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THE
WITNESS OF TRUTH.

Vol. V.

OSHAWA, APRIL, 1850.

No. 4.

MR. DAVIDSON'S FIRST LETTER REVIEWED.

BY A CORRESPONDENT.

Feb. 1850.

I wish at present to make a remark or two on the communication from Mr. Davidson, published in the January Number. From the fact that you considered it expedient to address a number of letters to Mr. D. I concluded he was as a man and a Christian worthy such efforts. I expected he would in calm manly dignity, and true Christian candour, examine your statements—"approve the things that are excellent" and "distinguish the things that differ"—in short I thought that if he found you seriously wrong he would as a humble worker in his Master's vineyard, show you a more excellent way.

But I am quite disappointed. I feel sorry indeed on his account that he has allowed such a production to be published. It is by no means calculated to raise him in the esteem of those who admire the meekness and lowliness of Christ Jesus—nor to produce the impression that he is a *humble* laborer in any vineyard. But let us look at it once more. I have read it again and again and conclude that it is designed to be—an apology for not reviewing your letters. As such let us consider it.

The apology embraces several items. 1st. The Baptists are held up in "an unfavorable and invidious light." 2nd. A reply would "lead to a controversy unpleasant to him in the extreme, and unprofitable to both." 3d. He is a man of peace. 4th. His time is fully "occupied with his duties to God, to the church, and to the world." First, the Baptists are held up in an unfavorable and invidious light. "Whatever *makes manifest* is light." To things unseemly and distorted, the most unfavorable light is daylight; the most favorable is twilight or even darkness. Hence the value of the common "mantle of charity"—it presents a fair outside and conceals all defects and deformities; and hence also some hate the light and avoid it.

On the other hand, an article that will bear inspection is placed in the broad light of the sun, to be seen in all its parts and admired in all its fair proportions. In this case, the least obscurity or darkness is

unfavorable. Whether the light of which Mr. D. complains is too strong or too weak, whether it *manifests* too much or too little, I must leave for him to say. One thing is clear—there is neither reason nor propriety in saying—you have placed the Baptists in an unfavorable light, therefore I will leave them there.

But certainly your letters were not mainly occupied with the Baptists, and hence Mr. D.'s first reason for his silence is the more remarkable. He says you hold up the Baptist denomination in an unfavorable light, therefore, says he, I have nothing to say to you—your “pious performance,” your “verbose productions” I regard with contempt.

Is such logic common in Markham ?

His first reason being so evidently *unreasonable*, let us examine his second—a reply would be unpleasant to him in the extreme and unprofitable to both.

Is it unpleasant to speak the truth in love ? If you have made any erroneous statement in reference to any great scriptural truth, is it unpleasant to Mr. D. to show in the “spirit of meekness” wherein you have erred ? For my part I cannot conceive how a good man can possibly esteem it unpleasant or unprofitable to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. So strange a notion of pleasure and profit that good man Paul did not by any means possess. Not only did he dispute daily for months and years with all sorts of infidels and opponents, but he labored incessantly in exposing the false doctrine that was introduced by the professed Disciples of Christ. In imitating the Lord Jesus Christ “who pleased not himself” he had occasionally to act in a way, which, to human nature, “would be unpleasant in the extreme ;” but he conferred not with flesh and blood in such cases.—Therefore, “when Peter” says he “was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.” His pleasure consisted in doing his duty, and this he knew was profitable to all concerned, Hence he taught Titus that a Bishop should “be able by sound speech both to exhort and convince the gainsayers,” “for,” says he, “there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers teaching things which they ought not, whose mouths must be stopped,” “wherefore rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith.” Titus might reply “True, father Paul. These men do indeed teach things which they ought not. But you are aware how difficult it is to stop men’s mouths, and were I to attempt to convince the gainsayers and to make them sound in the faith, it would certainly lead to a controversy un-

pleasant to me in the extreme, and unprofitable to both parties. I pray therefore have me excused." And Paul might in "godly sincerity," rejoin—"If this be your deliberate conclusion—if through fear of something unpleasant or unprofitable, you allow vain talkers and deceivers to go on unchecked, you are unfit for your office, and had better either correct your present views and feelings, or seek other employment more consonant therewith."

Leaving Titus to settle this matter with Paul, we will proceed to consider Mr. D's next reason for not reviewing your letters, which is,

Third, he is a man of peace. Men of God are always men of peace. But it is the peace of God they prize. They know there is no peace to the wicked, and buckling on the sword of the spirit, they go forth with the Captain of salvation, conquering and to conquer. While they follow peace with all men, they never shrink from the good fight of faith. They know that Christ came not to send peace on earth but a sword, and that the more vigorously the war is prosecuted the sooner the peace of God will be established. Hence Paul, that good soldier of Christ Jesus—in imitation of the ancient worthies—"waxed valiant in fight and put to flight the armies of the aliens"—the weapons of his warfare were mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. He loved the truth, and was set for its defence against all opposition.

But Mr. D. is a man of peace. If in his estimation you hold up the Baptists in an unfavorable light, he simply sneers with becoming humility at your "pious performance," and with commendable delicacy merely observes in reference to your statements, that nothing, so far as his experience and that of thousands goes, could be more *libelously false*. He "cannot come down" to you, but he can point to you the finger of scorn, and with righteous indignation learnedly exclaim, *O pudor*.

"Traducing and scandalizing may seem hard terms," but sir they are not so. They only seem so. Mr. D. is a man of peace. How could he use hard terms? Your expressions are "harsh and uncouth." Your views are "purely apostolical." You love controversy; you make false charges—"libelously false," you are "carried away by party zeal in its unloveliest form;" you "traduce and scandalize;" you "stigmatize;" you make a "perfect caricature;" you make "invidious comparisons;" you speak "tauntingly;" you use the "Campbelite bible;" you "regard the disciples as perfect models! unparalleled and unmatched!" "No doubt ye are the men and wisdom shall die with you."

You may be surprized at the remarkably smooth and polished manner of Mr. D.; but "as his own feelings are easily hurt," he naturally avoids all "harsh and uncouth expressions," in his intercourse with others. In short when we consider that, "every where at all times—with all men—he wishes to cultivate *peace*" we naturally expect to find in him all the graces and beauties of a "*meek and quiet spirit.*" Hence the polite and graceful style of Mr. D.'s communication, so illustrative of the truth that he is "not so much a polemical writer as a humble worker in his Master's vineyard."

But while admiring his style, let us not forget his logic. Another item of *reason* remains to be examined which is,

Fourth, his time is fully occupied with his "duties to his God, the church, and the world." With what did you wish to occupy his time? Let us see. I need not mention all the subjects specially touched, the following will suffice;—"Christ the Head of the church;" "the gospel;" "repentance;" "baptism;" "conversion;" "church fellowship;" "open and close communion;" "election," "spiritual influence," "christian experience," the difference between Disciples and Baptists."

Now on reflection, what can you think of yourself? What a fertile and romantic imagination you must possess to think that all, or any of these, or similar subjects, had any connection whatever with Mr. D.'s duties to his God, the church, or the world! Awake from your dream, and profit by experience. Should you ever again wish to secure the attention of Mr. D. say nothing to him about repentance, about conversion, about the way of salvation, about the blessed Redeemer as the glorious Head of the church; he has no time for such trifles—he is "doing a great work," "and cannot and will not allow himself to be called off by any object of minor importance."

Thus ends the logic of Mr. Davidson as I understand it. How would it look to close by exclaiming in imitation of Mr. D., *O Pudor!*

But seriously I cannot conclude without again expressing my disappointment with Mr. Davidson. He has not in my judgment acquitted himself worthily on the present occasion. The case is simply this,—The Baptists and Disciples are *one* on several important points—on several important points they differ. Union on scriptural grounds is desirable for its own sake—for the sake of the church—for the sake of the world. Such union cannot be effected without a clear view of its nature, and of the nature and extent of the forbearance to be exercised. Several letters were written, showing either clearly or obscurely

the position of the "disciples" in relation to a number of points Any thing not clearly expressed could be explained.

Mr. D. as an honorable man and an intelligent Baptist Minister is respectfully invited to state for the benefit of all concerned, wherein the views set forth agree with, or differ from, those which he has received and taught.

That your matter and manner are perfect and complete, wanting nothing, I presume you will not affirm. But what of this. Mr. D. could tell his own story in his own way. He may, and it rather appears he does, regard the "disciples" as a company of cavilling, captious, incorrigibly discordant spirits. He is mistaken. The best of them ardently long for peace. They are aware however that the only peace worth having is the result of intelligence—of spiritual illumination; and therefore until all "see eye to eye" they wish "to prove all things," in order to "hold fast that which is good."

When Mr. D. instead of embracing the offered opportunity to promote *that peace* which on all hands is so truly desirable, gave vent to mere childishness about his aversion to controversy, his easily hurt feelings &c.—and when on the contrary, I saw in his letter from beginning to end genuine spiritual pride and true clerical haughtiness and contempt—I confess my spirit was stirred within me, and thus I have delivered myself.

May the Lord in his infinite mercy pardon all our offences—show us to ourselves as we really are—and make us what we ought to be.

O.

The tone of the above needs no commendation—its logic and point are in advance of praise. The whole article reflects credit upon the head and heart of the writer. The gospel was and is a message of "good-will to men," and we fondly trust that we shall be able to exhibit in this paper a portion of divine good-will, notwithstanding all our controversy.

D. O.

POPULAR CHRISTIANITY—OR
THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION COUNTERFEITED.

No. II.

By the beginning of the seventh century, as intimated in our No. I on this subject, popular christianity so far triumphed over the christianity of the New Testament, that it succeeded in making an earthly Head for the church and placing him upon a new throne in the city of

Rome. Many a sin, and many a stride from the truth, had taken place among the religious populars before the maturity of this declension within the dominions of the church of Christ. But this was the climax ; and those who are favourable or partial to fashionable religion, can justly claim the Pope ; and indeed, willing or unwilling, they are bound to receive him ; for he was formed and fashioned, created and preserved, originated in, and maintained by, a grand system of popularized christianity ! The different varieties of admirers of popular religion, and the adherents of every vitiated church, are welcome to "His Holiness" the Pope, and the sacredness of the chair on which he sits, with all the power, honor, influence, and wealth connected with a source so spiritually famous and fashionable ! But as we proceed in the begun work of handling and exhibiting the skeletons of anti-christian systems, let no one doubt either the necessity or the benevolence of recommending something more substantial, healthy, and heaven-like.

"One is your master"—the language of Jesus himself to his followers—was forgotten in the Imperial city. Here, indeed, is the "root of all evil" as it respects the adulteration of the christian religion in all ages and in all places. "The form of sound words" must first be set aside before anything unsound can usurp or find a place. The time came for the "traitors," the "heady," the "high-minded," the "proud" of whom Paul predictingly spake to the evangelist at Ephesus. The time came when some did "depart from the faith," and gave "heed to seducing spirits"—"men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, who supposed that gain was godliness."

The "man of sin," the destroyer of saints under a saintly garb, commenced his reign. No sooner was he seated on his throne—a throne unlike every other, past or to come—than the world was dazzled and the worship of the world changed. "Times and laws" were overturned "at the pleasure of his will." He "reigned over the Kings of the earth," and "all the world wondered" after him. Upon his head was written "blasphemy," and he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God." The world wondered—admired—worshipped—and threw its honors and its powers at the feet of the Pontiff. A new city, in the empire of religion, rose into consequence and spiritual greatness with the new-made Head of the church. Jerusalem is unseen and Rome towers above all. The gaze of the nations and the ear of the world are turned from Judea to Italy. Rome and the Pope eclipse Jerusalem and Jesus ! Italy and traditions more than equal Judea and the divine scriptures ! Unpopular Jerusalem and popular Rome !! A

Pope exalted and the Saviour dethroned !!! Alas for weak, vain, easily estranged man, when, in the name of religion, a crown glitters upon the brow of sectarianism, and religion itself is driven as a fugitive into the remote corners of the earth.

But what use had the counterfeit and humanized christianity of these times for the example of Jerusalem, the authority of God's Anointed One, or the inspiration of the oracles? When charming Italy is famed through the earth, why go to Judea's wilderness? When the splendor of Caesar's capitol enchants and captivates, why look toward the city of David? When the chief Bishop of the church, "Lord God the Pope" speaks, why turn an ear to the Redeemer on Calvary or after he was laid in Joseph's tomb? When councils with their hundreds of bishops assemble, why listen to the humble, feeble, apostolic Twelve? When the writings and doctrines of pious men, of sound men, of learned and great men are at hand, why examine the old oracles and the stale revelations of the Spirit? When customs and ceremonies, flattering to human pride, are not only sanctioned but established by solemn authority of the "vicar"; why learn the ordinances and practices of the church as constituted by the labours of the ambassadors of Jesus? When the Pope can forgive sins and bestow salvation, and at the same time give liberty to the lusts of the flesh, why apply to the Prince of Life or go up to his cross? When prayers to saints, the worship of images, and a Godless life can secure the glory of the eternal world, why pray to the God of the gospel, why pay homage to the 'Holy One of Israel', or why keep "unspotted from the world"?

Thus taught Rome—thus taught the Pope—thus taught the holy Councils—and such therefore was the popular faith. The religion of Jesus was counterfeited. The Imperial City became infallible, the Pope infallible, the Councils infallible, the writings of the Fathers infallible—"the mystery of iniquity" was openly at work—and hence Christ, his cross, his grace, his apostles, his revelations from heaven, and the purity of his church were impiously spurned from the proud spiritual metropolis, or insultingly trampled under foot.

Two things were needed to keep up the grand-apostacy—priests and the power of lucre. Once seated on his pontifical chair, the successor of Peter, to guide the destinies of the church universal, needs, above all things, the influence of a host of clerical agents and the influence of large sums of money. Hand in hand these two sources of power proped the pontiff's seat and supported the papal see. When the Pope;

through one of his ordained instruments, could say, "Our Lord God no longer deals with us as God : he has given all power to the Pope," he could choose what means he pleased to perpetuate his authority and make it generally felt. He made choice of priests and gold. Some of the names of the priestly tribe he ordained were—Cardinals, Vicars-General, Legates, Arch-Episcopals, Primate, Arch-Bishops, Counts, Abbots, Bishops, Holy Fathers, Doctors, Confessors, Nuncios, Priors, and common Priests. As to filthy lucre, it made its way into the Roman box in the shape of Peter's pence, purchase of degrees, penance tax, confessional money, indulgence sales, tithes, price of purgatorial deliverances, holy pilgrims' tax, &c. &c.

Such was and is popular christianity in that hierarchy called the Roman church. To shut up the Bible, to conceal the light of heaven, to exclude the free grace of God, and to crush the liberty of the gospel, were these two species of power employed ; and most effectually did they answer their design for nearly ten centuries. Ten centuries did we say ?—their influence extends to the present moment, but their benighting sway was more complete from the sixth to the sixteenth century. The work of Rome's agents was to decry the Bible and magnify the Pope—to bar the gates of heaven and offer the pardon of sins for a stipulated price. Hear what one of them, in the dark days of papal rule, said of the scriptures, in pious warning to his brethren :

"The New Testament is a book full of serpents and thorns. Greek is a modern language, but recently invented, and against which we must be on our guard. As to Hebrew, my dear brethren, it is certain that whoever studies *that* immediately becomes a Jew."

This shows not only the piety but the learning of the priests. In some one of the papal schools, in France, about the time of the revival of fetters, it was affirmed—"There is an end of religion if the study of Hebrew and Greek is permitted." Such was the policy of Rome and the anointed ones under the Pope.

Now hear a sample of the language employed in drawing up indulgences, sold to the people for a price proportionate to their ability to pay :

"Our Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on thee, and absolve thee by the merits of his most holy sufferings ! And I, in virtue of the apostolic power committed to me, absolve thee from all ecclesiastical censures, judgments, and penalties that thou mayst have merited ; and further, from all excesses, sins, and crimes that thou mayst have committed, how-

ever great and enormous they may be, and of whatever kind,—even though they should be reserved to our holy father the Pope, and to the apostolic See. I efface all the stains of weakness, and all traces of the shame that thou mayst have drawn upon thyself by such actions. I remit the pains thou wouldst have had to endure in purgatory. I receive thee again to the sacraments of the Church. I hereby re-incorporate thee in the communion of saints, and restore thee to the innocence and purity of thy baptism; so that, at the moment of death, the gate of the place of torment shall be shut against thee, and the gate of the paradise of joy shall be opened unto thee. And if thou shouldst live long, this grace continueth unchangeable, till the time of thy end.—In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.”

On this wise did popular christianity exhibit itself in the days of Huss, and a hundred years before and after a hundred years afterwards. As we proceed with the subject, and bring our remarks down to later times, we shall endeavour to develop in unmistakable terms the contrast between the religion that is only fashionable and the religion that carries with it and within it the grace of the Lord Jesus.

D. OLIPHANT.

BAPTIST AND METHODIST HOSTILITIES.

A few months ago, a tract on baptism was printed in the office of the Baptist organ in Toronto, and copies of the tract either miraculously or ministerially found their way to the doors of some of the Methodist fold in the same city of Toronto. Complaint is made at the Methodist head quarters, and war immediately commences. After several sallies on both sides, the *Guardian*, the organ of Methodism, uses his armour in manner as follows:—

THE PIONEER ONCE MORE.

A column or two of last Thursday's *Pioneer* is devoted to the borrowed and adopted calumny of the Methodist Church. It is represented as anti-scriptural in its spirit, and whole constitution, and its Ministers are held up as a set of despots and knaves. This is the response of the *Pioneer* to the previous expression of our feelings in regard to the Baptists, in which we said “We rejoice to believe that there are thousands of Baptists who are imbued with the spirit of primitive Christianity, and who are faithfully labouring to spread it in the world. Such we heartily bid God speed, and rejoice in their success—they are fellow-labourers, not adversaries—brethren, not foes.” But the

Pioneer objects not to a particular sentiment held by a portion of the Methodists, as we do to an unchurching dogma of a portion of the Baptists; he wars against Methodism itself, and the spirit of his original and adopted language is, "away with it from the earth! It is not fit to live!" For lack of matter from a belligerent English paper, the *Pioneer* calls in the aid of a Canadian Methodist apostate, who has been "every thing by turns and nothing long at a time." As well might JULIAN the apostate be called to witness against Christianity. Now all this is what ROBERT HALL calls the "intolerance of weakness." Calumny and abuse, instead of argument, is the strong fort and the great weapon of "weakness," as it is the spirit of "intolerance." The *Pioneer* is an apt example of the "weakness" in the one case, and of the "intolerance" in the other, clearly illustrating another passage of ROBERT HALL—"an attempted incongruous mixture of liberal principles with a particular act of intolerance; and these, like the iron and clay in Nebuchadnezzar's image, will not mix."

But this is only an incidental topic of the *Pioneer's* introduction to cover his retreat from the original subject of our rebuke; which was neither the subjects nor the mode of Baptism, but the *close communion* dogma, which denies the memorials of the Saviour's dying love to all, and unchurches all, who do not submit to the *Pioneer's* mode of baptism. It was this feature of the *Pioneer's* tract (thrust into Methodist houses) on which we animadverted, and which the *Pioneer* has the self-deceiving weakness still to call an "unwarrantable attack," instead of a proper rebuke in behalf of insulted parties. We come back to this unchurching as well as unscriptural dogma, and we remark that it belittles the mind; that it involves the essence of Popery in the despotism of its assumptions, in its intolerant spirit and schismatic character.

We will illustrate these positions, not in our own words, not after the example of the *Pioneer*, by citing the calumnies of enemies and apostates, but by quoting the words of a Baptist Minister, whose works have enriched the English language, whose virtues have adorned the whole Christian church, but the catholicity of whose spirit was not bound by under-water Christianity, but embraced "all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

1. On the belittling character and tendency of the *Pioneer* dogma, ROBERT HALL remarks: "Generally speaking, the adoption of a narrow and contracted theory will issue in a narrow and contracted mind. It is too much to expect that a habit of treating all other Christians as aliens from the fold of Christ, and unworthy of a participation of the

privileges of his Church, can be generally unaccompanied with an asperity of temper, a proneness to doubt the sincerity, to censure the motives, and depreciate the virtues of those whom they are accustomed to treat with so much vigour." "The direct tendency of such a principle is not merely to annihilate the unity of the Church, but to contract the heart to narrow the understanding, and, in the room of, 'holding forth the word of life,' to invest every petty speculation and to minute opinion with the dignity of a fundamental truth." The angular disputes in the *Pioneer* about weekly communion, missionary organization, &c., &c., as well as his anathemas against other Churches, are examples of the truth of these remarks.

2. Of the *Schismatic* character of the *Pioneer's* dogma, Robert Hall observes: "*Schism*, in its primitive and literal sense, signifies the breaking of a substance into two or more parts, and when figuratively applied to a body of men, it denotes the division of it into two parties; and though it may be applied to such a state of contention as consists with the preservation of external union, it is most eminently applicable to society whose bond of union is dissolved, and where one part rejects the other from its fellowship. If there is any meaning in terms, this is *Schism* in its highest sense." "The advocates of strict communion *pled* for visible *disunion*; nor will it avail them to reply that they cultivate a fraternal affection towards Christians of other denominations, while they insist on such a visible separation as must make it apparent to the world that they are not one. Internal sentiments of esteem are cognizable only to the Searcher of hearts, external indications are all that the world has to judge by; and so far are they from exhibiting these, that they value themselves in maintaining such a position towards their fellow-Christians as confounds them, in a very important point, with infidels and heathens. If a rent or division in the body is pregnant with so much scandal and offence as the Scriptures represent it, if the spirit of love and concord is the distinguishing badge of the Christian profession, it is surprising it has never occurred to them, that by insisting on such a separation as was unheard of in primitive times every approach of which is denounced in Scripture as a most serious evil, they are acting in direct opposition to the genius of the Gospel and the solemn injunctions of its inspired Teachers."

3. The *intolerant* spirit of the *Pioneer's* dogma is thus stated by Mr. Hall: "The case of strict communion is not a defensive but an offensive measure; it is not an assertion of Christian liberty by resisting encroachments, it is itself a violent encroachment on the freedom of others; not an effort to preserve our own worship pure, but to enforce a conformity to our views, in a point acknowledged not to be essential to salvation.

4. The *Popish assumption of infallibility*, &c., involved the *Pioneer's*

dogma, are exhibited by Mr. Hall in the following forcible and eloquent terms :

“ The Romish Church, it is well known, pretends to an absolute infallibility ; not, however, in such a sense as implies authority to introduce new doctrine, but merely in the proposal of apostolic traditions and in the interpretation of Scriptures. While she admits the Scripture to be the original rule of faith, she requires, under pain of excommunication, that the sense she puts on its words should be received with the same submission with the inspired volume. In what respect, let me ask, is the conduct of the *strict* Baptists different ? A controversy arises on the extent of a positive rite, whether it should be confined to adults, or be communicated to infants. Both parties appeal to Scripture, which the Baptist interprets (in my humble opinion) correctly, in such a manner as to restrict it to believers ; the Pedobaptists, with equal sincerity, suppose it to include infants. While the former in his practice confines it to the description of persons to whom he judges it to belong, he acts with unexceptionable propriety ; but when, not satisfied with this, he insists upon forcing his interpretation on the conscience of his brother, and treats him in precisely the same manner as though he avowedly contradicted Christ and his Apostles, what is this but an assumption of infallibility ? “ We have already observed the coincidence of this system with the *opus operatum*, or the intrinsic or mechanical efficacy of religious rites, independent of the intention or disposition of the worshipper. The Roman Catholic attaches such importance to the rite of baptism as to believe that when duly administered, it is *necessarily* accompanied with the pardon of sin and regenerating grace. The strict Baptist maintains that its absence where all other religious qualifications are possessed in the highest perfection which human nature admits, deprives the party of ‘ the privileges of faith,’ and renders him an alien from the Christian Church.” —“ The adherents to the Papal power claim to themselves the exclusive appellation of the *Church* ; the arrogance of which pretension is faithfully copied by the advocates of which strict communion.”

Such are the sentiments and words of the most eloquent of Baptist ministers, but not a bigot ; not a man of one side, and that a watery one ; not a Romanist in principle, and a liberal in profession ; not the pretended advocate of the universal right of private judgment, and the practical denier of the right of any judgment different from his own ; not the unscrupulous assailant of the Ministry and institutions of the earliest and most laborious Protestant Christian community in Upper Canada, but a lover all good men. We know the *Pioneer*, if he be not past learning, may derive some benefit from contemplating himself in the mirror furnished by the memorable Robert Hall, and pursue a course in future that will enable us to maintain those friendly relations with all our Baptist brethren which we have observed in our editorial capacity for years before the existence of the *Pioneer*.

Thus the *Guardian*, in using Mr. Hall's armour, encounters his opponent with more than a usual share of pedobaptist spirit. Mr.

Hall was, both in views and practice, open communion. He wielded a powerful influence in Scotland and in England during his public life and labours. Few names among the Baptist ranks can command the same degree of respect or the same amount of genuine good-will from all sections of the religious world as the name of Hall. Still we cannot endorse all the articles of his confession. While however there is one or two points in the preceding quotations from him that may be with profit laid aside, there is a nobleness, a capacious spirit, a commanding liberality in his remarks to which the readers of the *Witness* in taking diligent heed will do themselves no injury. To be free from the narrowness of proud sectarianism, and at the same time to contend uncompromisingly for the truth of Heaven, are among the cardinals of all our efforts in favour of religious reform.

D. O.

✍ Since the above was penned, we have received a few numbers of the *Pioneer*, from which an extract or two may be expected.

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#### INTEREST IN OUR LABOURS.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—When I sent you “*Spiritual Dyspepsia* No. 1,” I fully expected to have No. 2 in time for the succeeding number of the *Witness*. But as No. 2 has not yet made its appearance, it may be well to occupy the time till it comes.

I sometimes feel disposed to ask the meaning of a sentence in number eleven of your last volume, but whether any pleasure or profit will result from the enquiry, is not very certain. The sentence is this—“When the co-operation becomes stronger, and when the *Witness* has tested the verity of a few more pledges which fade with the autumnal leaf, the brethren, we have pleasure in thinking, will be relieved from farther deliberation, burden, or responsibility as it relates to this work.” From this I understand, that you are *at present* struggling against wind and tide—devoting much time, toil, and energy to maintain the *Witness* in existence, and that when the co-operation shall be firmly established, you will cease to make the same sacrifices—and commit the work into the hands of others.

There is something not very pleasant in being left by those equally interested, to bear by far the largest share of the burden and responsibility connected with the publication of a religious periodical. But such is the case with most if not all of those who conduct religious periodicals—pledges fade with the autumnal leaf. I observe that the *English Harbinger* by brother Wallis, is considered too dear, and that

it is barely maintained in existence. The *Christian*, after a second attempt to live, was obliged to die, and every where and at all times religious papers can be kept alive only by a more than ordinary patience in well-doing on the part of their conductors. Some indeed have been so persevering—so determined to “spend and be spent” in this manner—that they have involved themselves in pecuniary embarrassments from which they have found it exceedingly difficult to recover. That such is likely to become your position should *present circumstances continue to surround you*, is what may be inferred from the language referred to.

But this inference may be incorrect. At all events it presents an unpleasant picture, and I therefore feel disposed to put a more favorable interpretation on the said sentence.

From your past perseverance and known hopefulness, may we not presume and expect the co-operation to effect something commendable—that when it becomes stronger, the brethren will be so enlightened in reference to the duty of sustaining the press, and so fully determined to practice said duty, that there will be no burden to bear? Every brother will be forthcoming with a dollar for his own subscription, and another (if necessary) to prevent loss to the publisher. That this is the true meaning of your words I conclude, from the fact that you have *pleasure* in thinking on the prospect, which of course could not be the case, were you looking for a final abandonment of the work.

Trusting that this is what you mean, and that your hope will be fully realized, I shall for the present dismiss the subject. O.

15th Feb., 1850.

☞ The query that our brother implicitly asks, will be responded to not long hence. When the time arrives to break the silence I have imposed upon myself in reference to this topic, all freedom and frankness of speech on my part may be expected. D. O.

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### ITALY AND SPAIN

The Jesuits are exerting themselves in every direction to procure the restoration of the Pope by force of arms. His Holiness himself is not averse to this method. The following passage is copied by the *New York Tribune* from a recent Paris Journal:

“In the convent of Spello, an official letter from the Court at Gaeta to the Superior, has been lately discovered. The following are some passages of this appeal to massacre:—The Liberals, the Jacobins, the Carbonari and the Republicans are people of like kind; they wish to destroy religion and its ministers. In our turn we must disperse the

remains of all this race. Continue to embrace with your zeal those of your order and the inhabitants of the country. Advise them not to fail at the sacred rendezvous which will be announced to them by the sound of the alarm-bell, and then let each one without pity bury his steel in the breasts of the profaners of our holy religion. Bid them repeat their vows to exterminate our enemies, not excepting their children, or to avoid the revenge which they might hereafter attempt upon us; in a word, prepare all, so that when we raise the cry of reaction, it may be repeated everywhere without fear.'"

Such are the tender mercies of Popery. Unchangeable in its spirit untaught by experience, it continues to abjure the gentleness of Christianity, and advocates, in the nineteenth century, the barbarities of the middle ages. Pius IX. seeks to be restored by foreign bayonets; and from his Court proceeds the infernal exhortation to "bury the steel" in the breasts of opponents, *not excepting their children!* Who can wonder at the fearful spread of infidelity in Roman Catholic countries?

There may be a fierce struggle in Italy. The forces are even now mustering to the battle. Yet there are several encouraging circumstances to be taken into the account. One is, the destruction of the Inquisition at Rome. By order of the Assembly, the Holy office (properly so called) has been abolished. Its prisons have been emptied of their inmates, among whom was an Egyptian bishop, confined there by Pope Leo XII., who died in 1829; the unfortunate man had nearly lost the use of his limbs by his long incarceration. Another circumstance is, the formation of a Bible Society, the first that has been established in Italy Proper. The secular histories of the age will contain no notice of that event; but it will exert a happier influence on the country than may a transaction which worldly chroniclers delight to honour. The state of public opinion, also, affords good ground for hope. A resident writes thus:—

"A great change is taking place in the church of this country. Papacy has received a shock from which it is not expected to recover. It is said there are sixty thousand people in all Italy, ready to renounce the errors of Popery, and that they are only waiting till they can number one hundred thousand, to make open profession. We often hear sentiments from our Italian acquaintances that make us start; instead of looking upon us as lost heretics, they can, not only converse in a friendly and rational manner on the subject, but it is become a common thing for them to say, 'You are right and we are wrong!' These poor creatures are not free to change their religion; their church is one of bondage, and they must give up rank and fortune, when they give up their false creed. . . . One certain fact is, that there is an open talk here of breaking up some of the convents, a speaking sign of the times, and reminds one of the reign of Henry VIII. In short, the downfall of Popery is a common subject here, and if the Almighty is so working out his own ends, we must not complain of any personal inconvenience that all these changes and revolutions bring upon individuals."



There is yet another fact. The Bishops of Tuscany lately petitioned the National Assembly at Florence for a law to abridge the liberty of the press. Their petition was rejected. The observations of the *Nationale*, a Florence paper, indicate the views entertained by the people of Tuscany.

"The petition with which the Tuscan Episcopates ask for a restraint to be placed on *the licentiousness of the press in religious matters* was the subject of a long and serious discussion, but the decision of the Commission was sustained, and the Assembly, by a small majority, passed to the order of the day. Indeed we have often had to deplore, and still do deplore, the intemperance of which a part of our press has been guilty, impudently pouring contempt and insult on venerated and holy things; but we must acknowledge that the decision of the Council was just and reasonable, since the state of the question was, in its nature, simple and precise. The laws have already provided against abuses of the press, and when these laws are broken, it belongs to the competent tribunals to define the quality of the offences and the punishment of the offenders. The Assembly ought not to interfere. And where the press keeps within the bounds of a *reasonable and honourable controversy, discussing, and even contradicting the dogma of any religion whatsoever, it uses its right, nor is there any reason for complaint, every one being free to confute, by availing himself of the same means.*

We turn from Italy to Spain—the head-quarters of ignorance, bigotry, and concealed infidelity. A debate had taken place in the Cortes on a bill for the construction of a railway in the Asturias. The remarks of the *Clamor Publico*, a Madrid Journal, deserve to be transcribed:—

"Movement is the life of nations. In order to encourage and impart impulse to this movement, it is necessary to put open the gates of our country to all the foreign wealth which seeks investment, supplying new sustenance to human industry. Do the Deputies wish to know who are the best workmen for the construction of railways? Do they wish us to point out the only means of facilitating the exchange of produce, the circulation of ideas, and the transmission of public riches? Then in our opinion the following conditions are required:— 1. Personal security; 2. Absolute liberty in the employment of the productive faculties; 3. Complete abolition of privileges and restrictions; 4. *Toleration of other forms of worship.* As one of the principal causes of decay in Spain is want of population and of capital, it is necessary to attract colonies and speculators of all sects and religions, to promote an increase of both. Great capitalists, who cannot find employment for their money in other countries, where interest has come to be exceedingly low, would come hither, if they had security that their religion would be respected. But, while certificates of Catholicism are required in Spain, in order for a foreigner to establish himself, it is vain to think of improvement, roads, or communications."

The editor is right. Spain is a doomed kingdom, as long as "Cer-

tificates of Catholicism are required," in order to the settlement of a foreigner. But this state of things cannot continue. Common sense and humanity protest against it. Now that the Press has taken up the cause, and ventured to plead, even in Madrid, for "toleration of other forms of worship," we may expect to hear of the gradual advancement of religious freedom, and with it of science and general improvement.

We are indebted for the foregoing extracts to the *Evangelical Christendom*, an English periodical of great interest and value, for the information it furnishes respecting religion on the Continent of Europe.—*Montreal Register*.

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From the *New-York Observer*.

A GREAT LIBRARY.

Much has been said, lately, of great libraries, splendid buildings to accommodate them, the immense number and character of the books, &c. I should like to put in too, and tell of a Library of which I have obtained some information.

1. It is *very large*. The first decisive account we had about the number of books was, that there were "an hundred and four thousand;" and soon after that there were "a great multitude whom no man could number." And, as we have the best of evidence that there have been almost or quite daily accessions since, we must admit the sum total to be very great.

2. And there can be no doubt of the *very best selection* in making up the collection. No enterprise, since the creation, has had more wisdom employed than has been exercised in this matter. The Person, making the choice, has never been known to err. Some people have not agreed with him, at the first, about his course; but they will all agree with him at last.

3. There is a *great variety* in the Library. Some of the books are very old—have been there several thousand years. Some of them are quite new, and have been there but a very short time. There is not a duplicate—no two alike among the whole. "For one star differeth from another star in glory." Yet they are perfectly alike, not the shadow of difference in respect to the grounds on which they got admission to the Library, and their fitness to be there. Such variety, and yet such unity were never found before in any Library in this world.

4. A curious fact too that, splendid and beautiful as the Library is, there is not yet a single book *fully bound*. Some of the books were once bound in a style called, "of the earth, earthy." But that binding is worn out and has dropped off. But they will all be bound yet in the

most splendid manner. Nothing that the Great King who owns the Library can do will be left undone to make those books shine in the eyes of the universe. And, that the work shall be well done, he will do it Himself. None will doubt the perfect beauty of every volume, "for they shall be LIKE HIM."

5. There has not been, and never will be, a *work of fiction* in that Library. By a fundamental and immutable law of the Great Owner, nothing but truth and reality can ever find a place there. Hence, for that reason, and others,

6. The volumes are *very valuable*. Especially because there is not one but was obtained at a vast price. Never was a Library gathered at such expense; and this not by silver and gold, but, by what was infinitely more precious than either. Not a book there but cost the blood of the Owner to secure and place them. Hence nothing can be conceived so valuable as each of those volumes. An old record contains the same information in the exclamation, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul." All the splendid orbs of the starry heavens would be so many bubbles in the Owner's sight, compared to the value of one of those volumes.

7. Hence, too, there never will be one of those books *lost*. Some have thought that some volumes that really belonged to that Library, might get out of their place, by one device or another, and never get back again and never be seen there any more. But the Great Owner has said several things which do not at all agree with such an idea, such as "And no man shall be able to pluck them out of my hand," &c. And he has *done* some things which cuts off the idea that any book shall ever be lost that was fairly in that Library; such as purchasing it with his own precious blood, stamping his own image upon it, &c. And when we throw into the same scale the fact that he has manifested the most deep and tender love for every volume, from the largest to the smallest, from the time it entered the Library, there remains not the slightest probability whatever, that one of those volumes will be lost. Most Libraries have missing volumes; but I do not believe the records of all future duration will show one missing from the Great Library.

8. That Library shall be *eminently useful*. Some are not; either because there is really no value in the books themselves, or because they are locked up in strange, and but little known languages. But these volumes are legible to the whole universe. "That to the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, through the

church, the manifold wisdom of God." The Great Author meant that this Library should instruct all rational beings. It contains things infinitely interesting to be known by them, things they could not have learned in any other way. And they shall have an opportunity for the perusal. And they will confess, with wonder and joy, that they had never learned before things so important and interesting. And it is not impossible that some of these volumes may be scattered into very distant regions of the universe, and give information upon great matters which had not been known, and never would have been known but for these volumes. "Which things the angels desire to look into," and they will have the opportunity. Some of these volumes have been in use, in giving instruction in reference to some of the greatest wonders in the moral universe, ever since the collection of the volumes first began; which is more than five thousand years ago. And, as new works are continually added, the value of the Library is continually increased, and it imparts a larger amount of instruction, so that some suppose that all the libraries in the universe together will not be so useful as this in imparting wisdom. Certainly this is true in regard to some subjects most important to be known by all rational beings.

9. The *place* where the Library is kept ought to have a word of notice. It is so large as to be called a kingdom, and to have said of it, they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it—and well illuminated, for the Great Owner is said to be "Light thereof," besides the light from the books themselves, every one of which "will shine forth as the sun." All the visitors of the Library will be the most dignified, and excellent, and happy persons in the universe, themselves "shining as the stars forever and ever."

P. S. I had almost forgotten an important fact about matter in hand. The volumes, every one of them, will be growing more and more beautiful and valuable forever. It has been so since each was united to the Library. There is not a book that has not more in it, and more to communicate, and is not more goodly to look upon, than at first. Such as have been in the Library five thousand years or so, instead of being outstripped in worth by more modern books, have gone ahead every hour, and are all the better for being old, since both beauty and intelligence have been constantly augmenting.

If any persons wish for more information, they are reminded that the "Everlasting Doors" will soon be thrown open, and it is hoped they will be found ready to go in and examine it for themselves.

SIMON.

CLERGY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Of the character of the Pastors in the Established Church, Mr. Noel says,—“ I grieve to write it. There are men among them of great virtues to whom I gladly do homage. I know and love many faithful, energetic, and sincere servants of Christ ; but when these exceptions are subtracted, what are the rest? I grieve to write it. Chosen by peers and squires, by colleges and church corporations, by chancellors and State-made prelates, many are made pastors by a corrupt favoritism, many are allured to an uncongenial employment by the income which it offers them, and many embrace the profession of a pastor because they are too dull, inert, or timid for any other. They have scarcely any theological training; they are pledged to all the errors in the Prayer-book, and all the abuses sanctioned by the Union. They dread reforms, they are servile to patrons, they are intolerant to Dissenters ; their zeal is crippled by State restrictions, and their indolence tempted by unbounded liberty to indulge it. Severed from the body of the people by their birth, by their early education, by their college life, by their aristocratical association, by their zeal for their ecclesiastical prerogatives, they have little popular influence. Lawyers, men of science, and editors of newspapers, do not listen to them ; Chartists and Socialists dislike and despise them ; they scarcely touch the operative millions ; they make few converts among the devotees of fashion ; and under their leadership the Christian army is inert, timid, and unsuccessful.”—*Christian Observer*.

NEW-YORK BIBLE SOCIETY.

This Society held its 26th anniversary meeting at the Reform Dutch church in Lafayette Place, on Monday evening. After singing by the choir, the Rev. Dr. De Witt read a portion of the Psalms, and Dr. Adams followed in prayer. From the Treasurer's Report, it appears that the receipts of the Society during the past fiscal year, have amounted to \$27,609 of which, \$6,698 were received from churches of various denominations, and \$18,156 from sale of Bibles and Testaments at the Depository. The sum of \$23,830 has been paid to the Parent Society for volumes ; \$1,012 have been presented as a donation ; and \$2,340 have been paid as salaries to agents.

Mr. Blatchford presented the Annual Report, a concise, perspicuous, and interesting document. Special efforts, it appears, are bestowed by the Society upon the seamen and immigrants. The Rev. Mr. Stockbridge, the chaplain of the Receiving ship, was favourably mentioned.

He has distributed 2,221 volumes; and 3,740 volumes have been distributed among immigrants; of whom 233,912 have arrived at this port during the past year. To Sabbath schools 1,152 Bibles, and 1180 Testaments have been given; to hotels, 338 Bibles and the missionaries of different wards have distributed 1,412 Bibles and 1,079 Testaments.

Two years ago a thorough exploration of the city was commenced with the view of supplying every destitute family with the Word of God. It was resolved at the beginning of this year to go forward with this great work. Mr. Alexander Watson commenced his labors to this end, last March. He has thoroughly explored and supplied the 7th and 13th Wards, and is now employed on the 11th. Prior to the 1st inst. he had visited 16,932 families; of whom he found 1,658 destitute of the Word of God. He has distributed 1,064 Bibles and 1,538 Testaments.

The Society in October, was in debt over \$4000—but this has since been paid off, and a donation of \$540 made to the parent Society, making the whole donation for the year according to the treasurer's report over \$1000. More than 28,000 Bibles and Testaments have been gratuitously distributed; and over 57,000 sold during the year.

RESIGNATION.

How touchingly beautiful was the parting scene between Cotton Mather and his wife. Observe his own account of it: "The black day arrives. I had never seen so black a day in all the time of my pilgrimage. The desire of my eyes is this day to be taken from me at a stroke. Her death is lingering and painful. All the forenoon of this day, she was in the pangs of death, and sensible till the last minute or two before the final expiration. I cannot remember the discourse that passed between us, only her devout soul was full of satisfaction about her going to a state of blessedness with the Lord Jesus Christ. As far as my distress would permit, I studied to confirm her satisfaction and consolation. When I saw to what point of resignation I was called of the Lord, I resolved with his help to glorify him. So, two hours before she expired, I kneeled by her bedside, and took into my hands that dear hand, the dearest in the world, and solemnly and sincerely gave her up to the Lord. I gently put her out of my hands, and laid away her hand, resolved that I would not touch it again. She afterwards told me that she signed and sealed my act of resignation: and before that, though she had called for me continually, *after* it she never asked for me any more. She conversed much until near two in the afternoon. The last sensible word that she spoke, was to her weeping father—'Heaven, Heaven will make amends for all.'"

NEXT GENERAL MEETING.

Our June meeting is this year to be held in Bowmanville. The second Friday (June 7th.) is the day of commencement. The brethren there having been so enterprising as to erect during the past summer a comfortable Meeting House, and withal being socially and hospitably inclined, we may safely say for them that they will heartily welcome friends from all sections of the province who may attend. As meetings of this order have greatly increased in interest among us during the last few years, and as there is a disposition on the part of all concerned to make them still more interesting, edifying, and religiously influential, may we not hope for a full assembly of brethren and friends?

Those who were appointed to direct the evangelists' labours, and to see them sustained in the work they are accomplishing in behalf of the brotherhood, are expected, according to adjournment, to meet on that occasion. All the churches now co-operating in sustaining evangelists, and others that will doubtless unite in this soul-saving and noble work, are requested to send to the meeting in Bowmanville one or more brethren with instructions in reference to providing for evangelical labours and labourers for the coming year.

Brethren and friends, a great meeting with a great feast is at hand! Come—partake—and rejoice!

D. O.

A GREAT MEETING PROPOSED.

Tully, N. Y., 17th April, 1850.

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—As your periodical finds its way to every congregation (would that we might say to every family) of Disciples throughout the Empire State, I would make it the medium of a suggestion touching the interests of our *best cause*, which I trust may meet a hearty response from every true friend of Him who died to redeem the world to himself. It is this: That a state convention of the Disciples of this state be held either by delegates or otherwise to confer upon "the good things of the kingdom," to stir each other up to love and good works, and perfect an organization by which to render more efficient the labours of our evangelists, and our own efforts to spread abroad the knowledge of the Lord. Familiar acquaintance with those who hold the truth with us, and "speaking often one to another," are, as we know, efficient means of exciting and keeping alive a proper interest in the cause, and in diffusing a knowledge of its progress among men. The plan of conventions of the friends of any

cause has ever been found promotive of its interest; then why should not the brethren come up in the fulness of their souls to confer upon this best of all subjects, and devise for the future? Not that this convention should have aught of ecclesiastical authority, binding the consciences and the liberty of the members; but a meeting of love, harmony, and peace. It should be during the summer, or in early autumn, at some central point easy of access, and where there is a convenient House—say Cicero, Pompey, or Tully. What say you brethren? Consider the suggestion, and give it a response through the “Witness.”

The congregations in this section are enjoying union and a good degree of prosperity; many accessions to some of them during the winter. With good wishes for yourself and the cause,

Yours in the best of bonds,

H. CHASE.

The suggestive request of our brother, contained in the above, will, we have little doubt, be favourably and practically received. Our travels in New York enable us to say that a number of prominent brethren, in different portions of the state, are ready to give this proposition a salute of welcome, and elicit a warm and joyful cordiality in behalf both of the object and the means.

D. O.

Martville, N. Y., April 21st.

SPECIAL NEWS.

Pompey, March, 14th 1850.

BELoved BROTHER OLIPHANT:—As it is pleasing to every friend of Christ and Christ’s people to hear of the prosperity of the cause they love, and of the spread of the principles of primitive Christianity, I now embrace this means of communicating to you and through you to the brethren some items of intelligence that I trust will be interesting. We are assured there is joy in heaven over one sinner that reforms; and that our Saviour and the celestial spirits view with emotions of pleasure the returning wanderer to his fold; and the saints on earth are permitted to harmonize in their feelings of pleasure and gratitude to the author of all good, for his manifest mercies in permitting man to become his humble instrument to hold forth the word of life “for the obedience of faith.”

We have had very interesting meetings in Pompey, conducted principally by brother E. L. Bates, who came among us as an Adventist;

but one whom we found to be a truth loving and truth seeking disciple and withal a humble and devoted follower of the Lord Jesus in the proclamation of his word.

Through his labors and the united effort of the brotherhood, some eighty persons have become convinced of the truth and become willing converts to the Lord Jesus by being "buried with him by immersion in the likeness of his death, that as he was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, even so they also should rise to walk in newness of life." Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ for the gospel, which is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." And I pray God that they, with us, may be kept to the day of his coming unblamable; that "when the chief Shepherd shall appear we may all receive a crown of life that fadeth not away."

Yours in the Lord, H. KNAPP.

A. S. HAYDEN'S MUSIC BOOK.—Several dozens of this work have come to our office at different times, and the friends of melody soon convince us that the book is a favourite. It is unusually well received. Its typography, its cost, its music, its author—all give it a recommendation. Reader, have you a copy? If not, the quicker you have one the sooner you will have something worth having.

THE EVANGELISTS.—Brother Bradt, of Wainfleet, in a late communication, says, "Our brethren left here on the 16th (March) for Rainham, to commence their labours there. So far as their labours are concerned here, we believe they have made a good impression. Although we received no additions to the church, yet we can truly say that our spiritual strength is renewed; and O that the Lord had more such labourers in the field. We hope a return of our brethren as soon as practicable."

OUR PAPER IN NOTTINGHAM, ENGLAND.—"If Brother Oliphant, of Calada West, should see this, we beg to inform him, that his two last numbers of the WITNESS OF TRUTH came to hand, with a charge of 2s. 4d. each for postage. Of course they were returned to the dead letter office. The reason of the charge being made is that, in folding them up, both the ends are not left open, the same as a newspaper. The consequence is, they are charged as letters."—*British Harbinger*.

We learn, brother Wallis, from our partner, Mr. White, that the *Witness* for England is generally put up and addressed according to the specifications of the postal law. A mistake however might easily occur, and therefore in future care will be taken to have our periodical sent subject to inspection at both ends as well as its inner man after arrival at Nottingham. The *English Harbinger*, it is a pleasure to say, regularly visits us, for which its editor will please accept our acknowledgments.

D. O.