increase, and to carry the individual more and more deeply into error and delusion.—*Abercrombie*

A GOOD SERMON.

We have heard a story of the elder Dr. Beecher, now of Cincinnati, that is said to be true, and is worth putting in print, as illustrating the truth that we never can tell what may result from an apparently very insignificant action. The doctor once engaged to preach for a country minister, on exchange, and the Sabbath proved to be one excessively stormy, cold and uncomfortable. It was in mid-winter, and the snow was piled in heaps all along the roads, so as to make the passage very difficult. Still the minister urged his horse through the drifts, till he reached the church, put the animal into a shed, and went in. As yet there was no person in the house, and after looking about, the old gentleman—then young—took his seat in the pulpit. Soon the door opened, and a single individual walked up the aisle, looked about and took a seat. The hour came for commencing service, but no more hearers.

Whether to preach to such an audience or not was now the question,

and it was one that Lyman Beecher was not long in deciding. He felt that he had a duty to perform, and he had no right to refuse to do it because only one man could reap the benefit of it; and accordingly he actually went through all the service, praying, singing, preaching and benediction, with only ONE hearer. And when all was over, he hastened down from the desk to speak to his "congregation," but he had departed.

A circumstance so rare was referred to occasionally, but twenty years after, it was brought to the doctor's mind quite strangely. Traveling somewhere in Ohio, the doctor alighted from the stage one day in a pleasant village, when a gentleman stepped up and spoke to him familiarly, calling him by name. "I do not remember you," said the Doctor. "I suppose not," said the stranger; "but we spent two hours together in a house alone, once, in a storm." "I do not recollect it, sir," added the old man, "pray when was it?" "Do you remember preaching, twenty years ago, in such a place, to a single person?" "I do, indeed; and if you are the man, I have been wishing to see you ever since." "I am the man, sir; and that sermon saved my soul, made a minister of me, and yonder is my church!—The converts of that sermon, sir, are all over Ohio!"

RELIGIOUS MUSEUM.

[*American Paper.*]

1. A professor of religion, praying with great fervor that God would convert the world, yet never giving a cent for missions.
2. A man getting shouting-happy and telling how much he loves the cause of God, and how much he is willing to deny self, yet fretting and scolding if any one asks for a little money.
3. A professor, too poor to take a religious newspaper, yet taken three or four political ones.
4. A *Christian* brother, very much hurt in his feelings, to hear his master refer to *politics* on the Sabbath, yet spending the whole Sabbath noon conversing on doings in Congress, and the probability of Taylor or Calhoun being the next President.
5. Another one, who thinks it very wrong to desecrate the Sabbath by holding temperance meetings on the evening of the Lord's day, yet spends the same in visiting his neighbors, or going to see his hired man about the work for Monday morning.
6. A *Christian* brother, very much opposed to anything like ornamenting our churches, such as furnishing them with blinds, carpeting

the aisles, or cushioning the pulpit, yet furnishing his own dwelling with rich carpets, astral lamps and splendid sofas.

7. A follower of the Prince of *Peace*, with his heart running over with the war-spirit, and rejoicing in the destruction of his fellow-men.

8. A professing Christian family asking the Minister to pray with them, and not one of them kneeling with him.

9. The man who has a periodical head-ache, returning every Sabbath morning.

10. The man who dare not expose his health by going to meeting on a stormy Sabbath, yet is very robust the next Monday, and can sell wood all day though it storm and blow.

MY MOTHER IN HER CLOSET.

Nothing used to impress upon my mind so strongly the reality and excellence of religion, as my mother's counsels and prayers. Very frequently she retired with her children to a private room, and after she had read the Bible with us, and give us some good instruction and advice, kneeled down with us and offered a prayer, which, for apparent earnestness and fervor, I have seldom known equalled. These seasons were always pleasant to us; and sometimes we looked forward to them with impatience. My mother seemed to me then almost an angel; her language, her manner, the very expression of her countenance, indicating great nearness to the throne of grace. I could not have shown levity at such times; it would have been impossible. I felt then that it was a great blessing to have a praying mother; and I have felt it much more sensibly since. Those counsels and prayers time can never efface from my memory. They form as it were a part of my very constitution.—*Theodore Tinker.*

Wainfleet, May 7th, 1848.

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—To-day three persons were introduced into the kingdom of the Messiah by baptism. The scene to us was joyful, and I presume the news through the *Witness* will be highly acceptable to the brotherhood in Canada. I am happy to say, these individuals (a sister and two brethren) were led to obedience by pursuing a course similar to that of the noble Bereans, namely, *a reading of the scriptures.* Had you been here much more might have been accomplished. May the prayers of the saints arise to heaven for the spiritual welfare of these precious souls, and for the safety and prosperity of the Church of God in Wainfleet.

A. CENDENAN.

C R E A T I O N .

BY E. SHEPPARD.

'The Lord Jehovah! God Omnipotent!
 'Thy power is vast, omnific, unconfined,
 'To man incomprehensible, unknown
 'The deep resources of creative might.
 'Thy word shook chaos; thy all-powerfull will
 Strewed boundless ether with unnumber'd worlds,
 Which like a vast, untiring army march
 In stately grandeur round thy awful throne.
 "Let there be light:"—the peerless beams dart forth;
 In brilliancy, from the eternal source.
 Let man be formed:—he rises from the dust
 An image of the pure and holy God,
 Favoured by thee, thy blessing he receives,
 And lord of animated nature reigns.

PLEASING, THOUGH PAINFUL.

The following extract from a friendly letter, although not designed for the public, deserves a place in this paper. We ask not to be excused for the liberty we take of publishing without consent, for we know the writer is ever prepared to acquiesce in anything which may be for the best. While we sympathize with the christian parents, who have lost an amiable child, it affords a measure of delight to learn that her departure was accompanied with so much pious hope:— D. O.

Since I last saw brother Bentley's family it has lost one of its most amiable, intelligent, and affectionate members. You have, I believe, heard of the death of Helen, but perhaps not the circumstances of her death. They were hopeful and consolatory. She died as she had lived,—in loveliness. She was eminently precautionary in piety, in sentiment, in sympathy, and devotion. She bore her sickness without a murmur, and as her body failed her mind appeared to be strengthened by the thought of immortality, and the renewal of the society of her afflicted father and mother, sisters, and brothers. She delighted in singing hymns and praising God, and all that made her uneasy was, to give her parents pain—to see them weep and mourn for her.

Who can doubt the salvation of such a child. Only eight years of age, her mind was matured in nothing but devotional reverence, and devout sentiment, when she was removed to heaven, where her virtues will blossom in a fair clime. Farewell.

EDMUND SHEPPARD.