

THE CHRISTIAN.

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CONDUCTED BY W. W. EATON.

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

THE DESIGN OF IMMERSION.

ALTHOUGH much has been said and written on this subject, many seem not to understand our true position. Some continue to insist that we are teaching that immersion by itself secures, to those who believe in it, pardon and the enjoyment of God; that faith and repentance are something to follow after; or, at all events, they are principles of little value. When asked why they come to such conclusions, they are either silent or refer to what some one has said—whose testimony cannot then be obtained. We once heard a very popular preacher—in his party—say “Mr. — says you should be baptized *first*, and repent afterwards; but the Scriptures teach that the sinner should first repent and believe the Gospel.” Now, this man knew that he was not telling the truth; but by thus taking advantage of the credulity of the people he led them all astray, and most effectually (for a long time) unfitted them from giving us a candid hearing. Others think that we are inculcating a species of Puseyism, because we urge the necessity of immersion in order to a scriptural evidence of regeneration. Whether to charge such detractors with a want of honesty or of common sense, we know not: any man ought to be able to discern the difference between Puseyism or Romanism and the Apostolic Gospel. The former teach that baptism alone—that infant baptism is regeneration; the latter that the Faith, Repentance, Reformation, the consecration of the affections to the Lord, the public confession of this before the world, and immersion, are all necessary in order to regeneration. Were only so much as this communicated to inquirers, by our opponents, the public mind would soon be disabused; but for those who misrepresent us a day of reckoning, we trust, is at hand—we mean in this world. We hope that those who are being led astray by self-styled Ambassadors of Christ will yet have their eyes fully opened to see who are their real friends, and who are advocating the truth. The only punishment by which we pray that those who are leading the people astray may be visited is, to have the real facts in the case held up before their deluded votaries and themselves at the same time, that they may be led to that repentance and reformation which will issue in a new life. May the Lord in mercy spare them until that day.

It may be possible that some of our readers do not fully understand all that we mean, when we urge the necessity of baptism in order to the full enjoyment of the present salvation. For the benefit of such we publish the following—

EXPERIENCE OF BIBLICUS:

My father was a Scotch Presbyterian, and my mother was a regular Baptist—I was religiously brought up, and being taught the system of doctrine laid down in the confession of faith, I became a speculative Calvinist. My mother's views of baptism appeared the most scriptural, and although I always helped my father, when he and mother, of a winter evening, had their good natured fire side debates, yet still I gradually leaned more and more to my mother's side in my real sentiments. I finally became as firmly convinced of Baptism as of Calvinism; and was a speculative calvinistic baptist, of the supralapsarian school. But as yet I had no real devotion, nor practical views of the gospel. I went to meeting, sat as a judge upon every preacher who came amongst us, and when sermon was over, I had a little crowd around me listening to my criticisms and censures. I was very severe, and valued myself no little upon my quick discernment in all the doctrines of the day. So acute was my religious scent, that I could almost tell a man's whole system before he had spoken half a dozen of sentences. During these days of my vain and foolish behaviour, a very practical calvinist preacher came to our congregation, and so engagedly addressed us on justification by faith, in the imputed righteousness of Christ, that I saw a fitness and beauty in this scheme which wonderfully charmed me; I became quite religious, prayed twice each day in secret, and attended meeting with views and designs quite different from those which formerly actuated me—I had heard much upon faith, and was very precise in my definitions and disquisitions upon true and saving faith. I at length fancied I had obtained it, and had serious thoughts of joining the church. Baptism came up to my consideration again, and I concluded I ought to be baptized, for I perceived it to be a very plain duty: and a very commendable way of making a profession. I had fixed the day for making my profession, and had given in my experience to a baptist church. I was approved by the whole congregation, but the intended administrator taking sick, it was put off for another month. In the mean time a Mr. J. S. came round, who was accused of not being very orthodox, for he preached a gospel which some of his friends called the ancient gospel; and his enemies the water gospel. I went to hear him without any other object than to gratify my curiosity, and to be able to oppose this new heresy. But to my utter astonishment, in one hour and twenty minutes, I was completely and entirely converted to this *ancient gospel*, or as some of the wits who cared for no gospel, called it, the *water gospel*. My whole views of God's character, philanthropy, and scheme of salvation, were as radically changed as if I had heard nothing worthy the name of gospel ever before. And strange as it may appear, I was immersed for the remission of my sins before I left the ground. I now saw for the first time in my life, that sinners were called to act upon the divine testimony alone—that they were not to wait for any change for the better to be discovered in themselves, nor any secret drawings, remark-

able or sensible impressions, before they obeyed the command "to be baptized for the remission of sins." This command I saw to be binding upon all who feel any interest in the question "what shall I do to obtain pardon and peace with God?" The blood of Jesus I well knew, was the only sacrifice for sin, and was the only thing in the universe which could take away sin from the conscience, and present us without fault to God: but I now found that by this gracious institution we came to the blood of Jesus, in God's own appointed way, and thus washed our robes and made them white, not red, in the blood of the Lamb. But my mind as the needle touched with the loadstone, always terminated upon the divine testimony and veracity, and the command, "to day if you will obey his voice, harden not your hearts," compelled me to take God upon his own word. I went to the river edge believing the promise of God, and that he could do this thing, even wash away my sins in the very act of immersion. Down into the water I went, and was immersed into the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of my sins—and you may rest assured, for it is a fact, that I declare to you, I felt myself as fully relieved from the burthen of my former transgressions, as ever did a man to whom the Lord said, your sins are forgiven you: go and sin no more.—I had read about peace and joy before. I had thought I once understood these terms, and felt something worthy of the name; but I can assure you that all I ever knew of the import of these words before, was as unlike to my present feelings, as a marble statue is to a living man. Most assuredly, said I, and felt I, God is as good as his word, and I have found his promise yes and amen in Christ Jesus my Lord. But in all probability I would not have derived so much happiness from being buried with Christ by immersion into his name, had I not previously understood from the many declarations found in the sacred testimonies, that God's philanthropy embraced all those who were pleased to come to him in his appointed way, and had I not also been assured of two things; first, that the scriptures mean just what they say, and secondly, that they say, Be immersed for the remission of your sins—I went down to the very water just for this very purpose, in the honesty and simplicity of my heart, believing that it would be as God said, and according to my faith so has it been to me. And one thing more I will tell you, that "whereas I was blind now I see."

With regard to the Holy Spirit, which is also promised, I will tell you what I have since that time experienced—and you will please inform me whether you think I have received that promise. While I thought about religion before, and determined to act some day, I felt a considerable attachment to the distinctions found in society, growing out of wealth and popularity. I was strongly disposed to have as good a share of these as I could honestly obtain. I felt moreover a good deal of that sort of spirit which presumes upon the electing love of God, and so soon as I began to think I was a christian, I saw in my secret devotions, as well as in my public exercises, a good degree of likeness to him who said, "I thank you, O Lord! that I am not like other men—I fast and pray," &c. But now I am content with my lot, thank the Lord for what I have, and pray to him that I may be a good steward of what he has committed to me already: I feel the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; and

therefore I hold every thing as a tenant at the will of his landlord. I find it is more blessed to give than to receive—I know none of those little sectarian feelings which I once felt—I rejoice in the Lord, and in his people, and feel that every thing that affects his honor and glory, affects mine. I feel the same sort of interest in my Saviour's Kingdom, I used to feel in my father's character and estate—whatever added to either, I thought added to my fortune and fame: and now I feel that whatever advances the interest and reputation of the kingdom of my sovereign, adds to my individual gain and honour—I feel myself his and him mine; and I would rather be the meanest soldier in his army, than the greatest potentate on earth—I do rejoice exceedingly in him all the day, and when I walk in the fields, or sit by the fire, my heart wanders after him; when travelling along the way, I sometimes speak out to him as if I were conversing with him; and the very idea that the eyes of the King of Kings are upon me, makes me bold in danger, and active in all the obedience of faith—I sometimes retire from the best company, to talk a few minutes to my Lord, and nothing is sweeter to my taste than is an interview with him who pardons my sins—takes me into his family, and promises to take me home to his own glorious abode by and by—I think no more about tenets and doctrines, but upon the love of God, the death of Jesus—his resurrection from the dead—his coming to judge the world, and the resurrection of the just. This is the spirit I have received and enjoyed since I put on the Lord. Now tell me is this the holy spirit promised?—*Christian Baptist.*

STUDY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

No. 9.

PREFATORY HINTS TO THE OTHER EPISTLES.

BY A. CAMPBELL.

HEBREWS.

THIS epistle, next to that to the Romans, has been considered difficult and abstruse. It is one unbroken chain of reasoning from the first sentence to the close of the eleventh chapter.

To find out the special design of this invaluable letter, it is necessary to note down a few facts gathered from itself.

1. It was addressed to believing Jews or Hebrews, irrespective of any particular place.

2. At the time it was written these Jews were the objects of *persecution* from the infidel or unbelieving Jews. This is evident from several hints in the letter, particularly chapter xii. 4, where the Apostle, after having in a previous part of the epistle reminded them of their former persecutions, tells them they had not yet resisted unto blood—striving against the sin which easily beset them. In the same chapter he exhorts them to patience under chastisement, and to follow Christ with cheerfulness and resignation.

3. The intention of these persecutions, on the part of those who inflicted them, was to cause the believing Jews to renounce the christian profession and return to Judaism. The Jews themselves being the persecutors, they could have no other object in view.

From these facts, the design of this letter is apparent. It was *designed* to prevent that apostacy from the christian faith which those persecutors had in view. The infidel Jews designed by their persecutions to cause their brethren, who believed in Jesus, to renounce their profession or confession of him as the Christ; and Paul designed by this letter to disappoint them. To understand this letter, it is necessary that this be always kept in mind. No person can be said fully to understand *what* is written in it, unless he know *why* it is written.

To be more particular in illustrating this point, it must be noticed that the infidel Jews attacked their brethren, who confessed Jesus, in two ways—first, by argument, and then by force. If they failed to convince them that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor, or that the Jews' religion was to be of perpetual standing, their next effort was to inflict upon them corporal sufferings for what was called *obstinacy*. To understand every branch of the argument of this epistle, it is therefore necessary that we should know what the infidel Jews had to say, by way of argument, in support of their views of the excellency and perpetuity of the Jews' religion; for Paul meets their objections or arguments in this letter.

His letter was first to demonstrate that their arguments were inconclusive and false; and, having done this, to show that the terrors with which they clothed themselves to induce to apostacy, were not worthy to be compared to the terrors of falling into the hands of the living God, should any be induced, through fear, to renounce the christian profession.

He thus opposes argument to argument, and terror to terror; and his arguments were just as far superior to theirs in weight and importance, as the terrors of the living God are to the terrors of men.

This is the grand key to the whole epistle. When, then, we know what arguments the Jews had to offer in support of their darling hypothesis, we understand *why* the Apostle says what he says, and we understand the true import of *what* he advances.

We shall, therefore, in the first place, glance at the topics from which the infidel Jews argued:—

1. That their constitution and laws were superior to the christian, was argued from the fact, that both were introduced by the ministry of heavenly messengers.

2. That their laws were faithfully represented by the writings of Moses, was argued from the fact, that Moses was a lawgiver of the utmost dignity and fidelity.

3. That their religious rites and instituted worship were most sacred, sublime, and unalterable, was argued from the divine call and consecration of Aaron to be High Priest.

4. That the covenant at Sinai embraced the Jews only as God's people; that it was established on the most excellent promises, and was to be everlasting.

5. That their temple and sacrifices were of divine appointment, and superior to any thing of the kind ever exhibited upon earth.

These items embrace all the capital points which were advanced in the controversy between the believing and unbelieving Jews. Now the Apostle Paul, well versed in all these questions, fully meets them, one

by one, and carries his cause triumphantly in every instance. Let us now, for example, take the first and observe how he manages it.

He admits the fact that the constitution and laws of Israel were introduced by heavenly messengers; but at the same time declares that the God who in times past spoke to the fathers of the nation, had in these last days spoken by a *Son*, of incomparable dignity—as far superior to the heavenly messengers as his name was superior to theirs. He, then, from their own prophets, shows that this *name son* had never been conferred on any creature, however exalted; but that the *name messenger* had been bestowed on the winds and lightnings. David being witness, they were stranded here. They could give no instance of such an humble appropriation of the term *son*, as he had given of the word *angel* or *messenger*. Again he argues, from the dignity of place bestowed on the *Son*, his incomparable superiority: “To which of the heavenly messengers did he say, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool?” They were silenced again. Nay, with all their dignity of *name* and *office*, they were the ministers or servants of this very Jesus, sent by him on errands to the humblest of his followers. Thus he carries the first point. After having shewn the superior dignity of the christian institution from the very fact on which the Jews gloried so much; (and especially from this consideration, that, dignified as the heavenly messengers were, God had not employed or entrusted them in introducing the christian institution, but had shewn in the contrast that the christian institution was just as far superior to the Jewish, as the dignity of God’s own *Son* was to the dignity of God’s mere servants, though of heavenly origin and standing)—the Apostle next delivers to the Hebrews that believed him, certain exhortations arising from his own conclusions in the first branch of the argument. Thus we see *why* the Apostle introduced those topics, and we understand *what* he said upon them.

In the same masterly manner he takes up Moses, Aaron, the tabernacle, covenant, sacrifices, and even their altars; and not only rebuts all conclusions, but gains many proofs of the superior and incomparable lustre and dignity of the christian system.

Moses, as a servant in another’s house; Christ as a son over his own house; Aaron, a high priest, made without an oath, by a law which expressed weaknesses and defects, and limited the times of service; Jesus, of the order of Melchisedec, made by an oath, since the Levitical order was introduced, and consecrated a priest forever, by virtue of the power of an endless life; the tabernacle but a shadow, and the sacrifices but a type of one real sacrifice, which puts an end to all sin offerings; a covenant established on better promises and of unalterable provisions; and an altar, to which those who officiated according to the law, had not access; and a rest in heaven, superior to that in Canaan, &c. &c. These are the points on which the Apostle argues, and by which he silences the infidel Jews, and from which he encourages, cheers and enlivens the persecuted christians.

On the *terrors* of apostacy he is equally triumphant. Confiscation, or loss of goods, imprisonment, bodily tortures, and a cruel death, were the strong arguments of the infidel Jews when their sophistry failed. But Paul is before them here as much as he is in argument. He lays before

the Jews the most tremendous instance of apostacy which their history afforded ;—the people who fell in the wilderness, to whom God swore that they should not enter in, because of unbelief. God had caused glad tidings of a rest in Canaan to be proclaimed to this people. They commenced their pilgrimage thitherward. They were immersed into Moses in the cloud and in the sea ; they eat the manna, and drank the water which prefigured Christ, and yet cast away their confidence in God's promise ; and although he had done so much for them, in his wrath he swore, that into Canaan they should not go.

Again he shows, that it is impossible to renew again by a reformation, those who apostatized from the christian profession, by any arguments which the religion had to offer : for if, after having heard them all, and partaken of them, they should, from cowardice, duty and renounce their confidence in the promises of God, when thus *fallen away*, there was no new topic which could be presented to take hold of their minds ;—that if they wilfully apostatized after they had received the knowledge of the christian faith, there was no sacrifice by which to expiate their guilt. In vain the Jewish sin offerings, in vain all oblations, if the sacrifice of Christ were renounced. The sin of apostacy was a sin, inducements to which were presented both to the hopes and fears of Christians. The virtue of constancy in the christian profession, of holding fast the begun confidence, unshaken to the end of life, was presented to the Hebrews with stronger, inexpressibly stronger appeals than the Judaizers had to offer. That God had no pleasure in them that apostatized ; that it was a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God ; that the God of Christians was a consuming fire ; that vengeance belongs to him—were the awful terrors by which the Apostle guarded these Christians against this sin.

He very pertinently concludes his arguments by laying before them a cloud of witnesses to the virtue of perseverance. He shews the reputation which the ancient worthies obtained, by holding fast their persuasion and confidence in the promises of God, and reminds the Hebrews of their sorrows and sufferings, of their conflicts and triumphs in this cause ; and concludes the whole argument with an appeal to the author and perfecter of the christian faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and who thus ascended to a throne. Lest they should faint in their minds amidst persecutions, he reminds them of him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself ; and tells them, that although they had suffered much, they had not suffered so much as others, who had resisted to blood rather than cast away their confidence, which had great recompense of reward. Such is the design and scope of the letter to the Hebrews. Neither it, nor the letter to the Romans, was written as a treatise of divinity, or as an abstract of the Christian system. They are both practical letters of instruction, and contain the most sublime views of God's benevolence towards sinners, and exhibit the strongest inducements to a willing and unreserved obedience.

HE who teaches religion without exemplifying it, loses the advantage of its best argument.

CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE.

A few remarks were made on this subject in a former number, in reply to "Senex." Since then we have learned that the querist is a very intelligent, and most excellent baptist brother. The motives that prompted the suggestions made by him were, we doubt not, the purest. Had we then known the state of things at which he was looking, when he made the communication, a very different reply would have been given. Not that it would have, in any thing, opposed the former article; but, from the study of the Word of God we have learned to answer all inquirers with reference to their circumstances.

John preached repentance to all; but his definite instructions, as to the manner in which they were to manifest its fruits varied, with their peculiar circumstances. In the same manner, the apostles replied to the interrogatories of anxious sinners. To the unbeliever, faith was proclaimed; to the believing, reformation and baptism; and to the penitent believer, "arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acting on this principle—having in our mind, one with whom (every week) we break the monumental loaf—and supposing that he might possibly be opposed to the manner in which he imagined we desired to see the congregation edified, our exposition of christian forbearance, though purely scriptural, had direct reference to that point; and so with the other queries. But now having learned that our Baptist brother had the "Evangelical Union" in his eye, or the degree of fellowship which should be extended to those who, notwithstanding their prayerful devout lives, refuse to obey the command of the Holy Spirit, "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," &c. the question is an important one. At present we cannot do it justice; but we will endeavour to state it fairly, and make a few preliminary statements, which we hope may suggest such a train of thought as will lead to favourable results: *Does christian forbearance require of those who take the Word of God alone as their rule of faith and duty, an avowal of christian fellowship for those who, so far as men can discern, live devout prayerful lives, although evidently PERVERTING and COUNTERFLITING or ENTIRELY NEGLECTING some of the positive ordinances of the Gospel?* There was a time when our old, uncompromising Baptists would, without hesitation, answer: "We bestow our christian fellowship on all who give evidence of being the Lord's people; but we can grant church fellowship only to those who have been immersed, and belong to churches of our faith and order." How far the "open communion" principle has extended, or what effect the "Evangelical Alliance" has had on the Baptist communities in general we are unable to determine. But the change must be very great, when dignitaries of the "Church of England" and the long persecuted and stigmatized "Anabaptist" can meet as the disciples of the same master, together with the whole phalanx of self styled evangelicals, and commune in every thing except, perhaps, the "Sacrament of the Lord's Supper."

We refer not to this matter from any feeling of jealousy because the Baptists have been so highly honored after all the dishonor that has been heaped upon them, and the persecution and suffering which they have

endured. By no means. But we have strong convictions that the cause of truth has suffered; for the union of the real disciples of Jesus Christ with the practical advocates of institutions sustained only by human tradition, cannot fail to prestrate completely the influence of the former. Those who favour those schemes of worldly policy will no doubt increase in popularity, and by world-loving professors be extolled as liberal, charitable christians: but the angels will weep, and the Bible loving, God fearing christian will mourn in secret over the desolations of Zion. "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you"—said the Saviour; and, "they who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," responds the great apostle to the Gentiles.

The true Church has never been popular. Worldly and governmental establishments have always been opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ. They have *opposed* those who have endeavoured to induce men to conform to the religion of the New Testament. They have treated them as heathen men and publicans, until they have been convinced that their power and influence are to be feared; and then they have sought their fellowship. There are generally, even in unpopular religious sects, those who, pleased with princely smiles, and the good opinion of the great, have gained so much influence as to induce the brotherhood to accept the proffered fellowship; and too late, they find themselves with a name to live, while as a people they are dead. The populars have "used up" the unpopulars, and like Pharaoh's lean cows, they are as gaunt and as hungry as ever.

Reader, call us "charitable" or "uncharitable," "bigoted," "exclusive," or whatever you please, but with the light that now dawns on our path, we must contend that christianity is *exclusive*. It not only demands the whole man—body, soul, and spirit; but its beauty, excellency, and efficiency suffers by every species of amalgamation. The religion of Jesus Christ, like the pure gold, is of the greatest beauty, and of the highest value unmixed. Every attempt to improve its appearance or to increase its value by varnish or alloy, only decreases its worth and renders its real value doubtful.

Christianity when unadorned by human trappings is adorned the most. By its own intrinsic value and power it will not only sustain itself, but will conquer all things when it is made to stand out in bold relief in the lives, words, and actions of its devotees. The truth as it is in Jesus would long since have convinced the world, had it shone out in the lives of its professors, as it did in the Jerusalem church, when all its members were of one heart and of one mind. But the world by its reflex light became partially moralized, and the church became in many things conformed to the world. The transition was easy: a union was formed; and pure christianity fled to the caves and fastnesses of the mountains. From those places they emerged when the storms of persecution had blown over, to conform to the world, until the faithful again raise the trumpet of reform. The same course is being taken now, even by many who call themselves reformers. The result is as certain as death.

But what has all this to do with the question under consideration? Much. What motive is held out to the real disciples of Jesus Christ to form a union with those, concerning whose discipleship there is at least

a strong doubt? Do you answer, to stop the progress of Romanism? And what is the main pillar of that temple? On this there are doubtless various opinions among the different protestant sects; but to those well acquainted with church history, and the New Testament, there can be but one answer given: "*Infant baptism.*" So soon as the moral power of the gospel compels protestants to acknowledge that church membership is an individual work, a personal thing, the act of a conscientious believer; and his standing in the church to be continued no longer than he conforms to the New Testament faith and practice, *then and not till then*, will the "man of sin" tremble in his chair. In vain will protestants curse the Pope, and form their "alliances" to stop his progress while they receive his "mark in their right hands and on their foreheads." Every one that understands the New Testament knows that neither the rantism or the baptism of infants is once alluded to in that precious volume, as a duty devolving on parent or child—on church or state! Indeed dignitaries of the Roman church have charged protestant doctors of divinity with filching from the church of Rome the practice of infant baptism, for which Rome did not pretend she had higher authority than the traditions of the church, and then boast that the "Bible, and the Bible alone is the religion of protestants." And what reply can be made? None, but a few far-fetched inferences; and who that understands the law of evidence would make a positive institution—an act that makes the subject or object of it a "member of Christ, a child of God, an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven"—depend on mere *inference*, without a one "thus saith the Lord" from Genesis or Revelations!! Such is the unenviable position of all that practice either infant rantism or baptism.

And is it to be a question long held in doubt, whether christian forbearance requires that those who adhere to the teachings of the New Testament should hold such in christian fellowship! Can we do them any good by extending to them that fellowship? We should esteem them as fellow citizens according to their real worth; we should manifest to them that charity which was so fully exemplified by the Apostles and first Christians towards Jews and Gentiles; teach them the way of the Lord more perfectly, and when they openly renounce this relic of heathenism and the traditions of the darkest age that ever spread its pall over "Christendom," embrace them as citizens of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. On their own principles—those who believe in the immersion of a penitent believer only—are required to withhold from them the hand of fellowship. They all contend that baptism came in the room of circumcision: they all acknowledge that no one was a legal member of the congregation of Israel until circumcised! How then can they expect that those who believe in one immersion, and that too of believers, can fraternize with them in the promotion of the cause of God, without virtually renouncing the "faith once delivered to the saints." The Baptists have shorn themselves of much of their former strength and power by their recent compromising course. They no doubt supposed they would advance the cause of God by their amalgamations. Indeed they should be commended for their consistency; for if men become the disciples of Christ—if they can obtain a scriptural assurance of par-

don without immersion, then with them are they bound to cooperate ; for if Christ has received them, no man can reject them without rejecting Jesus Christ ! But the idea was fast gaining ground among the Bible reading part of our communities that no man should be recognized as a disciple of Christ until he was "born of water and the Spirit ;" the Baptist Churches were growing rapidly ; their enemies began to pursue a different course towards them from what they once did. The time was when ministers of Pedobaptist Societies publicly charged their flocks not to go to Baptist meetings ; and none ventured but those who had not the fear of the clergyman before his eyes. But through the influence of the truth announced by some individuals—*it does not become us to say who*—infant baptism began to be a matter of such doubtful moment, that some of the most devout, and indeed some very prominent, members of the Wesleyan societies, up to the present time have neglected the sprinkling of their children ; and others who had been rantized in their infancy sought immersion of their own ministers, *and received it too*, although Dr. Clarke pronounced such a step "open profanity !" Just then when complete victory was ready to perch on the banners of the true Gospel—and would have done so had those who began to announce it held on their way, and increased in zeal and in devotion to the cause of truth and righteousness—some truths became too popular ; hundreds rushed to the standard, and enlisted before they became fully acquainted with the Captain of our salvation : these apparently conscious that they conformed no more to the teachings of Jesus and the holy twelve than their Pedobaptist neighbours, formed an alliance, and Baptists with Pedobaptists exchanged pulpits ; and each doubtless tried to please their auditories ! The result of all this is told in a few words : *Bible truth has ever since been on the retrograde ! !*

Now all this amalgamation—this compromising the truth, or what its aiders and abettors would call christian forbearance—has all been calculated to stop the progress of that investigation which was resulting in the emission of light. Many were turning to the Word of God as the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, to ascertain whether they were the characters to whom he had bequeathed the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading. Preachers, who had exhorted them to "repent and be baptized for the remission" at the water side, and recognizing the very same persons in every place but at the Lord's table, as having obtained pardon and the Holy Spirit, could not by this forbearance expect to impress their minds very forcibly with the importance of attending to their exhortations.

In conclusion we would say : it becomes the duty of every Bible Christian at all times to act consistently with his profession. With the truth in his heart and in his hand, he should prize it more than the smiles of popular parties—more even than his own judgment of expediency. Hold on to the truth, and announce it ; carry it fully out into practice, though we stand alone ; and then we will enjoy the approbation of a good conscience, the smiles of God, and the esteem of all God-fearing men.

"Should all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treach'rous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the Gospel to my heart "

W. W. E.

BAPTISM OF BELLS.

The *Quebec Chronicle* gives an account of an extraordinary event, which took place in that city some few weeks since, in the words following, to wit :

“The ceremony of the benediction of the new bells for St. Rochs Church, took place yesterday afternoon. Monseigneur de Sydeme officiated, and the Rev. Messire Baillargeon preached a sermon suitable to the occasion. The Church was crowded to excess, and many strangers of respectability were present. The bells, richly dressed up, were placed in the choir. The following are the names given to the bells : *First Bell*—‘Marie-Annie-Judith.’—Godfather, F. X. Paradis, Esq.; godmother, Mrs. Joseph Tourangean. *Second Bell*—‘Marie-Josephine-Delphine.’—Godfather, T. C. Lee, Esq.; godmother, Miss Bruneau, daughter of Judge Bruneau. *Third Bell*—‘Catharine-Caroline-Elizabeth.’—Godfather, Mr. Gaspard Garneau; godmother, Mrs. J. J. Nesbitt. After the ceremony the audience was permitted to ring the bells, and we learn the amount collected on the occasion is about £200, besides the dresses of the bells, which are adapted for church ornaments, and cost nearly £100.”

REMARKS.

Is it possible that such a farce as this was enacted in the far-famed and long renowned city of Quebec? This account has gone the round of the Provincial press, and not a word said on the grossness of such superstition! Can it be possible that we are living in the nineteenth century? And will a large audience, and “strangers of respectability,” convene to listen to such profanity as pronouncing over *bells* the sacred name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! and that too at an expense of \$1200! Within the hearing of those chimes how many poor wretches were not in possession of sufficient clothing to protect them from even the cold dews of summer, while the bells were dressed to the tune of four hundred dollars! But I suppose they would even desecrate the word of the Lord, by referring to Solomon’s temple or something else, to prove that it was scriptural to baptize bells!

Most of the sects have so much of the trappings of the old city that they dare not lift up their voices against such a gross desecration of what are usually termed the ordinances of religion. We know not, however, but that as much Bible and reason might be furnished to prove the propriety of ranting bells as unconscious babes! and the godfathers and godmothers of the bells can manifest as much parental solicitude in the one case as the other.

After the pious traditionist has had all his reasons (?) for infant baptism swept from him, he says, “Well, the bible does not say any thing *against* it!” And the Romanist can with just as much reason say, “the bible does not say that we must *not* baptize our bells, and have godfathers and godmothers for them.”

Indeed the consecration of Churches and burial places, with nearly all the show of popular worship, present to the world a wretched caricature of the forms of the Jewish and Christian Churches. It is astonishing that there is not more open infidelity than there is. Men who know nothing about religion, only as they learn it through such scenes, only wait for

some heartless demagogue, or revolution in the government, to become just such sceptics and atheists as disgraced humanity during the reign of terror in France.

W. W. E.

NEWS FROM THE "WEST."—PROGRESS OF THE CAUSE.

WE intended, when we recommenced *The Christian*, giving our readers a monthly synopsis of the influence of the re-proclamation of the Apostolic Gospel on the world and the sects. Long articles and the smallness of our sheet have generally excluded them. A hasty glance over the "Harbinger," "Reformer," "Journal and Union," and "Record," furnish the following pleasing intelligence. When we consider the general apathy and indifference of professors to the cause of truth and righteousness, and their general activity in the business of the world, to hear that there are some noble exceptions—that there are brethren who show by their devotion to truth, that they believe that there is a hell to shun and a heaven to gain—we are disposed to thank God and take courage. That these facts may produce a corresponding effect upon our readers is our earnest desire and ardent prayer.

J. B. Ferguson, of Nashville, Tenn.: "We have a gradual increase of the congregation in this city. *Three* were immersed last Lord's day."

J. B. New, of Fort Wayne, Indiana: "The truth is making its own impression in this place. We began here in November with *six* members; our present number *fifty*—*twenty five* by confession and immersion; *twenty two* had been immersed. Some from the Baptists; some from the Methodists; and some from other Churches. Our opponents used the same arguments that were common eighteen hundred years ago. They say we deny the influence of the Holy Spirit, change of heart, and the divinity of Christ: *all these charges are false*, and have been so proved a thousand times; but the truth is making a good impression."

S. W. Leonard: "There have been *six* or *eight* additions at Union, Clark Co., Indiana. Also *five* additions, one from the Methodists, and one from the Presbyterians, by immersion, at Olive Branch, Indiana."

J. B. New, Fort Wayne, Indiana (again): "I preached five days at Wabashtown, and we immersed *six* believers in the Lord. At Huntington we preached six days, and had *eight* additions, including the Baptist preacher's wife, and we expect him soon! Since my last I immersed a school teacher in this place, who had been an Episcopal preacher. He has begun to teach the Ancient Gospel."

Isaac Headly, Orange Co., Indiana, "There have been *four* additions made to the Church in this vicinity; two at Liberty, and two at Mount Pisgah."

John Wright, Senior, Greenville, Indiana: "At Bluff Spring *one* was immersed. At Harrison School house *three* confessed the name of Jesus, and were baptized. Three miles east of Pekin *three* others made the good confession. In Clark County *eight* additions—*six* by letter. At Westport, five miles from the Ohio river, there were *eight* additions—*six* by immersion. At New Washington *six* were immersed. Perhaps there has not been a meeting in the State that passed off with greater joy among the saints than this one did. After commending them to the

Lord on whom they had believed—'we all kneeled down and prayed' with them, and truly it was a time of prayer!"

P. H. Roberts writes from Springfield, Indiana: "The work of the Lord still looks up. At White Oak *two* made the good confession. At Richland *four* were immersed. *Two* were immersed at Bethel. *Two* at Harrodsburg. Brother Neville co-operated, and he informs me that *thirty five* had been added to the Lord on his tour, at different points."

U. H. Watkins writes from Bear Creek, Indiana, that "In a few weeks we have had *ten* additions to the cause of our Lord. At Brother Powell's, near Columbus, *four* immersions. At Brother Step's, Munroe County, *four*."

Wells Gilbert writes from Reddington, Indiana, that the congregation "at Ebenezer is in a prosperous condition"—the house not large enough to contain the people—"five additions, two by immersion."

The Editors of the *Christian Record*, Bloomington, Indiana: that "Brother Johnson M'Callough, of this place, has just returned from a visit to his friends at Crawfordsville, and informs us that a most glorious meeting was in progress in the Church of that place when he left. Some *fifty nine* persons had been buried with the Lord in baptism, and some seventy five in all added to the Church." *One* was immersed in Bloomington. One of the Editors reports the immersion of *two* in Union Town, Kentucky, "who had long understood their duty, and had often been urged to obey the Lord." At his last meeting there they came over to the "Lord's side."

J. A. Gano, of Kentucky, reports, from July 7th to 16th, the immersion of *nine* in the sphere of his labours.

C. B. Bohannon reports *two*.

W. S. Patterson: At two or three points *five* had been immersed.

G. Vaudemant, of Ohio, reports the immersion of *three*.

John T. Powell, of Ohio, reports *seven* additions—four of them by immersion.

George Compbell says, "We recently had a meeting at Milton, Ind., at which there were *seventeen* additions."

James Challen, Cincinnati, Ohio, "I returned a few days since from St. Louis, Missouri, at which place I had an interesting meeting: *twenty two* confessed the Lord, and some ten or twelve by recommendation united themselves to the congregation. I left the brethren greatly encouraged and refreshed. I also visited Jacksonville and Springfield, Ill., and spoke in both places. *Ten* confessed the Lord at the latter place."

P. T. Russell, editor of the (Mishawaka) *Investigator*, reports a meeting in La Porte County, at which *ten* were immersed. At Mount Pisgah, Marshal County, *ten*, and near Rochester *one* more. "Others in various directions we heard of at Buchanan. Brother Sargeant, of Tippecanoe County, writes that success was attending the proclamation by him. Brother Cook also, of Michigan, has recently had the joyful privilege of beholding his labours result in the salvation of souls. Indeed present appearances indicate an abundant harvest." Brother Russell adds that "the call for labor is urgent; some of the old soldiers, as well as myself, fear the necessity on account of ill health of quitting the field. May I ask is the Church praying that the Lord would send forth laborers

into the harvest ; and while she is thus praying, is she doing all she can as a co-worker with God in this matter ! Brethren, might not a more vigorous and systematic effort yet be made ?”

Benjamin Franklin, of the *Western Reformer*, reports the conversion of *four or five* more.

Brother John M'Donald, of Cornwallis, (N. S.), in a letter recently received by us, reports the immersion of *two* in Douglas and *one* in Cornwallis. May the Lord bless and prosper all his faithful children.

W. W. E.

RELIGIOUS MAXIMS—BY UPHAM.

XVI.

THERE are many persons who would willingly be christians, and eminent christians too, if christianity were limited to great occasions. For such occasions they call forth whatever pious and devotional resources they have, or seem to have, and not only place them in the best light, but inspire them for the time being, with the greatest possible efficiency. But on smaller occasions, in the every day occurrences and events of life, the religious principle is in a state of dormancy ; giving no signs of effective vitality and moment. The life of such persons is not like that of the sun—equable, constant, diffusive, and beneficent, though but attracting little notice ; but like the eruption and glaring blaze of volcanoes, which comes forth at remote periods, in company with great thunderings and shakings of the earth ; and yet the heart of the people is not made glad by it. Such religion is vain ; and its possessors know not what manner of spirit they are of.

XVII.

A strong faith has the power to make a virtual and present reality of those things which are in fact future. Be it so that we have not the thing itself in the literal sense of the term ;—that we have not heaven ; that we have not the visible presence of Christ ; that we have not those things, whatsoever they may be, which constitute the glory and blessedness of the future world. But it is certain that in the Bible we have the promise of them ; we have the title deeds, the bond, the mortgage, most solemnly made out and delivered to us. All these things are therefore ours, if we will fully believe in the promise ; and they can all be made, in the exercise of entire faith, a virtual and present reality. A man records his notes, bonds, and bills, which are the certificates and confirmations of absent possessions, as so much property, as actual money, although it is only virtually and by faith realized to be such. He counts himself as truly and really owning property in amount and kind, which the face of his papers, of his notes and bonds, represents. And yet he has nothing but his papers, and his faith in the individuals who have signed them. How much more, then, should we have faith in *our* title deeds, in *our* bonds and testaments, which are written in the blood of the Son of God, are confirmed by the oath of the Father, and are witnessed by the Holy Ghost ! And how much more should we, having such deeds and bonds, and such inimitable confirmations of them, count God ours, and Christ and the Holy Spirit ours, and eternal glory ours.

DEDICATION OF CHURCHES.—Soon after the "consecration" of a Church not many miles from this city, the Rector met a friend of ours, and after the usual unmeaning compliments of the age, the following dialogue took place:—

Rector. We had a glorious time at the consecration yesterday!

Friend. Ah! indeed! What did you do?

R. Why, sir, the collection amounted to *Forty Pounds!*

F. Was that all!!

R. Why, was not that a *large sum* for the occasion?

F. The first sermon that Peter preached, there were *three thousand souls converted.* But then, *he* preached for *souls* and *you* for *money!*

W. W. E.

THE CHRISTIAN.—VOLUME IV. FOR 1848.

By divine permission, and with the aid of our kind friends and patrons, we purpose issuing another volume. It is needless for us to say what we shall do, as we cannot tell what a day may bring forth.

The present volume is too small for the examination of any subject of great moment. Our readers have learned that we have no talent for writing short articles. It takes a Solomon to write maxims. There are several works on important subjects being circulated in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, that we purposed reviewing; but we were unwilling to write against the sentiments of any one without proffering him an equal space to defend himself. And this our little sheet would not permit without excluding all other matter. Many of our friends call for a larger sheet, and say they would just as willingly pay us a *whole* dollar as a *half* one. We have therefore concluded to double the number of pages. Our friends will see the necessity of making extra exertions to sustain the work; for there will be more than twice the expense with only double the income. Some of our personal friends last year subscribed for *eight* copies in order to give us a start, and a large proportion have paid for *two*. We could not solicit such liberality should we double the price. All our patrons then will, we hope, come up to the work promptly, and by the commencement of another year furnish all the means we need to issue another volume twice as large, and we hope conducted with more talent and energy, and consequently more useful.

We thank our friends for their patronage and kindness. They have uttered not one complaint. We have been too insignificant to attract the attention of the opposers of the ancient gospel! We have no complaints to utter; our circulation has been much greater than we expected, and our readers have borne with us patiently, and nearly all have promptly complied with our terms, so that we are encouraged to do all we can for their edification and salvation while they will give us a hearing.

Remember, then, the Volume for 1848, will contain 32 pages per month—type and page same size as the present; a good cover; table of contents, &c.—*Terms*, ONE DOLLAR, always in advance, or on the reception of the first number.

W. W. EATON.