



THE

# CHRISTIAN BANNER.

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

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## A NARRATIVE

OF THE ORIGIN OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION.

No. V.

As the reader, not acquainted with the origin of the present religious institutions, will be curious to know how the lay elders or ruling elders, got into existence, we shall while noticing these proceedings of the assembly, just remark, that while they were inquiring into the constitution of the Jewish Sanhedrim and defining its ecclesiastical and civil powers, it was remarked that "Moses appointed that he that should not hearken to the priest or the judge should die." Deut. xvii. 12. It was inferred in favor of church power that the priest held one court and the civil magistrate another. But Mr. Selden observed that the Vulgate Latin, until within these 40 years, read thus, *Qui non obediverit sacerdoti et decreto judicis morietur*. "He that will not obey the priest shall die by the sentence of the judge." Mr. Lightfoot added, that when the judges of inferior courts went up to Jerusalem by way of appeal; it was only for advice and consultation. But when the question was put for a subordination of synods and lay elders, as so many courts of judicature, with power to dispense church censures, it was carried in the affirmative, and asserted in their humble advice to parliament, with this addition, "So Christ has furnished some in his churches besides ministers of the word, with gifts for government, and with commission to execute the same when called thereto, who are to join with the ministers in the government of the church, which officers the reformed churches generally call elders." Hence their name, authority, and office.

When this point was carried by a large majority, the Independents entered their dissent in writing, and complained to the world of "the unkind usage they met with in the assembly; that the papers they offered were not read, and that they were not allowed to state their own questions, being told they set themselves industriously to puzzle the cause and render the clearest propositions obscure, rather than argue the truth or falseness of them; that it was not worth the assembly's while to spend so much time in debating with so inconsiderable a number of men." They also declared that the assembly refused to debate their main proposition, viz. Whether a divine right of church government did not remain with every particular congrega-

tion." To all which, says Mr. Neal, it was replied that the assembly were not conscious they had done them any injustice; and as for the rest, they were the proper judges of their own methods of proceeding. So these matters were carried in the Westminster Assembly. But the Erastians reserved themselves for the House of Commons, where they were sure to be joined in opposing these decisions of the assembly by all the patrons of the Independents. For it mattered not what was decided by the assembly—it was neither divine nor orthodox until sanctioned by the parliament. The English and Scots commissioners were very solicitous about the fate of this dogma of the divines in the House of Commons, and were determined to carry the point by stratagem. The scheme was, to carry the question before the house should be full. "They gave their friends notice to be early in their places; but Mr. Glyn, perceiving their intentions, spoke an hour to the points of *jus divinum*; and after him Mr. Whitelocke stood up and enlarged upon the same argument till the house was full; when the question being put, it was carried in the negative, and that the proposition of the assembly should stand thus, *that it is lawful and agreeable to the word of God, that the church be governed by congregational, classical, and synodical assemblies.*"

Because the House of Commons would not go the whole length with the Assembly in establishing the *jus divinum* of presbytery, the Scots commissioners and the high Presbyterians in England alarmed the citizens with the danger of the church, and prevailed with the common council to petition the parliament (November 15) "that the Presbyterian discipline shall be established as the discipline of Jesus Christ." But the commons answered with a frown. Not yet discouraged, they prevailed with the city ministers to petition, who, when they came to the house, were told by the Speaker they "need not wait for an answer, but go home and look to the charge of their congregation."

"The Presbyterian ministers, despairing of success with the Commons, instead of yielding to the times, resolved to apply to the House of Lords, who received them civilly and promised to take their request into consideration; but no advances were made for two months, and they became impatient, and determined to renew their application;" and to give it the greater weight prevailed with the lord mayor and court of aldermen to join them in presenting an address, which they did June 16—"for a speedy settlement of church government according to the covenant, and that no toleration might be given to popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, profaneness, or any thing contrary to sound doctrine, and that all private assemblies might be restrained." But it was all in vain. The House of Commons would not be moved by their disagreeable importunity. "However, adds Mr. Neal, this laid the foundation of those jealousies and misunderstandings between the city and parliament, which in the end proved the ruin of the Presbyterian cause."

The next and fiercest controversy between the parliament and the assembly was upon the power of the keys. But upon this we cannot now speak particularly.

It would be tedious, though, perhaps, very profitable to go into the

detail of the acts and deeds of the Westminster Assembly, and those proceedings of the long parliament connected with the call and session of those creed makers. An assembly which sat five years, six months, and twenty two days, in which they had one thousand one hundred and sixty three sessions, must have done a great deal of ecclesiastical business, right or wrong. Their deeds will appeal to posterity either good or evil, according to the medium through which they are viewed. If viewed through the medium of the popular and fashionable systems of this age, a majority of their acts will appear good and commendable to those who are their children; but if viewed through the medium of the twelve apostles, by those who venerate their character and authority, their deeds will appear every way out of character, and worthy of the severest reprobation. It is a very slim commendation of them to allow that they declared many truths in their confession; for so did the council of Trent and the council of Nice.

After they had spent the above term of five years, six months, and twenty two days, in creed and discipline manufacturing, those who yet kept their seats were converted into examining committees. After making the laws of conscience and conduct, they became examiners of such ministers as presented themselves for ordination or induction into livings. In the form of examining committees they might have sat till their last breath, had not Oliver Cromwell, on the morning of March 25, 1652, turned the long parliament out of doors, and thus being deprived of their patron, preserver, proprietor, benefactor, and guide, they broke up without any "formal dissolution."

#### OBSERVATIONS ON THE OLD AND NEW COVENANT, AND RESPONSE.

FRIEND OLIPHANT:—I acknowledge the obligations you have laid me under by the trouble you have taken in directing me in what you think is truth; but as you have not complied with my first requirement, you have left me in the same state you found me in. In your remarks upon my first sentence, you have over-leaped the mark, as the why and the wherefore is addressed to fellow mortals like myself, and not to God, because that would be unreasonable; for there is not a human being upon the face of the earth that he requires to have faith in any thing but what there is along with the requirement indubitable testimony given to base faith upon.

I am sorry that you have put yourself to so much trouble in finding the beginning at which I begin, seeing that I quoted from Genesis, second chapter, and only seven days from the beginning of time.

You have marked out four propositions which I acknowledge, and in the proof you offer against the first one, you have these words, "The ten commandments were given to the Jewish people by divine authority." Thus far you are right; for they were never given to the Jewish people as a nation before, but that does not prove that they were not previously given to Adam. According to your own showing, example is equal to precept. In the scriptures we do not find in as many words that these ten precepts were given to Adam but there are in the scriptures examples enough to prove that they

were the governing principle amongst the nations from Adam to Moses. But it would require too much space to notice all that could be given. I have in my former essay traced the Sabbath and the laws from Adam to Moses. This you appear to have overlooked, which causes me to notice some of it again. Exo. xvi. 4, "Then said the Lord unto Moses, behold I will rain bread from heaven for you" (and by this take away all cause of murmuring) "that I may prove them whether they will walk in my law or no." Now when the Lord proclaimed his law and commandments from Horeb, the people were afraid: "and Moses said unto the people, fear not; for God is come to prove you, Exo. xx. 20" (to give you correct knowledge of his laws) "and that his fear may be before your faces, that you sin not." Now if you are prepared to say that the laws and commandments mentioned by the Lord in Exo. xvi. 4-23, are not the same as those he proved Israel with in Exo. xx. 20, no doubt you are prepared to inform us what laws and commandments they were that the Lord alluded in the 4th and 28th verses of this chapter: for it is important that we should know: for they were given to Adam, and the scriptures nowhere inform us that they are repealed. Then of course they are binding upon us. The Apostle Paul found the work of the law written in the hearts of the Gentiles, Rom. ii. 15. Now when or where did the Gentiles in Paul's day and the nations in Julian's obtain this good and perfect gift? I answer from God through Adam and Noah. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Now the Roman Emperor "Julian the apostate, when writing against the Christians, finds fault with the decalogue of Moses, which, as he says, contained no precepts that are not equally regarded by all nations."

According to Paul, "love is the fulfilling of the law," and by the principle of love, God governs the universe, both men and angels; and there can be no just or righteous laws but what are based upon these ten precepts, and let no man say that these ideas are fanciful; for the scriptures if called upon will amply sustain them. As to the authority by which the Jews were to sanctify the Sabbath, there is no dispute.

Second proof. You say "respecting what antediluvians knew about the Sabbath, I can say nothing—Moses' history is silent on the subject." Now I will ask this question. After the Lord proclaimed the fourth commandment, from Sinai were the Israelites informed by the proclamation how they were to observe the Sabbath? Here I will undertake to answer for you in the affirmative; and if I am wrong you can correct me. The command from Sinai is, "Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy &c." Then the Sabbath was sanctified and set apart at the creation by the same authority that it was at Sinai, and whatsoever is sanctified is holy. The Israelites were only commanded to do what is ordained at the creation to be done, and God did more for Adam's information than he did for the Israelites; for he set Adam the example as well as gave the precept. How then can you say that Moses' history is silent on the subject?

Third. You ask "How will this interpretation, at a venture, suit you." To say the least of it, it is blinking the question, or casting dust in our eyes; for the Lord is not in this portion of scripture teaching his followers to sanctify the Sabbath, but simply "pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day," thus placing the existence of the Sabbath beyond scripture precedent and precept.

Fourth proof. "Will you, friend Observator, inform me and many others where anything like authority is found for the observance of the Sabbath day by the Lord's disciples." For your information, and as many more as desire it, in the first place I call attention to my former essay which you appear to overlook. There you will find that the Sabbath was ordained at the creation for Adam's family in general, and from Sinai for Abraham's family in particular. I will next quote a sentence from said essay; "There is not an instance in the New Testament that any Jew or Christian ever doubted the existence of the Sabbath." Well, then, it belongs to you to inform us by what authority Christians of the present day abolish or even doubt the existence of the Sabbath. As to the first day of the week, we have no precept apart from the Sabbath, and the example only informs us that the disciples at Troas came together to break bread on the first day of the week at night. It does not show that it was customary with them to preach to or exhort one another; for Paul was there accidentally and embraced the opportunity of their meeting together to preach to them at this time. It may not be improper to say here what my views of the first day of the week are. From the example given, and it being countenanced by Paul, I believe that the Sabbath was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week by Divine authority, in honor of our Lord's resurrection.

Next, you give us five cardinal points, which you say "I am ready to maintain and defend before God and man." Now, friend Oliphant, have you not spoken unadvisedly here. You may defend these five points before men, right or wrong, and if they are scriptural they need no defence before God, but if they are unscriptural, what then?

First Point The Sabbath may be looked upon by a few as obsolete. but the great bulk of professing Christians do not believe that it is not obligatory, as is proved by taking the one thousand essays as a sample that were written in Great Britain in the short time of three months, addressed to one man, pointing out the scriptural and temporal blessings conferred upon men by the immeasurable boon, the gift of the day of rest. "Six days thou shalt work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest, that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger may be refreshed, and in all that I have said unto you be circumspect," Exo. xx. iii. 12. This scripture shows what the Sabbath was intended for.

Second Point In my scripture reading I have not found the Jewish nor Patriarchal, nor the Christian Sabbath, nor the Christian's Lord's day. These are all supplements. I have showed in the November No., quoted from Genesis, that the Sabbath is the Lord's

day; and you have not impinged that quotation, and John heard his Lord and Master say that he was "Lord of the Sabbath." It is then reasonable to suppose that John had in his mind's eye the Sabbath day when he said he was in the spirit on the Lord's day.

Third Point. You say "the Sabbath was instituted in honor of the first creation." Here the Lord and you are at variance; for he says that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, Mark ii. 27. Now as I desire to believe the Lord in all things, I am bound to believe him in this also: for if it were as you say, it is man would have been made for the Sabbath. As to your fourth and fifth Points, I see nothing disputable in them but what has already been answered.

As you invite a review of what you have said in the August and September Numbers, I will offer some remark, upon your seven propositions in Position and Principles of Disciples No. 9, on the old and new covenants; and I wish to be understood as offering no objections to what you say of the Horeb covenant, as such; but to your having mixed the old and the Horeb covenants together, or rather your considering them as one. Then the first inquiry is this, Is the old covenant and the Horeb covenant the same? If they are, there must be some analogy between them and the new covenant. The principal features of the new covenant are these:—it has in it, atonement for past and present sins, and it embraces the whole of Adam's family. Now Paul when reasoning with the Corinthians calls the Horeb covenant the ministration of death. Again, the Horeb covenant was given exclusively to the Israelites. "I have made a covenant with thee and Israel, Exo. xxxiv-27," and then it only contains ten moral precepts given to the Israelites as the covenant they were to fulfil, "and he wrote on the tables the words of the covenant the ten commandments." So then the Horeb covenant has no analogy to the new covenant. We must therefore find it elsewhere. When Adam was created he was capable of yielding perfect obedience to the laws and commandments given him, but as soon as he took of the fruit "of the tree whereof the Lord God commanded him not to eat," he was no longer capable of yielding the perfect obedience that was required of him, and must therefore have died for his first transgression, if God had not given him the old covenant, the institute of sacrifice; and it is presumable that it was given him before he committed any other sin, because the sin offering must come of his own freewill, or it could not be received. But as we have not here direct precept for the establishing the old covenant at the creation, we will therefore quote one from Paul, Heb. ix-26. The apostle reasons thus: If Christ had been an high priest on earth, and entering once every year, into the holy place, with his own blood, then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world. Thus the apostle places it beyond doubt, that the old covenant existed since the foundation of the world, and embraced the whole of Adam's family; and continued unaltered until Christ offered himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world; but when the Israelites were organized as a nation, and the tabernacle set up, they received an

high priest, ordained to offer up sacrifice for the sins of the people, which could not after this be received in any other way; and Paul in his reasoning with the Hebrews has this language, Heb. vii-11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law,) for the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. Wherefore then the law? It was added because of transgression. Now, what was it added to? I answer, *the old covenant*. For the Horeb covenant could not admit of any laws being added to it; that the law the apostle alludes to here is the same law the people received with the priesthood there cannot be a reasonable doubt. You will observe the priesthood was changed from the order of Aaron to the order of Melchisedec, and the old covenant from carnal sacrifices, washings and ordinances, to spiritual sacrifices. And the apostle in contrasting the old and new covenant, directly shows what the laws of the old covenant were, and that they could not be any part of the Horeb covenant; and it may be worth observing that the laws of the old covenant were only changed. Now this does not amount to abolition.

Now, friend Oliphant, I think that I am warranted to say that the covenant given to Noah, the covenant of circumcision, the covenant given to Abraham concerning his temporal and spiritual seed, the covenant from Horeb, and the institution of the Passover, were never abolished; but I have no desire to debate these points with you, or any other; but if they are called in question I believe that the scriptures will sustain the position I have taken.

OBSERVATOR.

#### OBSERVATIONS ON "OBSERVATOR."

MY DEAR FRIEND:—While I find a commendable measure of sincerity, reverence, and candor in the essay now submitted, I cannot, with all my charity, discover the same amount of scriptural cogency and logical appropriateness in its premises and conclusions.

The essay on the Sabbath in a late Number was before me in full, when a call was made for more light as it respects the Lord's authority for the observance of the Sabbath by his people since the establishment of his spiritual kingdom; and hence some other evidence than said document supplied was evidently required. And with some care have I looked over the present effort, and re-read your former remarks, and yet the light called for, is, in my horizon, not apparent. Nor do I marvel; for, as I view it, the work would be like making brick not only as the Israelites without straw, but also without clay.

Christianity, with me, is all found in the "New Testament of our Lord and Saviour"—all embraced in the inspired writings of the apostles and evangelists of Jesus. Every law, precept, institution; and injunction recorded and made manifest in the Infallible Record of this Dispensation claims my faith and receives my hearty religious



assent; but "whatsoever is not found therein, nor proved thereby," so far as the religion of Jesus is concerned, "is not to be required of any man."

The question that strikes at the root of the whole matter, the answer to which answers ten thousand questions, is, Do the discourses of the apostles to sinners, and their epistles to churches, contain the whole will of Christ to saints and sinners, or the whole of the Christian religion? The writer answers *Yes*; and if you are understood your answer is regarded as *No*. Here we join issue. Now, as a calculating man will not walk seven miles to a given spot that he can reach by walking one mile, so I decline discussing the merits of all the covenants you are pleased to bring before me, (especially as some of them will be denominated *home-made covenants*;) because the shortest method of arriving at our duty is to gain a clear knowledge of the one new covenant of which Jesus is mediator, and Paul and Peter primary ministers.

Were the covenants instead of the observance of a day before us, it would be among the easiest things to demonstrate that the old covenant, Jewish covenant, and Horeb covenant are three names for the same thing—that Paul has no allusion to any covenant with Adam when he speaks of the old covenant. With Adam, indeed, a covenant was made; but it was BEFORE HE SINNED. The three great cardinals of the Adamic covenant were—

1. Of every tree of Paradise thou mayest freely eat;
2. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and ill thou shalt not eat:
3. For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die.

What use you have for this covenant—or the covenant made between God, Noah, and *every living creature*—in contending for the observance of the Sabbath, is best known to those who can discern the connexion.

I will only add upon this topic, that were I so generous as to admit all that you affirm in reference to how the Sabbath was observed *previously to the Jewish law*, the admission, fairly handled, would fall with awful weight upon the whole theory that we are to observe the Sabbath because observed by the Patriarchs. Admit what you say about a covenant prior to the Jewish, in which prior covenant there was express authority for the Sabbath, and the entire argument in favor of present authority for the Sabbath is tried, condemned, and executed without ceremony. For if the Jews under Moses required positive law on the subject, *when clear and express law al-*

*ready existed*, most certainly the saints under Jesus require equal positive law for the observance of the day, because, on your Adam covenant and Horeb covenant principle, we require not only previous but present authority by transference or re-proclamation. Hence seeing you believe in the observance of the day for the Lord's people, I have made a draft upon you for this authority, but have done so in vain. My friend "Observer" hastens with great gravity away back to Abraham, to Noah, and even to Adam in order to rest the sole of his feet while arguing a Sabbath for Christian people. The authority is too old by several thousand years. Old things are passed away, Paul tells us; all things are become new. Why should we put old wine into new bottles? This has always proved fatal both to bottles and wine.

It ought here to be very distinctly said that no one disputes the appointment of the Sabbath at the creation; and no one, so far as known to me, denies its authoritative observance from the first Pentecost in Arabia by the Israelites to the great Pentecost in Jerusalem fifty days after our Lord partook of the last Passover. A great boon it was. The Sabbath was arranged by God for man, as indeed all things at the beginning. My good friend with whom I now correspond regards this fact as contradicting what was affirmed in my last letter, that the Sabbath was appointed in honor of the creation. Certainly Moses is not reprov'd or contradicted by Jesus on this point. Moses says, "And God blessed the seventh day [or Sabbath] and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Thus was it *honored* by God as a lasting memorial of the fact that he had created the heavens and earth in six days, and it is also true that this arrangement, in its power to bless, was for the benefit of man. I fully believe both Moses and Jesus. As a divinely inspired historian, Moses' word is still good—as a lawgiver, his authority, like his body is not to be found.

Allow me to notice one more remark made by my very excellent and in many respects praiseworthy friend, and I will pass on. John, you affirm, heard the Master say that he was Lord of the Sabbath; and hence you argue that it is reasonable to suppose that the apostle had reference to the Sabbath day when making use of the words, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." That this is as fair, as full, as forcible an argument for a Christian Sabbath as can be found in any book store or pamphlet shop in Canada or elsewhere, I am willing to admit; but that it is a valid argument is inadmissible. Clear,

positive, express directions were given by Moses to the Jews ; but you ask us to accept of an inference under Prince Messiah who has " all authority," and an inference too that not one in a million would draw from the premises ! Let me ask, are we advancing backward—instead of saying " the darkness is past, the true light now shines," must we say, ' the light is receding, and greater darkness ' is come upon us ?' Can you think for a moment on calm reflection that all of Moses' disciples had clear precepts respecting Sabbath observance, and that the disciples of Jesus must rely on a bare, far-fetched, undependable inference ?

But this inference is absolutely in the face of reliable testimony. And the very expression—" Lord of the Sabbath," uttered at a time when the Pharisee Sabbath men complained that Jesus did not honor or sanctify the Sabbath sufficiently, is stoutly against the pro-Sabbath advocates. Read the narrative. Jesus passed through a corn field—his disciples pluck corn and eat—the Pharisees murmur at his profanity ; and his reply is, ' I am Lord of the day, my authority is above and beyond it.' Had friend " Observator" not told us such original things relative to the old covenant being made with Adam, it would have been matter of surprise how any inference could possibly be drawn from premises like these at all favourable to the observance of the Sabbath by the Lord's saints since he took away the first that he might establish the second *church* covenant. My apology however, is, that every Sabbath advocate is exceedingly hard pressed, and the very word Sabbath, found in any connexion in the New Testament, is considered capital proof, even when the passage is against the original seventh day appointment.

Let me now amplify and sustain one of my five propositions submitted in the November No. It reads—

The Sabbath was observed by the Jews and the fathers by divine authority—the Lord's day is the day on which the first and divinely guided disciples assembled in honor of their risen Lord, and for the observance of the ordinances of his house.

This sustained (*from the scriptures of the New Covenant*) and I will make any one welcome to all the learned and popular reasoning upon the 'Christian Sabbath' which has been spoken and written from the days of the Covenanters till now. The first clause of the above affirmation needs no proof, for it is acknowledged. And who disputes the latter clause? Not Observator ! And yet when intelligently acknowledged, it looks out of countenance every practical leaning toward the old Jewish Sabbath or the Sabbath of the Patriarchs. Here is a sample of the authority for honoring the Lord's day or first day of

the week :

1. When Jesus was risen early on the first day of the week, he appeared to one of the Marys.

2. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they [certain women] came to the sepulchre-----entered in, and found not Jesus.

3. In the end of the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, the angel of the Lord who sat at the sepulchre door, said to the women, Go quickly, tell his disciples he is risen from the dead—he goeth before you into Galilee: there you will see him.

4. The same day two of them journeying to Emmaus, while conversing together, Jesus drew near and went with them.

5. These two, the same hour that Jesus vanished out of their sight, went to Jerusalem, and found the eleven assembled, and while they talked Jesus stood in the midst of them.

6. Eight days after, being the first day of the week, Thomas being with them, Jesus appeared with his disciples.

7. The Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles, and they began to preach, on the first day of the week.

8. At Troas on the first day of the week the disciples *came together to break bread.*

9. Paul instructed the brethren at Corinth to put into the Lord's treasury their contributions for the poor on the first day of the week.

10. The churches of Galatia were likewise so enjoined.

11. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.

12. Let no man judge you in respect to a feast, or of the new moon, or of Sabbaths—shadows of things to come; the substance, Christ.

What need we of farther witness? And not one syllable about a Sabbath, saving in disapprobation of its observance. When we find Paul to the saints in Colosse and to the Hebrew believers class feasts, new moons, Sabbaths, priests, gifts, sacrifices as belonging to the same category, serving their time as unto the example and shadow of better things under the reign of Messiah, we are certainly at liberty to regard the authority of the Sabbath exactly as we regard the offering of gifts and sacrifices of the law. To the brethren in Galatia, Paul speaks on this wise: How turn you back to the weak and beggarly elements, to which, a second time, you desire to be in bondage? You observe days, moons, times, and years—I am afraid of you, &c. Now among the days and times then observed by the zealots who, with some love for Moses and some for Christ, attempted to cement the gospel and law in some sort together, the Jewish Sabbath was conspicuous.

Of the proofs that the first day of the week is a new institution, totally different from the institution of the seventh day both in design and manner of observance, I rely with the greater confidence on the assembling at Troas. One precept or one example is as good as one thousand. Now Luke does not speak of a certain number of disciples, but he relates that *the* disciples, thereby referring to the disciples at Troas as a body. Nor does he refer to a first day of the week, as if alluding to a special or incidental coming together. Very far from it. But it is *the* disciples came together on *the* first day. Nor is this all. The purpose for which they met is designated. Paul was there incidentally. They came not together to hear the apostle. None of the congregations in those days assembled "to hear preaching." Luke is definite. His language is not to be mistaken by any who understand language. *The* disciples (not some disciples) forming the church at Troas came together on *the* first day (not a first day, and not the second or seventh day) TO BREAK BREAD. Hence, Jesus' injunction, *Do this in remembrance of me*, was complied with by these Troas disciples on the first day of the week; and that these disciples either in doctrine or practice were diverse from other congregations of disciples, or practiced what they had not been taught, neither my friend Observator nor any one else will be likely to affirm. The stated practice of one primitive congregation was the practice of all.

Now permit me to call attention with special emphasis to the capital fact that the great thought of these disciples was to honor Jesus—to honor him as the Lord of Glory—to worship and pay homage to the ME who was Messiah—to remember and commemorate his love as the Saviour, the risen Son of God. Did any people ever thus occupy the hours of the seventh day? Where—how—when—did the Jews or Patriarchs assemble on the Sabbath or seventh day? No such thing in all the Book! They came not together—they silently and inactively and privately remembered the day and honored it as a day made holy by God on account of resting after six days' work—the old creation. How different the first day of the week! One grand argument every intelligent disciple has to glorify Jesus and maintain that he has all authority, is, that the original holy day, expressly set apart by God in honor of his creative energy, was wholly lost sight of and cast into the shade by the appropriation of the day after it in honor of the new creation—the coming, teaching, sacrifice, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of King Jesus. The two days are just as dissimilar as the first and second creations.

Yet it is preached and published from Dan to Beersheba that the

Sabbath is still to be observed, only it is changed from the seventh to the first day! This was and is impossible. We may as consistently and as logically speak of the change of the original creation into the new or spiritual creation—the creating the heavens and the earth at the beginning into the creating of man anew unto good works by Christ Jesus. We boldly promise to furnish as many arguments to show that the old creation is changed to the new creation as any man in British America or out of it can bring from his logical treasures in favour of a change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day.

Some, indeed, very sanctimoniously exclaim, 'You infidel—deny the Sabbath!' Were we disposed to reply in this sort of metre, we should respond, You infidel—deny the oracles of Christ! But we approve not of this style. *What is the teaching of our Lord's holy ambassadors on this subject?* is much more worthy of an honest man's attention; and most assuredly he is the practical infidel who denies or rejects any portion of what our Lord teaches by his inspired twelve. We are not under Moses, and will not submit to his authority in any one thing as a *lawgiver*. We are under Jesus and his quorum of sacred legislators. When the great Master says to these inspired messengers, "Teach the disciples to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," we will not look—we dare not look—for other things to observe, whether of Moses or of Adam!

And he is a "miserable sinner" as saith the English Prayer-Book—he is a miserable sinner who will take advantage of the abolition of the Sabbath, and say in his heart, 'There is now no Sabbath, I will do as I please on Lord's day.' Such an one is not a disciple of the Lord Jesus. It is questionable if he knows one lesson taught by the spiritual Lord of the spiritual kingdom. What! do as we please because Moses does not speak, but Jesus—?—! O Lord, may those who profess thy name not bring wrath upon their heads as did the Jews by a rejection of thy blessed claims! Grant that they may all LOVE THEE, and therefore HONOR THEE, and in spirit and in truth SERVE THEE!

Respectfully Yours,

D. OLIPHANT.

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ELDERS.

No. I.

We offer the following as introductory to a few articles on the office and duties of Elders:—

Rainham Centre, Nov. 18th, 1852.

To BROTHER OLIPHANT: EDITOR CHRISTIAN BANNER: COBOURG:—I

take this opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of nine numbers of the Christian Banner, sent to me by yourself or some other kind friend or brother, for which I feel truly grateful; for they greatly edified and strengthened me in the truths of the gospel, and I shall circulate them among my friends and neighbours, hoping they may be equally benefitted. I must also inform you that my former prejudices have given way to the light of divine truth. When my understanding was opened by the truths of the gospel I then endeavoured to set those truths before my fellow creatures, but this soon brought down the frowns of my brethren, and they commenced labouring with me and demanded of me a confession or an acknowledgment, and a renouncement of the principles I entertained, which of course I could not do; and accordingly I left the Baptists and united with the Disciples, where we have peace and union, and we meet every Lord's day, and endeavour to edify each other in hymns and psalms and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord. There seems to be no backwardness among the brethren. Many of them are able in the scriptures. Next Lord's day we expect three to be immersed. The church has appointed two Elders, but they are not willing to attend to the ordinance, having some doubts whether an unordained Elder should perform that rite. The brethren have sent for an administrator. Would you have the goodness to give your views through your very valuable paper upon this matter. - The brethren will not move one step without a "Thus saith the Lord." Your suggestions, drawn from the word, might not only be a benefit to the church in Rainham, but many others.

By giving your attention to the above you will oblige your unworthy brother in Christ,

AARON OVERHOTT.

[For the Christian Banner.]

Nov. 16th, 1852.

Will you answer a few queries for my information as soon as you can.

1. What is the Elder's office in a Christian Church? Or in other words, what is his duty?

2. Has the Elder a right to officiate in all his office before he is first ordained by the laying on of hands and fasting and prayer?

3. Has the church a right to appoint any other person to Baptize when they have Elders, that is, when these Elders have not ~~had~~ *had hands laid on them?*

4. In what light is an Elder considered before laying on of hands?

5. Is the Elder like a watch hung up before a shop for show, that is, before he has had HANDS LAID ON HIM.

6. Has the church a right to appoint officers, and then to keep the office in their own hands?

7. Is the office of baptizing of a higher order than to preach the gospel or to attend to the Lord's supper?

A. QUERIST.

Here are a few of another cast, but bearing partially on some items in the preceding. We shall endeavour to say something on these topics in due time:—

1. How many, or what proportion of the disciples in Canada give evidence of constant secret prayer?
2. How many obviously improve in the knowledge of God's word?
3. What proportion of families worship God regularly by reading his word and calling on his name?
4. What proportion of the number meet constantly to break bread or the loaf?
5. How many of the overseers and deacons have been ordained by the imposition of hands?
6. Have all the evangelists been ordained by fasting, prayer and the imposition of hands?
7. What number of brethren are capable and enjoy the approbation of their brethren in preaching or teaching the word?

#### A USEFUL PORT FOLIO.

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—In looking over my Port Folio, my eyes lit upon several conversations held with our opposers, which I had minuted down, some of which I will transcribe and send to you, and if in your judgment, they will be of interest to your readers, you may give them to them.

Conversing with a Pedobaptist on the subject of the Union of Christians, he remarked that he saw no chance for union on account of immersionists being so tenacious for immersion. I asked him if he believed that immersion was baptism, and believers were proper subjects? O yes, says he, but I do not think that immersion is the *only* mode, or believers the *only* subjects. But continued he, if immersionists were as charitable as we are, there would be no difficulty in the way of union.

But Sir, is it charity only, that leads you to think that believers are proper subjects of baptism, or that immersion is baptism? Or is your faith predicated upon evidence? If your faith rests upon evidence, then as a believer you could be immersed without any sacrifice of principle, or conscience. But immersionists would have to sacrifice both, to acknowledge infant sprinkling.

I am not so certain, said he, that immersion is taught in the Bible at all, and it is very certain that the learned world are much disagreed on the subject.

Do you know Sir, of any learned man, who does not give Dip, Plunge, Immerse, as the primary meaning of the word? There are many learned men who think immersion is not its *only* meaning, said he. But Sir, if they are all agreed that it means immersion, and all are not agreed in any other meaning, who is the most consistent, those who practise what all say is right, or those who practise in a way that is disputed.

I think Sir, said he, that it is uncharitable not to give all people a choice in the mode of baptism.



In conversation with another, who professed to be a learned man ; after he had made a lengthy speech in trying to show that the Greek word *Baptizo*, meant to *wash*, as well as to immerse, and that washing could be performed in a variety of ways, I asked him if he knew of any passage in the Bible where sprinkling was called washing? He thought that the various washings under the Law, were performed no doubt by sprinkling. Please refer me to some example of the kind that I may be instructed in this matter, for I know of no such instance.

There were divers baptisms under the Law, said he, according to Paul Heb. ix. and 10th. These baptisms on washings said he, were performed by sprinkling.

Allow me Sir, again to ask where under the Law sprinkling was ever called washing?

In Leviticus xiv. 7. we read of the Priest *sprinkling* upon the leprous man that was to be cleansed. Again in the 7th verse of the same chapter, of his *sprinkling* the house seven times. Also Numbers, xix. 19., a clean person was to *sprinkle* the water of separation upon the unclean person, that he might be cleansed.

There is no dispute but there were divers sprinklings under the Law, as well as divers Baptisms or washings as our version has it, but the question is, were these sprinklings ever called washings? Was the house *washed* when the Priest sprinkled it? Or was the leprous man *washed* when the Priest sprinkled the *blood* of the bird upon him? Or was the unclean *washed* when the clean person sprinkled the water of separation upon him? Moses says in the latter case that the person was to wash his clothes and *bath* his flesh in water to be clean, Numbers, xix. 19. Again Leviticus, xiv. 8th and 9th, after the Priest had sprinkled of the blood, the leprous man was to wash his flesh *in water*, in order to be clean. Again Lev. xi. 32., the unclean vessel was to be put *into water*, also vi. 28. the brazen pot was to be scoured and *rinsed in water*. In Numbers, xxxi. 23, "all that abideth not the fire ye shall make *go through the water*." Now as water alone was never sprinkled on a person under the Law, and the various washings *rinsing in water*, *bathing in water* and the vessels must all be put *into water*, and all that would not abide the fire must pass *through the water*, permit me to ask by what authority do you say that the divers washings were performed by sprinkling? No answer was given!

In conversation with another, he contended that *Baptizo*, meant to sprinkle and pour as well as dip. I asked him if to sprinkle meant to pour or dip? His answer was, No. Please tell me then by what law in language you make a word mean three things or acts distinct from each other, and yet the three acts mean one thing?—As in the other case no answer was given.

In conversing with a fourth, he said it was a pity that the question of baptism could not be settled. I asked him if he had been a member of the church at Rome, if Paul in writing in the 6th chapter of Romans would have told the truth in his case when he said, Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death?

Or had he belonged to the church to whom Paul wrote, Heb. x. 22. where he said, "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our *bodies washed* with pure water," whether Paul would have told the truth in his case? Or whether he ought not to have said having our foreheads moistened with a little water?

Ah! said the person, Paul does not refer to water baptism in Rom. vi. but the effect of baptism was a burial unto Christ's death and not unto water.

But pause a little, pouring is always pouring, no matter what the element poured, or the subject poured upon. So sprinkling is always sprinkling. So also baptism is always a unit, no matter what the element in which we are baptized. In Rom. vi. 3., Paul says, as many of us as were baptized into Christ were *baptized into his death*, and in the fourth verse, we are *buried with him unto death* by baptism. Now is it not plain that baptize and bury stand precisely in the same relation to the death of Christ. Or will you take the position that they were introduced into the death of Christ twice, one by baptism and once by a burial?

I confess said he, I never saw that before; I must confess that baptize and bury are one and the same thing. But still I doubt whether Paul had any reference to water baptism. I understand this to be a spiritual baptism, in as much as it was their old man that was crucified, therefore it was their old man that was buried.

But what better is that? If the baptism of the old man was a burial into death, does the word change its meaning when it refers to the baptism of the person himself?

But it strikes me that you mistake Paul. He says how shall *we*, that are dead to sin, &c. Is it not plain that the *we* that was dead to sin, was the *we* and *us*, that was buried in baptism? Or will you say that the *old man* was dead to sin, and the *old man* that was buried, and the *old man* that was raised to walk in newness of life?

I see it said he, the question is settled.

But the most common plea for union in this country, is the following:

1st. It is not likely that denominational distinctions will ever be done away. Indeed the subject rightly viewed, no one would desire it. For the prosperity of one party only provokes another to greater diligence. Neither is the abolition of creeds essential to christian union.

2nd. But let a general creed be drawn up, embracing all the cardinal points in religion such as the Trinity, the special influence of the Spirit, a special call to the ministry, total depravity, &c., &c. then—

3rd. Let these general articles of faith answer for all common occasions, such as communion seasons, and meetings for the conversion of sinners &c., &c.

4th. Let the different sects with their creeds stand in the same relation to the general creed that the different states in our union, with their State constitution do to the constitution of the United States.

5th. By means of this general creed, all can be united without any sacrifice of principle, and each church can have their own rules, and worship God in their own way.

What say you, brother, to this general creed? It looks to me as if it would be the occasion of more strife between Baptists and Pedobaptists, than is now between the North and South on the subject of slavery. For my part I can say as did Peter, "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life." Jesus says "every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up."

YOUR FELLOW LABORER.

### A GOOD MESSAGE FROM INDIANA.

*Indianapolis, Ind., 16th Dec., 1852.*

MY DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—Your very kind and welcome epistle of the 8th inst., now lies before me. It is indeed very refreshing to me, to cultivate the acquaintance of a fellow-laborer in the great vineyard of our common Lord. Christianity is the same, always, and in all places. It presents the same motive to every one who embraces it, no matter whether he lives in the United States or in the Provinces of Great Britain. Christians in all countries enjoy the same blessed hope of immortality, and are co-workers in the same blessed cause.

I am happy to learn that the cause of our blessed Master has many friends and advocates in the Canadas, and that the truth is gaining ground with you. You have unfurled your "Banner," and entered your plea for reformation. You have, no doubt, met with much opposition from sectarian bigots, and the blind devotees of human creeds and confessions of faith, who never dare to think differently from their fathers. But you have nothing to fear from that quarter. "Stronger are they that are for us, than all those who can be against us." Then keep your 'Banner' flying, and victory is sure.

It might interest you, to learn something of the history and present prospects of reformation in Indiana. I can only promise you a "bird's eye glance" at the subject, in the compass of this short communication.

About a quarter of a century ago, the "Reformation" was introduced into this State, by means of a few copies of the "Christian Baptist," then taken by some strong men who were not afraid to read and think; and some copies of the 1st edition of the 'New Version' of New Testament; or "Living Oracles," together with the preaching of brethren from Kentucky, who had received the truth a little in advance of us. It was immediately embraced by a band of noble spirits, such as, M. Cole, J. Fassett, J. T. Littell, A. Littell, B. Vawter, John Wright, sen., J. O'Kane, M. Combs, A. Prather, J. R. Ross, and many others, who became zealous advocates of the cause. They met with great opposition from the sectarian world, but, so far from being discouraged by the opposition, it only drove them to the Bible, and caused them to live near the Lord, and "love each other with pure hearts fervently."

In the October of 1827, I was immersed for the remission of sins, being but a boy; and soon after, on account of misrepresentation, and opposition, and the great scarcity of preachers, I was compelled to become a public advocate of the cause. We were then very few, and greatly despised by all the sectarians in the land. We had no institutions of learning, nor any paper or periodical in the State to advocate the cause.

But the cause has been steadily on the advance ever since. "The little one has become a thousand." Christian churches have sprung up all over the land, and the Christian brotherhood in Indiana alone now number more than Fifty Thousand disciples. In the *Christian Record*, you will see the rapid increase which is now being made to our ranks. In the October, November and December Numbers of the *Record* you will see an aggregate of some eighteen hundred additions reported by the brethren, not all in Indiana, but a large proportion of them are.

We have an excellent institution of learning, which has been in operation several years—"Fair View Academy." It is under the Presidency of bro. A. R. Benton, a graduate of Bethany, and an excellent teacher. This institution is doing good service. We are also building up and endowing the "North Western Christian University" to be located in this city. This is to be an institution of the very first order. And so far great success has attended the enterprise. We have organized under the Charter, with funds subscribed to the amount of some \$85,000. Our agents are still in the field, and we expect to be able to raise a sufficient sum, to erect buildings worth \$50,000, and completely endow every chair in the Institution. We hope also to endow one chair of Bethany College. We shall commence building in the Spring, and shall most probably commence a preparatory school, composed of Male and Female departments, next autumn.

The *Christian Record*, which we have Edited and published during the last ten years, is *now* the only periodical published in the State, that advocates the cause of the reformation. And it has a patronage, we suppose, second only to the *Harbinger*, among our monthlies. That the *Christian Record* has been the humble instrument of doing great good, we have the most indubitable evidence, from the brotherhood every where.

We have also met for more than a dozen years, annually, in what we call "state meetings" not to legislate for the church of God, but to consult together upon the great interests of Messiah's Kingdom. These meetings are every year increasing in interest and usefulness.

We have our "Indiana Christian Bible Society," which however is doing but little at present; for reasons which we have not room to give in full now. One however is this; we are nearly all friends of the "BIBLE UNION," and are expecting much from that association, in the way of furnishing us with a *correct* version of the Bible in the English language.

We have also our "Indiana Christian Home Missionary Society." This Institution is now doing good service. It has been organized

but a few years, and during the first two years, it was scarcely able to live; but now, it supports in whole or part, some half dozen Missionaries; and its prospect for future usefulness, is very encouraging. The object of this society, as its name imports, is to supply, as far as possible, the "Home field,"—to send the gospel to the destitute of our own State. But our brethren here have not forgotten the foreign field. The Jerusalem Mission is very popular with us, and our liberality, is passed up to Brother Barclay, through the society at Cincinnati.

The foregoing, is the bright side of the picture. We also have some unfortunate circumstances and influences to contend with. And not the least of these is the fact, that we cannot obtain a general and punctual attendance of the brethren upon the first day of every week. So many of them have been used to the *Monthly Meeting* system, among the sects, that they can appreciate nothing else. The love of the world too, is very much against us. The fertility of our soil, and the almost boundless recourses of our State, open so many avenues to wealth, that to resist the temptations requires a large portion of the spirit of Christianity.

But in spite of every obstacle, the truth is *onward* in Indiana and throughout the Western country. May the Lord bless his people every where; and may the time soon come, when the cause of Christ, so long oppressed, shall universally triumph!

Favour, Mercy, and Peace to you and all the holy brethren with you, be multiplied! Yours in the good hope,

J. M. MATHES.

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### SINCERITY.

[For the Christian Banner.

Sincerity like all other virtues requires cultivation. It is a delicate plant and grows not among briars and thorns. The sincerity which the Christian should display, needs a good soil, and will flourish only in the mild light of truth. When cultivated by an enlightened hand and watered by the gently distilling dews of truthfulness and devotion, it becomes a luxuriant plant—the perfection of moral excellence and of moral beauty. It is the greatest ornament which can enable the heart or decorate the character. Its value to the world and to the Christian is immense; for without it piety cannot exist, hope dies, religion is vain, and friendship becomes hypocrisy. It is a gem of highest esteem in heaven and earth. It is a pillar to the Christian character and closely connected with the basis of all right action. As sincerity increases in any enlightened community, friendship increases and becomes lasting, and the great object of the gospel can be accomplished; but where sincerity is not a welcome guest, its opposite is present to exert its baleful influence over society, debasing all who come within the reach of its blighting influence.

How dear is this principle to every humble follower of the Lamb, whose hopes are above and whose aspirations ascend to those scenes of immortal bliss, unseen by the beclouded eye of reason. And yet though valuable to all and admired by many, it is exhibited by

very few. Sincerity strengthens its possessor in every ennobling principle, and shields from many evils, and temptations; and fits for usefulness in every department of social life.

This is truly a wonderful age—greatly advanced in knowledge—enjoying more of the light of science—more civil and religious freedom than any other: yet exhibiting a great decrease in sincerity and many of its accompanying virtues. The more closely we look into society and watch with care the principles which govern it, the more decided will be our convictions that insincerity abounds and is destroying many bright hopes and carrying strife and misery into the abodes even of the pure and upright.

In view of the great defection in this point which exists in society in general, and even among those who are called after that name which is above every name, it certainly becomes the solemn duty of every "soldier of the cross"; to raise his voice and fearlessly, boldly, and plainly testify against those who dishonour their profession by indulging in insincerity either in words or actions. There is a great reform to be accomplished in which every lover of the Saviour should engage with all the energy of his soul, determined never to desist until sincerity adorns every heart—beam from every countenance—flows forth in the evening song—and arises with the morning hymn of praise from pure and upright hearts to him who rules on high, and delights in sincerity and truth.

J. B. jr.

All our readers will thank this young, sincere, and very worthy brother for the preceding remarks. They are needed, much needed.

D. O.

#### PERSONAL DEFENCE.

MR. D. OLIPHANT,—SIR:—It would appear from certain things in the August Number of the *Banner*, (which I first saw a few days ago) that I am no better than I should be, and much worse than any man ought to be; in proof of which, a couple of articles are presented to the public, upon which (from the date of matters) much time and labor must have been expended. As it is no more than charitable to credit every man according to his polemic productions, I will at once close this preface, and notice in the first place "H's" communication, which is superior in point of assurance to anything I have met with of modern date. He peremptorily contradicts things of which he is *ignorant*. In my letter was the following, "One disciple endeavored to convince me that baptism is conversion." 'H' says this is untrue,—that he knows the man, &c. In reply, I would remark, that, I read the whole letter (before mailing it) to the disciple alluded to, and he neither denied nor objected to anything it contained. A second charge named by "H" is, "Another disciple contended that no man should pray before conversion." This he disposes of rather curiously. "H" denies the language, but subsequently acknowledges the truth of the assertion. Again, he imagines

that I charged him with denying prayer, because he "discards the penitent bench." I thought not of the penitent bench when I wrote, but I now think that "H" discards *all* penitential feelings. He believes a man may rejoice in believing a lie, &c., and points to "Saul breathing out threatenings." Saul says he was "mad" &c. I know not where "H" finds any *joy* in that case. I trust he will be less precipitate in future, and *know* a little more before he condemns.—"H" may be acquainted with a man's creed, but he can never be certain of what is said by any person when he is not present; and no amount of intimacy will warrant a man in being so positive as 'H' is. I know not who 'H' personates, though I will venture a *guess* that he is not proverbial for either his moral or literary attainments.

I will now leave him to his own reflections, and turn my attention to your sonorous commentary, on a garbled extract of a private letter. I wrote to your Christian brother in Walpole, *alias* Asher Holmes in Rainham, who, probably, sent the letter to you to get it printed in order that he might be able to read it; but instead of printing it and sending it back to him, you concluded to publish it, and then explode at it. But as all was mere euphony, no great harm was done. It seems that you delight in publishing my private letters. Very well; they help to fill up the paper, though I confess, frankly, that I would be better pleased if you would publish the whole, postscripts and all. Had you answered the first letter as its P. S. directed, no other than myself could have read it, and many unpleasantries would have been avoided; but you thought proper to do otherwise, and when I complained of unfairness, you exonerated yourself, and called me "traitor" [to yourself, Mr. Holmes!—D. O.] This is, Oliphant-like, void of truth. The letter was a private one, and I can maintain it.

Be pleased to publish this and afterwards you can explode at it to your "heart's content".

Yours,

N. L. HOLMES.

Chippawa, 7th Dec., 1852.

#### REMARKS.

The preceding is a useful document. The writer, it may be presumed, is a noble specimen of the opponents of the Disciples in talent, tone, temper, learning, acuteness, and spirituality. And what is it that he urges against us?—! We ask again—what?!!! From the above, or from anything the gentleman has written, can any one inform us what he has against the cause we plead? True, Asher Holmes and D. Oliphant do not please him. We grant that. But do all within the pale where he chooses to worship come fully up to his views of perfectness? Are they all as learned, as dexterous, as devout, as reputable as pleaseth him? What have all these personalities to do with *his* faith or the *Disciples'* faith?

Now we will allow Mr. N. L. Holmes to award to us every dark

and black epithet that he can mark with a gallon of ink, provided he furnish us with one argument against anything we have attempted to establish from the Holy Book. And if he fails even to attempt this, but instead thereof fires personalities from his battery, we shall bid him a benevolent adieu.

We are free to affirm that no man of Mr. N. Holmes' ability could pursue such an anti-spiritual course were he conscious that his cause was a maintainable one. He first submits to us something like a dozen queries, all of them, in his judgment, important. He is in Rainham. At the close of his communication, and in a Postscript, he in substance says, Mr. Editor, I have no objections to the publication of this letter; but I shall leave this vicinity shortly; therefore, if your business will allow you, furnish me with a private answer immediately. For many reasons we chose to furnish a reply through the paper, as it was left optional with us to do the one or the other—(or not at all:)—believing that wherever the gentleman went the reply would find him, two of his relatives being regular readers of the paper—unless indeed he went out of reach of Queen Victoria's or President Filmore's mail carriers. Our response, it appears, reached him. The rest our readers already know. Instead of thanking us for thinking his communication worthy of being generally read, or feeling grateful that he was accounted of sufficient *calibre* and candor to speak with publicly on such solemn matters as conversion, spiritual power, prayer, and some others, he very consequentially turns to one of his friends and speaks not very like a courteous gentleman in respect to the young man called D. Oliphant, comments largely upon evasions, squints at his own attainments, and treats contemptuously what he should have opposed with the Word of Truth; and now, when he appears before us, instead of endeavouring to ascertain the mind of the Spirit in relation to what is conversion or anything connected with it, or attempting to show how we evaded his queries, we are treated to a second edition of very undignified personality. Such is the course which at least one of the able opponents of the Disciples has chosen to pursue. If he does not present us with other evidence, the candid reader will justly infer that he regards his own cause as too defective to defend. So endeth the first and second lessons!

We are beginning to be convinced, from his manœuvres, that the gentleman dare not say one word respecting our answers to his questions, unless it be to affirm that they are evasions, or something of that sort; and any one, on the same principle, could designate him the Prime Minister of Siam. We have, we frankly say, overrated the gentleman's candor and love of investigation for truth's sake.

D. O.



## RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

Ira, N. Y., 24th Dec., 1852.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT :—I have read a number of your paper during the past year, and have now received the December Number, the last for the year; and I have now concluded to write you and send what will answer as an equivalent for the Numbers I hope to receive from you for the ensuing year, which I hope will enable you to write with pleasure to yourself and profit to your readers.

I would inform you that most of us enjoy good health; but some are soon going to reap the reward of their labors. Brother Birch and sister Noble are failing. Brother J. M. Shepard is quite feeble, and the prospect of his recovery not flattering. In view of these things, having received precious promises, we endeavour to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting our consecration in the fear of the Lord.

But I have other matters of which to speak. I have been for many years endeavouring to learn what the apostles teach on all subjects relating to our present and future enjoyment. For that purpose, in addition to the Bible, I have for more than twenty years read the writings of one Alexander Campbell with admiration and delight, and in whose teachings I had entire confidence; and I had, or thought I had, learned this fact "that all persons believing in the Messiah as the Son of God, and being immersed in his name into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," were substantially and formally members of the church of Christ. In this I may have erred, inasmuch as new doctrines are taught by some of our brethren, and we (the Disciples) are fond of new things. We have recently been taught that the baptism of John, and the giving the right hand of fellowship to his disciples on the day of Pentecost, were equivalent to being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the remission of sins; or in other words, they were thus constituted members of the Church of Christ, and that there is no authority in the church or out of it that can put them out.

I am thus writing to you with the expectation that you will enlighten us in this dark corner of the world and give us "the form of sound words" which Peter or some other person used when he gave the three thousand the right hand of fellowship on the day of Pentecost. I see in the December Number of the *Banner*, that some have followed Peter's example, but have not given us the form of words which he used,—which is a matter of much importance to some of us who wish to practise right; and I am not quite certain who it was that gave the right hand of fellowship, or whether it was the common practise to do so on the first day of the week to those who were baptized during the previous week. But I am inclined to think that it was on the first day of the week; for I find it stated by Luke, that the disciples came together on that day to break bread, and it is reasonable to suppose that they could add to the church the saved when they came together. But I will not insist, but wait for more light.

My desire to establish this new teaching has caused me to look into the Bible to find something to prove it *true*, as most men have done before me:—first make the doctrine, and then look up something in the Bible to prove it. I wished to know who gave the right hand of fellowship. I found in Paul's letter to the Galatians, ii. 9. that James, Peter, and John gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas, and in the name of the whole church at Jerusalem, made them welcome to all the privileges and immunities of said church, and that they should remember the poor. I find also in Paul's second letter to Timothy that he was directed to preach the Word and do the work of an evangelist; and I think it should read "Baptize believers during the week, and add them to the Church on the first day of the week by giving them the right hand of fellowship." I am not quite certain that I get the precise words which were used on such occasions, but by reference to those places you will be able to set me right. I would also direct your attention to the twenty-third chapter of Revelations for more proof of the position we occupy, which is giving the right hand of fellowship to those baptized into Christ to add them to the church. I do not know, Sir, that it will prove anything in our favor; but we greatly desire your *opinion*, to which we shall respectfully submit.

Love, mercy, and peace be to you and yours,

A. BENTON.

#### REMARKS.

The very intelligent writer of the preceding, who is known far and wide for his close and critical study of the scriptures, has a very convenient faculty of making an inquiry and answering it at the same time.

The December *Banner* contains two allusions to the right hand of fellowship—one by our always esteemed fellow-labourer brother Eaton, and the other by a very brotherly correspondent who refreshed us with some cheering items of news. In the first instance, prayer and the right hand of fellowship were associated in recognizing (not in making) members a church of the Lord. The other instance, we presume, was in accordance with the practice which commonly obtains among Baptist and other churches; a keeping up of the fine old, cordial, generous custom of putting people through a second door in the middle of the temple to make certainty doubly sure that they are really and undeniably in the temple, and that they are welcome—defended upon the principle that "a little more is just enough."

In our New Testament (which, either fortunately or unfortunately lacks the twenty-third chapter of the Revelations—!) we find the term fellowship some fourteen or fifteen times. The right hand is associated with it precisely once. Paul tells the secret of its use to

instruct some officious Jew-Christians in Galatia who feigned to dispute his apostolic authority. He informs the Galatian brethren that he at one time went up to Jerusalem because it was revealed to him that he ought to go. Barnabas and Titus were his associates. This was at least seventeen years after he had been in the ministry. The apostle gave the chief brethren of the Jerusalem congregation a summary of what he had taught among the Gentiles. These brethren of repute, on Paul's statements and revelations, perceiving that he had the same work to do among the Gentiles that Peter had to do among the Jews, gave to him and his chief companion, Barnabas, the right hand of fellowship—that they should go to the Gentile world. What this had at that time or what it has now to do with the admission of members into the church, few will be able satisfactorily to explain.

It looks indeed friendly to see an evangelist, elder, or chief brother give a hearty shake of the right or left hand to one who has put on Christ in *acknowledging* him as a brother; but when this is called the right hand of fellowship, or when this process is regarded as joining the person to *the* church or *a* church, we have little fellowship for the ceremony. We might as well suppose that the first kiss a father gives his child makes it a member of his family! But we need both patience and charity until these simple particulars are clearly and generally apprehended.

D. O.

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 LABOURS OF EVANGELISTS.

[3.]

Near Warsaw, 17th Jun., 1853.

TO THE LORD'S CHOSEN IN CANADA, AND ALL IN EVERY PLACE WHO MAY BE INTERESTED:—From the first week of the current month I have been labouring in the gospel in this vicinity. I am between forty and fifty miles north east of Cobourg. My steps were directed to this place on receiving intelligence that a small company of the Lord's friends were here, and that something might be done in the cause which is dear to the heart of every Christian. The Baptist brethren in this neighborhood have a chapel, which was occupied by me five times in holding forth the gospel. Two appointments also were made and filled at the village of Warsaw. At none of these meetings was the attendance large, nor could it be said that the meetings were particularly small. Some two or three will shortly be baptized; but whether this resolve on their part was fixed previously or during these efforts, I did not enquire. To delay obedience in this our day, is more fashionable than commendable.

A very acceptable acquaintance has been formed with a number in this section. I may make mention of the Kidd family as possessing much interest. The old gentleman and six sons, all full grown men, constitute a host of themselves, though all of them have not yet seen it their duty to obey that precept of the Lord, "Be baptized." I was pleased to learn however that the eldest son, while yet halting in reference to a part of his *acknowledged duty*, has taken and still takes a strong and active interest in the Lord's day School in this place, which he has with others kept up for sixteen or seventeen years. William Kidd together with James and Walter are active in the Baptist cause. I found them exceedingly friendly, primitive minded, and liberal in their views. The friends in the neighborhood have all seemed cordial. They have testified the same by making a collection for me—which, as a matter of course, I declined to receive only upon the express understanding that it should be handed over to the treasury of the churches sending me out.

I start for Westwood (Asphodel township) to-day, and will if opportunity presents deliver a discourse or two in that place.

A sort of PREACHING DISCUSSION is arranged between a minister of the Free Church of Scotland and myself on the subject and action of baptism—to come off in Warsaw or vicinity sometime about the first of March. In respect to the circumstances and features of this arrangement, I must speak more at large hereafter.

D. OLIPHANT.

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### ZEAL IN OUR WORK.

J.—, Dec. 27th, 1852.

BROTHER D. OLIPHANT: DEAR SIR:—Enclosed I hand you payment for my own paper and for two to give to friends, making three for me, which I hope will be an encouragement to your enterprize in publishing the truth in our land. I hope that the Lord may strengthen you in writing for the coming volume, and wish you a happy New Year.

Yours respectfully,

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### BEAUTIFUL AND TRUE.


The late eminent Judge Sir Allan Park once said at a public meeting in London, "We live in the midst of blessings till we are utterly insensible to their greatness, and of the source from whence they flow. We speak of our civilization, our arts, our freedom, our laws, and forget entirely how large a share is due to Christianity. Blot Christianity out of the page of man's history, and what would his laws have been—what his civilization? Christianity is mixed up with our very being

and our daily life; there is not a familiar object around us which does not wear a different aspect because the light of Christian love is on it—not a law which does not owe its truth and gentleness to Christianity—not a custom which cannot be traced, in all its holy, healthful parts, to the gospel.”

CHRISTIANS—STARS OF THE FIRST MAGNITUDE.—Dr. Clarke, in his commentary on 1 Cor. 15th chap. has made many important remarks. Among these, few passages exhibit more clearly the fact, that the same of religious society prevailed in England that is so manifest among us now, some half century after him. Writing relative to the small number of stars of the first magnitude. he says: W. W. E.

“The reader is probably amazed at the *paucity* of large stars in the whole firmament of heaven! Will he permit me to carry his mind a little farther, and either stand *astonished* at, or *deplore* with me the fact, that out of *millions* of Christians in the vicinity and splendor of the *eternal Sun of righteousness*, how very few are found of the *first order*! How very few can stand examination by the *text* laid down in the 13th chapter of this epistle! How very few love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength; and their neighbor as themselves! How few mature christians are found in the church! How few are all things living for eternity! How little *light*, how little *heat*, how little *influence and activity* are to be found among them that bear the name of Christ! How few *Stars* of the *first magnitude* will the Son of God have to deck the crown of his glory! Few are striving to excel in righteousness; and it seems to be a principal concern with many to find out *how little grace they may have and yet escape hell*! How little *conformity to the will of God*, they may have, and yet get to heaven! In the fear of God I register this testimony, that I have perceived it to be the labor of many to *lower the standard of Christianity*: and to soften down and explain away, those *promises* of God that himself has *linked with duties*; and because they know that they cannot be saved by their *good works*, they are contented to have *no good works at all*: and thus the necessity of Christian *obedience*, and Christian *holiness* makes no prominent part of some modern creeds.”—Dr. Adam Clarke.

ITEMS—Interesting news, some of it laid out for insertion this month, but omitted for lack of space, will yet appear. Brother Black's report arrived after the pages of this No. were principally made up. An article in respect to the scarcity of preachers, from the pen of our esteemed and ever estimable brother Eaton, should have appeared in this No., but was unfortunately misplaced in our arrangement and crowded out. It, and 'Plurality of Elders,' next month:

 We are happy to say that our friends have enabled us to add fifty new subscribers to our list during the month of January. All helpers will be blessed in these efforts, and require no flattering expressions of gratitude from us. D O.