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THE
CHRISTIAN GLEANER.

VOL. 2.

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NO. 6.

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

A WORD TO THE DISCIPLES OF THE ANCIENT
GOSPEL,

IN BEHALF OF REFORMATION, AND FOR THE CONSIDERATION
OF OPPONENTS.

BELOVED,

“WE commend not ourselves again to you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf; that you may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart;—not in reality.”

The reformation for which we plead, is the exhibition of the ancient gospel and law of Christ, as preached and inculcated by the Apostles, and expressly recorded in the New Testament.

Objection. All professions say so.

Answer, Do they do so? If, they do, we are all agreed; but if not, that is no reason why we should not do so. And if all do what we propose and urge, whence come our divisions. If all that preach and teach spoke the same things, would not our divisions speedily terminate? And can this ever take place and be maintained till all obey the apostolic injunction, “Preach the word,”—and,—“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God speak.” Pray how can we do this, but by exhibiting the recorded word as delivered by the Apostles? Have we any authority to preach any thing else? Have we any authority to explain the gospel or law of Christ; much less to add to the propositions either of the law or the gospel, by inculcating anything as matter of faith or obedience, that is not expressly inculcated as such in the New Testament. We do not, however question the authority of translating, or of the grammatical exposition of words and phrases,—but, merely, of theological explanation, for the purpose of making these expositions, inferences, and opinions, articles of faith, and terms of communion. Thus new-modelling the christian religion by those additions and alterations, which now distinguish one sect from another.

Objection. But may not inferences and opinions, formed by just reasoning, be as true as the text? and, if so, ought they not to be received as of equal authority?

To the latter, we answer, No; and that for the following reasons:— First, because it was not the will of Christ to make the knowledge and belief of human inferences a part of his religion; but upon the belief and obedience of what is expressly recorded as his will, did confer upon the believing and obedient all the blessings of his kingdom,—viz. righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Second, because it is not the will of Christ to make all moral and religious truth, or every thing that might be fairly deduced from scripture promises, a part of his religion; for were this the case “the world itself could not contain the books that should be written;” as John says of the many other things which Jesus did, which are not written—not recorded. Third, because inferences and opinions are the proper and immediate effects of human reasoning and judgment: and are, therefore, but of human authority; whereas divine testimony and law are the proper and immediate effects of a divine authority. Wherefore, in the belief and obedience of the former, we obey man; but in the belief and obedience of the latter, we obey God, having an immediate respect to his express authority, and that alone. Fourth, because were all deducible inferences from the holy scriptures, or even a distinct apprehension of every thing expressly contained in them, made a part of the Christian religion, where is the man that could be justly entitled to the name of Christian, and where should we find a society of such? Fifth, and lastly, for the best of all reasons, that the belief and obedience of what is expressly and explicitly revealed concerning Christ, his laws, and ordinances, will render the believing and obedient subject perfect;—thoroughly furnished for all good works. Thus are we thrown back again upon the gospel and law of Christ, as delivered by the Apostles and expressly recorded in the New Testament, that we may find rest to our souls; the belief and obedience of which constitute the Christian religion and the Christian character.

But then, “How can two walk together except they be agreed?” True, unless they be agreed to walk together. But can no two agree to walk together in religious fellowship, unless they think alike in all religious matters? And, if not, where shall we find the two that can walk together? But, perhaps, it will be said, the necessary agreement is only to be understood of things of an essential character. Well, be it so; but by what rule is this to be determined. The difficulty of agreement here, appears to be as insuperable as in the former case. Does not every sect think the things that they have agreed upon, for that purpose, to be quite essential; yet no two sects agree what these ought to be. But they always happen to be what the supreme will and authority of the sect pleases to make them, and not what their intrinsic importance would seem to indicate. For instance, the cutting of a bit of skin of a child eight days old, is quite essential to fellowship in one sect; whilst in another, the aspersion of a few drops of water, accompanied with certain words, is deemed of equal importance. In short, as every religion, true and false, consists of faith and obedience, and is confessedly founded on authority;

Therefore, the belief and obedience of whatever the respective authors saw cause to put into their respective religions, becomes essential; so that he that offends in one point is guilty of all; and therefore stands exposed to the highest penalty that the author of the religion was pleased to annex to the specified disobedience. Thus it was in the Adamic religion, and thus it was in the Jewish religion, death was the highest penalty annexed to disobedience under either: and was inflicted under both for actions, the intrinsic importance of which was apparently of little moment:—under the former, for eating a bit of fruit; under the latter, for gathering a few sticks, and for touching a chest to prevent it from falling. Hence the dangerous absurdity, the impious presumption of making such distinctions as non-essentials in our holy religion.

Whatever the Lord has taught and commanded, is essentially incumbent on us to believe and obey: “For he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar;” and “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar.” Thus, again, are we compelled to fall back on original ground, not only for the sake of christian unity and fellowship; but also for the sake of personal comfort and safety—that we may have a good conscience, and abide under the promise of eternal life. “Blessed are all they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city.”

Objection. We want personal reformation, practical and experimental religion enforced, instead of so much declamation against sectarianism.

Answer. Who can enumerate the evils of sectarianism! *But is there no personal reformation in a strict conformity to the faith and practice expressly inculcated upon the disciples of Christ in the New Testament.* Is there no practical and experimental religion in the belief and obedience of the gospel and law of Christ, as preached and taught by the Apostles? If not, in what does it consist, and where shall we find it? This puts us in mind of the clamorous outcry of the sectarian religionists in our Lord's time, who had made void the word of God by their traditions; they stigmatized him a Sabbath-breaker, a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, as one not sufficiently austere, not addicted to fasting, &c. But he was a reformer.

T. W.

From Jones' Millennial Harbinger.

ANCIENT GOSPEL.—A NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

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 my 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 calvinistic preacher came to our congregation, and so engagingly addressed us on justification by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ, that I saw a fitness and beauty in the 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 the 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 meantime 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 of 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, remarkable or sensible impressions before they obeyed the commandment "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 now I 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 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 felt myself as fully relieved from the burthen of my former transgressions, as ever did a man to whom the Lord said, thy sins are forgiven thee: 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 *yea and amen* in Christ Jesus my Lord. But in all probability I should 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 sacred testimonies that God's philanthropy embraced all those who were pleased to come to him in the 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 sincerity of my heart, believing it would be as God said, and according to my faith so it has 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 as 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 thee, 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 everything as a *tenant at will* does 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 everything that affects his honour 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 from 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 or 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?

BIBLICUS.

EXTRACTS FROM CAMPBELL AND OWEN'S DEBATE.

(CONTINUED.)

Mr. CAMPBELL resumes—

* * * * *

In the prosecution of my argument I had advanced so far as to demonstrate, I trust, that the Jewish religion was divine, and that all its rites were in their nature *symbolical* and *prophetic*; that the sacrifice of a lamb, the building of an altar, the consecration of the priesthood, and the whole ritual of Moses were symbolical and prophetic of christianity; that this ritual was designed to have a two-fold operation—first, upon the generation then living; and secondly, upon posterity. With the first to keep up the constant recollection of the divine institutions of their eligion. Your children, says Moses, will ask you what is the meaning of your eating the paschal lamb; and then you must tell them the circumstances by which you became a nation. And such was the import of every one of the Jewish institutions. When they paid their five shekels per head, for the redemption of the first-

born, their children were to be informed that these first-born were the ransomed of the Lord; and this tribute was rendered in perpetual commemoration of that event. This is implied in the rendition of this tribute up to the present time. Their successors were also to be informed that the Pentecost was solemnly observed as commemorative of the promulgation of the law from Mount Sinai; the feast of the tabernacles for so many days, to commemorate that they once dwelt in tents in the wilderness; that on the fiftieth day after their redemption they heard the voice of God promulgating the law—had seen all the accompaniments of the divine presence, and received the autograph of their constitution from the Lord.

All these things the children of the Israelites were to be taught, and they were so contrived as to be equally prospective and retrospective, so as to preserve and conduct forward the miraculous evidences of their religion. Hence the deliverance of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, their Pentecost, and every part of their ritual, looked forward to, and anticipated a new state of things, in which a certain system of existing realities was to correspond with the past. Was there ever presented an exhibition of wisdom and benevolence comparable to this? Every part of the ritual operates as a commemoration of its divine institution, and to produce faith in all future generations. It was designed to stand for a perpetual monument of their miraculous history to the nations: and its consummation in the development of that order which enters into the constitution of the christian religion, was as natural as the production of the bird from its shell. And thus the consummation of its every type is portrayed in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. On these accounts we consider these memorials as of high moral power and dignity, and the facts which they commemorate as rational and demonstrably established. You have seen what all the gatherings and gleanings of my opponent during a period of forty years, have enabled him to bring forward against these evidences.

With regard to the means employed for the preservation and perpetuation of these holy oracles, there were not only the temple and tabernacle, but men set apart to take care of the record. And the necessity of their care emphatically impressed upon them. This was the way to preserve it from interpolation. No man dare touch it at peril of his life; and this is the reason why Uzzah was struck dead for touching the chest, in which was the sacred deposite, to represent the majesty of that power which guarded it.

Now, in process of time, the copy of this record began to be read in every synagogue. Their land, like other countries, in time, became too small for its population. In consequence, they emigrated, and carried with them their religion, their history, and law, to the ends of the earth. These migrations caused the Jewish scriptures to be translated into the Greek language, about 300 years before the birth of Christ. By the order of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the whole writings of Moses and the Prophets were translated by seventy-two Jews, for

the benefit of the foreign-born Jews, and of the proselytes made from other nations. Thus by this singular wisdom were these oracles handed to every nation under heaven; insomuch that the learned sages of Greece became conversant with these oracles. The Jews traversing all parts of the earth, carried along with them their religious peculiarities; thus all nations were called to bear witness to the truth of these sacred scriptures. This singular people when contrasted with the philosophic nations of Greece and Rome in their notions of God, exhibit a phenomenon which can only be explained on the admission of a supernatural revelation being bestowed upon them.

The Greeks and Romans had cultivated philosophy very extensively. Their languages exhibit the most polished intellectual refinement, and express every ramification of human thought; they not only invented, but compounded and remodified words so that any idea whatever could be forcibly expressed thereby. They had cultivated science to an extent far beyond any other nations; but they had, nevertheless, a thousand foolish superstitions composing their mythology. But here were a people called Jews, ignorant of, and contemning philosophy, who considered the Greeks absolutely stupid and blind in matters of religion. Yes, the acute, the polished, and refined Greeks were sots in theological matters; but the Jews, destitute of philosophic taste and acquirements were nevertheless in possession of a religion every way honorable to the character of the Creator and Governor of the World. Now how is this to be accounted for? A polished nation, like the Greeks, embracing a system full of theological absurdities; and, on the other hand, the rude and unlettered Jews holding the only rational views of the Creator, and contending for the unity and spirituality of God!!

But this same people, being a travelling people, carried their oracles with them every where; and by this universal promulgation of them communicated to all nations the confident expectation that some wonderful person was to be born, through whose influence there was to be brought about a universal revolution in society; through whom a new order of things was to arise, and the world be blest thereby.—For this universal promulgation of the Jewish record, all nations fondly cherished the idea, that at the very time of the actual birth of the Messiah, a person in that character should appear in the land of Judea; the Roman Poet* sings of it; all nations had arrived at an uniformity and universality of anticipation in this matter, and in the reign of Augustus, there was not a nation which was not as fully prepared as the Jews to anticipate the advent of the Messiah.

*Late researches into the antiquities of Judea, Persia, and China, show that the same traditions and hopes existed in the most distant eastern nations. Vide Asiatic researches, Indian antiquities. Piere Du Hold's history of China.

CHRISTIAN MORALITY.

ON SPEAKING TRUTH.

“AND as he thinketh in his heart, so doth he truth express,” is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Truth is the basis of all confidence amongst rational beings. Implicit confidence in every word spoken would have always been enjoyed had it not been for the introduction of lies. Unbelief and distrust are the natural results of a system of lying and deceit. God has thought proper to designate himself, since the introduction of falsehood into the universe, as “*the God of Truth.*” The Devil is always represented as a *liar*—as the father of liars—as the arch deceiver. Eve was seduced by a lie, and the belief of a lie became the cause of all distrust, and opened a fountain of deceit which has corrupted the whole race of Adam. By the *belief of a lie* death entered into the world; and God has thought proper, *by the belief of the truth*, to introduce men into the enjoyment of life. Every thing good is on the side of truth; and every thing evil is leagued with falsehood. The lying tongue and deceitful lips are an abomination in the sight of God; because from them have proceeded all that is the cause of misery and wretchedness in the world.

From these maxims, which are as universally admitted as the evidence of the christian religion, it is easily inferred that truth is a capital virtue, without which there is no goodness in man. Christians having experienced the evil consequences of the first lie that was spoken in human ears, and having been reclaimed and brought back to God by the belief of truth, are led not only to love *the truth* which brought them to reformation, but to love truth in general. To speak it and to practise it are therefore indispensable duties of the christian.

All errors in religion are of two kinds; as we say, errors in doctrine and errors in practice. Errors in doctrine are simply lies; whilst errors in practice are transgressions of law. Doctrinal errors are doctrinal lies, or false views which the mind takes of things revealed. If, then, a man believe false doctrine, he simply holds that for truth which is, in plain English, a lie. Of those doctrinal lies some are inoperative speculations; others are operative falsehoods which issue in the transgression of law.

Some men, for example, teach for doctrine that repentance is not the *immediate* duty of all men yet unreclaimed. Some believe this to be a truth; consequently, do not repent; but are waiting for something as previous or preparatory to it. Now the holding of this error issues in the transgression of law, or in the transgression of a divine commandment, which expressly saith, “God commandeth *all men every where* to repent.” Again—some take up false views of the repentance, which issues in practical errors. Supposing it to mean no more than a change of views or a regret for the past, they are led to rest

in a change of system or of sentiment, while their practices continue as they were. But did they view it as a truth, that, in the proclamation of repentance, God commandeth such a change of sentiment *through the truth proclaimed*, as commences forthwith reformation of life; and that this *reformation of life* is the end or object of the commandment or proclamation, then nothing short of such a reformation could satisfy the persons entertaining such a view of this proclamation. In this we see how errors in doctrine, or doctrinal lies, issue in transgression of law, either in the way of omission or commission.

The Apostle John, both in his Epistle and in the Revelation distinctly and boldly denominates the speakers or promulgers of false doctrine, *liars*. Those who profess to know God; but in works deny him, the same Apostle calls *liars*. "If," says he, "a man saith I know him, and keep not his commandments, he is a *liar*, and *the truth is not in him*." When the Apostle John saith, "all *liars* shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire," there is every reason to believe, from a just regard to his style, that he especially means the propagators of false doctrine.

But we would call the attention of our readers to a great apostacy from truth; not only doctrinal or sentimental truth, but from speaking truth, and giving true representations to one another in the common intercourse of life. The time has been when a christian was understood to mean a person free from guile, deceit, and falsehood of every kind. He was understood to be a person purified in heart, by the belief of divine truth; a person who made no false pretensions nor promises, and always gave a faithful representation of things. But there appears an awful declension in the general character of christians from this description, in the present day. "Christian nations" are as famous for lying and deceit, as they are for their refinements in the arts of war and an honest way of men stealing. The great multitude seems to have lost a regard for truth, and to have adopted a regular system of prevarication and deception. Even the most solemn promises and pledges are violated without any apparent contrition. A tells B, without any apparent compunction, that he cannot meet his engagements because the times are hard. He will not discommode himself, or make any sacrifice, and scarcely an effort to redeem his pledge, because it is fashionable to excuse oneself for failing to fulfil promises by laying all the guilt upon the depreciation consequent on our extravagancies. But this is not all. In speaking of one another, and to one another, exaggeration and hyperbole do not satisfy the propensity for the marvellous, do not give full vent to our passions, our loves or our hates; but downright fabrication and gross misrepresentation become necessary to carry favorite objects; insomuch that we scarcely know how much to subtract from all that we hear, in order to arrive at the truth. Those whose consciences will not brook downright fabrication and blunt lying, will nevertheless

button themselves up to the chin in a garment of guile of as many plies as the seven-fold shield of Achilles; so that if you were to unbutton some of our giants in morality, they would be mere pigmies in stature. Equivocation, mental reservation, ambiguity, double meanings, high colorings, small subtractions, and little additions are the apparent order of the day. Now the genius and spirit of all the precepts and examples of christian morality on this point are in direct opposition to this course of the world. Even hypocrisy and guile are denounced as most odious offences against the Spirit of Christ; and yet hypocrisy and guile are the most *decent* of all the species of lying and deceit exhibited in the world. One of the ingredients in that famous recipe for long life which King David first promulgated, and which the Apostle Peter attests, is this: "If a man would *live long and see good days*, let him refrain his tongue from evil and *his lips from guile*." If christian societies do not reform in this respect, the character which Paul gave of the Creans will soon accord with the great mass of the christian world—" *The Creans are always liars*."

Every pretence, profession, declaration, and promise, that does not fully accord with simple fact, is to be ranked under the generic head of LYING, and divests the character of that essential attribute of the inhabitants of heaven. "And as he thinketh in his heart, so doth he truth express."

POTENT REPLY TO A WEAK OBJECTION.

"Pulling down every thing, and building up nothing," is an objection often presented against the *Christian Baptist*. The following reply to it from an English paper, is a perfect expression of our sentiments on the subject. The same things have in substance appeared in this work before.—*Ed. C. B.*

"But the charge of *pulling down and not building up any thing in its stead*, is, unintentionally, the highest compliment that can be paid to us. It is to this building up *something*, instead of what was pulled down, that we owe the evils of all pretended reformatations, and it has served more than any thing else to perpetuate error, as it is a lamentable fact, that from Luther down each have set up a system of their own; not always indeed so repugnant to reason as that which they have destroyed, but so encompassed with hedges, that whoever has dared to go farther than they have done, have been considered as enemies to religion.

"*We have nothing to build up*. The fair fabric of christianity stands still as firm and conspicuous in the New Testament as ever it did; all that we have got to do is to remove the walls, the buttresses, and rubbish, which prevent inquiring men from beholding it in its native purity, splendor, and loveliness; and when this is done, the

superstructure will present itself to view—an object deserving of universal admiration; then nothing more will be requisite than to invite men to examine it, as it is fairly and clearly depicted in the New Testament.”

From the Christian Baptist.

JOHN NEWTON.

GOOD men of all sects have nearly the same views of Creeds, Ecclesiastical Courts, of “Christian Experience,” and of Pure Religion. The following sentiments are extracted from one volume of the works of JOHN NEWTON, of excellent memory.—*Editor.*

“I dare not say what the Lord may or may not do; but I have no present conception of love without faith, or of faith without some communication of gospel truth and light to the mind.”

“I am not very fond either of assemblies, consistories, synods, councils, benches, or boards. Ministers as individuals in their respective places, are like flowers, which will preserve their colour and scent much longer, if kept singly, than when packed together in a nosegay or posey, for then they quickly fade and corrupt.”

“It is possible to preach a very good sermon from an English or Scotch proverb. Modes and fashions alter in religious matters, as well as in dress. Our first reformers usually preached from *common places*; they did not take a text, but discussed a subject—such as faith, repentance, holiness, &c. yet surely they were preachers of the gospel. The two volumes or Homilies, to which our clergy are obliged by law to subscribe their assent, are a valuable collection of sermons in this way.”

“On our side of the river, many think as highly of Episcopal as of Congregational order. Perhaps much of our differences of opinion on this head, may be ascribed to the air we breathed, and the milk which we drank in our infancy. If I had lived in Scotland, and known the Lord, my ministry, I suppose, would have been in the Kirk, or the Relief, or the Secession; and if Doctor Erskine had been born and bred among us, and regarded according to his merit, he might perhaps have been Archbishop of Canterbury long ago.”

“May we not say with the apostle, *Grace be with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity?* I think that is a latitudinarian prayer—I hope many agree in loving him, who sadly disagree about trifles. Such is the weakness and wickedness of the heart even in good men. There is a great and old established house, which does much business, and causes no small disturbance in the world and in the church. The firm is SATAN, SELF, AND Co. Till this power-

ful, extensive partnership be dissolved, we cannot expect perfect peace and union among all believers. It will be a joyful day, when its credit shall totally fail. Such a day we are warranted to hope for."

"I cannot speak as you do of remarkable discoveries, &c. I trust I do walk by faith—I certainly do not walk by sight. All my hope, light, and comfort is derived from a little book which I can carry in my pocket."

"If all lay preachers were like-minded with Messrs. H*** and A***, I would pray the Lord to increase their number a hundred fold. We have some such in England, but not a few who would be better employed at the plough or the loom."

"A man who is more fond of novelty, than of honest labor or of being always called plain Tom or Dick, having a good stock of self conceit, transforms himself into a preacher—he then expects to be styled Mr. Thomas, perhaps the Rev. Mr. Thomas, to be excused from work, and to look almost like a gentleman. I fear such motives as these may stimulate some to be missionaries, both for at *home*, and for *abroad*. When these are invited to the houses of the affluent, courted and caressed by people of the first characters, laden with gifts and presents &c. considering what human nature is, I cannot wonder if this sudden transition from obscurity to honor and public notice, has a tendency to turn their heads, and make them think themselves persons of no small consequence."

"I pray the Lord to bless you and all who love his name in Scotland, whether Kirk, Circus, Relief, Burghers, Anti-Burghers, Independents, Methodists, or by whatever name they choose to be called. Yea, if you know a Papist, who sincerely loves Jesus, and trusts in him for salvation, give my love to him."

"Study the *text* of the good word of God. Beware of great books. The first christians had none to read, yet they lived honorably and died triumphantly. Beware of leaning too hard upon human authority, even the best; you may get useful hints from sound divines, but call no man *master*. There are mixtures of human infirmity, and the prejudices of education or party, in the best writers. What is good in them, they obtained from the fountain of truth, the scriptures; and you have as good a right to go to the fountain head yourself."

"There was a man and his wife who had no book but the Bible. In this they read daily, and received much comfort. One day their minister from the pulpit recommended some commentary. They attended to his recommendation, for they purchased the commentary, and sat down to read it. After reading in it for some time, the man asked his wife how she felt now under the commentary. I will tell you 'said he' how I feel. When I read the Bible itself, I felt as if I had drank a glass of wine; but this commentary tastes like a glass of wine in a pail of water. The wife acknowledged her feelings were the same; and by mutual consent they returned to the Bible."

So did write a good High Churchman.

B. ALLEN TO A. CAMPBELL,

AGAINST RECEIVING MEMBERS TO BAPTISM MERELY ON
A PROFESSION OF THEIR FAITH.

Brother Campbell,

I READ, with a great deal of pleasure, your *Christian Baptist*. Your April number was truly pleasing. On some topics, however, introduced into that work, I have doubted whether the editor has not, in opposing error, sometimes gone to an extreme I will specify one case—that of receiving members into the church on the bare expression or declaration made by the eunuch to Philip, the evangelist. Now, that, amongst the Baptists, there are some times many unnecessary questions asked, and many, very many, unnecessary and enthusiastic things told, is admitted and lamented. It is also admitted that in the New Testament, there is no example of any being received into the church or churches by the relation of a christian experience. But, brother, you admit on some other cases, (and that of divine command too) that a change of circumstances and customs may justify a change of practice, where the manifest design and spirit of the practice or command of Christ and his apostles are not violated; as in the case of the “*holy kiss*,” five times enjoined by the apostles, being strictly obeyed by the *christian shake-hands*, and this is argued from the change of custom and circumstances. Now that there is a change in the circumstances of the people in christian countries, when compared with those of apostolic ages, is manifest. Then the great question was, Is Jesus of Nazareth *the Christ*, or is he not?—Did he really rise from the dead, or did he not? The apostles and disciples of Christ, on the one part, affirmed; the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, on the other part, denied and contradicted—and so unpopular was the bare confession, that Jesus was “*the Christ*,” that it subjected the person to infamy and reproach, if not to death. Under these circumstances, a bare declaration that they did believe Jesus was the Christ, and a desire publicly to obey him, was a sufficient evidence to the apostles and brethren that there was a change of heart. Add to this, also, the notable case of Ananias and Sapphira, his wife, who, for deception, were struck dead, producing fear on all the people, “and of the rest durst none join themselves unto them.”—But now circumstances are very different, (at least in some of these things;) it is now no great disgrace to profess that *Jesus is the Christ*: no great dishonor to *obey him*; no great fear of scourgings, imprisonments, and torturing deaths; no signal judgments on hypocrites and impostors, to make others fear. If, therefore, the apostles required the strongest evidence that *then* could be given of sincerity of heart, is it not reasonable that we should require the strongest evidence that can *now* be given of a real change of heart in those whom we invite into our union and fellowship as members of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. You will not understand me as supposing that the strongest evidence of a change of heart consists in a *systema*

tical-experience, or that in this matter we are to measure ourselves by ourselves or compare ourselves among ourselves; but as you admit that men must be *born again*, and that this change is more or less known, or knowable to the subject of it, in proportion to their age and circumstances, and that such change is always followed by correspondent fruits of *love* to Christ, to holiness, and to christians, with a manifest abhorrence of sin, whether discovered in themselves or in others; of *joy* in believing in Christ, and in doing his will; of *peace* with *God* the Spirit, in the heart, crying *Abba, Father!* with *men*, in seeking their good, &c. &c. Shall we not, I say, require such a confession with the mouth, as will give us a charitable conviction that they have "believed with the heart unto righteousness;" and that according to their age, or the circumstances under which they have been raised, or in which they have lived. These remarks I submit to you with the confidence of a brother in Christ, believing, when understood, there will be no material difference of sentiment on this subject. Indeed I think I already understand you, but wish you to be more explicit for general satisfaction. You can make what use you please of any part of this letter; and as my name fixed to any composition of mine will likely never bring me to great honor, I wish it always to appear. I remain your unfeigned brother in Christ Jesus our Lord.

B. ALLEN.

REPLY.

Brother Allen—I perfectly agree with you "that we should require the strongest evidence that can *now* be given of a real change of heart in those whom we now baptize." The only question then is, What is that evidence? We must remember that we have no right, no law, nor precedent for putting off an applicant for one single day. The applicant *may*, and, indeed, *ought*, to solicit baptism the hour he believes. We cannot say to him, Go and show us by your works for a week, a month, or a year, that you are a genuine convert. This would be a glaring infraction of every principle, law, and precedent in the kingdom of Jesus. What then? Shall we require the testimony of others respecting the character of the candidate? This cannot be satisfactory. They may tell us he is moral, virtuous, and was always so; or they may tell us he is reformed; but still this is not sufficient evidence. Nay, should they testify that he is known to be devout, still a question arises, Why was he not long since immersed if so good a man—if so devout? We are at length reduced to a necessity of taking his own word, and acting upon that. Now the question is, In reference to *what* shall we take his word? Shall we require him to declare what he *believes* or what he *feels*, or both? For the first we have apostolic example, but for no other. Suppose, however, that we have found a safer way, (the apostles were deceived

sometimes,) and that circumstances have changed so far as to render the *ancient order* obsolete or unsuitable; for there is now no shame in professing, no danger of all those evils and terrors which you very properly enumerate—how shall we prove *our way*, to be safer than the good *old way*? They never told their experience in order to baptism; but it is supposed that this new way is not liable to the same objections as the old way. But will you please consider that all the shame and terror which you have very properly detached from saying “*I believe with all my heart that Jesus is the Son of God,*” is also detached from a narrative of our feelings, and our “*journey from nature to grace.*” Now if the shame of terrors prevented hypocrisy then, they might, if they still existed prevent it still. But they do not exist, either in relation to the confession of faith or the narrative of experience and consequently can have no effect in one ease more than in the other. If from the love of honor and absence of human terrors, men will solemnly declare a lie in professing their faith, they will solemnly tell a lie in narrating an experience which they never felt, and which, if they did feel, is to us not so sure an evidence of a change of heart as a declaration of the precious faith. For we are assured that all who believe what they confess, are born of God; but we are not sure that all who have felt as that candidate feels, are born of God. I am, therefore, dear brother, fully convinced that the good old way affords us the strongest evidence that the nature of the case admits.

A change of circumstances cannot be plead against the ancient, nor in favor of the new way—for circumstances equally affect both. Nor would I carry the argument from a change of circumstances so far in relation to the topic which you mention against any instituted item of religious worship. A brother in Maryland wrote me a long letter in favor of *the holy kiss*, which was received after my departure from home last Fall. I had intended it for publication, but it has been jostled ont. He lays great stress upon the *five times* commanded, and inveighs against my reasoning on a change of circumstances or customs. Had I published his letter, I should have illustrated one point not stated in my remarks upon “*the holy kiss,*” and which would have shown that a change of circumstances and customs was not the reasonings which sets aside a holy kiss in our country. Advocates for this usage deceive themselves by inserting a definite article and by rejecting the indefinite which always precedes the terms *holy kiss*. It is not *the holy kiss*, but *a holy kiss*. All instituted acts of religion are characterized by the definite article, as, *the Lord’s table*, *the Lord’s day*, &c. It is one thing to command *a holy kiss*, and another to command *the holy kiss*. The former style is decisive evidence that it was no stated institution, while the latter would most certainly have shown it to be established—against which no change of circumstances could be plead; but as it is, a change of circumstances can be plead with good effect. This, in passing, as a caveat against a licentious prin-

cept of reasoning in opposition to plainly and solemnly ordained usages and sacred institutes.

I am willing, brother Allen, to give to your reasoning all due regard, and I have no doubt but what you have written is as much to the purpose as any man can adduce; but you will see that while we equally agree that the strongest evidence which can be adduced ought to be demanded, the only question of moment is, What is the strongest evidence?

I will admit that if there is any ground to suspect the sincerity of the applicant, or any intimation of any improper motive impelling him to solicit the ordinance, I would sift him to the bottom, and on suspicious evidence, say to him, Go and bring forth fruits worthy of your profession. But where there is no ground of suspicion, and the person freely comes forward and solicits baptism upon a solemn declaration of what the eunuch professed, I would say nothing should hinder his baptism, and no experience be inquired after. A person can have little or no christian experience until he is born of water as well as of the Spirit; and it does appear to me preposterous to demand the experience of a christian from a person who has not yet put on Christ, not dead to sin, nor buried, nor risen with Christ. When a person has come out of the bath of regeneration, and has been born of the Spirit and the water, we look for the experience of a christian; but it will take more logic than all the colleges in your state possess, to persuade me it is reasonable to demand a narrative of christian experience from a person who has never publicly confessed the Lord Jesus, nor assumed his name. Yours, most affectionately,

EDITOR.

OBITUARY.

WILLIAM BALLANTINE, an aged and venerable president of the church of Christ, in Philadelphia—one of the most learned and amiable of the advocates of the ancient faith—after a long and painful illness, which he bore with christian fortitude and resignation, fell asleep in the hope of immortality on the morning of the 4th day of January last, 1836,

He was well known in England, Scotland, and Ireland, as a laborious minister among the Independents and Scotch Baptists; and for some years after his arrival in this country he labored amongst the Baptists of Pennsylvania. But a few years since, becoming acquainted with the principles of the present reformation, he cordially embraced them, and gave them not only his cordial suffrages but, to the utmost of his ability, laboured in the cause. He was eminently skilled in the original tongues, a most excellent lecturer on language and the Holy Scriptures; and we trust that the seed, which he has scattered in a long life devoted to the Lord, will result

in an abundant harvest to the praise of the Lord, and to his eternal rejoicing at the great feast of ingathering—at the harvest home.—*Ed.—M. H.*

***LETTER FROM W. BALLANTINE TO THE CHURCH,
MEETING IN BANK STREET.**

Beloved Brethren,

IT pleases the Lord to lay his hand upon me by a painful disease, which detains me from your assemblies: but good is his will. Have I received so much good from his hand, and shall I not receive evil also? Though absent from you, nevertheless I am present in spirit, beholding the steadfastness of your faith, and joying in the order of our heavenly Father's house. It is my earnest prayer before the throne of his grace, that we may be perfect and entire in the whole of his will, making increase with a great increase in all the fruits of the Spirit. Brethren we are called to purity in soul, body, and spirit, and to abound in that holiness, the holiness of the truth, without which no one shall see the Lord. I am filled with joy, when I consider your association in the kingdom of our Lord. Such is your church state, that, delivered from the sects of the present day, you may walk in the fear of the Lord, in comforts of the Holy Spirit, being edified and comforted, building up each other in your holy faith. Brethren, I beseech you, improve your vast advantages. Never forsake the assembling of yourselves together, and engage with all the holy fervors of devotion continuing steadfastly in the teaching of the Apostles, in the fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers: and ever remember, that these ordinances of Heaven are intended and calculated, by the supply of the Spirit of all grace, to keep up a continued intercourse with our heavenly Father through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus our assembling together will be for the better, and not for the worse. Be concerned also, brethren, to come behind in no gift, that you be able to edify one another in love. Remember that every good and perfect gift is from the Father of lights, and that he hath said, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally."

Liberal, indeed, are his thoughts and ways towards us. Since I had the happiness of meeting with you, I have indeed endured a great fight of affliction, nor did I ever think I should again be able to put pen to paper; but, blessed be his name, he has enabled me to endure. Lying in his hand, I have been able to say, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come," I must say to the praise of his glorious name, that while my outward man has been perishing, my inward man has been renewing day by day. I can tell no one the pains, oppression, and uneasiness of body I have

*Written during his last illness.

suffered ; but it is all light and trivial, compared to the joys and ecstatic pleasures I have enjoyed in fellowship with our heavenly Father, and with Jesus his beloved Son ! O ! what pleasures in the love of the Father, and in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ! The Lord has given me years of delightful study in all the parts of his revealed will ; and now, in the close of my existence here, he gives me to take an enlarged and succinct view of the whole Book. How beautiful its parts ! How stupendously great its whole ! The Messiah crucified ! Blessed Jesus ! the brightness of the Father's glory ! No wonder that when Philip said to thee, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," that thou didst reply, "Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip ? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" who sent me. Blessed God, who has made all thy glory to centre and be displayed in thy beloved Son ; so that we now, with the most unbounded confidence in all thy perfections, hear the song of angels, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will towards men !" Father of lights, thou art light, and in thee is no darkness at all. And thou that didst command the light to shine out of darkness, hast shined into the hearts of the holy Apostles, to give the light of the knowledge of all thy great name in the face, the person, the work, of thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, that they might reflect this light upon the benighted sons of men ; that thou mightest make thy great name to be known, not to the Jews only, but to all the ends of the earth, as the Lord God, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and by no means clearing the guilty. Father, who is a God like to thee ! O ! the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! O ! the endearments of redeeming love ! God glorified—man saved ! Meditate on these things.

WILLIAM BALLANTINE.

Camden, N. J. February 6, 1835.

LETTER FROM W. BALLANTINE TO A. CAMPBELL,
ON FIRST PRINCIPLES.

"THE following most excellent epistle is from the pen of one of the most experienced christian bishops* in the city of Philadelphia."

To the Editor of the Christian Baptist.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your answer to Paulinus in your September number is truly pleasing. I have rejoiced in Spirit, and praised the Father of Light for its contents. Your capitals deserve indeed to be written in capitals of gold—"No man can be saved by the belief of any theory—true or false—no man will be damned for the disbelief of

* The individual whose obituary is noticed in page 137.

any theory."—Nor is your assertion less important—"the only question with me is to understand each sentence" [of the scriptures] "in its own context."

I am not at all surprised that the descriptions you give of faith, regeneration, christian experience, and the sanctifying influence of the truth, should occasion such opposition. No man will believe that faith is the belief of the gospel till he understand the gospel in the sense in which the apostles preached it. Express the gospel in every possible way, and exhibit in the most pointed manner that it is impossible to be saved in the very nature of things, in any way but by believing what God has said of his Son: Still the thing is not understood—the internal feeling and sentiment of every one, even the best instructed in speculations about the gospel, is, "What shall I do that I may work the works of God?" And if you are so plain and pointed that such persons cannot mistake you that you mean exactly what you say, the faith is no more than believing what God says of Jesus—then the carnal mind rises in wrath against God's only way of saving sinners. For in the ears of all such persons the words of Jesus, faith, repentance &c. mean no more to them than the same thing they have done, or are about to do to reconcile God to them, and thus avert his wrath. The work that God has wrought they will by no means believe. And it has appeared to me the more orthodox, as you would say, unbelievers are, the more they are opposed to salvation by faith. The fact is, that men are not disposed to be dependant on the Saviour for salvation, and therefore their hearts rise in enmity against the doctrine of the gospel. And this is the real cause why their minds are blinded as to God's way of renovating the human soul and sanctifying all its powers. You have no doubt observed the striking beauty of the Saviour's words to Paul in reference to the effects of that gospel which he was to preach among the Gentiles, Acts xxvi. 18. "To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified through faith that is in me."

Here the Saviour attributes the enlightening of the mind, the renovation of the heart, the forgiveness of sins, and the present and eternal inheritance of his people, to the faith that is in him. A mistake then with respect to this faith will be fatal, to the whole of personal salvation. Hence the great mistakes about what is called "christian experience," I do not, indeed, approve of the phraseology. The word "experience" is used, I think, only three times in our translation of the Bible: first, in the book of Genesis, xxx. 27. where Laban says that he had learned by "experience" that the Lord had blessed him in worldly things on account of Jacob, second Eccles. i. 16, where Solomon boasts of his having great "experience" of wisdom and knowledge, evidently in worldly matters, above all that were before him in Jerusalem, And third, Rom. v. 4, where in Paul's beautiful climax he informs us that "patience worketh ex-

perience." The two first passages seem to regard altogether the things of this life; and Paul's "experience" seems plainly to refer to the proof we have of the interpositions of the Divine Providence in our behalf, when we patiently endure afflictions, especially for the sake of the gospel, or for righteousness' sake, as may be strikingly seen in the case of Joseph when imprisoned in Egypt. But this aside, I know what believers mean by "experience," viz. all the influence of the Spirit and gospel of God upon their minds and hearts. But others have a very different meaning. Their experience is their Saviour. That is, the many convictions of sin, and the law work they underwent before Christ, as they think, was made precious to them, and the sad struggle they have had since to persuade themselves that God loves them, and that they have an interest in Christ. That is, their religious feelings are their experience and their Saviour and their ground of hope, such as it is, before God. You would do well, then, to analyze and expose "experience" in this way. We may rest assured, that if we use the words "christian experience," or any other phraseology in a sense in which the Holy Spirit does not use them, that some error lies at the bottom. When the Spirit of Truth describes the influence of divine truth upon the mind, he uses more emphatic and defined language—such as "light in the Lord," "righteousness," "knowledge," the holiness of the truth," the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" or as Paul beautifully states it in few words, when enjoining on Timothy that he ought to charge the teachers of christianity that they teach no other doctrine than that which the apostles taught, he reminds him that the end of this charge which he gave him was "love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved, have turned aside unto vain jangling." 1 Tim. i. 5. Now Paul's definition of vain jangling in christianity, let it be about what is called christian experience or any thing else is that which is aside from love out of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. I admire this definition of "christian experience," or, I would rather say, of the influence of the gospel upon all the powers of man. But what does Paul mean? His meaning is obvious and the more striking that he descends his climax. The last step of his ladder is "faith unfeigned." And this is that which saves the guilty, depraved, perishing sinner. "Faith feigned" is when a man professes with his lips what he does not believe in his heart, like Simon Magus, who professed with his lips what he discovered by his works he did not believe in his heart. "Faith unfeigned" is the language of the lips expressing the belief of the heart. Like the eunuch when put on examination of his faith, that is of what he believed, answered, which seems to have been the express index of his heart, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God." Acts viii. 37. Or, as Paul himself expresses it, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus," [the very identical Jesus whom Paul preached] "and believe in thine heart that God

raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." But say many, thou must believe with thy heart and not with thy head, Oh, fools, and slow of heart to believe, what even common sense dictates! Are there two ways of believing? If a man believes—he believes! I know of no other way of correcting the fallacy. The question is, Does a man believe what God has said of his Son, or instead of this does he believe any religious conceit of his own imagination, or that of any of his fellow men? He may believe any thing in religion he pleases, but if he does not believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the only Saviour, he cannot be saved. Faith unfeigned, then, is to confess with the mouth, as an index of the heart, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. Now the second step upward (of christian experience) or rather of the influence of divine truth upon all the powers of man, is "a good conscience." Conscience is that knowledge which men have of their connexion with the author of their existence, either from tradition or from the written word of God, whereby they understand that now and after death they must give an account of themselves to God. What an awful account this must be is beyond the power of utterance. Overpowered with the account, men hear the gospel, that the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses from all iniquity, they believe it and escape to the blood, the sacrifice which the Saviour offered on Calvary, and see in this sacrifice that which satisfies the justice of God as to their crimes, and glorifies all the perfections of Deity in their justification, and obtain peace with God through the death of Christ; yea, the answer of a good conscience towards God through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, because that resurrection evinces that the Deity was satisfied with the atonement made on Calvary, inasmuch as Jesus of Nazareth was raised from the dead, and placed at the right hand of the throne of the Almighty. Consequently, that which satisfies the justice of the eternal God, pacifies the conscience which is enlightened in the knowledge of the justice and holiness of God. Those who have their consciences satisfied with anything less than that which satisfies the justice and holiness of the Deity, are building upon the sand. A good conscience is that which meets the justice and purity of the Divine Majesty, by the righteousness of God, the obedience unto death, of Jesus the Son of God. We have the answer of a good conscience towards God, because we urge nothing in our justification, before him but what magnifies his law and makes it honorable; namely, the death of his beloved Son. And we receive all our knowledge of right and wrong from this source. This, then, is a good conscience. The pure heart, is defined by Peter— "Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren," &c. &c. 1 Pet. i. 22. The "truth" is the gospel of the Son of God, which exhibits every object in its true light, and stands opposed to all the lies of Satan and his children about anything you please. Obeying this truth is believing it in the very sense, and in none other in which God speaks

it, and this necessarily produces a pure heart, the purification of the whole soul—the mind is enlightened, the conscience is purged and at peace—the passions, the will, the affections, all the volitions are thrown into the gospel mould—the new creature is produced, the workmanship of God; or as Paul beautifully describes the believing Romans, God be thanked, that though ye were the slaves of sin, ye have obeyed from the heart that mould of doctrine into which ye were cast. Rom. vi. 17. The gospel is the mould of teaching; obeying the gospel is believing the gospel; by believing the gospel, the soul is cast into it, as metal infusion is cast into a mould, and receives all that divine impression, in every power of the soul which the gospel believed is calculated to produce. Hence love to God who first loved us—love to all, whether persons or things, that bear his authority and his image. Hence especially the peculiar affection which is purely a christian affection—love to the brethren of Christ, because they are his brethren for the truth's sake, for the gospel's sake which is in them and shall be with them for ever, whether on earth or in heaven; and hence the benevolence to all men which the gospel breathes to the most inveterate of God's enemies. All this worketh that Spirit of the Truth which convinceth men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment by the gospel. Never was there any other work of the Holy Spirit to the personal salvation of men, to their being born from above, or being partakers of the divine nature. If any man have not this spirit of Christ with which he was anointed, he is none of his. This is the pure heart. And all this purity is from faith in the Son of God. No right sentiment, no peace of conscience, no holy feeling, no submission to the authority of God, no holy living but by the belief of the Son of God. Jesus must have all the glory. He has all the glory of the new creature, because he is the head of it; and his enemies who would have any religious experience from him, shall be eternally disappointed. I say, then, if I understand you, I wonder not that your little work meets with many enemies in what is called the religious world. But go on. Cut off every sentiment and every feeling that is not grafted on the cross of Christ, and care not who feels the severe incision. For every plant which the great husbandman has not planted shall be rooted up.

When I began this scribble I intended in the end of it to have given you specimens of speculation in christianity contrasted with the opposite truth, which have been among my papers for some time; but I have neither time nor room. If any ideas in this epistle be approved by you, they are at your service—and I can send you the specimens another time.

W. B.

ANECDOTE.

A Scotch blacksmith being asked the meaning of *metaphysics*, explained it as follows:—"When the party who listens dinna ken what the party who speaks means, and the party who speaks dinna ken what he means himself—that is metaphysics."

THE MANY AGAINST THE FEW.

The few have had a conflict with the many in every attempt towards Reformation since error got the better of truth. This for a long time must uniformly be the case. Therefore, none ought to be discouraged because of the numbers or influence of those leagued in support of any error. The history of the world is replete with information and encouragement on this subject. Truth, fairly presented, and enforced by the good examples of its advocates, has ever triumphed, and will continue to triumph till the victory is complete. "To the law, then, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. viii. 20.

"ALMOST THOU PERSUADEST ME TO BE A CHRISTIAN."

"THE son of Herod sat in regal state
 Fast by his sister-queen,—and mid the throng
 Of supple courtiers and of Roman guards
 Gave solemn audience. Summon'd to his bar
 A prisoner came who with no flattering tone
 Brought incense to a mortal. Every eye
 Question'd his brow,—with scowling eagerness,
 As there he stood in bonds. But when he spake
 With such majestic earnestness,—such grace
 Of simple courtesy;—with fervent zeal
 So boldly reason'd for the truth of God,
 The ardor of his heaven-taught eloquence
 Wrought in the royal bosom, till its pulse
 Responsive trembled with the new-born hope
 "Almost" to be a Christian. So, he rose,—
 And with the courtly train swept pompous by.
 —"Almost!"—and was this all, thou Jewish king?
 Thou list'ner to the ambassador of Heaven —
 "Almost persuaded?"—Ah! hadst thou exchange'd
 Thy trappings and thy purple, for his bonds
 Who stood before thee,—hadst thou drawn his hope
 Into thy breast, even with the sharpest spear
 Of martyrdom,—how great had been thy gain!—
 —O, ye!—who linger while the call of God
 Bears witness with your conscience, and would fain,
 Like king Agrippa, follow,—yet draw back
 Awhile into the vortex of the world,
 Perchance to swell the hoard which Death shall sweep
 Like driven chaff away,—'mid stranger bands,—
 Perchance, by Pleasure's deadening opiate lull'd,
 To false security,—or by the fear
 Of man constrain'd,—or mov'd to give your sins
 A little longer scope,—beware!—beware!
 Lest that dread "almost" shut you out of heaven." L. H. S.

TERMS.

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