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THE  
CHRISTIAN GLEANER.

Vol. I.

APRIL, 1833.

No. 2.

“ PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD.”

PREFATORY REMARKS.

ON the subject of Religion, it would have been well for the world, had nothing but the inspired scriptures been ever published. On all sciences and arts merely human, and pertaining to the things of this life, author may succeed author, and volume may be added to volume, keeping pace with the expansion of human intellect, and the accumulation of human experience; for this very evident reason, that no human author is infallible, no volume, science, or art, has arrived at absolute perfection. But as God is the Author of the Sacred Volume—is the infallible teacher, that science or that art which He teaches, is incapable of any improvement from human intellect. The Bible contains this perfect teaching to man, the art of living well in relation to all his high ends and destinies, and the teaching it contains is exhibited in the same perfection in which its Author exhibits all his works.—From all this it may be justly inferred that the contradictory variety of opinions, the endless mass of treatises, commentaries and systems of religion, tend as much to impeach the wisdom and benevolence of the one inspired volume, as they have always tended to perplex and divide Christians.

It is not easy to conceive or express the advantages which the world would this day have enjoyed, had no other volume, no other standard or rule in religion, ever have been announced to mankind, save the unadulterated Word of God. How inconsistent then, it may be objected, is it to adopt this sentiment, and to write another sentence, to publish another volume, on the subject of religion. Taking into consideration the avowed object and obvious intention of the writer, and the circumstances of the case, this objection becomes a mere cavil. Were it the fact, that Christians were making the word of God their only creed or rule of faith and practice, and in their union, only for its truth's sake were exemplifying its sanctifying influence; there would be indeed no occasion to plead the cause of the Bible, or to argue its superiority over every human expedient, for the conversion of the world, the union and sanctification of believers. But when so many systems, other than God's own revelation of truth, and so many rules besides his, have appeared—to call men from these, and to advocate the only one system, the one only rule which can boast an in-

fallible and divine origin, appears as consistent and as necessary, as when men having abused and perverted any gift of heaven, it becomes the duty of every philanthropist and faithful subject of the Great King, to apprise them of the consequences, and to warn them of what may prove their utter ruin. There was no occasion to denounce drunkenness before men had discovered the art of extracting from the bounties of God, and had acquired the taste of using to excess fermented liquors; but now that intemperance has become a common sin in the community, there is need of dehortation against this horrid abuse of God's goodness. To be instrumental towards introducing or restoring that state of things which God instituted, and which was once exhibited, in leading the disciples to see that they need but one law-giver—but one book, but one rule, but one bond of union, to make them happy and holy, is a suitable reason for any to write who really believe that conformity to God's revealed will, can alone produce these happy results, and who are persuaded that a want of conformity to it, with its attendant evils, actually exist at the present day.

Zeal for Christian union, like zeal in other matters, is either to be sought or shunned, to be advocated or deprecated, because of that with which it is associated. That which alone deserves the name of Christian Union can only be effected upon scriptural grounds, and not upon any sectarian platform in existence. Such an Union of all real believers, of all sects is supremely to be desired, but a mere union of sects is as supremely to be deprecated. The Pope's chair is found in almost every sect; all synods and councils have need of it; and much of our religious controversies are about who shall sit in the Pope's chair. The faith of every Christian is as summarily comprehended in the New Testament, as the wisest head in Christendom could comprehend it. The New Testament contains the constitution, laws, ordinances, and discipline of the Christian Church, if such things belong to it at all.—Hence the propriety of proposing and advocating this volume, as the only bond of union in the church. But what avails a promise to be governed by this book, unless, this promise be faithfully fulfilled. Why promise to submit to the constitution and laws, usages and institutions, found in this volume, and afterwards require submission to institutions and usages wholly human.

Thussaith the Lord,—“Ye shall not add unto the word which I command, neither shall you diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you. “Keep therefore, and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.”—Deut. iv. 2.—6. “Blessed are they who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart.”—Ps. 119.

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*Many of the great men of all departments of Science, have in their lucid moments as regards religion, expressed the same views of the Bible and of Systematic Theology.*

DR. BEATTIE'S OPINION OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

“THE Christian Religion, according to my creed, is a very simple thing, intelligent to the meanest capacity; and what, if we are at pains to join practice to knowledge, we may make ourselves acquainted with, without turning over many books. It is the distinguished excellence of this religion that it is entirely popular, and fitted, both in its doctrines and in its evidences, to all conditions and capacities of reasonable creatures—a character which does not belong to any other religious or philosophical system that ever appeared in the world. I wonder to see so many men eminent both for their piety and for their capacity, labouring to make a *mystery* of this divine institution. If God vouchsafe to reveal himself to mankind, can we suppose that he chooses to do it in such a manner that none but the learned and contemplative can understand him? The generality of mankind can never in any possible circumstances, have leisure or capacity for learning or profound contemplation. If therefore we make christianity a mystery, we exclude the greater part of mankind from the knowledge of it; which is directly contrary to the intention of its author, as is plain from his explicit and reiterated declarations. In a word, I am perfectly convinced that an intimate acquaintance with the **SCRIPTURE**, particularly the Gospels, is all that is necessary to our accomplishment in true Christian knowledge. I have looked into some systems of theology, but I never read one of them to an end, because I found I could never reap any instruction from them. To darken what is clear, by wrapping it up in a veil of system and science, was all the purpose that the best of them seems to me to answer.”

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MILTON'S TREATISE ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

“IF, then, the scriptures be in themselves so perspicuous, and sufficient of themselves to make men wise unto salvation through faith, and that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, through what infatuation is it that even Protestant divines persist in darkening the most momentous truths of Religion by intricate comments, on the plea that such an explanation is necessary; stringing together all the useless technicalities and empty distinctions of scholastic barbarism, for the purpose of elucidating those scriptures which they are continually extolling as models of plainness? as if scripture, which possesses in itself the clearest light, and is sufficient for its own explanation, especially in matters of faith and holiness, required to have the simplicity of its divine truths more fully developed, and placed in a more distinct view, by illustrations drawn from the abstract of human science, falsely so called.”

*Dr. George Campbell's views of Commentators and Commentaries, extracted from his Lectures on Systematic Theology.*

“THE dogmatist knows nothing of degrees, either in evidence or in faith. He has properly no opinions or doubts. Every thing with him is either certainly true, or certainly false. Of this turn of mind I shall only say, that so far from being an indication of vigor, it is a sure indication of debility in the intellectual powers.”—

“Of most of our commentaries we may almost say, they speak an infinite deal of nothing. Their reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them they are not worth the search.”

“Almost every commentator hath his favorite system, which occupies his imagination, biasses his understanding; and more or less tinges all his comments.”—

“How unsafe, then, must it be to trust in men. When we thus implicitly follow a guide before inquiry, if we should even happen to be in the right, it is, with regard to us, a matter purely accidental.”

“Whilst, therefore, it is by far the too general cry, “Read, read commentators, systematists, paraphrasts, controvertists, demonstrations, confutations, apologies, answers, defences, replies, and ten thousand other such like;” I should think the most important advice to be, Devoutly study the scriptures themselves, if you would understand their doctrine in singleness of heart.”—

“Rica having been to visit the library of a French convent, writes thus to his friend in Persia, concerning what had passed: Father said I to the librarian, what are these huge volumes which fill the whole side of the library? These, said he, are the interpreters of the Scriptures. There is a prodigious number of them, replied I; the scriptures must have been very dark formerly, and very clear at present. Do there remain still any doubts? Are there now any points contested? Are there? answered he, with surprise; Are there? There are almost as many as there are lines. You astonish me, said I; what then have all these authors been doing? These authors, returned he, never searched the scriptures for what ought to be believed, *but for what they did believe themselves.* They did not consider them as a book wherein were contained the doctrines which they ought to receive, but as a work which might be made to authorize their own ideas.”

#### EXTRACT FROM A SENTIMENTAL JOURNAL.

IN approaching the city we met multitudes of men and women flying in every direction, some of them having literally forsaken all that they had; husbands had left their wives, parents their children, and children their parents. I asked every one who would stop to hear me, what was

the matter. I always heard in reply, "The barbarian foes, the ruthless band, the merciless Scythians are approaching our city." Have they yet entered it, replied I. "No," said they. Are they yet in sight, I rejoined. I was again answered in the negative. Why then do you hasten? was the last question their trepidation would afford me time to ask. The answer which I received was pronounced with uncommon vehemence. Every feature in their face, and every tone corresponded with the import of their reply. It was this—"Twelve heralds of undoubted veracity gave the intelligence that they were just at hand, arrayed in all the vengeance of savage ferocity, stimulated to furious excess, from the ills they had received from our nation." I joined the fugitives, and, after retiring to a cave, fell into the following reflections:—

What an advantage to mankind that they have received from their Creator the capacity or faculty of being so certain of what they have not seen, of that for which they have not the evidence of sense, as to be moved, excited, and impelled to every kind of exertion, suited to the nature of the case, from what they have believed, as though they had seen it. The uncultivated citizen, as well as the sage philosopher, are equally certain, and equally moved by the belief of testimony. It is a blessing, thought I, an inexpressible favour, that we have this capacity of being assured, of what we have not seen, of what we have not felt, upon the testimony of others, and that this is as common to all mankind as instinct is to brutes, and so perfect at first that it is not capable of improvement; for a child believes as firmly, what it can apprehend, as a hoary-headed sage. This people, thought I, have been saved by faith—saved from the jaws of destruction, by believing what twelve heralds reported. I could not but reflect with surprise at the stupidity of those rabbinical doctors who have made so many nonsensical distinctions about the way and manner of believing, and the different kinds of faith. I found those people saved their lives by faith, without ever stopping to inquire of what kind their faith was; the only inquiry was about the evidence—about the number, character, ability, and faithfulness of the witnesses. Being satisfied upon these points, they never thought of consulting their own feelings upon the occasion. But the fact which they believed operated upon all that was within them, just according to his own nature. It produced all its natural or necessary results, and from the nature of all things it must necessarily be so. It was not their belief or their faith, abstract from the fact, that saved them; but the fact believed, that produced such a change upon them and upon their conduct. In one word, these people were saved by the belief of one fact, and that fact was of so great importance as to change their views and practice.

Leaving the cave, and making my retreat into the interior of the country, I met, after a few days, an old acquaintance, *Timothy Stedfast*, who used to be rather of a melancholy temperament when employed as a menial servant in the service of Lord A. His countenance, attire, and gait astonish-

ed me. Instead of that downcast aspect, and evil-boding, melancholic appearance, a peculiar cheerfulness overspread his countenance, and an eye beaming with joy, indicated that some marvellous change had taken place in the views and circumstances of Timothy. His raiment, too, was not of that rough and homespun texture as that in which he formerly performed his services in the fields and gardens of his former master. He was sumptuously apparelled; and even his style of address and demeanour participated in the general elevation and improvement in his aspect. What! said I, so far from home, friend Timothy! "Yes," said he, "and I must be farther yet; I am just going to the sea coast to embark for Jamaica." What! to Jamaica? "O yes, and I would go much farther on the same errand." Pray can you inform me of the nature of your errand? "Yes, with pleasure, and no doubt it will give you joy to know it." Say on. "You know I had an uncle, of whom I once told you, living in Jamaica, who was very rich; his children being all dead, he has left me his vast estate, and now I am going to possess it, it is said to be worth half a million, and the old gentleman having lately departed this life, has bequeathed the whole of it to your humble servant." Indeed! said I. But how do you know that such is the fact? He replied, that three persons whom he once knew, men of undoubted veracity, had written to him informing him of the fact; "besides," said he, "a copy of his last will and testament has been forwarded to me, to which the seal of the chief magistrate is appended. I am certain, I am certain," exclaimed he. "It is a fact." Oh then, said I, I wish you all possible happiness; but be mindful you were once poor. We parted.

I began to muse again on the excellency and power of faith. Truly I thought it was *the "confidence of things hoped for; and the conviction of things not seen."* And what first struck me with irresistible force, was, *that the fact believed always operates according to its own nature.* What a change in the views, feelings, appearance, and pursuits of Timothy! Once a rough, unpolished, downcast, desponding servant; now he possesses a smooth and polished exterior, a cheerful countenance, and a joyful heart; rich in faith, though not yet in actual possession of the inheritance. How powerful the principle! What an impulse to activity, industry, and perseverance! He forsakes the land of his nativity, his father's house, his kindred, and the companions of his youth; he encounters the toils of a long journey, perils by land and dangers by sea, from the influence of faith. This is the cause, the sole cause, of this extraordinary change. He cultivates the manners, the style, the demeanor, suitable to his anticipated circumstances; and though yet not in possession of the inheritance, rejoices in hope of realizing all his expectations. And what still astonishes me *the belief of one fact* thus converts the man—not the way and manner of believing, but the fact believed is the whole mystery.

I was roused from my meditations upon this striking instance of the

nature and power of faith, by meeting a friend whom I had met a few days ago, in all the cheerfulness and joy of good health, of good circumstances, of the finest animal spirits, light, gay, buoyant; but now clothed in mourning, and of a sad and dejected appearance. A heavy sigh and a cheek washed with tears indicated the bitterness of her grief. With querulous accents she told me that two friends, of great respectability of character, had written to her that her aged father, her younger brothers and sisters, had perished by the victorious barbarians in the late invasion; that her father did not hear the tidings in time to effect an escape. I told her not to faint in the day of adversity; besides, said I, it may not be so bad as you expect: perhaps your informants were not assured of the fact. "Oh!" exclaimed she, "I could wish I could not believe their testimony; but I know their character and their competency to give certain information, and I am certain, yes, undoubtingly certain, that such is the fact." I dismounted and retired to an inn, where I spent the evening in meditating upon the simplicity, the power and excellency of faith. The following conclusions were the necessary results of the scenes through which I had recently passed:—

1. In the first place the singular power of faith is manifested in all places and amongst all people. It demonstrates itself to be one of the common, the most common and intelligible principles of action; and produces the greatest changes in human character, in the views and pursuits of mankind. It overcomes the greatest difficulties, and impels men to the highest achievements known in the world.

2. It always operates according to the fact believed. Joy and sorrow, love and hatred, fear and hope, are the effects of the fact believed, and not of the manner of believing, so much talked of.

3. Evidence alone produces faith, or testimony is all that is necessary to faith. This is demonstrably evident in every case; and therefore the certainty felt is always proportioned to the character of the testimony produced. Faith is capable of being greatly increased in many instances; but only in one way, and that is, either by affording additional evidence, or by brightening the evidences already produced. To exhort men to believe, or to try to scare them into faith by loud vociferations, or to cry them into faith by effusions of natural or mechanical tears, without submitting evidence, is as absurd as to try to build a house or plant a tree in a cloud.

4. Faith, abstract from *facts*, produces no substantial, no real effect. Faith and opinions have nothing to do with each other—there is no consanguinity between them. A man might as reasonably expect to support animal life by the single act of chewing, as to be saved by the mere act of believing. It is not a man's eating that keeps him alive, but what he does eat; so it is not a man's believing that saves his soul, but what he does believe.

All controversies about the nature of faith, about the different kinds



of modern faith, are either learned or unlearned nonsense, calculated to deceive and bewilder the superstitious multitudes that hang upon such guides. The only, the grand question with every man should be *What is fact, or truth?* This ascertained, and let there be no inquiries about *how* a man believes, or whether his faith be of the right kind. If a man really believes any fact, his faith soon becomes apparent by the influence of the fact upon him.

6. No person can help believing when the evidence of truth arrests his attention. And without evidence it is as impossible to believe, as to bring something out of nothing.

- 7. The term *faith* is used in the Bible in the commonly received sense of mankind, and the faith which we have in the testimony of God differs from that we have in the testimony of men in this one respect only—that as men may be deceived, and may deceive others, so the confidence we repose in their testimony, in some instances, may be very limited, but as God cannot be deceived himself, neither can deceive others, so the confidence we have in his testimony is superior to that we repose in the testimony of men; and as the word comes to us in demonstration of the Holy Spirit, or attested unto us by the supernatural gifts which accompanied the testimony of the original witnesses; so it affords the highest possible evidence, and therefore produces the greatest confidence. If we receive the testimony of men, saith John, and act upon it in the most important concerns, the testimony of God is greater, and is capable of producing greater certainty, and infinitely worthy of being acted upon in the all important concerns of the world to come.

### THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVERTS AND INFLUENCES MEN BY MEANS OF THE WORD.

THE gospel truth believed through the agency of the Spirit, is the true, the proper and the only principle of grace and holiness in the heart. "We are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." Wherein, not only the thing itself, our being born again by the word, but the manner of it is also declared. The word is the seed, producing spiritual life; as every life proceeds from some seed, that hath, in itself virtually the whole life to be educed from it, by natural ways and means; so the word in the heart of men becomes a vital principle, which cherished by suitable means, puts forth vital acts and operations. By this means, the word, of God, we are born of God and quickened, who by nature, are children of wrath dead in trespasses and sin. While the Scriptures teach us, that the Holy Spirit is the Almighty and Sovereign Agent, in bringing us to the knowledge of the truth, in creating us anew in Christ Jesus; wherever

there is a hint given of the manner, or the means, through which this is brought about; the uniform account the Scriptures give, is that it is effected, by the gospel, by the word, by the truth. Since the miraculous gifts have ceased, they teach us that the Holy Spirit now operates upon the minds of men only by the word. Paul tells the Corinthians. "In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." 1. Cor. iv. 15. James says, "Of his own will begat he us" how? "with the word of truth." James i. 18. Peter says, "Blessed be God which hath begotten us again, unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Peter i. 3. And in what manner this is effected we are told—"That we are risen with Christ *through the faith*, (i. e., the belief) of God's operation raising him from the dead. The same truth is hinted in the titles which the apostles gave to such as were converted by his ministry; "To Timothy my own *Son* in the faith." 1. Tim. i. 2. "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds." Phil. 10. And Peter says directly and plainly, that those whom he addressed were "born again," not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, "*by the word of God.*" The scriptures do not warrant us to look for any new revelations of the Spirit. In the production of faith, and the fruits of the Spirit, we are made partakers of the divine nature, by the word of truth put into the mind and written upon the heart. 2. Peter i. 4. Heb. viii. 10. Any other way of stating this subject is unscriptural, and tends to draw the mind away from the revealed grace in Christ, to take its comfort, from *what is called* the work of the Spirit, implanted grace, and inherent holiness, either with or without the word. There is reason to fear that the great zeal professed by many for the honor of the Spirit, is rather a zeal for what he is supposed to have wrought in their hearts, some distinct, gracious principle, whereby they become more holy in their own eyes. They are afraid lest they should be robbed of the hope and the pleasure they derive from the thought of an inherent principle, or the sight of their own inward holiness. And if so, then all the concern turns out to be nothing but a zeal for an hope in themselves, founded upon what they suppose is wrought in them—while they discern not a sufficient ground for consolation in the free redemption of Christ, proclaimed by the Gospel for the hope of sinners, and if this be not discerned, there can be no true comfort nor holiness.

Again—Both the beginning and progress of Messiah's kingdom are ascribed to *the word*. Compare Matthew xiii. with Mark iv. and Luke viii. "Behold, a sower went forth to sow," namely, *the word* of the kingdom; for the sower soweth *the word*. "And he that receiveth seed into the good ground, is he that heareth *the word* and understandeth it; who, having heard *the word* keepeth it, in a good and honest heart, and bringeth forth fruit with patience." Again, Matt. xvi. 16. 18. Simon said to Jesus, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered and said unto him, Upon this rock will I build my church, and

the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Accordingly, John, in his first Epistle, chapter v, verse 1. asserts, that whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. And Peter, in his first Epistle, chapter ii. verse 2. exhorts all such, that, "as new born babes, they would desire the sincere milk of *the word*, that they might grow thereby." Again, Christ's farewell prayer for his disciples is, "Holy Father, sanctify them through thy truth—*thy word* is truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe in me through *their word*." John xvii. 17—20 and Paul to the Ephesians, v. 25. asserts that, "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by *the word*." Also, Peter, in his first Epistle, chapter 1. verse 22. addresses the brethren to this effect: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying *the truth* through the spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another with a pure heart fervently." Lastly, to close this chain of quotations, it is worthy of remark, that the whole body of the persecuted disciples of Jesus is represented as overcoming the grand adversary by the blood of the Lamb and by the *word of their testimony*. Rev. xii, 11. Now "who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the son of God? And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1. John iv. 5. Upon the whole of the evidence before us respecting the instrumentality of *the word* in the salvation of men, we find that it is the beginning, middle, and end; that every thing is done by it, and there is nothing done without it. That where *the word of the truth of the gospel* is not published, the Spirit of Christ has *nothing to do*, is farther evident from John xvi. 9—11. where his reproof or convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, is confined to his *testifying* the things concerning Jesus. In short, his very character as the spirit of Christ, as the spirit of wisdom and revelation, for enlightening, convincing, comforting, and establishing in the knowledge and belief of *the truth*, is ascribed to him exclusively as revealing and testifying the *things concerning Jesus*. Compare John xiv. 26. and xvi. 14. 15. with 1 Cor. xii. 9—13. with Eph. i. 13—18. and 1 Pet. i. 10—12. and ii. 18. 19. with Jude 14. 15.

For the more full illustration of the truth and certainty of this conclusion, let us again review and examine the evidence, that we may clearly perceive the connexion of *the word* with the kingdom of Christ in its rise, progress, and consummation, or ultimate triumph and perfection in this world:—

I. And first, we shall find that the word of the gospel is the seed of the kingdom; that every subject of it is begotten by, and born of that seed. See John i, 13. James i. 18. 1 Peter i. 23 25. 1 John iii. 9. Upon this point of the testimony three things are expressly evident:—

*First.* That every subject of Messiah's kingdom is born of God.

*Second.* That his birth is by the *means*, or through the *instrumentality*, of the word of truth.

*Third.* That this seed is in each the very and imperishable substance

of his new being. Consequently, till this seed is sown and takes effect, there cannot be an existing subject of the Redeemer's kingdom upon earth.

II. Again, it appears from the evidence before us, that the radical formative truth, the inwrought perception, and real persuasion of which gives birth and being to the new creature, is that expressed by our Lord in his declaration to Peter, Matt. xvi. 16—19. with 1 John v, 1. It farther appears that it was for the demonstration of the truth, that both the predictions, types, and promises of the Old Testament were exhibited and recorded, and also the things that are written concerning Jesus by the four Evangelists. See Luke xxiv. 25, 27. 44. 45. John xxiii. 30. 31. Consequently, there cannot be one born of God, but by means of the scriptural persuasion and hearty reception of this truth, in the light of its proper evidence, and true scriptural import; for if Jesus be truly received as the Messiah, the Christ, he must be received in character; that is, in the true scriptural import of his personal, relative, and official appellations. But who sees not that this is virtually and truly implied in the belief of the great fundamental truth under consideration, viz. "*That Jesus is the Christ, the son of the Living God.*" For whosoever is really persuaded of the truth of this grand fundamental article, upon the evidence which God has afforded, the same is heartily disposed to receive whatever this glorious personage has affirmed, or caused to be taught concerning himself, and his father, and the salvation which he has accomplished.

III. Hence, thirdly, according to the evidence before us, we are justified, sanctified, nourished, and obtain a final victory and triumph over all the power of the enemy, *by the belief of the truth; that is, by the word of the truth of the gospel*, believed and acted upon.

*First.* We are actually justified by believing the apostles' testimony concerning Jesus, that is, the gospel. Compare Mark 16. 15. 16. Rom. v. 1. with Acts xiii. 38. 39. and 1 Cor. ii. 1. 2. and xv. 1—6.

*Second.* We are also sanctified by the same word believed. See as above. John xvii. 17. Eph. v. 26. 1 Peter i. 22.

*Third.* By the same word the believer is nourished, comforted, and made to grow in grace. 1 Peter ii. 2. Jer. xv. 16. 1 Thess, iv, 13. 1 Tim. iii. 1.

*Lastly.* By faith, which is a belief of the divine testimony concerning Jesus, believers are made victorious over sin, Satan, the world and death. See Rom. vi. 14. 17. 18. 1 Peter v. 3. 9. James iv. 7. Rev. xii. 11. 1 John v. 4. 5. Heb. ii. 15. Therefore may all believers say, "Now thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Cor. xv. 57. Upon the whole, it is evident that all the salvation that is known or experienced in this world, is in consequence, and by virtue of, the knowledge and belief of the truth, which worketh in them that believe. 1 Thes. ii. 13. Neither is there any other means appointed or acknowledged of God for the salvation of men, but the scripture revelation of

Jesus Christ. Compare Mark xvi. 15. 16. with Luke xxiv. 46. 47. and Acts iv. 12. That where this scripture revelation is not heard, not known, there neither is, nor ever was, nor indeed can be, any faith in Christ Jesus, (see Rom. x. 9. 14.) nor of course any regenerate, any purified in heart, (see Acts xv. 7. 9.) nor any endued with the spirit of adoption, crying Abba Father. Rom viii. 14. 16. with Gal. iv. 6. 8. But instead of such characters, the debased and stupid practisers of horrid cruelties and abominable idolatries, "do service to them who by nature are no gods." This all *may know* to be the present, as it most certainly was the ancient state of the heathen world, in the days of the apostles and long before: Nor can it be shown, that since the gospel was first preached to the nations, from the day of Pentecost, (Acts ii. 1.) until this day, that any portion of the human family were ever reformed from their idolatries and di-graceful immoralities by any supposed physical operations of the Holy Spirit without the word. To talk, therefore, of christian experience by any supposed operations of the Holy Spirit without the word, or previous to, and independent of, the knowledge and belief of *the truth*, is not only contrary to most express declarations of holy scripture and universally established fact, but to reason also. It supposes a fact without a proper and adequate cause. It supposes a conversion from error and wickedness, without the proposal of truth and goodness to the understanding and heart of the creature. It supposes faith without the exhibition of a testimony to be believed, a thing absolutely impossible. It also supposes love to God in his true and lovely character, of just and holy, merciful and gracious, which the gospel alone manifests, which, without the knowledge and belief of that gospel, is a thing equally impossible with the former. Love and devotion to an unknown God !!! Let us have done then, with such unscriptural indefinite, unmeaning phrases, which, at best are, only calculated, to perplex, mislead, and deceive. When we speak of our holy religion let us speak of it, and distinguish it by proper epithets, such as the scriptures afford, instead of those vain delusive epithets, which the wisdom or rather the folly, of men has invented.

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### THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST.

GEORGE KING is the name of a man; but that George is king, is a proposition that expresses what either is, or is not a fact. And that *George is the king* is a proposition not only more definite than *George is king*, but it expresses something more. It expresses that he is either the chief of kings, or that he is *the king* spoken of or referred to by the speaker. This, we presume, is apprehended by all. Now, Jesus Christ is the name of a person; but that *Jesus is Christ*, or that *Jesus is the Christ*, is a proposition that is either true or false. In the four gospels, or during

the lifetime of the Messiah, the term *Christ* was never applied to him as a proper name, but as an appellative. After some time it was used as a proper name, and frequently without the name *Jesus* attached to it, designated the Saviour. Thus, when Matthew wrote "*the lineage of Jesus Christ,*" he uses the word as a proper name; but it is obvious to all from the perusal of the four gospels, especially in the original, or in Campbell's improved translation, that the term *Christ* was never addressed to the Saviour, while on earth, as a *proper name*, but as an *appellative*. The use of the article in the Greek is lost in many places in the English, by the negligence, or misapprehensions of king James' translators.—Dr. Campbell observes in his *Preliminary Dissertations*, vol. i. p. 223. "If we were to judge by the common version, or even by most versions into modern tongues, we should consider the word as rather a proper name than an appellative, or name of office, and should think of it only as a surname given to our Lord. Our translators have contributed greatly to this mistake, by very seldom prefixing the article before *Christ*, though it is rarely wanting in the original. The word *Christ* was at first as much an appellative as the word *baptist* was, and the one was as regularly accompanied with the article as the other. Yet our translators, who always say *the baptist*, have, one would think, studiously avoided saying *the Christ*. This may appear, to superficial readers, an inconsiderable difference; but the addition of the article will be found when attended to, of real consequence for conveying the meaning in English, with the same perspicuity and propriety with which it is conveyed in Greek. So much virtue there is in the article, which, in our idiom, is never prefixed to the name of a man, though it is invariably prefixed to the name of office, unless where some pronoun or appropriating expression renders it unnecessary; that, without it, the sense is always darkened, and sometimes marred. Thus, in such expressions as these, *This Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ—Paul testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ—Showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ*—the unlearned reader forms no distinct apprehension, as the common application of the words leads him uniformly to consider *Jesus* and *Christ*, as no other than the name and surname of the same person. It would have conveyed to such a reader precisely the same meaning to have said, *Paul testified to the Jews that Christ was Jesus*; and so of the rest. The article alone, therefore, in such cases adds considerable light to the expression, yet no more than what the historian manifestly conveys to every reader who understands his language. It should be, therefore, *Paul testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ*, or the Messiah, &c. Many other examples might be brought to the same purpose; but these are sufficient."

That *Jesus is the Christ* is proposed to us as a fact in the New Testament. But what is implied in the term *Christ*? John tells us that it is a correct translation of the word *Messiah*. Now both terms denote one and the same thing; for *Messiah* in Hebrew, and *Christ* in Greek, signi-

fy anointed. That *Jesus is the anointed*, is, in our tongue, equivalent to *Jesus is the Christ*. But still a question may occur, What is the meaning or peculiar import of the term *anointed* in this connexion? To this we answer from the Bible, that persons designed for the office of king, for the office of high priest, and, sometimes, for the office of a prophet, were, by a divine command, *anointed with oil*, and thus empowered and consecrated by God to the office for which they were designated. Thus Saul was called the Lord's anointed, and this consideration prevented David from taking away his life when obnoxious to his wrath and in his power. David also, and the Kings of Judah were thus consecrated and empowered to act as kings, as viceroys, under God, over Israel. In allusion to this ceremony of inauguration, Paul applies to our King these words, "Thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy associates in office," above all the prophets, priests, and kings that were ever sent to Israel.

Three eminent prophets, David, Isaiah, and Daniel, represent the promised Deliverer as an anointed prophet, an anointed priest, and an anointed King. Isaiah represents him as an anointed prophet, chap. lxi. 1. "The Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor." Daniel represents him as an anointed priest, chap. ix. 25. 26. "And after threescore and two weeks shall the anointed, Messiah and Prince, be cut off, but not for himself;" &c. David in the second Psalm, represents the alliance of the kings of the earth against the Lord's anointed, and sings his coronation upon Zion the hill of his holiness. The whole of the salvation which sinful men require is comprised in the execution of these three offices. We are ignorant, guilty, and enslaved. To remove ignorance, is the office of a prophet; to remove guilt, the office of a priest; and to emancipate and lead to victory, to defend and protect, the office of a king. Now, to believe that *Jesus is the Christ*, is to receive him as the only prophet, the only priest, and the only king, qualified and empowered by our Heavenly Father to instruct us, to atone and intercede for us, to reign over our conscience, to guide, defend, and lead us to victory. His qualification for these offices, being *the Son of God*, the ONLY BEGOTTEN of the Father, renders him infinitely worthy of our confidence, and constrains us to trust in him with all our hearts. To his word, as our prophet, we look for instruction; to his sacrifice and intercession we look for pardon and acceptance; and to him, as king on the throne of the universe, we yield implicit obedience, and are assured if we put ourselves under his guidance, he will lead us to complete and triumphant victory. As we have used and may often use the phrase, "*Jesus is the Christ*," we thought it expedient to give this brief statement of the ideas attached to that phrase."

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**THE FOUNDATION OF HOPE AND OF CHRISTIAN UNION.**

MESSIAH was born in the city of David, at the awful crisis, the fullness of time when science had proved itself systematic folly; philosophy, falsely called *moral*, had exhibited its utter incompetency to illuminate the understanding, to purify the heart, to control the passions, to curb the appetites, or restrain the vices of the world. A scepticism that left nothing certain, a voluptuousness that knew no restraint, a lasciviousness that recognized no law, a selfishness that proscribed every relation, an idolatry that deified every reptile, and a barbarity that brutalized every feeling, had very generally overwhelmed the world, and had grouped those assimilated in vice, under every particular name, characteristic of every species of crime. Amidst the uncertainty, darkness, and vice that overspread the earth, the Messiah appears, and lays a foundation of hope, of true religious union, unknown, unheard of, unexpected among men. The Jews were united by consanguinity, and by an agreement in a ponderous ritual. The Gentiles rallied under every opinion, and were grouped, like filings of steel around a magnet, under every possible shade of difference of thought, concerning their mythology. So long as unity of opinion was regarded as a proper basis of religious union, so long have mankind been distracted by the multiplicity and variety of opinions. To establish what is called a system of orthodox opinions as the bond of union, was, in fact, offering a premium for new diversities in opinion, and for increasing, *ad infinitum*, opinions, sects, and divisions. And what is worse than all, it was establishing self-love and pride as religious principles, as fundamental to salvation; for a love regulated by similarity of opinion, is only a love to one's own opinion; and all the zeal exhibited in the defence of it, is but the pride of opinion.

When the Messiah appeared as the founder of a new religion, systems of religion consisting of opinions and speculations upon matter and mind, upon God and nature, upon virtue and vice, had been adopted, improved, reformed, and exploded time after time. That there was always something superfluous, something defective, something wrong, something that could be improved, in every system of religion and morality was generally felt, and at last universally acknowledged. But the grandeur, sublimity, and beauty of the foundation of hope, and of ecclesiastical or social union, established by the author and founder of christianity, consisted in this, that **THE BELIEF OF ONE FACT**, and that upon *the best evidence in the world, is all that is requisite, as far as faith goes to salvation. The belief of this ONE FACT, and submission to ONE INSTITUTION expressive of it, is all that is required of Heaven to admission into the church.* A christian, as defined, not by any creed-maker, but by one taught of Heaven, and in Heaven, is one that believes this *one fact*, and has submitted to *one institution*, and whose deportment accords with the morality and virtue taught by the great prophet. The one fact is *that Jesus the Nazarene is the Messiah.* The evidence upon which it is



to be believed is the testimony of *twelve men*, confirmed by prophecy, miracles, and spiritual gifts. The *one institution* is baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Every such person is a christian in the fullest sense of the word, the moment he has believed this one fact, upon the above evidence, and has submitted to the above mentioned institution; and whether he believes the five points condemned, or the five points approved, by the synod of Dort, is not so much as to be asked of him; whether he holds any of the abstract views of the Calvinists or Arminians, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, or Quakers, is never once to be asked of such a person, in order to admission into the christian community, called the church. The only doubt that can reasonably arise upon these points, is, whether this *one fact*, in its nature and necessary results, can suffice to the salvation of the soul, and whether the open avowal of it, in the overt act of baptism, can be a sufficient recommendation of the person, so professing, to the confidence and love of the brotherhood. As to the first of these, it is again and again asserted, in the clearest language, by the Lord himself, the apostles Peter, Paul, and John, that he that believeth the fact, that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, overcomes the world, has eternal life, and shall, on the veracity of God, be saved. This should settle the first point; and as to the second, it is disposed of in a similar manner; for the witnesses agree that whosoever confesseth that Jesus is the Christ, and is baptized, should be received into the church; and not an instance can be produced of any person being asked for any other faith, in order to admission, in the whole New Testament. The Saviour expressly declared to Peter, that upon this fact, that he was the Messiah, the Son of God, he would *build his church*; and Paul has expressly declared, that "other foundation can no man lay, than that JESUS IS THE CHRIST." Our translation reads simply, "Jesus Christ;" but the article is in the Greek, and means just as above. The point is proved that we have assumed; and this proved, every thing is established requisite to the union of all christians upon a proper basis. Every sectarian scheme falls before it, and on this principle alone can the whole church of Christ be built.

It must strike every man of reflection, that a religion requiring much mental abstraction or exquisite refinement of thought, or that calls for the comprehension or even apprehension of refined distinctions and of nice subtleties, is a religion not suited to mankind in their present circumstances. To present such a creed as the Westminster, as adopted either by Baptists or Paido-Baptists; such a creed as the Episcopalian, or, in fact, any sectarian creed, composed, as they all are, of propositions, deduced by logical inferences, and couched in philosophical language, to all those who are fit subjects of the salvation of Heaven—I say, to present such a creed to such for their examination or adoption, shocks all common sense. This pernicious course is what has paganized christianity. Our sects and parties, our disputes and speculations, our orders

and castes, so much resemble any thing but christianity, that when we enter a modern synagogue, or an ecclesiastical council, we rather seem to have entered a Jewish sanhedrim, a Mahometan mosque, a Pagan temple, or an Egyptian cloister, than a Christian congregation. Sometimes, indeed, our religious meetings so resemble the Areopagus, the Forum, or the Senate, that we almost suppose ourselves to have been translated to Athens or Rome. Even christian orators emulate Demosthenes and Cicero; christian doctrines are made to assume the garb of Egyptian mysteries, and christian observances put on the pomp and pageantry of pagan ceremonies. Unity of opinion, expressed in subscription to voluminous dogmas imported from Geneva, Westminster, Edinburgh, or Rome, is made the bond of union, and a difference in the tenth, or ten thousandth shade of opinion, frequently becomes the actual cause of dismemberment or expulsion. Christianity consists infinitely more in good works than in sound opinions; and while it is a joyful truth that he that believes and is baptized shall be saved, it is equally true, that "he that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." 1 John, ii. 4.

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#### DIALOGUE ON HERESY.

[The following dialogue actually occurred, a short time since, between a Clergyman, and a Preacher of the Gospel. The Clergyman was acting for the time being, as agent for the Bible Society; and on entering the study of the Preacher, after the usual salutation, accosted him in the following manner:—]

Rev. Mr. MK—N.—I need not ask you whether you need a Bible for your family, as I see several lying around you.

Mr. CLEMENT.—No, sir; I think you have sufficient evidence that we are not destitute of the good book.

Mr. M. Well, friend Clement, can you not contribute something for the destitute? We are called upon by a General Agent of the Bible Society to pay for some Bibles we got for sale and distribution, and are unable to meet his demands against us. Can you not assist us by a donation? .

Mr. C. On reflection I know one who I think wishes to have a new copy of the Old and New Testament, and who will accept it from me. Please let me have one. [*While Mr. M. is handing the bible, and Mr. C. is paying for it, he proceeds to observe.*—Mr. M. I am glad upon the whole, to see you employed in distributing the bible without note or comment. In so doing, you and the society are sapping and mining the foundations of your own sectarian establishments; for in commending the naked text, and in putting it into the hands of the poor and illiterate, you in effect say to them, 'You may understand this and be saved without my creed and my official aid.'

Mr. M. Oh! Mr. C. I care nothing for party, or creed, or for building up a party.

Mr. C. I beg pardon, Mr. M. I thought you acknowledged and held sacred the Westminster creed as the standard of true religion, and as a term of christian fellowship.

Mr. M. True; I belong to a church which has a creed; but I am no great advocate for partyism, nor for creeds. I think it well enough to have a written creed. We have all our opinions of scripture, you know; and I think it is nothing amiss to let the world know what we think of the scriptures. Have you not some opinions of the Bible, Mr. C.?

Mr. C. Yes, . . . many opinions as most persons of my age; but I do not bind upon any man my opinions. I regard them as private property. But do you not bind, upon pain of excommunication, your opinions upon your society, and thereby make your opinions tantamount to the very faith of the gospel:—opinions, too, so abstract and metaphysical, that not more than one of your preachers in every twenty can so fully understand them, as to feel assured that they are correct?

Mr. M. And do not you inculcate, as a term of communion, some peculiar opinions of your own, and are therefore heretical, if such be the true meaning of heresy.

Mr. C. I have often been called a heretic; but most undeservedly, as I think, and as you would think, methinks, if you would but hear me. I am a *Catholic*, not in the papistical sense, but in the true sense of the word. I preach, teach, and practise nothing in the name of the Lord, that is not as universally admitted, as any article in the christian faith.

Mr. M. That is not what I asked you, Mr. C. Have you not some peculiar opinions about baptism, which you make a term of communion?

Mr. C. No, sir. In this I am a Catholic, if Catholicism can on earth be found.

Mr. M. A Catholic in baptism! You astonish me: I have been greatly misinformed if you have not, and do not, inculcate some peculiar views of baptism.

Mr. C. You must, then, be misinformed; for yours are the *peculiar* views, and mine the *general* views of all christendom.

Mr. M. Do explain how this can be. Do you not contend for immersion alone—and—

Mr. C. Yes. And tell me who it is in all christendom, that believes in baptism at all, who will not admit that a professed believer, immersed in water, into the name, &c. is scripturally and truly baptized. All christendom, Catholic, and Protestant, agree that such an immersion in water is baptism. Even the Quaker, who is wholly spiritual; soul and body, says that such was christian baptism in the olden time. But only a part of christendom will agree that the sprinkling of an infant, either upon the engagements of a fleshly father, or a *god-father*, is christian immersion. I am, then, the Catholic and you the heretic here, to speak after the manner of the age. All christendom say that what I practise is christian immersion; but only a part agree with you.

Mr. M. Well, well. That—that is not just what I was alluding to.

It was about the meaning of baptism. Have you not some peculiar opinions about what baptism signifies?

Mr. C. No, sir. The creeds of all sects preach just what I believe and practise in this matter—some with more clearness—others with less; but all preach it. I can show you my views of the meaning of baptism, not only in the direct testimony of the Apostles, but in the words of all the creeds and sects in the christian world. The only difference is, they say and do not: we *practise* what they *preach*.

Mr. M. I thought you had no great regard for our creeds, because you look upon them all as heretical.

Mr. C. I do, indeed, regard all the creeds, that of the *Roman Catholic*, and the countless creeds of the Protestants, as positively heretical; yet I can find the articles of my belief in them all.

Mr. M. How can you find the articles of your belief in so many contradictory creeds?

Mr. C. The contradictory parts of the creeds are about *opinions* not about *belief*. I can find all the great facts which I believe in them all. "The Apostles' Creed," as some call it, contains all the prominent christian facts. I can say I believe it, and every other fact found in the Catholic Vade Mecum.

Mr. M. And are you a Catholic in faith too?

Mr. C. Yes, in faith, in ordinances, in morality.

Mr. M. In ordinances! what do you mean?

Mr. C. I mean the Lord's day, the Lord's supper, and christian baptism. I regard the first day of every week as sacred to the memory of the Lord—the supper as sacred to all the disciples on that day; and you now understand how Catholic I am in baptism.

Mr. M. In morality too!

Mr. C. Yes, all that is called vice, immorality, and sin—all that is called virtue, morality, and righteousness, by the whole christian world, I call by the same names.

Mr. M. Do you not practise weekly communion?

Mr. C. Yes; and all christians say it is the ancient usage: all say we have liberty to do so from the words "as often;" and all say that if christians were in a proper frame it would be very comfortable to sit around the Lord's table every Lord's day.

Mr. M. I am glad to find you so "*Catholic*;" I had thought that you were a factionist, and a separatist.

Mr. C. This sin, I think, sir, you now perceive lies not at my door; but at the door of those who make their peculiar views of expediency a rule for others, and compel mankind not only to be of one faith, but of one opinion: I plead for nothing in faith, in religious practice, in morality, that is not universally admitted by all christians; and reject what is embraced and contended for by only a few.

Mr. M. I think, sir, if I had time I could find something in which you are heretical; but my appointment calls me hence.

Mr. C. At any time when it may suit you and myself I will spend a day with you; and will now promise if you find in me one heretical sentiment I will give it up. But let me tell you, sir, that the root of all heresy is this: *the placing of our opinions, inferences, and sense of expediency on the same footing with the express testimony of God.* This is what all sects have done, in binding their articles of belief and opinion in the same *calfskin*, calling it a creed, and then binding the whole upon the consciences of the disciples.

Mr. M. At a more convenient season I will hear thee again of this matter.

FELIX.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE CORRUPTIONS IN RELIGION, &c.

*Exhibited from Ecclesiastical History.*

MOSHEIM, vol. i. p. 73, Charlestown Edition.—“Another circumstance that irritated the Romans against the christians, was the simplicity of their worship, which resembled in nothing the sacred rites of any other people. The christians had neither sacrifices, nor temples, nor images, nor oracles, nor *sacerdotal robes*; and this was sufficient to bring upon them the reproaches of an ignorant multitude, who imagined that there could be no religion without these. Thus they were looked upon as a sort of Atheists; and by the Roman laws those who were chargeable with Atheism were declared the pest of human society. But this was not all. The sordid interests of a multitude of lazy and selfish priests were immediately connected with the ruin and oppression of the christian cause. The public worship of such an immense number of deities was a source of subsistence, and even of riches, to the whole rabble of priests and augurs, and also to a multitude of merchants and artists. And the progress of the gospel threatened the ruin of this religious traffic and the profits it produced. This raised up new enemies to the christians, and armed the rage of mercenary superstition against their lives and their cause.”—

“The places in which the first christians assembled to celebrate divine worship, were, no doubt, the houses of private persons.” p. 124.—“Let none” says Mosheim, alluding to the first and second centuries “confound the Bishops of this primitive and golden period of the church, with those of whom we read in the following ages. For though they were both designated by the same name, yet they differed extremely in many respects. A bishop during the first and second centuries, was a person who had the care of one Christian Assembly, which, at that time

was, generally speaking, small enough to be contained in a private house. In this assembly he acted not so much with the authority of a master, as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant—Ecc. his. vol. 1. 105.

“ In these assemblies the holy scriptures were publicly read, and for that purpose were divided into certain portions or lessons. This part of divine service was followed by a brief exhortation to the people, in which eloquence and art gave place to the natural and fervent expressions of zeal and charity.” p. 124, 125.

Haweis' Church History, vol. i. p. 150.—“ Nothing could be more undorned than the primitive worship. A plain man, chosen from among his fellows, in his common garb, stood up to speak, or sat down to read the scriptures, to as many as chose to assemble in the house appointed. A back room, and that probably often a mean one, or a garret, to be out of the way of observation, was their temple.”—

“ As pride and worldly mindedness must go hand in hand, assumed pomp and dignity require a sort of maintenance very different from the state when the pastor wrought with his own hands to minister to his necessities, and labored by day that he might serve the church by night. The idea of priesthood had yet scarcely entered into the christian sanctuary, as there remained no more sacrifice for sin, and but one high-priest of our profession, Jesus Christ. But on the dissolution of the whole Jewish economy under Adrian, when the power of the associated clergy began to put forth its bud, the ambitious and designing suggested, what many of the rest received in their simplicity, that the succession to these honors now devolved upon *them*, and that the bishop stood in the place of the high-priest; the presbyters were priests; and the deacons, Levites: and so a train of consequences followed. Thus a new tribe arose, completely separated from their brethren, of clergy distinct from laity—men sacred by office, exclusive of a divine call and real worth. The altar indeed was not yet erected, nor the unbloody sacrifice of the eucharist perfected; but it approached by hasty strides to add greater sanctity to the priesthood, and the not unpleasant adjunct of the divine right of tithes, attached to the divine right of episcopacy.” p. 181, 182.—

“ The simplicity of the primitive worship, contrasted with the pomp of paganism, was striking. It was concluded by the heathen, that they who had neither altar, victim, priest, or sacrifice, must be Atheists, and without God in the world. Those who were now rising into self-created eminence, had therefore little difficulty to persuade that it would be for the interest and honor of christianity to remove these objections of the Gentiles by very harmless but useful alterations. Though magnificent temples had not yet risen, the names of things began to change. There were already *priests*; and *oblations* were easily rendered *sacrifices*. The separation of the clergy, as a body, became more discriminated by their habits. *High-priests* must have more splendid robes than the simple tunic of linen. A variety of new ceremonies were invented to add dignity to the mysteries of christianity and obviate the objections to its

meanness and simplicity. And as the populace were particularly attached to their idolatry by the festivals in honor of their heroes and their gods, and delighted with the games and pastimes on these occasions, the great Gregory Thaumaturgus shortly afterward contrived to bilk the devil by granting the people indulgence of all the same pleasures of feasting, sporting and dancing at the tombs, and on the anniversary of the martyrs, as they had been accustomed to in the temples of their gods; very wisely and christianly supposing that thus, *sua sponte ad honestiorem et accuratiorem vite rationem transirent*—of their own accord they would quit their idolatry, and return to a more virtuous and regular course of life. I must be exceedingly hard drove for a christian before I can put such men as Gregory Thaumaturgus into the number.” p. 182, 183.—

“Constantine having become the conqueror of Maxentius, and as it seems chiefly by the support of christians, his favor to them increased in great munificence to build them churches, and in abounding liberality to their poor. Their bishops were honored by him and caressed, and their synods held and supported by his authority.” p. 246, 247.—

“Having now no longer a competitor, Constantine resolved to take the most decided part with the christians. He prohibited the heathen sacrifices and shut up the temples, or converted them to the purposes of christian worship. He universally established christianity, and tolerated no other religion openly throughout the bounds of the empire; the justice of which I doubt, and even the policy. I see no right to compel even an idolater, contrary to his conscience.” p. 247.

“The bounties he bestowed, the zeal he displayed, his liberal patronage of episcopal men, the pomp he introduced into worship, and the power invested with general councils, made the church appear great and splendid; but I discern not a trace in Constantine of the religion of the Son of God.” p. 248.—

“I am persuaded that his establishment of Christianity, and of those bishops whom particularly at last he most espoused and favoured, contributed beyond any thing to the awful debasement and declension of true religion; and from him and his son Constantius evangelical truth suffered in the spirit of christian professors, as much as their persons had undergone from Dioclesian or Galerius.” p. 249.

“The church now in esteem of some, was exalted to the highest pinnacle of prosperity, invested with vast authority; and the episcopal order collected in synods and councils, with almost sovereign dominion. The churches vied in magnificence with palaces; and the robes and pomp of service, imitating imperial splendor, eclipsed paganism itself, with mitres, tiaras, tapers, crosiers, and processions. If outward appearances could form a *glorious* church, here she would present herself: but these meretricious ornaments concealed beneath them all the spirit of the world—pride, luxury, covetousness, contention, malignity, and every evil word and work. Heresy and schism abounded, and wickedness of every kind like a flood, deluged the christian world: whilst the heads of the church,

more engaged in controversy, and a thousand times more jealous about securing and increasing their own wealth and pre-eminence, than presenting examples of humility, patience, deadness to the world, and heavenly mindedness, were, like gladiators, armed in all their councils, and affected imperial power and pomp in the greater dioceses." p. 261.

While the scriptures plainly point out the office of the Bishop or Elder of a Christian church, and enforce the importance, qualifications and duties of the office, they give no hint for the distinction between clergy and laity among the disciples of the Lord.

Dr. Campbell, Professor at Aberdeen, one of the most approved biblical critics of any age, in his *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, exposes the evil and absurdity of the distinction, as well as the means by which it was established—and his arguments have more weight, as he belonged himself to the established Church of Scotland, in which the distinction is held, and was himself one of the body.

*Campbell's Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 1, p. 297,—“Before such tenets as these, which savours so much of the views of an aspiring faction, and so little of the liberal spirit of the Gospel, could generally obtain, several causes had contributed in preparing the minds of the people.—On every occasion, the pastors had taken care to improve the respect of the lower ranks, by widening the distance between their own order and the condition of their christian brethren—and for this purpose had early broached a distinction, which in process of time, universally prevailed, of the whole christian commonwealth into clergy and laity. The terms are derived from two Greek words (*Kleeros*) lot or inheritance, and (*laos*) people. The plain intention was to suggest that the former, the pastors or clergy, (for they appropriated the term *Kleeros* to themselves,) were selected and contradistinguished from the multitude as being in the present world by way of eminence, God's peculium, or special inheritance. It is impossible to conceive a claim in appearance, more arrogant, or in reality worse founded.—God is indeed in the Old Testament said to be the inheritance of the Levites. But no where is the tribe of Levi called God's inheritance (or *Kleeros*) though that expression is repeatedly used of the whole nation.—Concerning the whole Israelitish nation, Moses who was himself a Levite, says in an address to God, Deut. ix. 29, “They are thy people (*laos*) and thine inheritance (*Kleeros*) which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power.”—The same persons in the same sentence are declared to be both the people (*laos*) and the *Kleeros*, clergy.—What, says the Canonist, at once laymen and clergy? This is certainly absurd; the characters are incompatible; yet it did not then appear so to Moses.—When we recur to the use of the term in the New Testament, we find one passage, and but one, wherein it is applied to persons. The passage is in 1 Peter v. 3, which is thus rendered in our version. “Neither as being Lords over God's heritage,” (in the original, over God's *Kleeros*—clergy,) “but being ensamples to the flock.” They are part of a charge given to the Presbyters or Pastors



relating to their care of the people committed to them who are called God's flock, which they are commanded to feed, of which they are to take the oversight, and to which they are to serve as patterns. The same persons, therefore, who both in this and the preceding verse, are styled the flock under the directions of God's ministers, the shepherds, are also called Kleros, his inheritance, over whom their pastors are commanded not to domineer. It is somewhat extraordinary, that in the choice of distinctions, which the church rulers soon showed a disposition to effect, they should have paid almost as little attention to the style, as they did to the spirit and meaning of the sacred book. Let it be observed, then, in the first place, that this distinction, so far from having a foundation in scripture, stands in direct contradiction, both to the letter and to the sense of that unerring standard."

The statements made by these historians, confirmed by a great variety of documents, establish the fact, that *the confounding of the Jews' religion with the christian religion, or the viewing of the latter as an improvement of the former, has been the fountain of error, which has, since the apostolic age, corrupted the doctrine, changed the order, and adulterated the worship of the christian church.* This, together with the influence of pagan priests and pagan philosophers, proselyted to the christian religion, has been the *Pandora's box* to the professing christian community. From this unhallowed commixture sprang all political-ecclesiastical establishments, a distinct order of men called clergy or priests, magnificent edifices as places of worship, tithes or fixed salaries, religious festivals, holy places and times, &c. &c.

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### ON THE DOCTORATE.

*Extract from a letter addressed to the Rev. Dr. Newman, by the late celebrated R. Hall—March, 1818.*

WITH respect to your inquiry respecting the Doctorate, I have little to say more than this, that it does appear to me to militate directly against our Saviour's Prohibition. The term Rabbi, by the consent of Campbell and the best critics, coincides as nearly as possible with the modern term Doctor. It was a religious degree of honour, conferred by their theological schools to denote a pre-eminence of spiritual wisdom; and if it has not this import (or rather if the D. D. has not) I am at a loss (to know) what it means, nor can I conceive in what manner our Lord, supposing it had been his acknowledged intention to have forbidden it, could have done it more effectually, consistently with the genius of the language in which he spake. Though I am fully convinced some who receive it are as remarkable for their humility as the obscurest of their brethren, and I might adduce the instance of Dr. R—d, and Dr. N. in proof of this assertion: yet it is naturally and intrinsically an element of

vanity, and, no doubt, gratifies that passion in some; and on that account, as well as for the reason before mentioned, it appears to me abhorrent from the simplicity of the Gospel.

It is an invention of barbarous, monkish ages—unknown, as you are well aware, to classic and christian antiquity. It had its origin in the decline of knowledge, both civil and religious, and appears to me to possess a strong tincture of the barbarity of its origin. In my ears it would sound like a nick-name, and I am truly concerned it was ever known that such a mark was upon me. I endeavoured to keep it as secret as possible. In addition to other considerations, I might add, it has been bestowed with such a *total* want of discrimination, that it can never add an atom to the reputation of any man who deserves it. Neither you nor Dr. R. will derive the smallest degree of celebrity from it; your merits would always render it unnecessary: in short, my pride would concur with better reasons for inducing me to reject it.

I hope, my dear sir, you will excuse the liberty I have taken in explaining myself on this subject, assuring you that my high esteem for you is by no means diminished by the slight difference of opinion, nor by another of much greater importance on the subject of communion. You will greatly oblige me by keeping the fact of my diploma as secret as possible.

With ardent wishes for your happiness, I am your affectionate brother.

The following is copied from the first volume of the Christian Magazine, printed in Edinburgh, in 1819.

#### AN ACCOUNT OF AN INTERESTING OCCURRENCE IN A LATE JOURNEY.

HAVING occasion, some time ago, to travel in the county of ———, I arrived, on Saturday evening, in the town of ———. Being a stranger, I made inquiry of my host respecting the places of worship in the town. He told me there were two established churches, a Burgher, and an anti-Burgher meeting, an Episcopal chapel, and of late, said he, another meeting has been set up, whose mode of worship is different from all others. I was curious to learn wherein it differed; but he could give me no distinct answer, only, he said, that many of the town's people did not approve of it, though, he had heard, some of the graver cast liked it very much. Next morning I enquired where I should find the new place of worship he had mentioned, and being directed, I repaired to it.—Two persons, whom I supposed to be the elders of the church, soon entered. One of them, after a short prayer, imploring the divine presence, gave out a hymn, celebrating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He then read a portion of scripture from the Old Testament, and another from the New. That from the New Testament was judiciously chosen, as illustrating some part of what had been read from the Old. Having men-

tioned several of the members by name, who were variously afflicted, he called on one of the brethren to pray. He was an aged disciple of grave appearance; his prayer seemed to be the effusion of a heart alive to God—plain, artless, and appropriate. I was particularly struck by the affectionate manner in which he prayed for these distressed brethren. It reminded me of the apostle's description of the body of Christ, "Whether one member suffer, all members suffer with it." After again uniting in praise, the other elder addressed the church, in terms which made such an impression on my mind, that, I believe, I repeat his words almost *verbatim*—"I have now, said he, brethren, to lay before you a matter peculiarly painful, it is the case of our brother——. His crime is described in the fifth chapter of the Galatians, the 19th verse. The fall of our brother, I lament to say, is well known to the world, and has caused the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. By the offence of this person (for he did not again name him) the church is called to deep humiliation before God. In this mournful case, we have a striking instance of the fatal effects of unnecessarily mingling with the world. This was the first step of his defection, and it paved the way for all that has followed. When first spoken to on the subject, he positively denied it; but has now confessed it to me and two of the brethren." [Here these two brethren simply attested the truth of the statement.] After a short pause he proceeded—"With the law of our Lord and Master in our hands, we can be at no loss as to our duty in this case. That law is explicitly stated in the fifth chapter of the 1st epistle to the Corinthians, from the fourth verse to the end, (which he read.) Here then, you perceive, brethren, there is no alternative; the Lord Jesus commands us, both for this person's good and that of the body, to separate him from our fellowship." The church (who I now perceived were sitting together in one place) having signified their conviction that this was their duty, the elder, with much solemnity, said, "We then, as a church of Jesus Christ, and acting by his authority, do, in obedience to his commandment, separate—— from our fellowship." He then prayed, in a very appropriate and impressive manner, for the unhappy subject of discipline, that the ordinance of God which had now been attended to, might be blessed to his soul, in bringing him to repentance—and to the church, in leading them to watchfulness, self abasement, and continual dependance on the grace of Jesus. After prayer, the 101st psalm was sung, which formed an extremely suitable conclusion to the solemn service. I never witnessed a scene more deeply affecting. The countenance of every person present bespoke his feelings. How is it, said I to myself, that I have lived so long among christians, and have never, till now, seen this plain and positive law of Jesus carried into effect? How beneficial are the laws of his kingdom! how much are they calculated to promote the spiritual life of his people, and to awaken the thoughtless and inconsiderate! The church now proceeded to—what I afterwards understood was a stated part of their service every Lord's day—the observance of the Lord's Supper. The simplici-

ty with which this divine ordinance was attended to, was, in itself, edifying. I beheld a representation of the unity of the body of Christ, which I never before witnessed. The words of the institution were read by one of the elders, a few remarks were then made on the nature of the Lord's supper, and on the spirit in which it ought to be observed. He then gave thanks; and then breaking the bread gave it to the disciples, who divided it among themselves. Having again united in thanksgiving, he gave also the cup, and when all had drunk of it, concluded with a short exhortation, and singing an appropriate hymn. This part of the service being closed, the elder said, "Let us now, brethren, attend to the ordinance of mutual exhortations:" when some of the members spoke, for a few minutes, alternately, with much simplicity, earnestness, and evident humbleness of mind. The addresses of the brethren were, properly speaking, exhortations—calculated to excite to the performance of duty, and to bear with patience, the various sufferings of the present life: each of them had some relation to the others, and their combined influence was highly salutary. Is not this, said I to myself, an exhibition of what the apostle means, when he speaks of "the body of Christ edifying itself in love?" The exhortations of the brethren were followed by an address from one of the elders, in which he briefly recapitulated the topics brought forward by the members, and enforced the duties to which their attention had been called. One of the brethren was again called on to pray. After again uniting in praise, the elder, in a short prayer, implored the divine benediction on all their services, and entreated the blessing of God, while they attended to the fellowship of the saints. The church then sat down, when a collection was made, and the worship closed. The two hours which I thus spent with these dear people, were among the happiest and most profitable I ever enjoyed on earth. I bless God, that unexpectedly I had an opportunity of witnessing the order of a church, which commended itself to my mind, as combining all the ends of christian association, and of which I had previously formed some idea from reading the New Testament. After an interval the service proceeded, and the time was occupied by prayer and praise, the teaching of the elders, and the reading of the word of God; which last, I observed, throughout the day formed a conspicuous part of their worship.

"Being under the necessity of leaving this town early next morning, I was very desirous of learning their history. Accordingly, when worship was over in the evening, I accosted a person whom I had noticed among the members: "Sir," said I, "I am a stranger in this place, and was happily led to your place of worship to-day. Although unknown to any of you in the face, I trust I am one with you in the faith and hope of the gospel. I was very much edified with your order, and would esteem it a great favour if you would give me some particulars of your history." He very kindly invited me to his house, and gave me the following interesting detail:—"I have no doubt," said he, "that the motives of your inquiry are good; I shall, therefore, without reserve, give you the informa-

tion you request. We have met together as a church for these six years past. The original members were intimately acquainted with one another. Each of us had, for a considerable time, been groaning under the defects of the societies with which we were then connected. We clearly perceived that they bore none of the features of the churches set in order by the apostles; but we sinfully contented ourselves with our condition. Our chief comfort, as to christian society, arose from assembling together once a-week in what is called a *fellowship meeting*. On one of these occasions a member spoke with much freedom on the distresses he felt, arising from the cause above mentioned. This led the way to a free conversation; and we soon found that our distresses were not that of an individual, but common to us all. We therefore resolved to walk together as a church in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord Jesus, diligently searching the scriptures to know his will, and fervently praying to be guided by him. From that period we have assembled regularly on the first day of the week. The Lord has been pleased graciously to commence us. Our beginning was indeed small; we were few and despised; but walking, as I trust, in the fear of the Lord and in the comforts of the Holy Spirit, we have been greatly multiplied. We had soon the satisfaction of choosing two of our brethren, with whose qualifications we were entirely satisfied, as our elders. Their labours of love have been much blessed, and one and another have from time to time been added to our number. Our communion commenced," he continued, "in the full conviction that we were yielding obedience to the Lord Jesus. And now we have increasing experience of the truth of our Saviour's declaration, that if any man do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. We have no standard but the will of our Master; and this we find so clearly stated in the scriptures, that, with the teachable spirit of disciples, we are in no danger of misunderstanding it." "The brethren," said I, "appear to have much love to each other." "Yes," he replied, "we know the benefits of christian fellowship: by coming together into one place on the first day of the week, and regularly observing the ordinances of Christ, we not only get better acquainted, but our interest in each other is greatly promoted. If a brother or a sister be absent they are immediately missed, and inquiry is made for them. Our elders know well the situation of every individual: and in case of distress, the church is particularly informed. Thus our sick, or otherwise distressed brethren, are not neglected. Christian sympathy is excited, and we are stirred up to the duty of weeping with those that weep. In short," continued he, "we have convincing proof of the wisdom of all the appointments of Christ, and how eminently the observance of them is calculated to cherish and mature every christian grace, the people of God are not aware of the loss they sustain by neglecting any one of them. I was much gratified, said I, by the short exhortations of the brethren to day; is every brother called on to exhort in the church?" "Yes," he answered, "we think the commandment to exhort one ano-

ther, can be limited no otherwise, than by the brother possessing no talent for it. It is the duty of our elders to take care that the edification of the church be not marred; and if a church be composed of real disciples abuses will rarely occur. We have no right to make laws to ourselves; it is our province to follow implicitly the injunctions of our Master. A few Sabbaths ago, one of our brethren, spoke on the consolations which the gospel affords to believers under the heaviest trials, and with much feeling urged the duty of cordial submission to the will of God. The advice came with peculiar impression, from one whose deep affliction was well known to his brethren. Indeed, who that knows the Lord is not fitted to suggest a word in season, and how gracious is the Saviour's appointment, that his disciples should comfort one another with the words of truth. Individual experience thus becomes a general benefit. The Lord Jesus, my friend, bestows gifts on his people, and every one knows that gifts are improved by exercising them." "But does not the singularity of your observances, draw upon you the censure of others?" "I believe it does; but, added he, with a look of peculiar satisfaction, a full conviction that we are obeying the commandments of the Lord Jesus, raises us superior to these little obstacles. While we follow our own convictions of duty, and are thankful, that, in this highly favored country, every man enjoys liberty to worship God according to his own conscience, we, at the same time, cherish a loving spirit towards all who truly fear God; we earnestly desire the universal spread of the gospel; and use every means in our power for the salvation of perishing sinners around us." I thanked this worthy man for the free and open manner in which he had talked with me, and, with much regret, bade him adieu!

Next morning I pursued my journey, but not without casting a wishful eye on the spot where these disciples sojourn. The occurrences of this day I shall not soon forget. Never do I read of the churches of the New Testament but I realize the christians at——. Send forth, O God! thy light and thy truth, unite thy people. Thou hast indeed given them a good law; thy commandments concerning all these things are right. "Thus saith the Lord, I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go. Oh! that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments, then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea!"

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[The following is the first of a series of communications now publishing in a contemporary Periodical. As the subject is highly important to all, and treated by this writer in an ingenious and somewhat novel manner, we shall lay before our readers such parts of his Essays as appear most calculated to arouse to solemn reflection, and give useful instruction on this interesting subject.]

## CHRIST'S SECOND COMING CONSIDERED, WITH THE RELATIVE EVENTS.

“Behold the Bridegroom comes : go you out to meet him.”

### TO THE READER.

I HAVE no party interest to promote—will never have. I do firmly believe (from prophecy and “the signs of the times”) the world to be approaching the most eventful period, the most important crisis, ever known since time began. The world, and especially the church, is to be a theatre of the most tremendous judgments—famine, war, pestilence, and fire! Silence is guilt.

The following points we propose briefly to examine:—

That no dispensation or government has ever been renovated after becoming corrupt.

That the present dispensation, committed to the Gentiles, has become corrupt—is to go into dissolution.

That no dispensation has ever lasted more than two thousand years.

That the Millennium, or Christ's Universal Reign, is to be a new dispensation.

That Christ is to make a second advent into the world, to be seen by every eye, and acknowledged as the “King of kings.” Is such an event possible or probable? Who will say it is not possible? Who dare use one argument in favour of the dangerous negative? And that it is probable, we shall proceed to show.

Reader, avail yourself of all that can be said on the subject. Nothing can be gained by disbelieving—much may be lost. Alarming prophecies concentrate on the dissolution of the church, and not on nature. Some of the above points are almost selfevident, and need but few arguments.

To the glory of God, and the good of man, do I devote the following pages.

### THE BIBLE.

No other book comes with such claims of divine origin—with such claims on the obedience of man. None other with such holy admonitions and purity of precept—none other so rich in promise, consolation, and reward to the virtuous; or terrible in threatenings and penalties to the vicious and disobedient. It carries accounts out into another state of existence, summoning delinquents before a tribunal beyond the limits of human vision—a tribunal which can never err—from which there is no appeal.

The Bible is a perfect rule of faith and practice. A man cannot read it without gaining knowledge, or practice its precepts without renewing

his strength. Who can read, without loving its holy precepts? Or who obey, without becoming more like the Divine Author? He who converses most with his Bible, converses most with his God, and he who converses most with his God, assimilates most to his image. Its precepts are mild, pure, and simple—its reward is immortality. Revelation first inspired in man the hope of a resurrection. It alone has shed a divine lustre on the gloomy mansions of the grave. It holds a bright beacon on her side of the dreadful pass, and bids us hope that death is not to hold an everlasting dominion—that *the slumbers of the tomb are not to be eternal*. It is impossible that philosophy could have ever conceived an idea of a resurrection; unaided by revelation. Human wisdom might have shed the tear of despair on the grave of worth and merit; or sighed an eternal adieu to the dearest friends and relations on earth, but for the hope revelation has given.

The Bible is an inexhaustible treasure; it daily pays the daily examiner. We may tire reading any other book; but the relish for the Bible increases with the perusal. I know not how a good man can neglect this wonderful book. How can he know his Master's will without consulting it? Can he depute this important duty to another? It furnishes a perfect system of morals—a perfect plan of duty. No circumstances in which a man can be placed, but it finds him, and is suited to his case. By it the man of God is “thoroughly furnished to every good work”—nothing lacking—nothing superfluous. Where it condemns, who may acquit? Where it acquits, who dare condemn?

The Bible furnishes a history of the past, precepts for the present, and a peep into futurity. In the past we may often read the history of the future. God has commonly kept throwing out a chain of predictions two or three thousand years beforehand relative to the destiny of churches or dispensations, in order to keep men on the look-out; yet, in spite of all these things, the events find the bulk of mankind in an unprepared state.

Men always fancy themselves in the most favoured age—that the happy religion, the favoured dispensation in which they live, will be handed down from generation to generation, till the very end of time—will be succeeded by eternity itself. This often precludes investigation, and predictions relative to the close of dispensations are applied to times the most remote—to events the most distant.

Prophecy will as certainly point us forward to an event, as the event will point back to the prediction. There can be no more certain application than there is ground for expectation. Prophecy or precept can have no private interpretation. An incomprehensible revelation is a contradiction in terms—is not a revelation at all. Prophecy is as much revelation as precept. Prophecies, not suited to the capacity of the poor—the common people—forfeit a claim on the obedience of nine-tenths of mankind. The poor had the gospel preached to them: so the poor must be interested in the prophecies, or there must be inconsistency in the divine admini-



istration. There can be no special application, no threatenings, blessings, or calamity, but will embrace the rich, the poor, the bond and free, who may be found obeying or disobeying the command of God. Prophecy is intended to prepare and to confirm. What preparation can we make when we cannot understand? What confirmation, when there is a doubtful accomplishment? Where the wisdom or the goodness in saying, "Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book," and deliver the sayings and prophecies in an unintelligible language? Why command us to watch as for the approach of a thief, and no object given for which we are to watch? For what are we to watch? For a reed shaken with the wind—a storm of thunder and hail—an invasion of the Saracens—a Spanish armada—a French revolution!!! To all these things have the prophecies been applied. But the Master says: "Behold I come as a thief; blessed is he that watches." Now here is an object; the coming of the Master, and the relative events.

Prophecy was given out of good will to man. What good will? In giving alarm without providing a refuge—without showing the point of danger, and a place of safety! God, in love, has always given us forewarning of some kind, before the fatal stroke—before the ministers of vengeance execute their dreadful commission on corruption.—A Noah preached before the flood, a Jeremiah prophesied before the evil day, and Christ wept over a devoted Jerusalem, before it was swept with the besom of destruction. And the same God of mercy, justice, and truth, has left on record many predictions of the most alarming kind, which have had no accomplishment, and can have no direct allusion to the general Judgment, or the close of time, but are unavoidably connected with the present Gentile church and its destinies. *God has always saved a remnant—a faithful, obedient few, who tremble at his word.*

No dispensation has ever closed, but with a day of sore calamity; nor have general sore judgments ever fallen, but for corruption. If they be threatened, or poured out, it is for one universal cause—incurable corruption.

Another fact, no less notorious, is this: No dispensation, after becoming corrupt, has ever been restored to primitive purity; and another fact, no less alarming, and which should have a special bearing on the world at the present day, is, that no dispensation, or moral administration, instituted by the Ruler of the universe upon earth, has ever been continued longer than about two thousand years; nor is there one single text in the Bible, affording sufficient warrant that the present dispensation, committed to the Gentiles, is to last longer, or even that long. Nay, we believe the signs of approaching dissolution appear. The harbingers of this tremendous crisis may be seen. The cry is heard, "Behold the bridegroom comes! go you out to meet him."

Our design is to arouse to investigation, to sound alarm. A most eventful day is approaching the world;—the world mostly asleep, priest and people. We propose showing, from the "signs of the times," from

prophecy, from reason and analogy, that the present moral administration,—the dispensation committed to the Gentile church,—is drawing to a close—has become corrupt—is never to be renovated—is to go into dissolution—is to be swept with the “besom of destruction”—is to be rolled together like a useless scroll, with all its appendages, and laid aside, before the introduction of the Millennium, or Christ's universal reign.

The Millennium is to be a new dispensation, as different from the present as the present is from the past. Its harbingers are to be famine, war, pestilence, and fire. We are to be devoted to the literal fulfilment of prophecy, especially in what relates to Christ's second advent into the world. To the Apocalypse!—it is high time the meaning of this mysterious book was examined;—no time to be lost: and I do affirm, regardless of contradiction, that all the alarming predictions in the Bible, standing unfulfilled, concentrate on the dissolution of the church, or the present dispensation:—not on nature, at all.

Having thus far premised, we will first briefly touch upon a few items of

#### CHURCH CORRUPTION.

All will acknowledge, at once, that the christianity of the world, taken at large, is much adulterated, fallen, shorn of its glory, compared with what it was in its primitive state; that it will not stand the test of the sacred oracles. In the very face of reason, or the Bible in full view of God's former dealings with old corrupted dispensations, the majority of the world *will believe* that God, in the plenitude of his mercy, will overlook human imperfection, and accommodate himself to the corruption of the present dispensation; or, as a sovereign, in his own *time* and *way*, will renovate the church, and that she will *then* “come up out of the wilderness, leaning on her beloved,” &c. This is hoped, this is believed, rather than believe God's word, or that he will resort to his usual method of renovating corrupted dispensations.

Some may say that truth will prevail. Does not the history of the world contradict this, and common observation teach a different theory? If error were not too strong for truth—aye, for the Bible,—truth would heal the corruptions of the day. Do the divisions, the diversities of opinion, the conflicting interests, the warring elements of christianity, originate in truth, or in error? None will say in truth. Truth does not heal them,—for this plain reason: it cannot. It is too weak, and needs the physical hand of God, occasionally, to avenge its wrongs. Now, in spite of truth, error and corruption have gained a dreadful ascendancy in the church. On what principles can we expect truth to cast out the demon? Does corruption ever purge itself? If truth was too weak to prevent an evil, how can it cure? It is easier to prevent disease than to heal.

The christian world, at the present day, is dreaming about restorations, Millenniums, &c. without examining on what ground they are to be brought about. Effects always correspond with a relative cause. A cause will always produce an effect exactly in proportion to its strength, in the natural or moral world. Need we argument to prove that there is a morbid action in the system, when the symptoms of death appear in every feature? What a contrast between the present and primitive christianity! Just as soon may we expect a stream to rise above its fountain, as expect crime to cease uncaused, error to lay down its hostility to truth or corruption to purify itself. Nothing but the physical hand of God, the last resort of heaven, will bring the world to see; *aye*, to feel. Nothing else will check the mighty tide of vice.

The world is ripening for the sickle. I would ask, When is the church to rise in her renovated strength, deck herself the Bride, the Lamb's wife; evangelize the world? What is she doing? What has she done?—Made a few hundred converts, in as many hundred years. In the heathen world there are probably more than an hundred thousand souls, twice told, born into the world, for one converted to christianity. The last and only resort, is this: That God as a sovereign, having all power in his hands, can, in his own *time* and *way*, bind Satan, put forth his mighty energy, pour out his *Spirit*, revive his *work*, and renovate the church: for who may limit the Almighty? We may limit the Almighty to his word, to his usual manner of dealings with the world, to his former method of healing incurable corruption. Long abused mercy, warnings and threatenings long disregarded, have always been followed by judgments.

The flood, the destruction of Jerusalem, with many other circumstances of notoriety, witness the alarming truth, that God occasionally touches the world with his finger, when men grow corrupt and forget that the Almighty rules: he then leaves an evidence of his footsteps, a monument of divine displeasure, a dreadful warning to following ages, of the consequences of corruption. For such an event as this, the world is fast ripening. But more of this hereafter.

I have no wish to enter upon controverted ground; my object is to show the utter impossibility of evangelizing the world, under the present administration; because the world is growing worse: there is a dreadful increase of crime, in spite of human effort; and God (to speak with reverence) will be compelled to increase the present ratio of light and motive, convert the world by power, or resort to the scourge. I do admit that there are partial revivals of vital piety,—short-lived, generally—some occasional vigorous pulsations about the heart, while the extremities are cold and stiff in death. It is like the glow on the cheek of consumption; like a frenzied imagination, fancying itself hale and strong, on the verge of dissolution.

*To be continued.*

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## THE WILL OF JOHN CALVIN.

IN the name of God. To all whom it may concern: be it known that in the year 1564, and on the 25th day of the month of April, I, Pierre Chenelat, citizen and sworn notary of Geneva, having been called in by John Calvin, minister of the word of God, in the church of Geneva, and citizen of the said Geneva; who, being indisposed in body, but of sound and disposing mind, hath declared to me his wish to make his last will and testament: desiring me to write what he should dictate and pronounce; which at his said request I have done, and written what he hath dictated to me, and pronounced word by word, without omitting or adding any thing thereto, according to what followeth:—“ In the name of God, I, John Calvin, minister of the word of God, in the church of Geneva, finding myself so much reduced by various maladies, that I cannot but think that God will shortly remove me out of this world, have ordered to be made and written my testament, and declaration of my last will, in form and manner following:—

“ First, I give thanks to God, that, taking pity on me, whom he hath created and placed in this world, he hath delivered me out of the thick darkness of idolatry, into which I was plunged, and hath brought me into the light of his gospel, and made me a partaker of the doctrine of salvation, whereof I was most unworthy. And he hath not only gently and graciously borne with my faults and sins, for which I deserved to be rejected of him and cast out, but hath vouchsafed to use my labours in preaching and publishing the truth of his gospel. And I declare that it is my wish and intention to continue in the same faith and religion, having no other hope or refuge but in his gratuitous adoption of me, upon which is founded all my salvation: *embracing* the grace which he has given me in Jesus Christ, and *accepting* the merit of his death and passion, that *so all my sins may be buried*; and *beseeching* him so to wash and cleanse me in the blood of that Great Redeemer, which was shed *for all* poor sinners, that in his image I may appear before his face. I declare also, that, according to the measure of grace bestowed upon me, I have endeavoured to teach his word in its purity, as well in sermons as in writings, and endeavoured faithfully to expound the Holy Scriptures; and that in all the disputes which I have had with the enemies of truth, I have never used either craftiness or sophistry, but have fairly maintained the truth. But, alas! my zeal, if it deserves the name, has been so cold and unworthy, that I feel myself highly indebted in all, and through all: and if it were not for his infinite bounty, all the zeal I have discovered would appear light as smoke, and the graces which he has bestowed upon me would only render me more guilty; so that my only refuge is, that He being the Father of mercy, I trust he will be and appear the Father of so miserable a sinner. Further, I desire that my body, after my decease, may be interred in the customary manner,

awaiting the day of a blessed resurrection. With respect to the property which God hath given me to dispose of, I name and appoint as my only heir, my well-beloved brother Anthony Calvin; nominally leaving to him only the cup which I received from Monsieur de Varennes, begging him to be content therewith, which I am persuaded he will be; knowing that I have no other motive than that what little I leave may descend to his children. Further, I leave to the college ten crowns, and to the purse for poor strangers, the same sum. Also, to Jane, the daughter of Charles Dastan, and of my half sister on the paternal side, the sum of ten crowns. Further, to Samuel and to John, sons of my said brother, my nephews, each forty crowns. And to my nieces, Ann, Susanna, and Dorothy, each thirty crowns. As to my nephew David, as he hath proved but light and trifling, I bequeath to him only twenty crowns, for chastisement. This is in sum, all the property which God hath given me, as far as I am able to ascertain it, in books, furniture (and other things. Should it, however, prove more, I desire it may be distributed between my nephews and nieces aforesaid, not excluding my nephew David, should God give him grace to be more circumspect. But I believe that with respect to this, there will be no difficulty, especially when my debts are paid, which I have given in charge to my brother, upon whom I can depend; naming him executor of this testament, with Laurent de Normandie, giving them full power and authority to make an inventory of, and to sell my goods, to procure money, in order to comply with the contents hereof. Dated this 25th day of April, 1564. So be it.

JOHN CALVIN."

And so John Calvin died leaving neither wife, son, nor daughter, worth not more than 250 crowns, as merchants and traders would say. But is it not worthy of remark, how much *moral* power a person may have in society, accompanied with little or no pecuniary power? and how often do we see great pecuniary power associated with the least conceivable degree of moral power? The talents of some men do more for society than the wealth of a Cræsus, or the sword of a Cæsar.

The will of Calvin furnishes another proof, that men often *feel free agency* one way, and reason another; and that after the verbiage of controversy is pruned off, the *points of agreement* are more numerous and of incomparably greater magnitude than the points of disagreement, even between the fiercest Protestant antagonists. John Calvin strenuously contended for special atonement; and yet, when dictating his last will and testament, witnessed to by Theodore Beza and other distinguished men, he rejoices to think and feel that Jesus "*died for all poor sinners.*"

The tincture of the system, the moral tinge of his Institutes, is nevertheless apparent in his feelings as expressed in his will. On the subject of *remission he speaks vaguely*, and it appears to have been with him rather an object of *hope*, than a matter of fruition.

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## SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR THE WEEKLY OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

ARE we left to our own discretion as to the frequency of observing this Ordinance? To answer this aright, the following questions should be previously considered.

1st. Are the worship and order of the church of Christ, in every age, to be regulated, in all respects, by apostolic precept and example.

2dly. Can we ascertain what apostolic precept and example would lead us to, in respect to the frequency of observing this particular ordinance?

First. The scriptures teach us that the Apostles were divinely inspired, and qualified infallibly to teach the churches the whole will of God. As Jesus Christ was the Apostle of the Father, sent to reveal him to the world; so he constituted them *his* apostles, gave them the words which the Father had given him, and sent them into the world, to teach all things whatsoever he had commanded. John xvii. 3—8. 18. Math. xxviii. 20. After his ascension, he sent upon them the Holy Spirit to guide them into all the Truth, to bring all that he had said to their remembrance, and to enable them to proclaim to the world, in the *very words* of the Holy Ghost, the whole Gospel of God, in faith and practice. John xvi. 7—15. Acts i. 5. 8. and ii. 1—4. Cor. ii. 9—13. In speaking and acting under this divine influence, they claim the same submission to their authority, which is due to God alone; and solemnly declare: “He that despiseth *us*, despiseth not man but God, who hath also given to us his Holy Spirit.” 1 Thes. iv. 8, And they esteemed it a sufficient test of one's being destitute of the Spirit, who, whatever might be his pretensions to the possession of spiritual gifts, did not acknowledge, “that the things which the apostles wrote, were the commandments of the Lord.” 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

In the execution of the commission they had received, the Apostles preached salvation to all that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and when any believed and turned to the Lord, they were separated from the world and instructed in the nature and observance of the ordinances of the gospel. Acts ii. 37—42. and xix. 9. 1 Cor. xi. 2. Neither was there any difference in the nature, time, and manner of observance, of the ordinances enjoined upon the churches. All were the same in every respect. “For this cause have I sent unto you Timothous, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, AS I TEACH EVERY WHERE IN EVERY CHURCH.” 1 Cor. iv. 17. The natural conclusion from all this is, that the Ordinances enjoined by the apostles on the first churches, are of continued obligation, as the established laws of that kingdom which cannot be moved; and that when churches now obey apostolic injunctions, and copy the approved practice of those churches, they obey Christ. In conforming to this, the only divine standard, we greatly promote the

unity of the body of Christ; while by departing from it, the disciples are exposed to great temptation of suiting their mode of worship and order to their own inclination and interest; and as these are different in different men, the ordinances, instead of being a bond of unity and peace, and their scriptural observance a token of submission to Christ's authority, become a source of debate, and of endless, and doubtful disputation.

Secondly. We can ascertain what apostolic precept and example would lead us to, in regard to the frequency of observing the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, as easily, and supported by the same evidence, as we can ascertain the apostolic, consequently, the divine authority of observing, or sanctifying the first day of the week as the Lord's day. The church in Jerusalem "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts ii. 42. We have here precisely the same evidence, that this ordinance was a stated part of their worship, as that they assembled at all statedly, or statedly observed any other ordinance when assembled together. In Acts xx. 7. we have a distinct example of christians meeting for worship on the first day of the week, and that one of the chief objects for which they assembled together on that day, was the observance of this ordinance: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them." This direct, and plainly stated example, is quite sufficient to warrant any church to go and do likewise; and it will not be an easy task to show, upon what authority any church, having before them this example stated by the Holy Spirit, either may omit coming together on the first day of the week, or, when assembled on that day, omit the observance of that particular ordinance, for the special purpose of observing which, the church at Troas are expressly said to have assembled together.

The two Institutions, therefore, viz. The appointment of the first day of the week as the day for christians to assemble for worship, and the observance of the Lord's Supper by them when so assembled, are supported by the same evidence, and stand or fall together. If this passage does not afford authoritative apostolic example, for the churches to break bread when assembled together on the first day of the week, it does not afford an authoritative example for their meeting together at all on that day, or for sanctifying that day. Again, all that regard the meaning of words must confess, that the frequency of their meeting together, and of their breaking bread, are expressed in the same terms, so that if the one was fifty-two times in a year, or twelve, or only once; so was the other. If they met every first day, they broke bread every first day;—if they did not break bread every first-day, they did not meet every first-day. The style of Luke, in narrating the circumstance, is confirmatory of the fact, that they did *both* on *every* first day of the week. He does not say, when the disciples came together on *a* first day, or on the first day of any particular week, but simply "on *the* first day of the week," expressive of a

stated, fixed custom, or what was invariably attended to on that day. This may be illustrated by a parallel and familiar case. Suppose that, having previously learned that the late George the third was born on the fourth of June, we read, though only once, in a record of the transactions of his time, that on *the* fourth of June, when his Majesty held a levee, the Nobles of his court congratulated him on the return of the day. Would we not hence naturally conclude, that this was the stated practice on every fourth of June,—namely, that his Majesty invariably held a levee on that day, at which the Nobles attended?

This plain passage of Scripture, Acts xx. 7. ought to be sufficient to convince every unbiassed mind, that it was the practice of the primitive disciples, approved, and consequently enjoined, by the apostles, to come together on the first day of every week, to break bread, and observe all the ordinances of the Gospel. The following scripture further proves the invariable custom of their meeting on the first day of every week, and of their attending to the Ordinances when so assembled; and it enjoins upon them the regular observance of one in particular,—the fellowship, or contribution for the poor saints. “Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. On the first day of the week, or rather, “on the first day of *every* week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” 1. Cor. xvi. 1. 2. Here it is stated, as a thing not to be doubted, that they assembled on the first day of every week to observe the ordinances of the gospel; and while it is tacitly acknowledged, that they were in general punctual and regular in this respect, they are specially enjoined, owing to the urgency of existing circumstances, not to neglect one in particular, that of the contribution or fellowship. We have then, in Acts xx. 7. and 1. Cor. xvi. 1, 2. two approved examples, of its being the customary practice of the first christians, to meet together every first day, for the worship of God, and the observance of the ordinances three of which are specified, viz. breaking bread, preaching the word, and fellowship for the poor saints. This ought to settle the question, as to the *day* on which christians should meet, in accordance with apostolic example, for the worship of God; and it is generally acknowledged to be conclusive, and therefore acted upon. But we have further evidence, without regard to the particular day of the week, that whenever the churches met, they met expressly for the observance of the ordinances, especially the Lord's Supper.

“Now I praise you, brethren,” says the apostle, 1. Cor. xi. 2. “that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you;” and a little after he reproved them sharply, respecting the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, not that they neglected it, but that they observed it in an improper manner; proving at the same time that, notwithstanding this impropriety in the manner, their principal design



in coming together, was to eat the Lord's Supper. "I hear that there are divisions among you; and I partly believe it.—When, ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper; for in eating it, every one taketh first his own supper, and one, verily, is hungry, and another is filled. What! have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and put to shame those who have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not." 1 Cor. xi. 18–20–22.—Whatever irregularity the Corinthian Christians evinced in their *manner* of observing this ordinance, it is evident from these words, that the ostensible purpose of their assembling together was to observe it. It was then a stated part of their worship, whenever they met for worship; and the divinely sanctioned time, more properly the divinely appointed time for that purpose, was the first day of the week. On that day, every part of worship was attended to, even discipline, that most solemn act, of delivering, "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,—and with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ," an offending member "unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." 1 Cor. v. 4. 5.

By "the Apostles' doctrine Acts ii. 42. I understand the reading, expounding and enforcing the word of God, for the instruction of believers, and the conversion of sinners. And if it can be proved, that a church of Christ when assembled together on the first day of the week, may omit, or neglect, without blame, the observance of the Lord's Supper; it can, by the same reasoning and evidence, be proved, that they may also neglect without blame, the reading and expounding of the word of God, the fellowship and the prayers: in a word, that there is no act, or time of worship enjoined upon them; that they are left entirely to their own inclination, as to whether, when, or how, they shall worship God at all.

If then the apostles were divinely inspired to reveal the whole will of God to the churches, what they have enjoined by express precept, or have sanctioned by their presence or approval, must be considered as the will of God,—the divine directory for the guidance of christians, in every age. Now we see that they sanctioned, by their example, the meeting together of the disciples on the first day of the week, for breaking bread, and preaching the word, and enjoined the fellowship to be, without fail, attended to on that day. But the last of these is enjoined to be attended to on the first day of *every* week; which proves that they must have been assembled together then; and in respect to the Supper, it is proved, that when they came together, the observance of it was one principal part of their assembling in one place. The day reminded them of their Lord's triumph over death and the grave, and of his entering into heaven with his own blood, there to appear in the presence of God for them; and the Supper reminded them, that he had redeemed them to God by his blood; that they were not their own, but bought with the precious blood of the Son of God, and bound to glorify God in their bodies and spi-

rits which were his. The meeting together on every first day, and the breaking of bread on every first day, are therefore equally of divine authority, and equally necessary to the honour of God, and to the comfort, edification, and stablishing in the faith, of the people of God, in every age.

**A CHURCH IS WARRANTED, BY SCRIPTURE EXAMPLE, TO OBSERVE THE ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, IN THE NECESSARY ABSENCE OR WANT OF A PASTOR.**

THE social ordinances of the christian religion were delivered to the first churches for their regular observance, immediately on their first formation, or their being collected together, and separated to the service of God. These are all included in the following description of the primitive practice. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts ii. 41-42. The Apostles were enjoined and empowered to teach believers "to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them;" and they taught the same things "every where in every church." Math. xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. iv. 17. The churches, or congregations of believers assembled together on the first day of every week to celebrate the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and to observe the other ordinances appointed for their mutual comfort and edification. Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1-2. and xi. 20-26. Heb. x. 24-25. 1 Cor. xiv. 24-26-31.

No body of men, then, could be recognized as a church of Christ, that was not regularly observing all the ordinances, as the apostles had taught them: and yet we find, in scripture, no instance of a church blamed for neglecting any of these ordinances; though we meet with one notable instance of a church being praised for its stedfastly observing the ordinances, while it is sharply reprov'd for the *manner* in which it observed them. 1 Cor. xi. 2. 17-22. All the churches observed *all* the ordinances regularly and stately, notwithstanding that, through their remaining ignorance, as in this case, their *manner* of observing some of them was blameable. They must consequently have been recognized as churches of Christ subject to his authority, and imitators of the church in Jerusalem, on account of their stedfastly continuing in all their assemblies together, "in the doctrine of the apostles, in the fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in the prayers. But this recognition, in many of them at least, was evidently before they had Elders appointed over them. Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel in Lystra, in Iconium, in Antioch in Pisidia, besides other places. On their return to Syria, they visited those places, "confirming the souls of the brethren;—and when they had *ordained*

them," (that is, when the churches had ordained over themselves), "elders in every church, and had prayed, with fasting, they," (the apostle and Barnabas,) "commended them to the Lord on whom they believed." Acts xiv. 21-23,—In Crete also, there were many churches, which, for a length of time after they were collected together, had no pastors; and the apostle left Titus there, to direct and oversee the appointment of suitable persons to that office in all these churches. And it is worthy of observation, that while faults are mentioned as existing in these churches, no hint is given that they neglected the regular observance of the ordinances; on the contrary, they could not have existed, or been acknowledged by the apostle as churches of Christ, had he not known them to have been in the regular practice of observing them. At the same time he represents them as experiencing the inseparable effects of the unnecessary delay of the appointment of pastors over them to rule, guide, and watch over them, and instruct them in sound doctrine. "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision,—who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake." They must then have been long in the habit of meeting together as churches, before these particular evils could have been discovered among them, and during all that time been observing the ordinances, included in "the apostles' doctrine, the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers;" and as the Corinthians are blamed, not for neglecting the Lord's Supper, but for their manner of observing it; so these Cretians are blamed not for neglecting public teaching in the church, but for their motives, and the manner in which they did it. There were among them unruly, vain talkers and deceivers; subverting whole houses; teaching what they ought not for filthy lucre's sake. Titus i. 5-11.

That there is no necessary connexion between the observance of the Lord's Supper and the pastoral office, so that the supper must be neglected, unless the Pastor be present to administer it, will be more clearly seen by carefully considering the following observations.

1. The Ordinances were delivered to, and enjoined upon the churches, without any limitation whatever respecting Elders. They are no way connected in scripture with any particular order of men, so that the disciples must either receive them from their hands, or neglect, or lose the benefit of them.—It is unreasonable, as it is unscriptural, to attach to the ordinance of the Supper any such peculiarity of sanctity, as to lead christians to act on different principles respecting it, from what they do respecting the ordinances of prayer, praise, the public reading and expounding of the scripture, and exhortation, by so connecting it with the pastoral office, as to make the presence of an Ordained Minister necessary to give validity to it, and indeed essential to its existence in a christian church.

2. Is there any thing indescribable or mysterious conveyed by Ordination? Is it not simply appointment to an office? Pastors are never spoken of in Scripture as priests, or apostles, or evangelists, or as their successors, as we too frequently hear them represented. And indeed if

this unwarrantable assumption respecting the office were even conceded, it would furnish no analogous proof, that the Supper must be received only from the hands of an ordained minister; as neither the Passover among the Jews, nor the Lord's Supper among Christians, as far as appears from Scripture, necessarily required a Priest or Apostle to dispense and give it validity, even while these offices actually existed. In Pastors we see no more than the presidents of Christian Assemblies, chosen according to Scriptural rule, plainly defined; 1 Tim. iii. 1-3. Titus i. 5 &c. appointed to lead, to rule, and to feed the Church of God, by and with the word of truth; "not novices," but tried and experienced men, known to be the fittest for the important task, by their aptness to teach, and by their possessing the other qualifications mentioned by the Holy Spirit. But the Pastor possesses the authority and is bound to perform the duties, of the pastoral office, only in the church which appoints him to that office. Detached from that body, he cannot Scripturally exercise the pastoral office any where else, in virtue of being once ordained; for he was ordained, or appointed to only one particular charge, namely the Church that chose him. We have no diocesan, no universal Bishops described or authorised in the New Testament. There is therefore great inconsistency in those who, while they oppose the sentiment, that a Church should eat the Lord's Supper *without Elders*, are yet satisfied to partake of it when the Pastor of a distant Church presides; one who has not, who cannot have, consistently with common sense or Scripture, any authority, or official character, beyond the bounds of his own charge. A Priest, was indeed a Priest wherever he went, and could exercise his office in any or every part of the land of Israel. Such was the constitution, expressly appointed of God, under which he was made a Priest. But all the meaning, and all the offices of the Aaronical Priesthood met, and had their fulfilment in Christ. In his kingdom no particular order of men is set apart as priests; for his people are *all* alike priests to God, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter ii. 5.

3. No office, either in things sacred or civil, is appointed on account of duties which could not *at all* be performed until such appointment. Stated or fixed offices are appointed, not because the duties connected with them must be wholly omitted without such appointment, but because they, otherwise, could not be performed in the same perfect manner. If there were no teaching or oversight of a church, but the mutual teaching or oversight of the brethren in general, the church would not be so well taught or overseen, as when one, or more, duly qualified, are set apart, according to the appointment of God, to that office. Before the appointment of Deacons, the charitable funds of a church may be distributed; but not so well, or with so justly discriminating a hand, as when faithful men are appointed to the office; and when these are appointed, the duty devolves on them alone, and to that they direct their particular attention. The church therefore have the power, or divine

right, to do every thing necessary to its own edification, and increase in numbers and comfort, before they have particular persons appointed to the offices, best calculated to effect this. Consequently Believers have a divine right to observe all the ordinances of the gospel on, and from their first being associated together as a church of Christ; otherwise they cannot, as a body, evidence their professed subjection to Christ, in obeying his injunctions to observe all things he had commanded, without some special interposition of God, in preparing and fitting and appointing to the oversight of them, before they unite together in his name, certain persons to that particular station and office; a thing which he has not promised, and which they, therefore, have no reason to expect.

4. Why then should a church of Christ want the ordinance of the Lord's Supper till they obtain stated Pastors? The nature, design, and importance of the pastoral office does not require it; while the nature, design and importance of the Supper, show that the observance of it is at all times in their power when they assemble together, either with or without pastors; and that no ordinance is more calculated to promote their spiritual improvement. The general direction given by Christ respecting its observance is "Do this in remembrance of me." What object more deserving a christian's constant remembrance than that the Lord of heaven and earth gave his body to be broken, and his blood to be shed for them? And who dares, with the fear of God before his eyes, declare that christians, however humble, however untalented, met together in his name, when he himself, according to his promise, is present with them, are not warranted to commemorate his dying love, because they have not a clergyman among them to *bless* the bread and wine? Where is the command for such limitation of this sacred institution? Or rather, Where is the command, or the example, of the observance of this ordinance being restricted to the presence, superintendance, and dispensation of an Elder, or an ordained leader of a church? None such can be found. "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye." Acts xiv. 19.

Jesus, by saying "Do this, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me, has intimated that it was to be observed often; and by promising, that where two or three are met in his name he will be in the midst of them, he gives assurance to his people, that a greater than the united sanctity and glory, both of the Jewish, and fancied Christian priesthood can produce, is present with them, sanctioning their proceeding and together with his Almighty father, holding fellowship with them in the observance of the ordinance commemorative of his death.

When churches have Elders, and those Elders are present, they ought and will of course preside at this ordinance, as also at all their meetings. But since the regular and stated observance of all the social ordinances is enjoined upon the churches, without limitation of their having Pastors or Elders, are not they who insist on the presence of an Elder being necessary to give th. ordinance validity, assuming the great responsibility of

not only *adding* to the word of God, but also of "making the commandments of God of none effect by their tradition?" Restricting what God has not restricted, and teaching to neglect a positive institution, except as subject to that restriction, is in reality adding to the word of God. "Add not thou to his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Prov. xxx. 6. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, *that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God.*" Deut. iv. 2. Men never can add to the word of God, without, by that means, being led to neglect, or set aside some positive command of God. So the Saviour says, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition," Mark vii. 1-13. As the concluding book of the Law, contains a solemn prohibition from adding to or diminishing from it, and the prophetic revelation was closed in a similar manner; so the *whole* Revelation of God to men is closed with the following awfully solemn words, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen. Rev. xxii. 18-20

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## THE CIRCULAR OF THE NORTH DISTRICT ASSOCIATION,

*Which met on the 23d. of July, 1832, in Montgomery Co. Ky.*

THIS Association reported 1392 members, and agreed at their last meeting to divest themselves of every attribute of an ecclesiastical tribunal or authoritative council.

The Circular which appears in their Minutes is written with so much moderation, christian temper, and good sense, and contains so much that exhibits a practical regard to the Bible, that we judge it worthy of a careful perusal by all; though we, or they might not coincide in every sentiment it expresses.

### CIRCULAR LETTER.

*Dear Fellow Christians,*

IN meeting your expectations in hearing from us, through the medium of a general address, we are glad to embrace this opportunity of presenting you with some matters that have fallen under our observation since the last meeting of the North District Association of Baptists. Whilst we would earnestly urge upon our brethren love and good works, and for them to keep all the ordinances of the Lord's house blameless, we are sorry to have to address you under circumstances not as propitious as we could wish: for although harmony and christian affection ge-

nerally prevail in the churches composing our own body, yet we are surrounded by scenes of discord that mar the happiness and interrupt the free intercourse of christian enjoyment. We have not only the united opposition of all the various sects, but are even opposed by brethren of the same hope; and we are assured that nothing can save us from the desolations of this fell destroying tempest of clerical opposition and domination but the rich panoply of that gospel which is "the power and wisdom of God." Whilst we regulate our lives by a conformity to the word of God, the shafts of opposition will fall harmless at our feet. We have concluded it best, dear brethren, to notice the principal objections urged against us by some of our brethren, who have withdrawn their fellowship from us, and which will form, in part, the subject of this address. And here we beg leave to remark, that let those brethren say what they will concerning us, let us never speak evil of them—never return railing for railing, or reproaches for reproaches—it is unbecoming our characters as christians so to do; for, let them act towards us or speak of us as they may, their improprieties should rather draw forth our christian sympathies and prayers, and can never furnish us with a justification for violating that law of Christ which forbids our speaking evil of any man. To err is human, and we have no doubt but we have many errors to ask forgiveness for; and, whilst that is the case, we should always cultivate a forgiving, kind, and charitable temper, seeing that the scripture saith, that "if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And whilst we are fully aware that perfection belongs not to any man, or an entire exemption from error to any body of people, we should ever be ready to accord to others that indulgence for their weakness and their improprieties which we ask for ourselves. At the same time we would remark, that to persist in error, if that error, can be manifested from the word of God, we utterly disclaim as forming any part of our character. The first item of objections to which we shall call your attention as presented by our brethren of the opposition, is—

1. We are charged with denying "the special operation of the Spirit in quickening the dead sinner."

In answer to this, we in the first place remark, that the expression "special operation of the Spirit" is no where to be found in the Bible, and in teaching the christian religion in reference to man's receiving the Holy Spirit, we prefer the using of Bible terms to those terms invented by men, because the Apostles would not speak the things of God in words taught by human wisdom, but in "words taught by the Holy Spirit." 1 Cor. ii. 13. We do not believe, neither have we ever taught, that men could be christians without receiving the Holy Spirit; but the difference between us and our opposing brethren, is this:—We teach *that the Spirit is received through faith*, whilst we understand them to teach *that its first reception and operation is in unbelief*. We know of no promise of the Holy Spirit to any person, in the Bible, whilst in unbelief; but, on the contrary, the Apostle Paul expressly teaches that "*without faith it is*

impossible to please God;" and the Saviour says, (John xiv. 17.) "that the Comforter, or Holy Spirit that *he* would send, "the world *cannot* receive." Our opposers say it *can*—Jesus says it *cannot*. Our opponents say that the sinner must be regenerated by the Spirit before he believes. Paul says, (Gal. iii. 14.) "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," and not in unbelief. The Saviour says, (John vii. 38–39.) "He that believeth" [not one that does not believe] "as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that *believe* on him" [not those who do not believe] "*should* receive," [not, had received before they believed.] Again, Paul, (Eph. i. 13.) "In whom ye also trusted, after" [not before] "that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, *after* that ye believed," [not before] "ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise," &c. Again, (Gal. iv. 6.) "Because ye *are* sons" [that is believers Gal. iii. 26] "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." And Peter, on the day of Pentecost, says, (Acts ii. 38.) "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall" [not, that ye had already received, but ye shall] receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." From the foregoing it is evident that neither the miraculous nor common gifts of the Holy Spirit were *ever promised* to men in unbelief. Now, brethren, we know that if any man has not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his; and we do teach men that they must believe and obey the gospel, in order to the reception and enjoyment of the Holy Spirit.

The 2d objection is, "that we teach that the *mere* act of baptism or immersion *alone* can wash away sins; or, in other words, that mere baptism *alone* constitutes regeneration."

In answer to this we say, we do not believe, neither do we teach that immersion *alone* can wash away sins, or that it is regeneration. But we do believe and teach that "he that believeth" [not one that *does not* believe or *cannot* believe] "and is immersed, shall be saved." Mark xvi. 16. And we do teach that Peter (Acts ii. 38.) did tell the believing Jews or those who gladly received the word, to "repent and be immersed for the *remission* of sins;" and that Ananias, by the *immediate direction* of the Lord, did say unto Saul, (not that his sins were washed away, but) "Arise, and be *immersed and wash away thy sins*, calling upon the name of the Lord." That the Eunuch, and the Jailor with his household, *heard the word, believed it, were immersed, and then did rejoice* in the Lord, &c. &c. &c. And as the Apostles did thus teach, so we believe and so we teach—and those things which God has joined together *we will not* put asunder.

The 3d objection is, that we receive and administer baptism upon "a bare historical faith;" or that we will baptize any person who merely *says* he believes that Jesus is the Christ.

As to the term "historical faith," it being an invention of men, of



which the Bible knows nothing, we consequently have nothing to do with it; but we do teach that for a man to believe with all his heart, through the teaching or word of the Apostles according to John xvii. 20, and xx. 30-31, and confess it with the mouth, that no man can forbid water; for proof of which we refer to Acts viii. 37. And we know we are right when we do as the primitive christians did in the Apostles' day, by the Apostles' directions.

The 4th and last objection which we shall notice for the present, is, that we deny "heart-felt religion, or christian experience."

This we do humbly conceive has arisen from a misapplication of terms. We cannot say how a man can have the experience of a *christian* until he is one—all the workings of his mind before he becomes a christian, we could only call faith and repentance, and not christian experience; therefore, whatever an individual may feel or experience either in mind or body, of either despondency, or hope and joy, before he becomes a christian, we humbly conceive it would be a great prostitution of language to call "*christian experience*." We therefore do not call it such; yet we believe that every christian has felt these sensations more or less vivid: but we cannot call or recognize (neither do they) any man or woman as a christian until they have, by a confession with the mouth of their faith, and by immersion, become one: They may have felt all the dark and desponding sensations, commonly talked about, and all those happy and joyous feelings, and yet, unless they *obey* the Lord Jesus Christ, we cannot call them christians or invite them to the Lord's table—neither do or will any of our opposers. Whilst we admit, then that those feelings and sensations are experienced by every person, more or less, before they are baptized, we cannot, nevertheless, agree to call it "*a christian experience*;" for the individual has not as yet put on Christ. We believe that it is by faith and obedience an individual has the promise of the Spirit, and that they do feel and rejoice in the promises of God; and we do set at naught all Babylonish terms and phrases, not found in the word of God, and all traditions, and all commandments, and doctrines of men, and urge all to disregard every thing, as matters of faith or practice, not found in the word of God. We, therefore, profess to be followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of no mortal man; and our enemies, who, by way of opprobrium, call us followers of any man, do (while we are following in the footsteps of Christ) insult the King of Saints, by robbing God of his own glory and giving it to man.

You have no doubt heard much about us and against us on the subject of reformation, by all sorts of people, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, &c. &c. and you have no doubt had it rung in your ears again and again, that we wanted to *reform religion*. Now to set this matter in a light so clear that we need not be misunderstood by any person in future, we here say that this is a mistake or a misrepresentation. We want no reformation of religion. By religion, we mean that *divine system of faith*

*and worship delivered to us by Christ and his Apostles*, a reformation of which no man in his senses can or ought to desire; but a reformation of our lives, as the professed children of God, we do desire; nay, we do most earnestly exhort, admonish, entreat, and persuade men to live as the gospel tells them to live, and not to be running about after the vain and foolish things of men's invention. Brethren, ye know how that the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ was established by him and his Apostles in the world, near 1900 years ago: this fact ought to prove to us that the many opposite systems of religions which are now upon the face of the earth were never authorized by Jesus Christ; and ought not man to be taught to obey God rather than man—to reform their lives and obey God's commandments, not man's? Should not this be urged upon all.

Take, for example, the Methodist system. The contradistinguishing traits by which this system is known from all others, were invented in the year 1729, only 102 years ago, by Mr. John Wesley. Would any man in his senses call this the christian religion? If he did, then the christian religion is only 102 years old. Again, the characteristics of the Presbyterian system were invented by Mr. John Knox of Scotland, in the time of Mary, Queen of Scots, and Elizabeth, Queen of England, in the year 1561—2, and perfected in its present form in 1643, when the Westminster Divines made them a Confession of Faith. Again the Episcopal Church of England was established, not by King Jesus or his apostles, but by an act of the British Parliament, passed the 3d of November, 1534, under Henry VIII. styled by Pope Leo X. "Defender of the Faith," and afterwards perfected in the reign of Edward VI. in the year 1547, though her liturgy has since been frequently revised. Without noticing the little ones, this is the origin of these powerful sects of religionists, the oldest of which is only 297 years old; and should not men be told to reform from these and turn to the religion of Jesus? And where, pray, can we find that divine system of faith and worship instituted by Jesus Christ, but in his word—the New Testament? the religion of which was established 1800 years ago, by signs and wonders and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, God bearing also joint witness. It is to that we go; for no Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Methodist can say that his system was established by such signs, wonders, miracles, &c. Then men should quit them and let them alone. But some of our Baptist brethren say, 'Why do you not teach them the doctrine of our confession of faith?' Why, brethren, the reason is, from the days of the Apostles we never had any other confession of faith but the New Testament, down to the year 1639, and then it was with great difficulty that our brethren could be persuaded to make one. It was upwards of 40 years after the Westminster Divines had made theirs, before the Baptists could be persuaded to have any thing to do with any but the New Testament—and then but seven churches agreed to that. This took place in the city of London, only 142 years ago; and the Philadelphia Confession was made on the

25th September, 1742, only 89 years ago; and if we were to stop at their dates we should greatly fall short of the date of the christian religion. Now we know that all these things may be reformed but after they are reformed, what are they? At best it only can be said that it is reformed Methodism, reformed Presbyterianism, reformed Episcopacy, &c. These are all matters of men's invention, and may be reformed, altered, changed, modified, or abolished, (as they all will be,) and yet the christian religion remain unscathed—untouched by their destruction. The world was once without all these systems, and will be so again; but the christian religion, which existed 1500 years before the oldest of them, is destined to live forever; and we are bold to affirm that it NEVER can be reformed; but our lives may be: and we do most earnestly desire all men to shape their conduct—their lives by the word of God, and not by the word of man. Is this heresy? If it is, then we are heretics. Now we contend for neither more or less than this—that God's word should be regarded in all cases, and at all times, and under all circumstances, without glossing or wresting it for any purpose. And now we will tell you why you should also be in favour of such a reformation too. You know [and if you do not, if you will read your book you will know] how that the ten tribes of Israel, after being rent from the house of David 254 years, were, by Shalmanezzer, king of Assyriā, carried away captive, 722 years before the birth of our Saviour, and have not been correctly heard of since. One hundred and sixteen years after, the remaining two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, were also carried off captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezer, where they remained 70 years. You know also that Malachi foretold the coming of a great and terrible day of the Lord; but that before it came he would send them Elijah the prophet, who should turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers. lest he smite the earth with a curse. Accordingly John the Baptist (the Elijah) came; and what did he do? He came preaching in the wilderness of Judea the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins—that men should bring forth fruits meet for repentance. He came proclaiming a reformation of life. As a nation the Jews did not reform, and the consequence was, the entire destruction of their temple and nation by Titus the Roman General, on the 10th day of August, in the year 70. Now what do you suppose were the causes of these tremendous displays of God's indignation? By reference to the word of God, it was, first, a neglect, on the part of the Jews, in attending to the law of Moses. Secondly, by doing or substituting other matters in lieu of the law of Moses. Thirdly, by regarding their traditions or customs (as some of our brethren are now doing) as of equal weight and dignity with the law of God. By examining you will find these things are so; for the Saviour you know, charged boldly upon the Jewish rulers and teachers the arrogance of sitting in Moses' seat, (that is, making laws like Moses,) of teaching doctrines and commandments of men—of setting aside the law of God by their traditions. And what, let us ask, are all these contradictory con-

fessions of faith, disciplines, rules or formulas, but doctrines and commandments of men? Did Jesus ever command them to be made? Had he wanted any beside the New Testament, would he not, think you, made them himself? He certainly would. If God, then, punished the Jews in the tremendous manner here spoken of, for their neglect of the law of Moses, and for their substituting their traditions in room of it, how can we expect to escape a punishment of which the foregoing judgments are but types, if we neglect to hear his *Son* in whom he is well pleased, or substitute in lieu of, or in addition to his commandments, as they are laid down in the book, any of our traditions, rules, or formulas.

Peter, on the mount of transfiguration, proposed to build three tabernacles—one for Christ, one for Moses, and one for Elias. But what said the voice from heaven? “This is my beloved Son: hear him.” To which we respond, Amen! We say, hear the Lord Jesus in all things, regardless of what men have said, or what they may say; and as he never told his Apostles to hear any man, so we teach no man to hear either Wesley, or Knox, or Calvin, or Luther, or Gill, or Arminius, or other men; for if we did, it would be teaching doctrines and commandments of men. A greater sin no man can hardly commit, the word of God being Judge. John says, “Blessed are they that do his commandments,” not these men’s commandments just named above, but Christ’s commandments, “that they may have right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city.” Brethren, keep yourselves unspotted from the world—live a christian life—adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour—neglect not the assembling of yourselves together, as the custom of some is, but be steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. If reproaches and revilings be ours, let us go forth unto Jesus, without the camp, bearing his reproach: for here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come. By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good and communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Brethren, pray for us, for we trust we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly. And now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep; through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

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## UNIVERSALISM.

THERE is a great deal said in this age upon the universal restoration of all demons and wicked men to the eternal happiness of saints and angels. It is true that the demons are yet in purgatory, and that those that die in their sins are to go through a purgatorial punishment proportioned to the number and magnitude of their sins, at the allowance of— years for each transgression according to some systems: and according to others on the ratio of—hundred of years. Satan and his colleagues have been out of the presence of God now for 6000 years, and how far they have got through this purgatorial punishment is not yet settled. Some, indeed, speak with as much certainty upon this subject as if they had just finished and gone through this purgatorial chastisement, and visited our world fraught with intelligence from *Hades*. They have discovered that all the caveats and threats in the New Testament are like the bug-bears, and stories of ghosts and witches, which nurses tell to their peevish children when they would scare them to sleep. They tell lies; but it is with a good intention. They know there are no ghosts nor witches to disturb the children; but it would not be safe to tell them so. It is necessary to lie. Just so, when the apostles and the Saviour spoke of everlasting punishment, and of everlasting destruction, they knew there was no such thing: but they found that men could not be governed or managed without those bug-bears, and were under the necessity of doing as the nurses aforesaid. They were under the necessity of telling lies from a good intention. They used such words and phrases in representing the duration of the punishment of the wicked, as they did in representing the continuance of the happiness of the righteous; yet they knew that the one was to terminate some fifty thousand years hence, while the other would never end. I have sometimes thought that it was exceedingly ungrateful in those knowing ones to disclose the secret. For if God was so kind to them as to afford them a *special revelation* for their own comfort, while he evidently holds out tremendous prospects to the wicked, *in terrorem*, it is unkind on their part, to blab out the secret, and thus divest the governor of the world, of the most puissant means of keeping it safe for the righteous to live in it. They seem to act the part of an intruder into the family of a matron who was succeeding pretty well in managing her restive children, by the terrors of ghosts and wizards, but the intruder tells them their mother is deceiving them; and thus the little pests scream out afresh, and bid defiance to all the ghosts and demons in the nation.—I say there is such a similarity in the cases, that we cannot avoid associating them in our mind, and we think it not unreasonable to inscribe them on paper.

But, to change my voice, I would earnestly request those preachers of universal deliverance from hell, to stop and think how far the drift and scope of their efforts correspond with the obvious drift and scope of the preachings found in the New Testament. It must be

admitted that the Bible always holds out something terrible to the wicked, to them who disbelieve and disobey Jesus the King, at his coming to judge the world. This I say, must be, and, I believe, is, admitted, even by all Universalists. Now, if it be admitted, as it must be, and as it most generally is, that the wicked shall be cast off from the presence of God and his holy angels, into inconceivable and inexpressible anguish and misery, in the judgment; it is all idle to talk and contend about the termination of it. There is neither days, weeks, nor months, in that state. There is no standard conceivable nor revealed by which the length or continuance of their punishment can be measured. If they are damned or condemned at all; it is in vain, on rational principles, to attempt to date it in a world where there is no calendar; and we are very sure that all the Universalists on earth cannot produce one sentence in all the revelation of God that says any thing about the termination of the punishment of the wicked. *The Bible often tells us of its commencement; but not once of its end.* It is wise for us not to live upon conjectures, nor to build systems upon dreams and visions, which may cover us and our children in the ruins, and one day cause us to exclaim—It would have been better for us we had never been born.—I am content to be assured that whosoever hears the gospel and believes it *shall be saved* and that whosoever hears it and disbelieves it *shall be damned*.—I know no gospel in proclaiming *to sinners on earth* that after they are damned in judgment, they may, by a long series of awful punishment, be brought to repentance, and be delivered from hell. This I am sure is no gospel in this world, and what it might be if announced in Hades or Gehenna, or by whom it could be preached there, I will not, I dare not, conjecture—But of one thing we are assured, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; and an awful experiment to attempt to relax or weaken the glorious and tremendous sanctions of the gospel of his grace.

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### CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE.

CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE is taught in Col. iii. 13. Matt. xviii. 22. Luke xvii. 3, 4,—here we find no limit to this forbearance, unless we forget the unlimited and unmerited mercy of the Lord, by which we live. This which accords so blessedly with every feature of the gospel, differs from what is often falsely so called; a forbearance which satisfies christians to walk together, though wilfully disobedient to the precepts of the Lord.—What is it, but a tolerance of continued and systematic disobedience to the word of the Lord? Christians may be often called upon to make due allowance, to exercise forbearance with one another, in regard to their differences, in natural temper, capacity, or the like; not to forbear with the *wilful* commission of what Christ forbids, or the omission of what he requires—as this would be suffer-

ing sin upon a brother—"Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour and not suffer sin upon him."

The subject of forbearance is sometimes still more grossly misapplied, where in strict propriety it does not at all apply to the subject in relation to which it is used. No man can be said to forbear with another except in such cases as he has done him an injury. Now when christians differ in opinion upon any subject, unless it can be made appear that the opinion of A is injurious to B, the latter cannot forbear with the former. There is no room or occasion for forbearance; for B is not injured by the opinion of A. To say therefore that christians must exercise forbearance with one another because of difference of opinion, is admitting that they have a right to consider themselves injured, or that one christian has a right to consider himself injured because another differs in opinion from him. It is precisely the same mistake which is committed by those who ask the civil authorities to *tolerate* all or any religious opinions. The mere asking for *toleration* recognizes a right which no civil government possesses, and establishes a principle of calamitous consequences, viz. that opinions contrary to the majority, or the national creed, are a public injury, which it is in the power of government to punish or tolerate, according to their intelligence and forbearance. Civil rulers have no right to tolerate nor punish men on account of their opinions in matters of religion. Neither have christians a right to condemn their brethren for differences of opinion, nor even to talk of forbearing with one another in matters of opinion. The scriptures speak of the forbearance of God, and teach that christians in certain cases should forbear with one another in cases of injury sustained; but never, that I can see, on account of matters of opinion. A person might as well be said to forbear with his natural brother because he was only ten years old, or five feet high, or because he had grey eyes; as to forbear with his christian brother because he differed from him in some opinions.

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#### QUESTIONS ON OPINIONS.

Q. 1. Are men never to be called to an account for their opinions?

A. No. There is no instance of this kind in the Jewish or Christian scriptures—God alone is judge of thoughts and private opinions.

Q. 2. But if private opinions are expressed, are they not to become matters of discipline?

A. By no means, unless a person express them for the sake of compelling others to receive them, or to exclude them from their fellowship if they do not receive them. In that case he is answerable, not for his opinions, but his *practices*. He is a factionist, is seeking his own honor, making a party, and on these accounts sins against the christian constitution; and such a person, after a second admonition, is to be rejected.

Q. 3. Are not opinions purely intellectual matters, and not to be regarded as moral principles?

A. They are purely intellectual matters; and ought to be so regarded; but when any person makes them principles of action, he places them upon the same footing with divine oracles, and demands as much for his *own reasonings* as for the express commandments of the Great King.

Q. 4. How do you distinguish between faith, opinion, and knowledge?

A. Faith is the belief of facts testified, or of testimony; knowledge is the assurance derived from actual and sensible perception, by the exercise of our own senses; and opinion is the view which the mind takes of all matters not certified to us by testimony, or our own experience. Thus Newton *knew* that bodies specifically lighter than water, would swim in it; he *believed* that King Henry VIII. seceded from the Roman Catholic institution; and he was of *opinion* that the planet Saturn was inhabited.

Q. 5. Does not the correctness of a person's opinions depend upon the amount of information which chance may have thrown in his way, or upon the strength and activity of his own mind, and consequently are not necessarily a part of his moral character?

B. As the man who opines that the earth was once a metallic ball, and he who regards it as having always been as flat as a plate, may be equally good citizens, so he that opines that free agency and rationality are the same thing, and he that opines that God in some mysterious way,

“ Binding nature fast in fate,  
Left free the human will,”

may be equally good citizens in the kingdom of Messiah.

## ADDRESS TO CHRISTIAN MOTHERS.

*Daughters of Zion,*

THE christian religion has elevated your sex to a very high degree. To it you are indebted for that amelioration of your circumstances, that mitigation of your present grievances, incurred by your having been first in the transgression, that important place you occupy in the christian affection and esteem of him to whom you were put in subjection. Although some of your sex, in the history of the Old Testament, shine with distinguished lustre; yet it is in the New Testament alone where you appear to the highest advantage. Never, we presume, was Gabriel despatched upon a more honourable or a more acceptable errand than when he visited the cottage of her that was espoused to the son of Jacob; than when he addressed the humble and virtuous virgin in these transporting words, “ Hail! favourite of Heaven! The Lord is with thee! Blessed art thou among women!”

The first miracle of the “ child born, the Son given,” was wrought in honour of the mother that nursed him, and in honour of the first commandment with promise. His mother, at the famous marriage of Cana



of Galilee, with all the deep solicitude of one concerned in every circumstance that concerned the reputation of the family with which she was in the intimacies of friendship, was prompted to appeal to her son, saying "they have no wine." He shows it to be an occurrence which was of no concern to him, abstractly considered; but in honor of his mother, who commanded obedience to his will, the water when presented—yes,

"The modest water, aw'd with power divine,  
Beheld its God, and blushed into wine."

This was the beginning of his fame, the first exhibition of his glorious power. And the last expression of solicitude for the temporal welfare of one of our race, which dropped from his lips amidst the agonies of the cross, was prompted by the keenest sensibilities of humanity, by that grateful recollection of the care of a mother, which is never to be forgotten; by that profound respect which every wise man exhibits to the woman that watched and wept over his childhood; yes, his last concern was for the future welfare of his mother. He saith to John, his favorite disciple, casting his eye towards his mother, "Son, behold thy mother;" and to his mother, "Behold thy son."

Christian women, your praise and your fame, your zeal, your affection, and even your courage, shine with so much resplendence in the New Testament history, as to throw the most distinguished of our sex much, very much, into the shade. The fame of that Mary who sat at the feet of the Messiah, who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, transcends and will survive the fame of all the statesmen, warriors, monarchs, philosophers, and poets, that ever lived.

And let the christian heroes remember, that when the highest and noblest names on their list of eighteen centuries fled like cowards from the scene of danger, and in the hour of darkness and terror deserted their suffering chief, christian women kept their place, and stood spectators near the cross. Yes, to the eternal praise of female piety, let it be published in all lands that women were the last at the cross, and the first at the tomb of their great and mighty Saviour. And as a token of his remembrance and acknowledgment of their devotion, pious courage, and unabated affection, to them he first showed himself alive after his death, and alleviated their sorrows.

But as it is not our intention to make these illustrious incidents in your history a theme from which to deduce all the reflections which they naturally suggest, we proceed to our design.

Your usefulness to the church is not curtailed by the apostolic injunction which allots to you that silence and submission which comport with that modesty and diffidence which are now, and ever have been, the highest ornament of female character. You are to nurse and nourish every one that cometh into the world; and the God of your offspring has given to you an authority over the mind in its most pliant state, paramount to every other. The babe that smiles in your arms, and finds its support and its refuge in your bosom, receives its first impressions from you. It

recognizes a relation existing between you and it before it forms an idea of a father. It views you as its best friend, and most willingly submits to your control. Your countenance is the first volume it reads; and it is a volume which conveys to its apprehensions more ideas than perhaps any of us imagine. Its articulations are formed from yours, and your language is the first it can understand. You can converse with it, and communicate to its tender mind ideas which the greatest linguists and philosophers that ever lived could not. You, then, occupy a place which cannot be rivalled, and which, if discreetly managed, may, under the blessing of heaven, be of eternal importance to it. Do not be startled when I tell you that you are, by the law of nature, which is the law of God, as well as by his *written word*, ordained to be the only preachers of the gospel, properly so called, to your own offspring. You can tell them in language more intelligible to their apprehension, the wonders of creation; you can, from the lively oracles, teach them the history of our race; you can preach the gospel to them better than any Doctor of Divinity that ever lived. You can narrate to them the nativity and life, the words and deeds of Messiah; you can open to their minds how he died for our sins, and rose for our justification. You can tell them of his ascension to the skies, of his coronation in heaven, and that he will come to judge the world. When you have done all this, in a style which you can adopt, more easy of apprehension than any other—if Paul the apostle was again to visit the world and call at your house, he could not preach to them with greater effect. Nay, you would have anticipated all that he could say, and done all that he could do, to give the word effect. If he were to attempt to make known the glad tidings of great joy, to announce the good news to your children—when he had done, they might say “Kind and benevolent friend, this is no *news* to us; we rejoice to have heard it all from a preacher before,—a preacher too, whose love and benevolence were equal to yours, and whom we understood as clearly as we understand you.” If he were to ask who the preacher was, and by what authority he spoke, the children might reply, It was from a preacher which you, beloved friend, yourself *licensed*, it was our mother whom you commanded “to bring us up in the *nurture* and *admonition* of the Lord.”

These hints, my dear friends, go to show you what is expected from you, and what you ought to do. And surely you will agree with me that the word of God, thus communicated by the fireside, from your own lips, under the blessing of heaven, is just as efficacious as if pronounced from any pulpit or by any man. Remember Lois, Eunice, and Timothy, and Paul's commands to you. The giving of such an injunction to fathers and mothers implied that they were competent to perform them to the best advantage. Your example, and your prayers, your authority, and your well proved affection and sincerity in all that you say, are worth more than all the logic, mathematics, algebra, and rhetoric, which ever were collected in all the seminaries upon earth, to give efficacy to your sermons. How blissful the privilege, and how high the honours conferred on you.

Do then, christian matrons, from your love to your own offspring, and from your love to him that raised your sex to honours so illustrious, and from your hopes of immortality and eternal life in that world, where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels, being the children of God and of the resurrection, bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

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THE OLD MAN.

“WHEN I WAS a little child,” said a good man, “my mother used to bid me kneel beside her, and place her hand upon my head while she prayed. Ere I was old enough to know her worth, she died, and I was left too much to my own guidance. Like others, I was inclined to evil passions; but often felt myself checked, and, as it were, drawn back by a soft hand upon my head. When a young man, I travelled in foreign parts, and was exposed to many temptations. But when I would have yielded, that *same hand was upon my head*. I was saved. I seemed to feel its pressure as in the days of my happy fancy, and sometimes there came with it a voice, in my heart, a voice that must be obeyed, *Oh! do not do this, my son, nor sin against God.*”

WHY gaze ye on my hoary hair,  
Ye children, young and gay?  
Your locks, beneath the blast of care,  
Will bleach as white as they.

I had a mother once, like you,  
Who o'er my pillow hung,  
Kiss'd from my cheek the briny dew,  
And taught my faltering tongue.

She, when the nightly couch was spread,  
Would bow my infant knee,  
And place her hand upon my head,  
And kneeling, pray for me.

But then, there came a fearful day;  
I sought my mother's bed,  
Till harsh hands bore me thence away,  
And told me she was dead.

I pluck'd a fair white flow'r, and stole  
To lay it by her side,  
And thought strange sleep enchain'd her  
soul,  
For no fond voice reply'd.

That eve I knelt me down in wo,  
And said a lonely prayer;  
Yet still my temples seem'd to glow  
As if that hand were there.

Years fled—and left me childhood's joy,  
Gay sports and pastimes dear,  
I rose a wild and wayward boy,  
Who scorn'd the curb of fear;

Fierce passions shook me like a reed;  
Yet, ere at night I slept,  
That soft hand made my bosom bleed,  
And down I fell and wept.

Youth came—the props of virtue reel'd;  
But oft at day's decline  
A marble touch my brow congeal'd—  
Blest mother! was it thine!

In foreign lands I travel'd wide,  
My pulse was bounding high,  
Vice spreads her meshes at my side,  
And pleasure lur'd my eye;

Yet still that hand, so soft and cold,  
Maintain'd its mystic sway,  
As when amid my curls of gold  
With gentle force it lay.

And with it breath'd a voice of care,  
As from the lowly sod,  
“My son—my only son—beware!  
Nor sin against thy God!”

Ye think, perchance, that age hath stole,  
 My kindly warmth away,  
 And dimm'd the tablet of the soul;  
 Yet when with manly sway,

The brow the plume helmet display'd  
 That guides the warrior throng,  
 Or beauty's thrilling fingers stray'd  
 These manly locks among;

That hallow'd touch was ne'er forgot!  
 And now though Time hath set  
 His frosty seal upon my lot,  
 These temples feel it yet.

And if I e'er in heaven appear,  
 A mother's holy prayer,  
 A mother's hand, and gentle tear,  
 That pointed to a Saviour dear,  
 Have led the wanderer there.

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## HEALTH—TEMPERANCE.

### THE FOUR GREAT SOURCES OF HEALTH.

THE preservation of health, mainly depends on early rising, temperance in eating and drinking, exercise, and cleanliness. These important advantages are distributed between the rich and the poor in a tolerably fair proportion, which may account for the apparent equability in the length of life, between two states, so seemingly opposite, in respect of those advantages, which might be thought to conduce to the enjoyment of health and long life. The poor have early rising, which is of the very first consequence. From this, the rich often exclude themselves, because they have no obligation to compel them, and because they go to bed too late. The humble and scanty diet of the poor, which they so much deplore, is yet of advantage to their health; though it is true, as they work hard, they could often bear more substantial diet than they can generally procure. But the opposite state of the rich is much more prejudicial to health. Their luxurious living and comparative want of exercise, vitiates the blood, and humours, and lays the foundation of numerous complaints. From not being able to afford suppers, the poor enjoy sound rest, the want of which is so much complained of by the rich. But the poor injure themselves materially by the use of intoxicating drinks of an inferior quality, which are strictly poisonous, and which have not one useful redeeming quality, to justify their use. The rich use wines, and other rich drinks too frequently, and they eat more than is necessary or proper, and that generally of things so artificially prepared, that the simple or nutritious qualities are in a great degree lost.

Of exercise which is allowed by all as indispensable for the preservation of health, if the poor have sometimes more than enough; the rich who from their sumptuous living really require more, can scarcely be said to take any. This is a heavy draught on the sources of longevity.

But it is in cleanliness that the rich have inappreciable advantage over the poor. The word has too extensive a meaning to be considered under all its bearings, in this concise sketch; besides its usual signification, personal cleanliness, it embraces in the present view numerous comforts, domestic and personal, presenting important securities against injury to

the health. No one can doubt that personal cleanliness is of the greatest advantage to health, and is much neglected by some orders of society—but there are other serious disadvantages to which poverty, or want of means subject many—want of changes from wet or damp clothes, bad shoes—humid and crowded apartments.—These are some of the consequences of the privations of the poor, as to cleanliness and comfort, from which result coughs and many complaints, that would preclude them from old age, were it not for their early rising, simple diet and exercise.

“Cleanliness” says Volney, has a powerful influence on the health and preservation of the body.—Cleanliness as well in our garments as in our dwellings prevents the pernicious effects of dampness, of bad smells, and of contagious vapours.—Cleanliness keeps up a free perspiration, renews the air, refreshes the blood, and even animates and cultivates the mind. Hence we see that persons, attentive to the cleanliness of their persons and their habitations, are generally more healthy and less exposed to disease than those who are negligent of it: and it may moreover be remarked, that cleanliness brings with it, throughout every part of domestic discipline, habits of order and arrangement, and decency.

A temperate diet has always been attended with the best effects. A regular attention to this practice is the only infallible nostrum for the prevention of disease. It is sometimes essential for those who are under the necessity of having their minds always on the watch, to be extremely temperate; hence the gallant defender of Gibraltar, (Elliot Lord Heathfield,) lived for eight days during the siege, taking only four ounces of rice per day as solid food. Dr. Franklin, when a journeyman printer, lived for a fortnight on bread and water, at the rate of ten pounds of bread per week, and he found himself stout and hearty with this diet. A respectable magistrate has related of himself, that at the age of seventy he was free from every bodily complaint, and had never paid five shillings a year for medicine, which he attributed to his having restricted himself to fourteen ounces a day of solid food. And the number of indigent people who have lived to a great age, is a proof of the justness of Lord Bacon’s observation, that intemperance of some kind or other destroys the bulk of mankind; and that life may be sustained by a very scanty portion of nourishment. An eminent British army physician, (Dr. Jackson,) on this subject says,—“I have wandered a good deal about the world, and never followed any prescribed rule in any thing; my health has been tried in all ways; and by the aids of temperance and hard work I have worn out two armies, in two wars, and probably could wear out another before my period of old age arrives. I eat no animal food, drink no wine, or malt liquor, or spirits of any kind; I wear no flannel, and neither regard wind nor rain, heat nor cold where business is in the way.” Such is the protecting power of temperance.

WATER *versus* ARDENT SPIRITS.

If, says Hoffman, a celebrated German Physician, "there is in nature a remedy which deserves the name of universal, it is in my opinion pure water. It is the natural drink of plants and animals of every description, and is the only article which can fulfil those ends for which the introduction of a liquid into the human system is demanded. Its use is equally adapted to every age and temperament, to every season and climate. It facilitates digestion, and by its fluidity and mildness promotes that free and agreeable circulation of the blood and humour through all the vessels of the body, upon which the due performance of every animal function depends. Hence the physical strength, the capability of enduring labour and fatigue, the vigour and clearness of the intellectual powers of the individuals whose drink is confined entirely to water, far exceed those who substitute for the pure element, distilled or fermented liquors.

"Their equal days  
 Feel not th' alternate fits of feverish mirth,  
 And sick digestion,—  
 Blest with divine immunity from ails,  
 Long centuries they live; their only fate  
 Is ripe old age, and rather sleep than death"—

Errors in regard to drink, constitute one of the great causes of disease. It has been computed that since ardent spirits have been introduced into common use, more victims have fallen by it alone, than by the sword and pestilence within the same period. Ardent Spirits are supposed useful to preserve the system from the effects of cold and dampness. The very contrary is the fact. Though while under the immediate excitement of the intoxicating draught, one may seem to expose himself with impunity; yet when the stimulating effects of the liquor have passed away, his system is left in a condition far more subject to every deleterious influence, than if he had never used them.

Dr. Rush says, "I have known many instances of persons who have followed the most laborious employment; long exposed to the open air, who never drank any thing but water, and who enjoyed uninterrupted good health."—Dr. Mosely a celebrated physician who resided long in the West Indies confirms this. "I aver," says the Doctor, "from my own knowledge and custom, as well as from that of others, that those who drink nothing but water, or make it their principle drink, are but little affected by the climate, and can undergo the greatest fatigue without inconvenience, and are not liable to troublesome or dangerous diseases."

Ancient history also records the power of water as a preserver and restorator of health.

Pomponius Atticus, the friend of Cicero, while labouring under that uncomfortable state of mind produced by disease of the stomach, became disgusted with life and resolved to destroy himself. He consulted with

his friends upon the species of death he should make choice of. Agrippa, his son-in-law, not daring openly to oppose his resolution, persuaded him to destroy himself by famine—advising him however to make use of a little water, to alleviate the sufferings which would at first result from entire abstinence. Atticus commenced his regimen, philosophising with his friends and thus preparing for death. This however, did not occur; on the contrary, by restricting himself solely to water as his only nourishment, the pains of his stomach and bowels by which he had been previously tormented, ceased, and he speedily felt himself improved in health, and tranquil in mind. Being convinced that his disease, the cause of his distress, was removed, he renounced his design of putting a period to his existence, and lived to a very advanced age.

Sir Walter Scott reports of Bonaparte, that abstinence from food was his common remedy for occasional derangements of health.

The brother of General Herry, of revolutionary fame, was the oldest man in St. Johns' Colleton, and had seen the parish buried three times over. It was observed to him that he must have been blessed with an excellent constitution. He said, no, quite the reverse. Had his constitution been good he should have been dead long ago. He should have done as others did; but he was compelled to take care of his health, and live temperately, while others, presuming on the strength of their constitutions, put them to trials they could not endure. He had observed that the most robust from this cause were generally the first to die.

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#### WHAT WOULD BE THE RESULT OF UNIVERSAL ABSTINENCE FROM INTOXICATING LIQUORS ?

1. Not an individual would hereafter become a drunkard.
2. Many who are now drunkards would reform, and would be saved from the drunkard's grave.
3. As soon as those who would not reform should be dead, which would be in but a short time, not a drunkard would be found, and the whole land would be free.
4. More than three-fourths of the pauperism of the country might be prevented, and also more than three-fourths of the crime.
5. One of the grand causes of error in principle, and immorality in practice, and of all dissipation, vice, and wretchedness would be removed.
6. The number, frequency, and severity of diseases, would be greatly lessened, and the number and hoplessness of maniacs in our land be exceedingly diminished.
7. One of the greatest dangers of our children and youth, and of the principal causes of bodily, mental, and moral deterioration, would be removed.

8. Loss of property, in one generation to an amount greater than the present value of all the houses and lands in the country might be prevented.

9. One of the greatest dangers to our free institutions, and to the perpetuity of the blessings of civil and religious liberty, would be removed.

10. The efficacy of the Gospel, and all the means which God has appointed for the spiritual and eternal good of men would be exceedingly augmented, and the amount of moral and religious effort for the best good of man, and for the glory of God be vastly increased.

11. Multitudes of every generation, through all future ages, might be prevented from sinking into an untimely grave.

12. Nor is the interest of females in this subject so unimportant as many suppose. More than fifty thousand of the daughters of the last generation were doomed to the curse, and all the wretchedness of having drunken husbands; and of being obliged to train up their children under the blasting influence of drunken fathers. But let the means be furnished to extend the principle of abstinence from the use of intoxicating liquors throughout our country, and the daughters of the next generation, from this tremendous curse may be free. Their children and children's children to all future ages, will rise up and call their deliverers blessed.

## THE CHRISTIAN RUM SELLER IN HIS CLOSET:

OR, THE TRIUMPH OF CONSCIENCE.

A Christian once retired to pray,  
And kneeling low, was wont to say,  
"Our Father, still in heaven the same,  
And hallowed be thy glorious name."  
When conscience, with a load oppressed,  
Our humble suppliant thus address'd:  
"To day you've sold that rum for gain,  
That made your neighbour so profane,  
And now, may be, with poison'd breath,  
Still scattering arrows, fire and death."  
He next proceeds, though almost dumb,  
And whispers out "Thy kingdom come."  
But adding still to his surprise,  
The monitor within replies:  
"You still pursue your cursed craft,  
And vend the soul-destroying draught,  
That greatly checks his kingdom fair,  
And fills the regions of despair."  
He ventures on once more, and said,  
"Give us this day our daily bread."  
"What! while your premises retain,  
In pay for rum, the poor man's grain?  
Or in your drawer the price is laid,  
That should have bought his children  
bread?"

Thus conscience rous'd to do her part,  
Directs the arrow to his heart.  
At length by keen conviction stung,  
With heavy heart and faltering tongue,  
He cries, 'Forgive and grant salvation,  
Nor any longer will I lay  
Temptation in my neighbour's way;  
What is thus earned, when understood,  
Is certainly the price of blood.  
I'd rather dig, or beg, or serve;  
O where shall end the frightful tale,  
Convey'd by every flying mail,  
Of murder, misery and woe,  
That from the cursed traffic flow?  
I am resolv'd th' unrighteous gain  
Shall never more my coffers stain."  
Then in humility dispos'd  
To bless'd assurance, sweetly clos'd:—  
"The kingdom's thine, and will retain  
The glory, power, and praise, amen."  
Then calmly rising from his knees,  
His heart approv'd and all was peace.

MASON.

*Bristol, April 10, 1833.*



## HOW TO SECURE AN ELECTION.

*Fragment of a conversation between a Candidate and his christian Friend.*

Candidate. My dear sir, can you inform me how I may secure my election.

Friend. Yes sir; by diligence. You must give all diligence to make it sure.

C. That I have already done, sir; I have spared, I assure you, neither trouble nor expense. I have opened my house for entertainment; I have canvassed personally; I have employed agents to collect voters; I have set the printer to work on broadsides and handbills; and to let you into a secret, I have got a clever fellow from — to draw them up; one who is used to write for the newspaper, and can draw up an advertisement with spirit, and a little smart abuse of my antagonist.

F. Alas! sir, that a gentleman and a Christian, as you no doubt profess to be, should stoop to such arts, to influence and corrupt the minds of the people. I heartily wish you would bestow as much pains to secure your election for a better place!

C. A better place, sir! How do you mean! Is not this as respectable a borough as any in this part of the country.

F. True sir; but I refer to a city, and even an heavenly one. The true Christian, sir, is a 'citizen of no mean city.' My advice is, to 'give all diligence to make your election sure,' in the New Jerusalem.

C. O ho! I understand you now. But gentlemen of your sentiments, I believe, consider that business as already settled. Do you not, sir, consider your election already fixed and unalterable?

F. No more, sir, than the business in which you are engaged.

C. How so? I wish my election were as sure as you represent.

F. And do you think the event is known to God?

C. Certainly.

F. Then the event is sure to him.

C. No doubt of it.

F. And must infallibly correspond with his foreknowledge.

C. That it is certainly foreknown to the Supreme Being, I have no doubt; but that does not make it sure to me.

F. I admit that, and therefore your anxiety to make it sure to you. But why not employ the same diligence in a case of infinitely more importance?

C. O, sir, if I am to be saved, I shall be saved, and if not, you know I cannot help it.

F. And if you are to be elected for this borough, you will be elected; why then all this trouble and expense!

C. Ah, sir! if I do not use the means, I know that I shall not be chosen.

F. And what reason have you to suppose you shall be saved without means?

C. The subject we will defer, if you please to a 'more convenient season.' I must wait on my electors.

F. Alas! sir, so said Felix the Roman Governor, when Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come;" but that season never came; and I fear it will be so with you. The world will always find you an excuse for neglecting religion; and the enemy of souls will represent every thing as more important than the *one thing needful*. The Lord awaken you from the delusion.