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# THE CHRISTIAN.

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CONDUCTED BY W. W. EATON.

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

## DISCOURSE ON THE STATE OF THE DEAD.

### THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulph fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.—*LUKE XVI. 19-31.*

WHETHER this portion of God's word be a parable or a narrative of facts, we presume not now to determine. Truths, more valuable than all the gems in the universe are conveyed in the discourses and parables of the Lord Messiah. In this communication, which he has vouchsafed to give to the sons of earth, most solemn facts are laid before them. The question is not, "what shall we eat, what shall we drink, or where shall we be clothed?" but, after we have spent our fleeting moments on this terrestrial ball, shall we dwell in "Abraham's bosom" till a resurrection morn, or endure indescribable pangs shut out from those blissful scenes, while the huge gulph forms an impassable barrier between? This is a question from which the sceptic, the self-styled rationalist and even many professed Christians (?) turn with apparent contempt. That God has a right to dispose of his creatures as, in his wisdom, he may deem just, no person will presume to question. The rationale of his conduct we do not, at this time, propose to examine. The future is known to God alone. Nature holds up no lights by which we can look beyond the tomb. Without the word of God we shall be wholly ignorant of man's future destiny. Man, without the

Bible or some special revelation from God, could never have invented the doctrine of the resurrection, much less imagine that his spirit had an existence in a state of enjoyment or suffering, immediately after the cessation of his mortal life in this transitory world. Man's ignorance of God and his decrees relative to his final destination *without* a revelation, being a fact, which we deem *indisputable*; we turn with confidence to the oracles of God, and ask, What has God revealed to man concerning the state of the dead? In answering which we shall confine ourself to that portion of revelation which has been already laid before you, usually called the "Parable of Dives [the Latin for *rich man*] and Lazarus." Many curious theories have been manufactured from this portion of God's word. Dr. Gill has "spiritualized" it into an illustration of the Jews and the Lord Jesus! The Rich man representing the former and Lazarus the latter! The Universalists and Materialists explain it as a parable of the state of the Jews and Gentiles. The distress of the Rich man fitly, in their estimation, representing the misery of the Jews during the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman army. Both of which views are, to us, as visionary as that which would turn the Parable of the good Samaritan into an allegory; making the man who went down to Jericho to represent Adam; Jerusalem to mean Eden or rest; went down—his fall; Jericho—changeable, transitory; thieves—sin and satan; stripped him—took away his righteousness; wounded—affected his heart; half dead—a living body and soul dead in sin; Priest—the moral law; Levite—the ceremonial; passed by—either did not or could not render relief. A certain Samaritan—Christ; journeyed—came from heaven to earth; came where he was—being incarnated; having compassion—the work of redemption; went to him—Christ first seeks the sinner; binds up his wounds—gives him comfortable promises; pouring in oil—pardoning mercy; wine—the consolations of the Holy Ghost; set him on his own beast—supported him entirely; took him to an inn—the church; took care of him—by his providence and love; when he departed—when Christ left the world; took out two pence—the law and gospel; gave them to the host—the ministers of Christ; take care of him—Christ's ministers are stewards of souls; what thou spendest more—if thou shouldst lose thy health or life; when I come again to judge the world I will repay thee with eternal life!

In this manner hundreds pervert the word of God, and the ignorant multitude say, "What an ingenious preacher!" Dr. Clarke, from whom we have abridged the above allegory, says, "several of the primitive and modern fathers treat the text in this way; and adds—"A practice of this kind cannot be too strongly reprobated!" And; "our certain knowledge some of his ardent admirers have made the same use of the "good Samaritan"—which he so strongly "reprobates?" This parable is designed, simply, to teach us that individuals of other nations are our neighbors equally with our own country men.

The practice of giving to the word of God a mystical, spiritual, theological, or some other meaning than a plain obvious one, has done more to becloud the mind and prevent the people from becoming ac-

quainted with the Oracles of God than any other cause. This mode of interpreting the Bible was introduced into the first theological school ever formed under Christian patronage! This was located in Alexandria in Egypt—their literature was imported from heathenism, and it soon caused a moral and pestiferous darkness to roll over the churches; which soon hid the sun of righteousness, and left the Christian Church groping at noonday. In proportion as men have come back to the word of God, and cleared themselves of these moral mists and fogs, by explaining the word of God as they do other books of the same antiquity, has the light of truth illuminated their path, and in the salvation of God have they been made to rejoice. The remark above made we repeat, that those who would apply the Scripture, with which we began, to this state of existence, or to Jews and Gentiles, can carry their point in no other way than that which every man acquainted with the principles of interpretation must in his heart reprobate. This may be considered strong language; but we hope the subsequent remarks will show its propriety.

If the account of the Rich man and Lazarus be considered a historical fact, which we are inclined to think is the case, comments are unnecessary. It is not called a parable, and it would, therefore, be rather difficult to prove that it is; but lest any should think that we would seek to inculcate an important point on the silence of Scripture, we will admit for the time being that it is a parable.

These questions then arise, on what does the Saviour predicate his instructions? On realities or non-entities? Shall we take those parables which are difficult to explain those that are perfectly plain? or shall we reverse the rule, and take those that are plain and obvious to illustrate the intricate? The parable of the Rich man and the Beggar is admitted, we believe, by all whom we oppose in this interpretation, to be one of the most difficult of solution.

This being conceded we now turn our attention to the other parables, with the inquiry, Are they not without an exception *founded on facts*? Unhesitatingly we answer, *Yes!* How then dare any man, with this truth before him, say of this parable what cannot be said of any other? Are all the other parabolic instructions of the Saviour based on facts, obvious to the most common capacity, and this which a common reader would at once consider one of infinite importance, based upon a bugbear—a non-entity! Who can indulge the thought! Yet this must be done or the opposite side of the question yielded without an argument to support it.

Some may call this declamation. Hear, then, the facts! Take the parables in order. There is the sower. The individual, the field, the seed, the way side, the thorns, the stony places, and the good ground, are all realities. The same may be said of all the others. Here they are—the tares; seed springing up imperceptibly; grain of mustard seed; Leaven; found treasure; precious pearl; net; two debtors; unmerciful servant; Samaritan; rich fool; servants who waited for their Lord; barren figtree; lost sheep; lost piece of money; prodigal son; dishonest steward; unjust judge; pharisee and publican; laborers in

the vineyard; pounds; two sons; vineyard; marriage feast; ten virgins; talents; sheep and goats.

Out of nearly *thirty* parables *not one* can be found based upon the imagination, and shall we say that Hades, Abraham's bosom, happiness and torment, connected with the state of men's spirits immediately after the dissolution of their bodies, are all imaginary? Is it not, to say the least, begging the question, to assert of this parable that which cannot be said of any other?

Consider well, friends, the importance of this subject, and treat it not as deserving but little notice. We would have you criticise not our style of delivering our views, or the language in which our ideas are couched, but the arguments presented. We say then, subject this parable to the same ordeal to which you would any or all the others, and the conclusion will be that there is now and was in the days of the Saviour a place called in the Greek language *Hades*, in which were confined the spirits of the departed whether righteous or wicked, that the righteous were in a state of happiness, and the unrighteous in a state of suffering, as soon as they were committed to their prison house to await the sitting of the Judge.

Our first argument has been based on the position that the Saviour taught the people from facts which *already existed*, and not from surmises of what might hereafter exist. Forget not this!

2. The next argument is drawn from the circumstances which called forth the Parable. Jesus had been teaching them in the parable of the Steward, that they should make a good use of their riches, by being benevolent; that should they at any time be destitute, sources might be open for a supply of their wants. This teaching to misers was not acceptable. "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous heard these things: and they derided him." They ridiculed such teaching; just as many do the exposition which we are giving of this solemn portion of Heaven's Book. The Saviour then alluded to the fact that they justified themselves, while their conduct was abominable to God. He taught that the law was immutable, but they, under the pretence of being zealous for it, prevented the honest and simple hearted from receiving the principles of the kingdom of Heaven. The privilege that the Law of Moses granted, which permitted a man, for certain causes to put away his wife, they had perverted it by putting their wives away for every cause. The Saviour's allusion to this no doubt held up their character before them as adulterers in its blackest colours.

With the rich, voluptuous, and licentious Pharisees before him, who derided him for teaching them benevolence, what more natural than that he should speak a parable, or give a statement of facts, which would be calculated to place their present and future prospects in such an awful contrast, as would be best calculated to arouse them to a sense of their danger. When people are reflecting the counsel of God against themselves, then is the time to proclaim the terrors of the Lord. All these circumstances are favorable to the above exposition.

3. We argue from the meaning of the language used. A good speaker makes use of language best calculated to convey his ideas;

and an honest man always uses words in their most commonly received signification. If, at any time he utters words, to which he attaches a different meaning from that which is usually entertained by his hearers, he immediately explains himself. Apply this common sense rule to the Lord Jesus, his subject, and audience, and our positions are triumphantly established. What did they mean by the word Hades, Abraham's bosom, and the state of the dead, immediately after the cessation of temporal existence? They are literally those expressed by this parable, if we take it as a plain narrative of facts. Now, be it remembered that the Lord Jesus knew this—he knew their sentiments; and when he spoke this parable to them he well knew how they would understand him. He gave neither them nor his disciples any explanation; which he always did where his parables required it. The conclusions from these premises, are, to our mind, irresistible.

Are we certain that these were the sentiments of the Jews? Do we know that they believed that man's spirits had a conscious existence in Hades as soon as they departed this life? On this question we have undoubted testimony.

We appeal to Josephus without hesitation, not to prove an article of our faith, but to give testimony to the sentiments entertained by those persons who heard the Saviour deliver this parable. Josephus must have lived about the time of the Messiah. He was for some time Governor of Galilee, a leader of the people, and a principal man among the Jews during the siege of Judea by the Roman army, which took place about thirty five years after the parable was delivered. Unless he was a very young man, he was born about the time of the Saviour's crucifixion. He declares himself to belong to the sect of the Pharisees. The Lord's congregation were Pharisees; so that, through Josephus, we may learn the precise sentiments of the audience who heard this parable.

It is well known to all who have read Josephus, that he has given a "Dissertation on Hades," in which he inculcates the doctrine found in this parable; if it is taken as a narrative of facts. But, without further preliminaries, we shall lay before you Josephus' own language:

JOSEPHUS' DISCOURSE TO THE GREEKS CONCERNING HADES.

1. "Now as to Hades, wherein the souls of the righteous and unrighteous are detained, it is necessary to speak of it. Hades is a place in the world not regularly finished; a *subterraneous* region, wherein the light of this world does not shine; from which circumstance, that in this region the light does not shine, it cannot be but there must be in it perpetual *darkness*. This region is allotted as a place of custody for souls, in which angels are appointed as guardians to them, who distribute to them *temporary punishments*, agreeable to every one's behaviour and manners.

2. "In this region there is a certain place set apart, as a *lake of unquenchable fire*; wherein we suppose no one hath hitherto been cast but it is prepared for a day afore determined by God, in which one righteous sentence shall deservedly be passed upon all men; when the unjust, and those that have been disobedient to God, and have given

honor to such idols as have been the vain operations of the hands of men as to God himself, shall be adjudged to this *everlasting punishment*, as having been the cause of defilement; while the just shall obtain an *incorruptible* and never-fading *kingdom*. These are now indeed confined in Hades, but not in the same place wherein the unjust are confined.

3. "For there is one descent into this region, at whose *gate* we believe there stands an archangel with an host; which *gate* when those pass through that are conducted down by the angels appointed over souls, they do not go the same way, but the just are guided to the *right-hand*, and are led with hymns, sung by the *angels* appointed over that place, unto a region of *light*, in which the just have dwelt from the beginning of the world; not constrained by necessity, but ever enjoying the prospect of the good things they see, and rejoicing in the expectation of those new enjoyments which will be peculiar to every one of them, and esteeming those things beyond what we have here: with whom there is no place of toil, no burning heat, no piercing cold, nor are any briars there; but the countenance of the *fathers* and of the just, which they see, always smiles upon them, while they wait for that rest and *eterna* new life in heaven which is to succeed this region. This place we call the *bosom of Abraham*.

4. "But as to the unjust, they are dragged by force to the *left-hand* by the angels allotted for punishment, no longer going with a good-will, but as prisoners driven by violence; to whom are sent the angels appointed over them to reproach them and threaten them with their terrible looks, and to thrust them sullenly downward. Now those angels that are set over these souls drag them into the neighbourhood of hell itself; who, when they are hard by it continually hear the noise of it, and do not stand clear of the hot vapour itself; but when they have a near view of this spectacle, as of a terrible and exceeding great prospect of fire, they are struck with a fearful expectation of a future judgment, and in effect punished thereby: and not only so, but where they see the place (or choir) of the *fathers* and of the just, even hereby are they punished; for a *chaos* deep and large is fixed between them; insomuch that a just man that hath compassion upon them cannot be admitted, nor can one that is unjust, if he were bold enough to attempt it, pass over it.

5. "This is the discourse concerning Hades, wherein the souls of all men are confined until a proper season, which God hath determined, when he will make a resurrection of all men from the dead; not procuring a transmigration of souls from one body to another, but raising again those very bodies, which you Greeks seeing to be dissolved, do not believe (their resurrection.) But learn not to disbelieve it; for while you believe that the soul is created and yet is made immortal by God according to the doctrine of Plato, and this in time, be not incredulous; but believe that God is able, when he hath raised to life that body which was made as a compound of the same elements to make it immortal for it must never be said of God, that he is able to do some things, and unable to do others. We have therefore believed that the body will be

raised again; for although it be dissolved, it is not perished; for the earth receives its remains, and preserves them: and while they are like *seed*, and are mixed among the more fruitful soil, they flourish, and what is sown is indeed sown *bare grain*, but at the mighty sound of God the Creator, it will sprout up, and be raised in a *clothed* and *glorious* condition, though not before it has been dissolved and mixed (with the earth.) So that we have not rashly believed the resurrection of the body; for although it be dissolved for a time on account of the original transgression, it exists still, and is cast into the earth as into a potter's furnace, in order to be formed again, not in order to rise again such as it was before, but in a state of purity, and so as never to be destroyed any more. And to every body shall its *own soul* be restored. And when it hath *clothed itself* with that body, it will not be subject to misery, but being itself pure, it will continue with its pure body and rejoice with it, with which it having walked righteously now in this world, and never having had it as a snare, it will receive it again with great gladness. But as for the unjust, they will receive their bodies not changed, not freed from diseases or distempers, nor made glorious, but with the same diseases wherein they died; and such as they were in their unbelief, the same shall they be when they shall be faithfully judged.

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8. "*In whatsoever ways I shall find you, in them I shall judge you entirely*; so cries the *END of all things*. And he who hath at first lived a virtuous life, but towards the latter end falls into vice, these labours by him before endured shall be altogether vain and unprofitable, even as in a play, brought to an ill catastrophe. Whosoever shall have lived wickedly and luxuriously may repent; however, there will be need of much time to conquer an evil habit; and even after repentance, his whole life must be guarded with great care and diligence, after the manner of a body, which after it hath been a long time afflicted with a distemper, requires a stricter diet and method of living; for though it may be possible, perhaps, to break off the chain of our irregular affections at once, yet our amendment cannot be secured without the grace of God, the prayers of good men, the help of the brethren, and our own sincere repentance and constant care. It is a good thing not to sin at all; it is also good, having sinned, to repent; as it is best to have health always, but it is a good thing to recover from a distemper. *To God be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.*"

Here, then, from a source that no man, who makes any pretensions to scriptural knowledge will dispute, have we, proved that the congregation to whom, and for whose benefit, the Saviour delivered this parable, believed that when men died their spirits were either in a state of happiness or misery. The only difference of sentiment between the speaker and his hearers was whether these pharisees, wearing long robes, seeking salutations in the markets, and desiring to be called of men Rabbi, could dwell in "Abraham's bosom," without hearing Moses and the Prophets—without pursuing a different course from that which they then pursued, Did the Lord know that those persons un-



derstood by Hades the place of departed spirits? And did he mean the grave, or Jerusalem, or some other place? Would he practice such a deception on the people as this? What would you say of us friends if continually we should be threatening you with, what you should consider some grievous punishment, and at the same time we had no such intention; but had some other meaning to our words; a meaning, too, of which we knew you were wholly ignorant!! And will we accuse him "who spake as never man spake" with such dishonesty? This is the only alternative.

Whether, then, we examine this parable as we would the others; or take into consideration the circumstances which called it forth, or the sentiments of his congregation, together with the sincerity of him whose mouth guile was never found, the conclusions are the same, namely: that God has a prison for souls in which they are confined until the eternal judgment sits, when and where a righteous sentence shall be passed on the whole human family.

To conclude for the present. Let us all consider that the only crime of which the rich man appears to have been guilty was that he was a worldling. He sought for happiness in this life. He no doubt was a better man than many of our high sounding professors at the present day. For should a beggar full of sores, with a drove of dogs about him, lay himself at the gate of some of our fashionable mansions, instead of getting the crumbs, he would be spurned from the door to receive charity from another source. And yet the Rich man lifted up his eyes in torments. Something more is necessary than riches or alms-giving. You, friends, have not only Moses and the Prophets, but Jesus and the Apostles—one has come from the dead. All excuses are now removed. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and enter through the gate into the City."

EDITOR.

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### TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PRESENT REFORMATION.

BELOVED BRETHREN—Permit a fellow citizen in the kingdom of Heaven to address you. For some time I have been waiting for a few spare pages in "The Christian," on which to write a few thoughts for your particular attention; but now when they are presented I find myself so thronged with business of various kinds that I shall be under the necessity of writing but a few moments at one time; in consequence of which my thoughts must necessarily be very desultory.

I have addressed you as brethren of the reformation! And is there in reality a reformation commenced? So we declare. And what kind of a reformation? Is it one of theory or practice? If the former, unconnected with the latter, it will result in but little good to the human family. If both, we shall not have labored in vain in the Lord either for ourselves or our fellow citizens.

When the darkness which enveloped the religious community in the days of Wickliffe, Huss, Jerome of Prague, Luther, Calvin, and their associates, had been in a great measure dispelled by their labors, the day began to dawn. After they had put into the hands of the

people, the word of God in their own language, the clear light of the morning shone upon them. This was a glorious step. This we call the era of the Reformation. Readily we grant that this laid the foundation for what we now enjoy, as the rising morn makes ready and must precede the meridian sun. But what can the sun just peering above the horizon effect on hills of ice and snow. 'Tis true it may, in part, dissolve them; but it must be the meridian sun—the luminary of day in the zenith to produce the delicious fruit. The Reformers of the fifteenth century were unwilling that their followers should enjoy any stronger light. They, therefore, circumscribed their growth to a dwarfish stature. The ultimatum of their labors was soon exhibited in the form of a confession of faith. A dissent from this became as dangerous as from the “Holy Mother Church.” Though the people had the word of God, yet they had not the privilege of openly believing and practising what they were convinced in their hearts the word of God taught. They joined Church and State, and imposed on the people their own opinions instead of God’s word, and thus, if they did not make the word of God of none effect by their traditions, they blunted the edge of the Spirit’s sword.

That which is called the “Protestant Reformation,” made many good pious Lutherans and Calvinists, &c., but the reformation for bringing men into the enjoyment of salvation, with the full assurance of remission of sins, was left to a later day. I do not assert that none of these men obtained pardon; but according to Luther’s own testimony they had incorrect views of justification, and, therefore, did not enjoy even in their own estimation a personal remission of sins. This is apparent in all their prayer books, homilies, &c., that have come down to us. Luther tells us that he who does not have correct views of justification cannot be right in any thing; but he who is right here cannot be very far wrong in any other doctrine. I quote from memory—these are his ideas.

One reformer after another have benefitted the world by their labors; but all were unwilling to close their eyes in death until they had completed their work by composing a creed. This then became the measure of the sect.

But since the commencement of the nineteenth century, a few individuals from various societies resolved to take the word of the Lord alone as the measure of their knowledge and faith in religious matters. 'Tis true some only opposed those creeds, which they did not believe; but others opposed the principles on which they were formed. They opposed the authority that any man assumed to make a confession of faith, and to impose it on his fellow man. They contended that no man, or body of men, had a right to draw up articles of faith, and say to his neighbor, this you must believe, or fellowship you cannot have with me. They were even opposed to a creed, though it should be expressed in the exact words of the Book; unless it contained them all! This was opposing them on the principle, that their very existence presupposed the insufficiency of the word of God. They believed that God had given his word as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path: and

that it was able to make the man of God perfect, and thoroughly to furnish him for every good work.

With them christian union was based on the enjoyment of salvation by the remission of sins. All, therefore, who gave evidence that God had pardoned them, were received without regard to differences of opinion. Those who believed in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and made a public confession of the same—repented of their sins, and were baptized into the faith of the Gospel, were recognized as the disciples and followers of the Lord.

The doubt and uncertainty which had for so long time hung over the minds of professed christians, whether they had actually become the recipients of the grace of God, led those who had taken the above stand to examine more particularly the doctrine of the Lord concerning remission of sins. When they opened the New Testament, and read the letters to the churches, they found them all addressed in a style which at once convinced the reader, that they were fully assured that those who professed to be christians had enjoyed the favor of the Lord. There never appeared to be any of those distressing doubts and fears, connected with their communications, which were apparent in all the "experience meetings" of even those who had taken the above stand.

One brother observed, after a meeting of some days, when it had broken up, that there was something radically deficient yet; "for there," said he, "are persons going home mourning; they are seeking the Lord; they are desirous of becoming christians! When the Apostles preached, all who heard them, and desired to become disciples of the Lord, did so, and went on their way rejoicing." Thus, through the mists and fogs of centuries the light began to dawn, and soon the brethren came out clear on the *doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins*. They soon learned from the Oracles of God that when the Apostles announced the Gospel, all that believed it, and truly repented of their sins, were forthwith immersed into the name of the Lord—obtained pardon and the Holy Spirit, and went on their way rejoicing. This, they found to be invariably the case. The conclusion was therefore irresistible, that God had ordained baptism as the act in which the believing penitent might trust with implicit confidence, that there he should have an application of the blood of the Lord Jesus, and consequently a discharge from all his past transgressions.

It is not necessary, brethren, for me to argue this question with you. This point with us is fully settled. We, therefore, have no doubts but that our sins are blotted out, because we have believed, repented, and have been baptized, and such have the promise of him that cannot lie—yes—of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that they are in Christ Jesus. The love of complacency which we have for the brethren and of benevolence for the whole human family—the joy that fills our souls—the peace of mind that we continually possess—the long suffering which we are willing to endure, and feel disposed to exhibit toward all men, we are assured from the word of God, are the fruit of the Spirit; and we, therefore, know, that not only in words but in a holy feeling the spirit of God bears witness with our spirits that we are the children

of God. If there were no seed, there would be no fruit—hence to a certainty we know that we have become the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments.

Brethren, through the providence of God we have been led to take his word as our guide and directory. We, I trust, consider that a high honor is conferred on us, in that we are co-workers in the pushing forward such a glorious reformation; a reformation which leads men to the personal enjoyment of the salvation of God—trusting alone in him for eternal life. We have nothing to fear from without. The giants in intellect, science and literature, have openly opposed these sentiments, and they have openly met with many signal defeats. When their arguments have been brought to the test, by even our youngest defenders of the faith, their weakness have been apparent. Not in consequence of any superior talent or knowledge in ourselves; but because we have the truth of God for our defence.

About *two hundred thousand* of us have been collected into small communities in various parts of the United States, Britain, and her Colonies, in North America within ten or fifteen years. We are made up of various nations, and many of us have belonged to other sects. From ourselves we have to fear. The principal object which I have in view, therefore, in addressing you at this time, is to suggest what I deem important in order to our continued prosperity and success.

I shall, therefore, begin with considering the disposition of mind, and the manner in which we should discharge the duties which devolve upon us, in presenting the Gospel before our friends and neighbors bound with us to the eternal world.

You all, no doubt, find it much easier to correct the errors found in your faith than in your practice. Controversies, generally, are more violent for orthodoxy than orthopazy.\* I am far from thinking that either are subjects of indifference; but when I see a disciple of Christ, with his countenance flushed with zeal, defending a point very remotely connected with the obedience of faith; and on practical subjects, the reception or rejection of which hang the happiness or misery of his hearers, cool and indifferent, I cannot prevent myself from drawing the conclusion that he thinks more of right thinking than right doing.

These remarks are made from a conviction that there is real danger of falling into speculations. A speculative disciple, whether he fills a public or private place in the church, will never do much towards advancing himself or others in grace or knowledge. Those preachers among us who have dwelt more particularly on the facts necessary to be believed, and the commands that must be obeyed, in order to the enjoyment of the present and future salvation, are the men who have done the greatest amount of good. Their praise is in all the churches. But in contrast with them are those men who are continually endeavoring to point out all the faults and blemishes of their brethren generally, and the sects in particular. This state of mind indulged will give to the individual a sour, morose disposition, so that he soon becomes displeased with himself and every other person. Brethren, permit me to warn you to

\* *Orthopazy* is used in contrast with *Orthodoxy*, and means *right doing*.

avoid this error. We were once minors and school children. When our parents or instructors were continually finding fault with us, and made the worst of all our errors and foibles, we viewed them rather as tyrants and hard masters than affectionate friends and guardians. I believe that it is an indisputable fact, that if we would be of continued benefit to our fellow creatures we must by our conduct convince them that they possess our best affections. Never was there a sinner who loved God until he believed that God loved him. Now, brethren, when you are endeavoring to point out the errors of faith and practice into which our fellow men have fallen, will you think of the above suggestion? But shall we not present the faults and false principles of others, whom we behold them? Certainly. But there is a proper time, place, and manner. The word of God and common sense must point out these. If one of your own family, or a dear friend had fallen into these errors, what course would you pursue? Precisely the same conduct is called for in the church and the world! When our children fall into errors we point them out calmly and affectionately, and then place the truth before them by way of contrast. Common sense, if not the principles of our own nature, would show the absurdity of dwelling continually on one side of the question—we would endeavour to chase away the darkness by the introduction of light—we would hold up the truth in all its fascinating forms, so that the former false and irrational sentiments would appear as the small dust of the balance in comparison.

It is true there are those who oppose us, and do all in their power to traduce our characters and sentiments, to whom such a course of conduct would be like casting pearls before swine; such we cannot expect to benefit, and all that we can do with relation to them is to turn the attention of the people to some other source. We can do this by a scriptural, conciliatory course, much better than by returning evil for evil. Let us exhibit the magnanimity towards our enemies that David did towards Saul when he was seeking his life, and we shall most assuredly come off triumphant. "Let envy alone, and it will punish itself," is a trite saying, but it is true. All the violent opposers of this reformation have injured themselves more than they have the cause. God has over-ruled their malice to their own discomfiture and disgrace, and to the furtherance of the Gospel.

Brethren, do not construe any thing which I have written into an admonition to pursue a vacillating course between the sentiments of the sects and those which we believe to be connected with the happiness of man. By no means. Contend earnestly for the truth, and calmly contrast it with error. Yield not a point which is taught by the example or precept of Christ or his Apostles; but let all things be done in love.

I have many things to communicate; and when I took my pen I purposed to lay them before you in order; but the influence of our teachings on the minds of our friends being a subject, if not first in order, is certainly under existing circumstances, the first in importance. These remarks are not merely for those who have become preachers,

but for all, male and female ; for situated as we are, every disciple in public or private has more or less to say concerning these things.

Having thus laid before you a few general observations relative to the manner in which we should inculcate the glorious principles of our holy religion, I next proceed to make a few remarks on a subject introduced by our beloved Brother Doyle. Many inquiries have been made concerning his meaning, and some of you, brethren, have thought that it is not a fact that any of us are the greatest mongrels in the land. A faithful friend to point out our errors and foibles should be esteemed as an invaluable treasure. For one, I feel grateful to any person who, in love will point out to me my blunders, and the causes of any difficulty or want of success. I hope that this disposition of mind is possessed by all the brotherhood. For, of what value can error be to us ! Why should we be displeased with any person who should point out what he considers wrong either in our faith or practice. Depend upon it, brethren, that when we come to stand before the great white throne, we shall find that all our errors either in faith or practice will be poor property. May Heaven forbid that we should say of investigation and improvement in faith and morals, " thus far shalt thou come and no farther," and here shall the noble employment of advancing in grace and knowledge be stayed. Instead then of thinking that our dear brother has been premature in his remarks, let us be grateful to him, and look about ourselves, and ascertain whether his conclusions are just or not. It is certainly better to be aroused from our slumbers when the fire first begins in our dwelling, than to be permitted to sleep until the house is enveloped in flames ! At all events he is to us a real friend who gives the alarm when he imagines there is danger, though in the end it should prove that he was mistaken.

To what particular point Brother Doyle referred I am wholly ignorant ; but I shall now enquire, if in some things we do not exhibit inconsistency. Many of us, previous to forming ourselves into the churches of which we are now members, belonged to some one of the religious parties into which Christendom is divided. For what purpose did we leave these societies ? Were we displeased with certain persons and regulations, because we differed in sentiment ? or did we desire to live more holy, and be more useful in the kingdom of the Redeemer ? If we left from principle—that we might enjoy more of God and heaven—that we might enjoy principles which we could not there ; then our move has been laudable—God approves of it, and his blessing will attend our endeavours to serve him.

" By their fruit ye shall know them." If we are not more holy, self-denying, zealous and devout than when we belonged to the sects, we are no better. The Reformation for which we plead calls for something more than a change of opinion and place of worship. You know how this is ; you know whether you possess a greater love for souls, and whether you are willing to do more for the dissemination of the truth than formerly.

If, however, we are not inconsistent with ourselves yet we may be with our profession. Understand me. Once, many of you believed

that God wrought without means as well as with—that when in his Sovereign pleasure he was disposed to convert a soul he would do so—that the sinner was *made* willing in the day of his power, and then, notwithstanding this, your exertions for the conversion of your families and fellow citizens were as great as they are now, when you believe that where the Gospel is preached, sinners are wholly to blame for not being heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

Here, brethren, we are inconsistent with our profession. The sects expend more money, exhibit more zeal, and are making greater exertions to disseminate their opinions than we are for the spread of truth. Are not some of you who now read this, paying actually less for the spread of the Apostolic Gospel than you formerly did for the dissemination of Calvinism, Methodism or some other *ism*? Ought not our zeal and engagedness now far outstrip our former zeal and devotion? But some of us appear to be afraid to exhibit warmth now in our addresses because we see so much zeal without knowledge. But let it be remembered that our success as a people will be commensurate with our engagedness. As we have taken such high ground, the world have a right to expect more of us than of any other people. Our faith should overcome the world. And we should remember that when we gave ourselves to the Lord, we also dedicated our property, our time, talents, and all that we possessed. We are not our own. The first disciples who engaged in the service of the King, not only devoted all their property to the good of the church, but they all became preachers. I do not think that the present state of the church demands this of you now; but the cause in which we profess to be engaged calls for more funds, more honesty, more personal and family devotion, and more individual and Church zeal than any other cause under heaven, and I am constrained to confess, my dear brethren, that I fear we have less in proportion to our numbers, knowledge and ability!

I rejoice to know that there are many noble exceptions, and I hope that I may have the happiness of knowing that all of the holy brotherhood will soon be noted not only for their correct knowledge of the truth, but their zeal and wisdom in its dissemination, and that soon the world will be constrained to say, see how these christians love one another. May the time shortly arrive when all of us shall constantly be bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit—where daily in every family the voice of prayer and the song of praise shall arise like incense before the throne, and when every congregation shall with truth be addressed in the language of Paul to the Thessalonians: “We give thanks to God, always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Dear brethren, these remarks are only introductory and general. In our next, the Lord willing, your attention will be invited to particulars relative to your practice as Churches of God—families having the charge of souls, and as individual members of the body of Christ.

Your affectionate fellow citizen in the kingdom of God.

W. W. EATON.

BAPTISM. No. VI.  
THE SUBJECT AND DESIGN.

CONTROVERSIES on practical subjects may be reduced to an unit. There is, generally, some one prominent point on which the attention may be fixed that will forthwith decide the question. This is the case with the subject before us. Although many volumes have been written on the questions, Who are the subjects? and what is the design of baptism? Still the whole controversy turns on the decision of the last question.

If baptism is for the purpose of making a public profession of faith in Christ, as the Baptists contend; then it can be designed for none but those who have come to the years of understanding. But if the act was ordained by God for remission of sins, it can be adapted to the case of none but sinners; it cannot be designed for infants, for they have no sins to wash away.

That baptism is for remission of sins is a point which can be triumphantly established from not only the word of God, the writings of all the primitive fathers, but also from every creed in Christendom, of half a century old. In some future number, the Lord willing, we shall lay before our readers extracts from the fathers, ancient writers, and the various confessions of faith, to confirm this assertion. At present we shall confine ourself to a few facts.

The church of Rome emphatically declares that it inculcates and believes in "*one baptism for remission of sins.*" To this the Greek Church and the Church of England agree. All the prayers and instructions connected with baptism in the latter church, where they have reference to infants, or adults, exhibit unequivocally the above doctrine. Wesleyan clergymen use the same Liturgy when they administer the ordinance. If they believe what they repeat on such occasions, when do they administer baptism for the same purpose. They make it synonymous with the new birth: "Seeing this child is born anew of water and the Spirit," &c. (we quote from memory, not having a Prayer book at hand) is the language used in the hearing of every one; and these are the persons, too, who say we make too much of an external ordinance. They attach the same importance to the baptism of an unconscious babe without knowledge, faith, repentance, or change of heart, that we do with all those united. But this by the way. Our last mentioned friends may say, though this is found in the Liturgy, and our clergyman repeat it when they administer baptism, yet still these are not the sentiments of Wesleyans generally. Where, then, shall we learn their sentiments on the design of baptism? They all believe as did Mr. Wesley, "our venerable founder," as he is styled. All who are ordained as preachers in the connexion declare, if we are correctly informed, that they believe Mr. Wesley's notes on the New Testament. Read, then, his comment on Acts xxii. 16. "Baptism to all penitents is both the means and the seal of pardon; nor did God ordinarily in the primitive church, bestow pardon only through these means." We are bound then to conclude that all Wesleyan clergy-



man believe that real penitents obtain pardon in the act of baptism. To say they do not thus believe, would be to say they are not men of truth, which, we would be very sorry to assert.

John "preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;" the Lord Jesus commanded his disciples to preach "repentance and remission of sins in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." When the apostles began to preach at Jerusalem they commanded the inquiring penitents: "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins." Here then is positive proof of the design of baptism. Seeing, then, that this is a question admitted by those who practice infant sprinkling, and proved by the Oracles of God, what further need have we of evidence! The controversy is settled so far as the *design* is concerned.

Have children any sins to remit? The most zealous advocate for hereditary total depravity in the land assert no more than that children have original *sin*. No person, to our knowledge, ever believed that children had *sins*.

Our argument therefore, stands thus: Baptism was instituted by the Lord for remission of sins; Children before they come to the years of understanding have no *sins*; therefore, baptism is not instituted for children before they come to the years of understanding.

We have many additional arguments on the action, subjects and design of baptism; but we shall occupy our pages otherwise, unless we can learn some new arguments in favour of sprinkling infants. If any of our friends think of an objection which we have not met, or a point which needs strengthening, or defending, in our essays on this subject, we shall take it as a favor if they will lay their views before us. Speak out friends.

In taking leave of the subject for the present, we would remind our Paido-Baptist friends of one particular in their defences. They generally, if not invariably admit that there is only *probable* proof of infant baptism in the scriptures; and then turn to us and say, "prove that there were not infants in these households—that infants were not baptized:" thus exhibiting their inattention to the principles of logic, as well as the positive commands of God. In the first place a logician ought to know that probabilities will never establish, certainly, an affirmative proposition, and secondly they call on an opponent to prove a negative—that this was not the case, that infants were not baptized. Although not required by any principle of reason to prove a negative yet if the above syllogism does not prove that children *were not* and *should not* be baptized, then no negative can be proved.

We have no disposition to challenge any one; but we should very cheerfully devote a few pages to any respectable Paido-Baptist, who will attempt a refutation of the argument against infant sprinkling based on the design of Baptism.

Reader, examine well the design of baptism. Come to Scriptural conclusions on this point; and then the controversy relative to the *action* and *subject* will be forever at an end.

## THE "REV." MR. SLEEP.

WE regret that a sense of duty requires us to bring this gentleman's name before the public. Private offences and personal injuries call for an application of the Saviour's rule—"go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Neither of us, however, may consider our relationship to be that which the Saviour recognizes in his instructions, and consequently the command not applicable to us. This, at all events, is the case with ourself, and, therefore, claim as a right the privilege of canvassing the conduct of public men, and their measures so far as they are concerned with the cause we plead.

This gentleman preaches occasionally in the western part of Cornwallis. By some means several numbers of "The Christian" got into the hands of an individual—a member of his flock. The *ninth* number of the first volume pretty nearly made a finish of this person's foundation for sprinkling and pouring, and the article in the *first* number of the second volume, on being "born of water and Spirit," caused him seriously to inquire whether he had indeed ever experienced the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. The doubts in his mind having arisen to such a height that he called to his aid Mr. Sleep. The number containing the last mentioned article was put into his hands. The next Lord's day he preached on the subject. The person who communicated the above information did not distinctly say what construction he put on our Lord's words; but he said Mr. Sleep very roundly asserted that being born of water did not refer to immersion or baptism in any way! After he had dismissed his congregation he called some friends around him, and with "The Christian" in his hand, gave them his reasons for speaking on the subject which had been laid before them. He then read the article to which we refer, and also several pages of manuscript which he had prepared as a reply to or criticism on the same. He also told his hearers that he should furnish the editor of "The Christian" with the article for publication.

During our late visit to Nova Scotia, this intelligence was communicated with the inquiry, why the article had not appeared in "The Christian." We, therefore, embrace this opportunity to say that nothing of the kind has yet been received. If our informant gave us correct information, the gentleman's pledge is yet unredeemed.

Mr. Sleep's plan would, perhaps, have been well for himself and cause, had we never heard of it; for then the people would be left with this impression, "the editor of 'The Christian' has declared to the world that he is ready and willing to discuss on his pages all subjects connected with his faith and practice; and here is a point which he declares he considers of the greatest importance, and yet is unwilling to publish Mr. Sleep's article, or even to inform his readers that such a communication had been received!"

If this gentleman will attempt to oppose that article, we shall show him that he is not only opposed to his leader, the "Venerable Wesley," but also to the word of God, and nearly all the commentators of note who have written on the subject.

EDITOR.

## A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF BAPTISTS.

A short time since we proposed addressing a series of letters to the "Christian Connexion." A few articles concerning them may be of general benefit to our readers. A personal acquaintance with many of their ministers, and an association of two or three years with them, have given us a general knowledge of their faith and practice.

In preparing articles, however for "The Christian," two questions of importance usually suggest themselves to us, namely: Will this subject be of benefit to the readers? and can we make it so plain that all can understand us? Knowing that the power of a fact consists in understanding it, we are particularly anxious to be understood.

Thinking over this subject, we were at a loss to make a beginning, as nine tenths of our readers know nothing about the "Christian Connexion." After pondering the question, how shall we best edify our readers? we concluded to give a brief sketch of the rise of the denomination. Their history being particularly blended with the Calvinistic Baptists, and in the minds of a great multitude associated with the Free Will Baptists, and others, it appeared necessary to give also a brief outline of the different kinds of Baptists, that is, of those who believe and practice immersion wholly, to the exclusion of infant affusion. To this then we shall attend.

### AMERICAN BAPTISTS.

The first Baptist Church in America was organized in 1639. The celebrated Roger Williams was the founder. He came to New England a few years after the Puritan Fathers landed on Plymouth rock. He was then an English Independent or what is now known in the United States as a Congregationalist. He was settled as the minister of Salem, Massachusetts. For contending "*that the civil power had no jurisdiction over the conscience,*" he was summoned to Boston. To avoid transportation, he fled in the midst of winter with twelve friends to the territory of the Narraganset Indians. Here he formed a settlement, and called it Providence, in memory of God's preserving care that had been over them. He embraced the principles of the Baptists and was immersed by one of his associates, though himself unimmersed. Mr. Williams then baptized his companions, and they formed as above stated, the first Baptist Church in America. This Church exists at the present day, now more than two hundred years; and what is remarkable, although recognized as a regular associate Baptist Church, they never had any other written or printed articles of faith than the Bible!

Many of the first American Baptists were Arminians. Their first articles of faith, particularly that which was designated the "Philadelphia confession," were, however, decidedly Calvinistic. Frequent revisions of their articles in the United States, have rubbed off nearly all the very obnoxious points, peculiar to Calvin, and now the confession of a New Hampshire association, given in a popular work, as the sentiments of the denomination, say "that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents

the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ; which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation."<sup>\*</sup>

Notwithstanding this explicit declaration of faith in the fullness and freeness of salvation by the Lord, yet in the year 1775, one of the largest and most intelligent associations in America discussed the following question, namely: "Is salvation by Christ made possible for every individual of the human race?"<sup>†</sup> This question was then decided in the negative!

The Baptists, however, increased very rapidly, amidst much opposition, and soon became the most formidable denomination in the United States. "The number of Regular Baptists in America, as reported in Allen's Register for 1833, was as follows: 309 associations; 5458 churches; 3204 ordained ministers; 402,863 communicants." During the last seven years the number has, doubtlessly, very much increased.

The first church formed in these provinces [N. B. and N. S.] was at Sackville, N. B. 1763, of *thirteen* persons, who had been members of the Baptist Church in Swansea, Massachusetts. These persons being disappointed with their new habitation, returned to New England. Subsequently there were a number of Baptists in various parts of the provinces, and an occasional preacher—several of the latter came as Missionaries from New England. According to Benedict, the Church in Horton appears to be the oldest in the provinces; in the "general table," however, he has left it without date, and the Cornwallis Church bears date 1776; but it appears from the above authority, that it was then a question whether the last named church was a Baptist or a New Light Church. It did not adopt close communion sentiments until 1807. The church in Chester was constituted in 1788, and that of Halifax in 1795. In 1812 the Nova Scotia and New-Brunswick association contained 19 Churches; 13 Ministers, and 1230 communicants. At present they probably number four or five, times as many churches, ministers, and members.

The reader will not suppose that we design any thing like a history. Our object is just to give a brief outline of the commencement of the Baptists in America, and their present state, as introductory to the rise of later sects.

The sentiments of the Provincial Baptists have been, until a short time, if not now, more highly Calvinistic than the brethren of the United States. Their articles are nearly word for word those of the "Westminster confession of faith," and are probably what the Baptists were in the United States fifty years since.

#### SEVENTH DAY BAPTISTS.

A Church of these was formed in Rhode Island about the year 1771. The latest accounts which we have, gives 18 Churches; 29 ministers, and 2862 members. "They hold, in common with other christians, the distinguished doctrines of Christianity." They differ

<sup>\*</sup> Ency. of Religious Knowledge—Article, "Baptists."

<sup>†</sup> Benedict's History of the Baptists, Vol. 2. page 56

from others on the views taken of the Sabbath. Its change from the seventh to the first day, they deem a corruption of the church effected in the days of Constantine. They, therefore, contend, 1. "That God hath required the observation of the seventh, or the last day of every week, to be observed by mankind universally for the weekly Sabbath. 2. That this command of God is perpetually binding on man till time shall be no more. And, 3. That this sacred rest of the seventh day, Sabbath, is not (by divine authority) changed from the seventh and last to the first day of the week, or that the Scripture doth no where require the observation of any other day of the week for the weekly Sabbath, but the seventh day only."

#### FREE WILL BAPTISTS.\*

"In North America, in the year 1780, the first church of this denomination was organized at New Durham, in New Hampshire, under the pastoral charge of Elder Benjamin Randall. They have since spread into various parts of the country; and now have churches in twelve different states, and in the Canadas. From the latest accounts of their numbers, (Jan. 1834,) there are eight yearly meetings, and forty-six quarterly meetings: and, including about three thousand General Baptists, in North Carolina, who have lately taken the name of Free-Will Baptists, about 700 churches; 560 preachers; 30,500 communicants. The net increase in numbers, for three years past, has been *seven and one third* per cent.

"*External Policy.* 1. They have held the Holy Scriptures to be their only rule of religious faith and practice, to the exclusion of all written creeds, covenants, rules of discipline, or articles of organization. Some, however, think no religious order can be maintained on the basis of Scripture, without, at least, an *implied* agreement in their understanding of the Scriptures, and believe it better that this understanding be definitely *expressed and known*; and they have in some instances, adopted written articles of organization, in the form of a constitution.— 2. Government is vested primarily in the churches; which are usually composed of such believers as can meet together for worship. These send delegates to the quarterly meetings; the quarterly meetings to the yearly meetings; the yearly meetings to the general conference. In cases of difficulty, appeals are made from one body to another, for advice and instruction. 3. The officers in the church, supposed to be designated in Scripture, are elders and deacons. After having been licensed and proved, the elders are ordained, jointly by the church to which they belong, and the quarterly meeting acting by a council. They are authorized to baptize believers, administer the Lord's supper, assist in ordinations, and to organize churches: they are amenable to the church and the presbytery. In each quarterly and yearly meeting, is an elders' conference; which, with the general conference, regulates the affairs of the ministry, so far as the presbytery is concerned. No inferiority of rank is acknowledged in the ministry. They consider piety, and a call to the work, to be essential qualifications for a minister; and maintain, that one having a call to preach, ought not to delay

\* This article was prepared by the late Elder Samuel Beede, a Free-will Baptist

for want of an education, or theological study; nor neglect preaching to acquire literature and science.

*Doctrine.* The Free-Will Baptists reject the peculiarities of Calvinism formerly denominated the "Five Points," so far as they represent the happiness or misery of man, as resulting from a divine decree, and not influenced by the personal actions of men; believing them, as they have understood them to have been held, unscriptural. They believe, that by the death of Christ, salvation was provided for all men; that, through faith in Christ, and sanctification of the Spirit, though by nature entirely sinners, all men may, if they improve every means of grace in their power, become new creatures in this life, and, after death, enjoy eternal happiness;—that all, who, having actually sinned, die in an unrenewed state, will suffer eternal misery. Respecting the divine attributes of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, they in substance agree with the Calvinistic Baptists, and other orthodox Christians. Yet some individuals, for want of properly knowing the Scriptures, or from adhering to such professing Christians, and such authors, as advocate unitarian, or Arian views of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, have imbibed Arian notions. This is a departure from the faith of the first Free-Will Baptists, and of the connexion as a body. From a neglect, to extirpate such doctrines, by sound discipline, and from the repeated attempts of the *Christian Society* to assimilate the two denominations, the Free-Will Baptists have lost much prosperity at home, and much reputation among others. They are a people distinct from the *Christian Society*, and ought always to be so distinguished. They essentially differ from the Christians in several important points of faith and church government."

They support a foreign Missionary, and publish a weekly paper and a quarterly Magazine in Dover, N. H.

Mr. Beede above remarks that they have in some instances adopted written articles of organization! True they have printed articles of faith, just as much as the Calvinistic Baptists, and probably make the same use of them. They have, in our estimation, far degenerated from that zealous, self-denying people, they formerly were.

#### KEITHIAN, ROGERENE, TUNKER, MENNONITES, AND SIX PRINCIPLE BAPTISTS.

These Societies have scarcely an existence now in America. There may be, however, some scattered in various places, but our means of forming any acquaintance with their present condition, by books or otherwise, are so limited, that we deem it proper merely to name them.

#### THE CHRISTIAN CONNEXION.

Several ministers have contended for the honour of organizing the first Church in the United States, who designated themselves as *Christians* only. That a number of preachers, without a knowledge of each other, had come to the conclusion, about the same time to acknowledge no name but Christian, and take no rule of faith but the word of God, is unquestionably the fact.

Abner Jones says that he organized a Church in Lyndon, Vermont, in the year 1784. Elias Smith formed one in Portsmouth, N. H.

several years after, without having any knowledge of Mr. Jones.—Subsequently they became co-workers. Smith had been for ten years a regular Baptist; Jones, however, never would be recognized by any other name than Christian. Mr. James O’Kane in the Southern States, a Methodist, being displeased with the Episcopal form of government which they were then adopting, came off from them, with others, and at first called themselves “Republican Methodists;” but when they ascertained that this designation was not in the Bible, they re-nounced it, and called themselves Christians. We have no means at hand of knowing the particular year that this took place; and what became of those churches is to us a mystery.

While these things were going on at the north and south, a great religious excitement in Kentucky warmed the hearts of some of the Presbyterian ministers to such a degree, that they formed a new Synod, called the “Springfield Presbytery:” but like Mr. O’Kane and others, they were soon aware that all such associations and designations were unscriptural, and they therefore resolved to renounce every thing connected with their former distinguishing peculiarities as Presbyterians. Their renunciation is a curious specimen of antiquity, too good to be lost. We, therefore, publish it entire as it has come to us in “Benedict’s History of the Baptists.”

“*The Prebytery of Springfield*, sitting at Cane Ridge, in the county of Bourbon, Kentucky, being, through a gracious Providence, in more than ordinary bodily health, growing in strength and size daily; and in perfect soundness and composure of mind; but knowing that it is appointed for all delegated bodies once to die, and considering that the life of every such body is very uncertain, do make, and ordain this our last Will and Testament, in manner and form following, viz.

“*Imprimis.* We will, that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the body of Christ at large; for there is but one body, and one spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling.

“*Item.* We will, that our name of distinction, with its Reverend title, be forgotten; that there be but one Lord over God’s heritage, and his name one.

“*Item.* We will, that our power of making laws for the government of the church, and executing them by delegated authority, forever cease; that the people may have free course to the Bible, and adopt the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

“*Item.* We will, that candidates for the gospel ministry henceforth study the Holy Scriptures with fervent prayer, and obtain license from God to preach the simple gospel, &c.

“*Item.* We will, that the church of Christ assume her native right of internal government &c.

“*Item.* We will, that each particular church, as a body, actuated by the same spirit, choose her own preacher, and support him by a free-will offering, &c.

“*Item.* We will, that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven; and as many as are offended with other books, which stand in competition with it, may cast them into the fire if

they choose; for it is better to enter into life having one book, than having many to be cast into hell.

"*Item.* We will, that preachers and people cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance; pray more, and dispute less, &c.

"*Item.* Finally, we will, that all our *sister bodies* read their Bibles carefully, that they may see their fate there determined, and prepare for death before it is too late.

"*Springfield Presbytery,* } (L. S.)  
*June 28th, 1804.*

" ROBERT MARSHALL, B. W. STONE, }  
 JOHN DUNLAVY, JOHN THOMPSON, } *Witnesses."*  
 RICHARD M'NEMAR, DAVID PURVIANCE, }

BARTON W. STONE is now living in Illinois, an efficient advocate of the Apostolic Gospel.

To the above names we add that of William Kinkade, who informs us that he had come to similar conclusions with the above men, previous to becoming acquainted with them.

From these brief outlines, then, it appears, that at about the commencement of this century, men from the Calvinistic Baptists, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, and from the world, without any knowledge of each other, resolved, to take the Scripture, particularly the New Testament, as their only rule of faith and practice, and be known only as Christians.

This was one good step in advance of the then existing denominations. And, under all the disadvantages which they labored, together with the prejudices of education, it is not surprisiug, that, thrown completely loose from all the sects, they should have fallen into some unnecessary and useless spéculations, as well as retained some of their former views of conversion, &c. We here give a summary of their sentiments, furnished for the Encyclopedia by Elder Joshua V. Himes, of Boston, a distinguished minister in the connexion.

"That there is one living and true God, the Father Almighty, who is unoriginated, independent, and eternal, the Creator and Supporter of all worlds; and that this God is one spiritual intelligence, one infinite mind, ever the same, never varying: That this God is the moral Governor of the world, the absolute source of all the blessings of nature, providence and grace, in whose infinite wisdom, goodness, mercy, benevolence and love have originated all his moral dispensations to man: That all men sin and come short of the glory of God, consequently fall under the curse of the law: That Christ is the son of God, the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world, the Mediator between God and man, by whom God has revealed, his will to mankind; by whose sufferings, death and resurrection a way has been provided by which sinners may obtain salvation, may lay hold on eternal life; that he is appointed of God to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day: That the Holy Spirit is the power and energy of God, that holy influence of God by whose agency, in the use of means, the wicked are regenerated, converted and recovered to a virtuous and holy life, sanctified and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light; and that



by the same Spirit, the saints, in the use of means, are comforted, strengthened, and led in the path of duty: The free forgiveness of sins, flowing from the rich mercy of God, through the labors, sufferings and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ: the necessity of repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ: the absolute necessity of holiness of heart and rectitude of life to enjoy the favor and approbation of God; the doctrine of a future state of immortality: The doctrine of a righteous retribution, in which God will render to every man according to the deeds done in the body: The baptism of believers by immersion: And the open communion at the Lord's table of Christians of every denomination having a good standing in their respective churches."

(To be continued.)

### LETTER ON INTEMPERANCE.

The letter, of which the following is a copy, was found with the names attached to it, among the loose papers of a merchant in the State of Maine.

May 22d, 1839.

MY DEAR SON,—It is with mingled emotions of pity and shame that I address you. I weep while I write, at the thought that a son of mine is about to add one to the number of the intemperate. Ever since I have been forced to believe that you have been repeatedly intoxicated, my spirit has sunk within me. Life has become insupportable, and death brings no relief. *A drunkard!* O, my boy, spare me this curse; save me from the unutterable woe of being the father of a living mass of putrefaction and pollution. I could hear that you were steeped in poverty, and begging your bread; and though my heart would bleed for you, yet I should have the consolation that there was no want of moral purity, no self-inflicted misery to deplore. I could see you brought to my door a raging maniac, or a wailing idiot, deprived by God of the glory of humanity, and bow in submission to the will of the All-wise. But to know, that by your own acts, you had voluntarily yielded reason and sentiment to a low appetite, is insupportable. I cannot endure it. Neither earth or heaven bring me consolation. By night and by day your image haunts me—not the image of the affectionate son whom I rejoiced to welcome home, but that of the weak, helpless inebriate, the sport of the thoughtless, the pity of the good. If this condition is to be yours, I know not where to turn for comfort. Whether you live or die, I must mourn inconsolable. O, my boy, my boy, save me from misery. Be to me, what you have been, my own honest, pure-minded son. Drink no more of the intoxicating liquor. *Touch not, taste not.* This is your only way of escape. I beseech you make a manly effort, abstain at once, totally and forever. If you have the moral strength to do this you are rescued. If not, I say it with anguish, you must suffer the torments of hell, a hell on earth—I dare not look beyond—and I, your father, must descend to the grave, a stricken, broken hearted old man, leaving a drunkard to bear my name, a sot to follow me to eternity.

Till I hear of your amendment, I must remain your afflicted father.  
—*Evangelist.*