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THE
CHRISTIAN BANNER.

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."
"This is love, that we walk after his commandments."

VOL. VIII.

COBOURG, APRIL, 1854.

NO. 4.

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE GRAND RIVER ASSOCIATION.

This document, kindly sent to our office, we had almost forgotten. It has lain among a pile of unreviewed papers and pamphlets for months. But we must let it speak and speak of it though at a late day; for neither our Baptist brethren nor the Disciples will be one iota the worse by reason of comparing each other's views in reference to the general scope of this denominational epistle.

Beyond the fact that this Letter is honored by an Association of over two thousand Baptists, or that it utters the mind of some twenty or thirty thousand Baptists in Canada, there is nothing in or about it claiming particular attention. The writer—Mr. E. Clarke of St George—has given us neither literature nor theology, neither theory nor practice very attractive or important.

His first paragraph is clear and pointed:

In this epistle we ask your attention to the subject of 'The Unity of the Spirit.' And as there is, at the present time, much said about "Union" and "Unity;" "Spirit" and "Spirits," it may not be amiss for us to define, what Spirit it is, the unity of which we are about to speak; and especially as we are commanded, to try the Spirits "knowing many false prophets have gone out into the world," 1 John.

All this is true, and the following also:

The attributes and actions of a person, are ascribed to the Holy Ghost. Let us simply refer to a few of them, as they are too conclusive to need many comments. The Spirit is said to speak. "He shall not speak of himself," John xvi 13. "Then the Spirit said to Peter," Acts x 19. "The Spirit said to Philip," Acts. viii. 29. *To know*, 1st Cor ii, 10 11. "The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man save the Spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no one but the Spirit of God."

Quite an effort is then made to prove what few have the hardihood to deny, that the Spirit is more than mere power or a mere attribute, concluding with this sentence,—“That the Holy Ghost is not an attribute of God, nor the power of God, is proved by the language of Peter,

Acts 3, "Why hath satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost." Friend Clarke carries his point with a vengeance when he testifies that the Holy Spirit is not the power of God because the Spirit is more than mere power. Elder Clarke's lady is not the power of Elder Clarke to convey a message of good-will to a suffering neighbor because she is more than that power!! What theological nonsense some good men will speak to rivet a favorite dogma upon the minds of their adherents. Yet, we endorse the Elder's sentiment, if we understand it, that the Spirit is more than mere power.

Again, says the author of the circular Letter—

That the Holy Ghost is distinct from the letter of the word, is evident from the fact, that he inspired holy men of old to write it, and was before it; "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Peter 1. 21. To admit this, would be tantamount to say, that the letter of the word moved holy men of old to write the letter of the word, and thereby sanction the self-contradiction, that while as yet there was no letter of the word, the letter of the word directed holy men to write the letter of the word, that is, to write itself while it did not exist. No marvel, that those who maintain this sentiment, should fly to outward forms for salvation, denying the independent quickening of the Holy Spirit and give the praise of their salvation to the letter of the word and to water, holding baptism to be regeneration.

O Elder Clarke, Elder Clarke! "The letter of the word"—the letter of the letter—the word of the word! The Scotsman's metaphysics must have been imported into Canada, and a full supply been received at St. George. In the midst of this clumsy orthodoxy, however, there are glimmerings of genuine light and sober truth. The word of God did not write itself. It is the divine word of the Divine Spirit. The Holy Spirit moved holy men's lips and holy men's pens, and their sayings when recorded, and their documents and epistle-form what is inspiringly as well as pre-eminently called "the word's"—the language of the Holy Spirit.

To say that Mr. Clarke is Mr. Clarke's Letter, or to say that this Letter wrote his Letter, would be something like a lunatic's whim; and yet, if anything could be more whimsically absurd, it would be the affirmation that the word is the author of the word. With the Elder therefore we add, "No marvel that those who maintain this sentiment should fly to outward forms for salvation," or fly any and everywhere but to the arms of Jesus the Lord of Life.

But our friend Clarke has at length arrived at something which is a serious and capital ground of difference between the Baptists and those who cannot find such a title for the Lord's people in the creed of Christ. "The independent quickening of the Holy Spirit," as

taught by Messrs. Clarke, Smith, Davidson, Cleghorn and others, is a traditionary quickening—a delusion as palpable as the conceits of modern spirit-rapping. According to all our authoritative testimony, the testimony of heaven, *we cannot say that the Holy Spirit ever entered into a sinner, independently of the word, to quicken him.* If Elder Clarke has seen, or heard, or knows of, an instance, we trust he will produce it. In the whole catalogue of miracles, signs, wonders, and powers brought to view, displayed, and illustrated in the volume of God's truth, we have never yet discovered such a case; and if the age of miracles came, and continued, and passed away, without one such instance, is it not too late to look for such a developement in this generation of theological counterfeits?

Now, Elder, do not turn round and tell something for the editor that he never said, nor peddle a doctrine among Baptists for the Disciples that the Disciples do not believe. There is no dispute about the existence of the Spirit. There is no disagreement regarding the fact that the Spirit exerts quickening power. Set these two things down as settled, Mr. Clarke. But you may tell every man in Canada, and preach it in your sermons, and write it in your correspondence, that the Disciples hold and teach that the living Spirit addresses, converts, and sanctifies men by or through its own instrument the word of its own utterance. Just as a Baptist Elder influences his hearers, not independently of his discourse, so the Holy Spirit pleads with men, enlightens men, converts men, edifies men, sanctifies men by the instrumentality furnished by the Holy Spirit. Referring to the past, the apostle who preached in Thessalonica, says to the saints there, "When you received the word of God, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh in you that believe;" 1 Thess. ii. 13. This was an effectual call and an effectual work by the word of God!—*but not by the word alone*, for Paul was not versed in the mystery of abstract word or abstract Spirit; and therefore he is free to say in the same inspired letter, "you became followers of the Lord, having received the word. . . with joy of the Holy Spirit." 1 Thess. i. 6. Do you understand the faithful Paul, Elder Clarke? He was a Disciple! His views on the operation of the Spirit were sound and wholesome—divinely orthodox!!

Quiet your nerves, Elder, while our spirit influences you by our word in relation to those who "give the praise of their salvation to the letter of the word and to water, holding baptism to be regeneration." What an ignorant as well as impious people must that people be who *praise the letter of the word—AND PRAISE WATER!!!* We did think

that we were somewhat posted up in reference to the various denominations in Canada and America, but it appears there is one sort of religionists with whom we have yet to become acquainted. Will friend Clarke tell us who they are, where they are, and how to get an introduction to them? It would gratify curiosity, if it would not be edifying, to learn in full the sentiments, habits, and practise of such a people. One thing is sure, that whoever and wherever they are, they know little about the God of the Holy Scriptures, the grace of the Lord Jesus, or the light and life of the Spirit.

True, indeed, the Disciples have been variously and persistently charged with holding the doctrine of baptismal regeneration; and the Elder ought to know, if he does not, that the Baptists have been charged more than ten thousand and one times with making too much of baptism, finding their salvation in water, and making a plunge in a river or lake a passport to heaven. O yes, friend Clarke knows the weakness of these charges against Baptists coming from a stout Wesleyan or a soldierly Presbyterian, armed with old traditions, when pressed hard to sustain himself by the authority of the inspired Book. It is however very convenient for the Elder to step over to the side of the cavillers, and fire a shot at those who are not *Regular* Baptists, using the armour of the Pedos against the Baptists!

To regenerate a man is to new create him. The Father, the Son, the Spirit, the apostles, the gospel, the knowledge of the truth, faith, repentance, obedience in baptism, effect this new creation; and what the authority of high heaven has linked together it is not wise in any Elder, Clergyman, Priest, Cardinal or Popo to separate. Baptism is not regeneration—repentance is not regeneration,—faith is not regeneration—knowledge is not regeneration—and certainly no sane man would transform the Father, Son, and Spirit into regeneration. But the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, through the apostles, their gospel, and the knowledge of it, by faith in the Lord, repentance unto life, and baptism into Christ, are the divinely appointed means of the soul-cheering and soul-saving change we call the new creation. The whole centres in Jesus: for he is Lord and Head of the universe. The Father speaks of, for, and by him; the Spirit pleads for and illustrates him; the apostles are his servants to do his will; the gospel is the message by which they develop him; that message learned is the knowledge of him; faith takes hold of him; repentance dissolves the connexion between the sinner and sin as respects the love of it, and henceforth he clings to Jesus; and “as many as are baptized into Christ put on Christ.”—This New Testament heresy at this day

is awful, no doubt ; but if Elder Clarke will now accept of our compliments we shall take our leave of him.

We are happy in knowing that there are hundreds of intelligent Baptists in the province who are wiser, more candid, and honorable than their Elders. They are our brethren and we love them. We do not hate the Clarkes, the Davidsons, the Cleghorns, the Smiths : but it seems that they " will not come to the light lest their deeds should be reprov'd."

D. O.

MR. WALKER ON SPIRITUAL UNION.

DEAR MR. OLIPHANT: SIR:—The eighteen facts adduced by me [in the September Number] were not intended to build up a theory or system, neither do they make up my creed ; but, only, as objections to J * * *'s "Plea of Union." You complain of the knotiness of my catalogue of questions. I was not aware of their being so until the spider caught hold of their opposite threads, and tied them up into a nice cobweb to catch the poor fly. On the word "visible" which you use as "Hercules' club," I predicate nothing. You do not admit that the world is Christ's kingdom. Will you admit that Jesus said, "at the end of the world, the Son of man will send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity?" I opine Simon the sorcerer, Demas, Hymeneus and Philetus, though subjects of Christ's kingdom, by baptism, were not members of his spiritual body.

When we read of *the* Church in the singular, without relation to place, I understand by it the whole body of true believers. But I do not profess metaphysics. There is *one* Body, and *one* Spirit, and every member of that *one* Body is baptized by that *one* Spirit into that *one* Body. There are now diverse Spirits baptizing into diverse Bodies. The Divine Shepherd will soon wrest this power from their hands, and deliver his Sheep and gather them into one fold ; then they shall become one flock and one Shepherd who shall lead, feed, protect and save them ; yea, he will baptize them with the Spirit, and the Spirit will baptize them into Christ's *one* Body. Do you say this is an assumption ?

John Baptist taught me to distinguish between water baptism and that of the Spirit and of Christ. John says, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire," Matt. iii. 11 "I indeed have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit," Mark i. 8. "John answered, saying unto them, I indeed baptize you with water, but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose ; He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire," Luke iii. 16. "John said, He who sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining, the same is He who baptizeth with the Holy Spirit." John i. 33. Now here is the

testimony of four inspired witnesses. besides a visible token from heaven that Jesus was to baptize with the Holy Spirit, and with fire. Some say all this was fulfilled on the day of pentecost. True, it was. There was a visible demonstration of that divine energy with which His disciples were endowed, by which they spoke one language, so that people of fifteen different languages understood them. But though those visible tongues of fire have never again been witnessed, the power signified still remains.

The baptism of John was from heaven; it commenced near the end of the Jewish dispensation. Like a switch, this water baptism, with certain modifications, was commanded to be observed by the Supreme Lord of heaven and earth. It was to run on a certain way, in the gospel dispensation, and then stop; a connecting link, to wind up the old and introduce the new dispensation. What bold assumption! Well, let us look at your five fatal points. The first seems the most potent. If it can be shown not to be permanent nor stationary, but like a comet receding towards its aphelion, the other four like the tail must follow in the train.

"1st. That the Saviour commissioned His apostles to preach the gospel to *all* nations, which gospel they were to begin preaching at Jerusalem."

Of the twelve, Peter is the principal actor on the page of truth, and it is written that the gospel of the circumcision was committed unto Peter. We read also, 'That Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made to the fathers.' Rom. xv. 8. At that time the Jewish worship was known in many nations of the world, as on the day of pentecost we find Jews and proselytes attending at the temple. When we consider the complicated ritual of the Jews, and they are to give all up, and receive a new dispensation, would it not be reasonable to expect that a commission to such a people would contain something in it peculiar to such a people, at such a time? Now, I assert that the gospel was preached to all nations within the period of sixty years, from the time the commission was given. And I will call upon three inspired witnesses to prove it. What say you Matthew? "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come," chap. xxiv. 14. What end, Matthew? "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place." That is, the Roman army unfurl their standard in the temple and about to destroy the city and nation of the Jews. But is it certain that the gospel was preached to all nations before the destruction of Jerusalem? "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled, verse 16. Mark do you testify the same things? Yes, see chap. xiii. 10. 'The gospel must first be published among all nations. Verily I say unto you this generation shall not pass till all these things be done.' Paul, what do you say to this? The gospel *was* preached to every creature under heaven. There was another peculiarity connected with the original commission. Certain signs were to follow them that believed. Mark xvi. 17.

The Divine King of Zion has adapted his laws and dispensations

to the capacity of his government, charters and laws are altered and amended for the benefit of the community, unlike the laws of the Medes and Persians that altered not.

What would you think of the skill of the lawyer who would assert, that you must go back to the Charter of King John, and stand by every article thereof whatever be altered, repealed, or added in the latest charter of the British constitution? If there be an amendment to any act, would it be legal to neglect the amendment? From the premises before us, may we not infer that the original commission was fulfilled in as far as it was peculiar to the Jews?—to the apostles?—and as it was introductory from the Jewish to the Christian dispensation—from a carnal ritual to a spiritual worship? Then we find a new apostle miraculously converted, and commissioned, by the same divine authority; and this commission is recorded by inspiration, *first, negatively, and second, positively.* The negative proposition, “*I was not sent to baptize,*”—the positive, *but was sent “to preach the gospel.”* If Paul thus asserted that he was not sent to baptize, who, I ask, in the nineteenth century can assert that he was sent to baptize? Paul’s commission was simple—had no peculiarities; fitted for all nations; and all ages. Our apostle was also commissioned to effect a union between Jews and Gentiles, Barbarians, Scythians, bond and free. We would therefore expect to find him baptizing for the sake of the Jews, as we find him circumcising for their sakes. To effect this union see Paul *our apostle* with the Jew in one hand and the Gentile in the other, leading both up to father Abraham, the natural father of the Jew, in whom he gloried, and the father of all true believers, whether Jew or Gentile, and to slay the prejudice of the Jew, he shows him that his father in whom he boasted, was once a Gentile, and while in that state, was justified by believing the promise of God, and received circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of his faith. In his letter to the Galatians he concentrates the broad principle of Christian union into *one simple contingent proposition.* *If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.* This agrees with John; to confess Christ and have the witness of the Spirit;—the confession of Peter, “*I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*”;—and the testimony of the Lord, “*Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*” This is the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which is to break up all other kingdoms, sects and parties.

Here, Mr. O., I have taken fort; I think I have stepped here on the stones of divine truth. I submit those stepping stones to your storms and floods. If they are only rotten stumps, sweep them away that none may be deceived by them. I confess I was a little startled when I heard of the fate of Paul’s commission, but when I looked into the mirror of truth I saw it, like its divine author, walking upon the rolling waves. I think, sir, I have now answered your questions either directly or indirectly. As you concede to *one* baptism, and I have proved that Christ was to baptize with the Spirit, and the Spirit baptizes into *one* Body, and Christ and the Spirit are *one*, until, sir, you can prove that the Spirit is to be removed from the church, I hold

to the baptism of the Spirit as the *one* baptism. Infant sprinkling and infant immersion, I believe, have no better authority than. Thus saith the Pope, the Priest, the Bishop, or the Doctor; therefore I have given them up. "Are you roady?" "Are we ready," Mr. O., to throw down the middle wall? You see the wall between the two commissions has vanished like dew before the sunbeams. I see no wall between any human being on the green globe, but the contingent proposition of our apostle: "IF YOU BE CHRIST'S, then are ye ABRAHAM'S SEED and HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE." Here is my hand, Mr. Oliphant, on that condition. What do you think, sir, of the divine name of Christ and his church? He and she shall be called, "The Lord our righteousness;" and of Mr. R. Fleming's word 'christocracy?' "Awake, awake, put on strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come unto you the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust, arise. and sit down O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." Hark! what voice is that in the distance. Like that of a great multitude, like that of many waters, and like that of many thunderings, "saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready."

Yours respectfully,

CHAS. WALKER.

Cuyaga, 13th March, 1854.

P. S. Philosophers for a long period viewed the earth as the centre of attraction of motion, and of the solar system; but that has been discovered to be an error, the absurdity of which is now seen by every intelligent mind who can view the sun as the centre and animating principle of the planetary system. How unlikely then, that the *material element of water, in the human act of baptism*, was ever intended by Infinite Wisdom as the centre of a spiritual union of all believers.

D. OLIPHANT TO MR. WALKER.

Brighton, 18th March, 1854.

MR. C. WALKER: DEAR SIR:—Your letter of the 13th came into my hands last evening, being forwarded to this village where I remain for a brief period.

My present response will embrace only a few points—

1st. Your objections to our plea for union. The union pled for by us is a union upon "that which was taught by the apostles of the Saviour, and received and practised by the primitive churches and Christians." To effect this, we are busy at work attempting "to recover the ancient, the original model of faith and manners." Such are the sentiments to which you objected in your epistle published in the Sept. Number of the Christian Banner of last year. After all the objections, great and small, facts and not facts, it is now pleasing and

encouraging to find friend Walker becoming so far a disciple as to be looking into the divine creed for a union basis! Success to you, Mr. Walker, in this work.

2nd. It appears that you distinguish between Christ's kingdom and Christ's spiritual body. The Samaritan sorcerer, Demas, Philetus, and others, were, you say, "subjects of Christ's kingdom" but "were not members of Christ's spiritual body." Thus, the subjects of Christ and the members of Christ are in your school two classes of religionists. Please settle this with master Paul, who intimates that "the kingdom of God [or kingdom of Christ] is righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Spirit." The phrase *spiritual body*, as applied to the church of the Lord, is of Babylonian origin. It has been manufactured to make good your popular curiosity of a spiritual union amid visible disunion. The Book of God speaks of the kingdom of Christ. It also speaks of the body of Christ. Christ's In kingdom we have Christ's subjects, over whom Christ rules as the Prince of salvation; the body of Christ is another figure, giving us a view of the same cardinal things in a more endearing light, the members of Christ being his body, and he the head of the body. The same things are likewise represented by a building or temple—the Lord's people in this case being living stones and he the Lord or Master of the house. If you continue to separate the kingdom of Christ and the body of Christ, viewing his subjects and his members as two sorts of people, would you not carry out your theology still more perfectly by making a third class, represented by the living or lively stones?

Now do not run away, friend Walker, and affirm that I am combating the idea of spirituality under the reign of the Redeemer, our Lord and King. Everything from, or of, or by, or through, or in Jesus Christ is spiritual. This, with me, is a vital point. While the 'things of the flesh' are of necessity fleshly, 'the things of the Spirit' are necessarily spiritual. Not some things but all things appertaining to Christ and his religion are spiritual. "Understandest thou what thou readest" in this paragraph? And as you affirm that "Christ and the Spirit are one," the law of Christ on your own principle must be the law of the Spirit!

3d. Though I put six stamps of reprobation on your new commission for Paul, doubled it up and sent it over Niagara to keep company with Sam Patch, you say you still see it on the surface, as valid and trustworthy as ever. Perceiving that my honest friend Walker did not get his eye on the marks of counterfeit found on said commission, I will pay my respects to it again. Here it will be in good

order to refer to my former specifications. When you assumed that "the commission of Paul differed from the other apostles," for the purpose of proving that we could not all be united visibly, I intimated 1st, That the Lord commissioned his apostles to PREACH THE GOSPEL to *all nations*, the starting point of this *gospel preaching* or GOSPEL TO BE PREACHED having been particularly mentioned and appointed—the city where the Jewish temple stood. Hence, not one apostle, but the apostles were to preach the gospel; and all the nations were to have the same gospel which was first preached at Jerusalem. Now a little lad of seven years of age can see that if you give Paul a new commission he must preach another gospel. And where will he preach it? Somewhere where there is not a nation (!) for the Jerusalem gospel was to be preached to *all nations*!! 2nd. Peter preached not only to Jews, but he was the first to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. 3d. Paul laboured in the gospel among the Jews as well as among Gentiles. 4th. Gentile and Jewish converts acknowledged the authority of apostles and elders at Jerusalem, in the adjustment of a debate at Antioch. 5th. Paul, while converting and teaching the Gentiles, wrote letters to "*all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ.*" 6th. Even if your commission for the apostle Paul were sound and genuine, all Gentiles ought to be one!

And what does my good friend do with these six deep imprints, which severally and collectively show that the new commission made for Paul is a pious fraud? Simply this,—that one of the specifications is barely noticed and repeated, and they are all supposed to be obliterated because a magic wand is shook over one of them!

Although I am under no necessity to do so, I will give you still more work to maintain your fancied commission for the noble Paul, seeing that you contend so tenaciously to make him fill an office never filled by any man. More than half of the Acts is taken up with an account of the journeyings, labours, and success of the apostle Paul as he works for the Lord as an apostle evangelist. The same sacred writer who tells us how Simon surnamed Peter preached and made converts, also lets us into the secret of how the Gentile proclaimer makes converts to the Lord. At Antioch, at Salamis, at Paphos, at Perga, at Lystra, at Derbe, at Philippi, at Athens, and among other places at Corinth, Paul the apostle is found laboring. When he goes among the very people to whom he subsequently writes the letter from which you quote, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach," let us see what is done. Take care, friend Walker, the evangelist Luke speaks the truth in telling how Paul made converts at Corinth. "Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."

The "Rev." Mr. Luke—what an unmannerly man! He seems to hint—nay, tell it right out—that the old Jerusalem gospel is at Corinth! What will be done, Mr. Walker, the same gospel appears to be preached among the Gentiles as among the Jews, and worse than all, the believers are baptized. The "Reverends" Messrs. Luke and Paul make too much of baptism!! They baptize believers—whom you consider to be first baptized with fire!

4th. As you are pleased to lay much stress on Paul's expression, 'The Lord sent me not to baptize,' allow me to assist you in giving force to that sacred remark. You are compelled to admit two things to begin with: that Paul *did* baptize, and that all his converts in Corinth were baptized. Please take special note of these two things, for they are of some consequence in understanding the apostle. At Philippi, in Galatia, in Corinth and wherever the apostle labors, the believers are baptized, some of them by Paul in person. Christ sending him not to baptize does not, it appears, keep him from baptizing, nor prevent his converts from practically enjoying the privileges of the commission given by Jesus himself, "He that believeth and is baptized." Putting these things down as indisputable, let me now ask and answer the question, What does the apostle mean by saying (according to our common version) that the Lord sent him not to administer baptism, but to herald forth the gospel? My pen the more readily enters upon this, and will treat it more fully, because you are in reality the mouthpiece of some five hundred thousand in Canada on this subject. Every sprinkler in the land, whose practical creed only calls for a little instead of much water, has at his tongue's end 'Christ sent not Paul to baptize' as a weapon to fight Paul himself when he enforces baptism.

The well known Hebrew style of speech ought to learn us something relative to this passage; and Paul we must remember was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. The Abrahamic family had a very emphatic way of contrasting what was of less note with what was greater, the inferior with the superior. Take a single example from the Great Teacher: "Labor not for the meat that perisheth," says Jesus. What! does not the Lord permit a man to labor for food that perishes with the using? Will Paul contradict him by saying, "Be diligent in business"—? All is made plain when we pay attention to the Saviour's mode of speech, for then we hear him saying to us, 'Labour not so much for the food which is of inferior worth as for the bread of eternal life'—a precept daily transgressed by almost all professors in the British provinces.

Now let us go to Corinth where the apostle's letter has come, from which you quote. He had been there a year and a half as a proclaimer. Many Jews and Greeks had believed, and precisely the same number had been baptized. But in the apostle's subsequent absence they get into a jangle, which originates in their carnal preferences for certain public men. "There are contentions among you" writes the zealous Paul. "I say this because each of you declares, 'I am of Paul,' 'I am of Apollos,' 'I am of Peter,' 'I am of Christ.'" Then the apostle asks, "Is Christ divided?"—again he asks, "Was Paul crucified for you?"—and with solemn irony he asks, "Were you baptized in the name of Paul?" Here are three seventy-six pounders thrown at their contentions. They had received Christ, and as he was not divided neither ought they to be divided; they had received Christ crucified not Paul crucified, hence no man in Corinth should centre his faith in a preacher; they had been baptized, but not in any man's name, and therefore there ought to be no contentions on account of personal preferences for those who administered it. No dispute in Corinth, my friend, respecting the ordinance of baptism—that is not the question at all. Neither preachers nor their pupils had learned in Paul's time to question an ordinance of the Lord. But some in those days, as in these days, would estimate their obedience in this respect according to their esteem for the administrator. Hence he intimates his gratitude to God, in view of the quarrels at Corinth about particular persons, that he had baptized none of them saving Crispus the old president of the synagogue who had too much knowledge to make a bad use of his being baptized by an apostle, and Gaius the preacher, and Stephanas and his family who "addicted themselves to the ministry."

And now says Paul, "I know not whether I baptized any other for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." As if the apostle had said, "Christ sent me to Corinth, and to every Gentile city where I have preached, not to be a valid administrator of baptism, nor indeed to occupy myself in administering this ordinance, but to preach him and prepare men for baptism." In this, while he shows his superior work in fitting people for baptism, he at the same time aims a death-blow at their fleshly contentions. Any disciple, no matter who—if not a cripple or physically weak—could wait upon believers in giving them an introduction to the Lord's family in the baptismal ordinance; but to herald the gospel to Jews and Greeks, to stand upon Mars' hill in Athens and present Jesus on the cross and risen from the grave, to plead the Lord's cause before philosophers, orators, and learned cavillers of every name, and convince multitudes that Jesus is Christ,—this was not the work of a stripling.

I am inclined to favor the rendering of *Pearce*—sometimes called

Bishop Pearce—in speaking of the passage under review. ‘For Christ sent me not so much to baptize, as to preach the gospel.’ I refer to this Doctor, not because I need his help, but because he may be at par value as a genuine theologian with some who may read this letter.

5th. The last item in your communication that my leisure will allow me in the meantime to notice, is embraced in your postscript. Your language is, “How unlikely that the material element of water, in the human act of baptism, was ever intended by Infinite wisdom, as the centre of a spiritual union of all believers.” And I will at once add, How unlikely that my good friend Walker will ever understand Christian union when he imagines that the disciples of the first century or the disciples of the nineteenth century ever entertained the idea that water, or baptism, or any act was or is the centre of union. We are it is true fond of clear beautiful water in its place—have no reason to be afraid of it, seeing that three-fifths of the world is of this element: but we do not approve of a watery foundation or a spongy centre for the Lord’s chosen and dear people. It would be as illegal and profane to make the element of water a basis of union as it would be to make the element of fire the foundation. The one would be “strange fire”—the other “bitter water.”

But have you forgotten the starting point? The recovery of the original model of faith and manners: here is where you commenced objecting. Yet even primitive faith and obedience are our centre only in a very subordinate sense. The apostles who taught these things are our centre in a higher acceptance of the term. Even they are left behind—we go farther toward the inner temple for the centre we love than the sayings and doings of the Twelve. A more sublime centre is found in the words and works of Him who came “not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” But superior to all, the central point of the centre comes directly from the Throne above, spoken not by a seraph but by the Father himself: “This is my Son, the Beloved.” In all this, my dear sir, there is a sublimity higher, richer, grander than the wheels of the prophet Ezekiel. The old pattern of the things to believe and the things to do is to be sought, because there is both salvation and union by this pattern; we are thus led to behold the apostles in the position they hold as teachers of the nations; from them we obtain “the knowledge of him who calls us to glory and virtue;” and He around whom we are to rally as our Life, our Lawgiver, our Leader, our Love, is introduced to us and is proclaimed to us by the lips of Jehovah from the Royal Palace in the heavens. And he who hears and honors what has descended from heaven will eventually be invited to a seat in heaven.

But I must not forget to say that the Lord Jesus Christ is spiritual—that the message of his mercy is spiritual—that faith in the Lord through his gospel is spiritual—that gospel repentance is spiritual—that baptism in the name of the Lord is spiritual. Let me illustrate. The table of the Lord does not furnish a bread and wine supper—no—it is the Lord’s supper, a spiritual feast. So baptism in water is not water baptism, but it is Christian baptism, by the authority of the Lord, and this makes it spiritual: for it would be impossible to cen-

ceive of a law, precept, ordinance, or promise from our spiritual Lord but what was also spiritual. And as it respects the power, value, or use of baptism, permit me to convey to you a wholesome lesson by a circumstance related to me this winter by an evangelist. He was riding one day in a public conveyance, when one of the passengers, a sensible aged lady, became very free in conversation. In their religious interview, the lady asked the evangelist if he believed that water could wash away sins. He said that he would answer the question provided she would first answer one or two queries from him, to which she assented. "Madame, do you believe that Adam was holy in Paradise?" "Yes" was the response. "Do you believe that there was any holiness left after he partook of the forbidden fruit?" "I think there was not" she replied. "And do you believe that eating fruit washes away holiness?" "O no—it was Adam's disobedience" was the lady's reply. "Exactly," responded the evangelist, "it was eating fruit in disobedience to God that destroyed his purity, and it is our obedience to Christ that makes us pure in him."

This sets forth in a clear light the principle for which we contend, not only in one item, but in all things wherein is found the Lord's authority. To ascertain in all humility the authority of heaven, and meekly and promptly to yield to it, are of more value in heaven's sight than a million volumes of reasoning about material elements and the merit of human acts. "To obey is better than sacrifice" said the loyal Samuel to the rebellious Saul. The disciples, in strenuously urging this principle, are not understood; but the time hastens when we shall be fully and joyfully apprehended.

Keep entirely cool, friend Walker, and take better aim before you again fire. It seems to me that your fire-arms are either somewhat twisted out of straight or otherwise you do not take good sight. Prove all things, and keep a fast hold of what proves to be good.—Wishing you health and happiness,

I am, Yours truly,

D. OLIPHANT.

P. S.—Your hand is accepted, according to your offer, upon the condition specified—that you are Christ's. Of course you will have no objections to show the ground you have whereby you develope to all men that you are of Christ and belong to Christ.

D. O.

BIBLE UNION MEETING NEAR NORVAL.

The readers of the Banner will remember that a meeting of the advocates of a pure version of the Bible was announced in the January Number. A meeting was held agreeably to appointment, and brother Menzies, secretary of the meeting, has forwarded an account of what was transacted. The following is the substance of our brother's report:—

At a meeting convened in the Disciples' Meeting House, Esquesing, on the 24th Feb., 1854, for the purpose of forming a Bible Union Auxiliary to the American Bible Union, brother James Black was

chosen Chairman and brother James Menzies Secretary. After prayer, the following resolutions were adopted :

Resolved that a committee be appointed to prepare resolutions and to draft a constitution to lay before the meeting, and that one brother from each church represented compose said committee.

—That the committee to draft resolutions &c. meet as soon as possible after the present adjournment.

Meeting adjourned till 7 o'clock, evening.

Delegates meet according to adjournment, when it was—

Resolved, that we as those who love and revere the word of God, are fully convinced that it is the will of our heavenly Father that the Revelation he has given in his word should be fully and correctly communicated to all nations in their respective languages.

—That the object of the American Bible Union "to give a faithful translation of the word of God in all languages," and especially in the English language, is a most important object, and that it is our duty as Disciples of Christ to give it our countenance and pecuniary aid.

—That in order to co-operate more efficiently with the Parent Society, the delegates from the various churches form themselves into an Auxiliary Society.

Saturday 25th, 10 o'clock—delegates meet agreeably to adjournment, after which the following constitution was adopted :

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I. This Society shall be called the Bible Union of the Disciples of Christ in Canada, Auxiliary to the American Bible Union.

II. The object of this Union shall be to aid in procuring and circulating the most faithful versions of the sacred scriptures in all languages.

III. Any congregation contributing to the funds of this Union, shall be entitled to send two of their number to the annual meeting as members of the Union, and any individual lover of a pure version of the scriptures not represented in any congregation is invited to co-operate with this Society.

IV. The business of this Union shall be conducted by a Board consisting of a President, vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and ten Managers, seven of whom shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

V. The secretary and Treasurer shall, at the annual meeting, present in detail a report of all receipts and disbursements for the past year.

VI. The Union shall meet at the time and place previously appointed, when the Board for the ensuing year shall be elected, and such other business transacted as may best promote the objects of the organization.

VII. The Board elected for the management of the affairs of this Union shall meet within one month after their election, and then by adjournment from time to time as business may require. The President shall have power to call either a special meeting of the Board of Managers or of the members of the Union, at the request of six

members of the Board, by giving suitable notice to the members of the Board to attend the same, and at least three weeks notice to the members of the Union.

VIII. This constitution may be altered by two-thirds of the members present at any annual meeting of the Union, provided only that no alteration shall be made in the second article which defines the object of the Union, without a unanimous vote and one year's previous notice.

Resolved, That for the election of the Board and the transaction of other business, the first annual meeting of the Union shall be held at Jordan on the 3d Friday in June of the present year.

—That the following brethren do compose the Board of management until the meeting in June, viz :

James Black, President ; George Barclay, vice President ; Peter Laird, Treasurer ; James Menzies, Secretary ; and the Board of Managers Thos. C. Scott, Lazarus Parkinson, Wm. Bradt, Thos. Bradt, Aaron Overholt, Hugh McMillen, J. Ash, James Morton, R. Royce, and Charles Lister.

Resolved, that the members of the Union now present shall within two months from March 1st, transmit to the Secretary of the Board the amount of funds each church may provide for the object of the Union.

--That the Secretary send to the Secretary of the American Bible Union a copy of the constitution adopted and the resolutions passed at this meeting, requesting him to forward all the information calculated to promote the objects of the Union.

—That the President draw up an address to the churches in reference to the objects of the Union to be published along with the proceedings of this meeting in the Christian Banner.

Board adjourned to meet in Jordan the third Friday in June next, at the hour of 2 o'clock, P. M.

JAS. BLACK, *President.*

JAS. MENZIES, *Secretary.*

DEACONS--ELDERS--EVANGELISTS.

ARTICLE FIRST.

The first officers appointed in the Christian church after its establishment were deacons. The office at that time was divinely important ; but since that time the office and the officer have been unfortunately lost. The word deacon is sometimes found on paper and in print, and we sometimes meet with persons styled deacons ; and here and there, like a solitary star, we may find a scriptural and therefore a real deacon ; but still it is like finding primitive churches in the dark ages, or like meeting with green and fertile spots in the sandy wastes of Arabia.

But what could induce Paul, who saw everything with inspired eyes, to affirm that " they that have used the office of a deacon will purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus ? " This language means something. Paul

had his eye upon a great work, and that work well executed, when employing these words.

And the apostles did not speak idly when they said to the congregation at Jerusalem, "Look you out among you seven men, of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business."

"But we" say the apostles "will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Divine arrangement! No more funds are to be brought and laid at the apostles' feet—no more money accruing from the sale of possessions is to be at their command by way of official superintendence; but a separate service is appointed—a church treasury is ordained and treasurers chosen—and the apostles, thus free from religious financials, give themselves wholly to prayer and the ministry of the word.

The fact that these finance officers were to be full of wisdom, and the fact that the apostles were henceforth to apply themselves undividedly to the ministry, very decidedly indicate that the whole management of the liberality of the congregation was with the deacons. An honest spiritual man, not very wise, could fill a hungry man's mouth with bread, or could carry a message of loving kindness and a little medicine to a sick man's couch; but the superintendence of a church treasury—a church such as then existed in the great Jewish city, and a treasury such as it had—called for wisdom. And the treasury of the brethren at Ephesus demanded wise as well as faithful men to manage it, for a good degree and great boldness in the faith legitimately grew out of attending to the duties therewith connected.

But the protestant popedom, with well learned lessons from the old Mistress, braces up its clerical stubbornness against such a deaconship. The three grand departments of service by deacons, elders, and evangelists are jumbled into ruins, and a new race of factotum ministerials claim the privilege of ordering all things as seemeth to them good. We need not refer to papalism where the chief treasury is in the palace at Rome; we need not point to the episcopal establishment where we will find the treasury in the safe-keeping of the sovereign and the executive council; we need not go to the good old Scotch Assembly where the Presbyterian Doctors keep the control of the denominational fund; we need not take a peep into the coffers of the Conference and examine the treasury formed and fashioned according to Wesleyanism: but look at the more independent and liberal bodies—the evangelical Congregationalists, our good friends the Baptists, and, not to offend any one, the Disciples also. Are we fault-finding, or letting loose a spirit of crimination? Not at all. We mean sim-

ply to affirm, that whatever worth or benefit there may be in an ecclesiastical council, assembly of divines, a conference, an association, or church convocation, provincial or state meetings, the Lord has not put his treasury in any such place to be managed in any such way.

We seek indeed to elevate the office of deacon which has been trampled into the dust and crushed out of existence. A scriptural deacon, is, we believe, a noble officer—an efficient fellow-helper in carrying out the mission of the church. We assume that the apostles knew how to organize churches; and that they by authority of the Lord ordained that each church should have its treasury, and this treasury watched over, kept, and managed by men duly and wisely qualified for that purpose. And do we oppose co-operation in thus contending? By no manner of means. Co-operative effort is scriptural, and therefore no scriptural principle or practice would condemn or annul it. The deaconship of the New Testament, instead of thwarting co-operation, would extend it, establish it, and carry it out in simple purity and effective power.

Some modern Nicodemus will ask, How can these things be? And we may answer by saying, That which is born of the flesh is fleshly, and that which is born of the Spirit is spiritual. Let us place before us five, twenty, fifty, or a hundred churches of the saints of the Lord—men who are not half or one-quarter converted, but wholly turned to the Lord Jesus, having given themselves to him, soul, mind and strength—wealth, talents, and influence. These churches are scattered over a county—a province—a state—or a nation. The poor are to be provided for; local laborers are to be remunerated—labours out of the immediate circle of the church are to be sustained. Every church has the same duty. Every church has the same treasury. Every church has the same class of officers called deacons. Each member of each church, according to ability, and for the Lord's sake puts into the sacred treasury. It is the Lord's treasury, for the Lord's people, to carry on the Lord's business. No one contributes because Mr. A. is a popular preacher—no one withholds because Mr. B. is not so well liked—no special collection is made for poor sister C. who is sick—no new fund is raised for brother D. who cannot support himself. The hope of seeing one's name in print or on some new church-book with a large sum attached, or to have it sounded out in the assembly or in private that such a one is very liberal, is not the motive for putting "as the Lord has prospered" into this consecrated depository. But the Lord's people act worthy of him; and every man gives his mite or his tens or his hundreds or his thousands because he and all that he has belong to the Lord Jesus, realizing

that the same authority that ordained the treasury also appointed competent officers to direct its treasure.

Let us take a view of the practical working of this arrangement in one direction—as it respects the maintenance of evangelists. Each church is a spiritual school, and among other things that this school does, it ascertains and develops the gifts of the pupils. The Lord has never yet had too many men among the churches intellectually and spiritually qualified for the work of evangelizing; but when any one has by his ability, judgment, piety, and zeal for the heavenly cause proved himself to be fitted for the self-sacrificing work, those who realize his fitness according to the Lord's directions, say to him, 'Brother, the Lord Jesus has need of you as a general laborer in his vineyard; are you willing to spend and be spent in the work of the Lord, entering upon it for life or while qualified for it?—we promise you nothing better than laborers and sufferers in the same work have had in times past, but the hearts and hands of the true-hearted will be with you.'

The evangelist, with a soul big with the love of Christ, and with his eye upon the Lord of Glory whose inheritance on the earth was the cross and the grave, responds, 'I am the Lord's and am subject to the Lord's people: I will labor and suffer, joy and sorrow, be honored or despised with them.' Two, ten, or twenty such laborers, thus reared up and invited, enter upon their evangelical toils and trials; and all the members of these five, twenty, fifty or a hundred churches, with their bishops and deacons, in the county, province, state or nation, know that these two, ten, or twenty laborers are ordained for life to preach and teach the word of the Lord. Who will say that the wisdom of the Lord through his treasury in each church, and his wisdom through the deacons of each church, will fail to sustain these workmen.

True, this divine arrangement is for spiritual men. There is not enough pomp and carnal parade about it for worldly professors. It will not suit calculating preachers who want to be up to the times in genteel outfit. It is not adapted to the taste of part religious and part fashionable saints who seek to move in fine trappings, and who ask, not only their names written in heaven, but trumpeted from Dan to Beersheba on the lips of popular applause. We grant all this; but still the Lord will finally honor those who seek to ascertain and follow his divine models.

THE JEWS—THE PROMISES CONCERNING THEM.

That the outcasts of Israel will be assembled, the dispersed of Judah gathered together from the four winds of heaven, and the ancient kingdom and throne of David restored to more than pristine glory is the burden of inspired prophets and scribes through the whole volume of revelation. God has literally fulfilled all the judgments he threatened to bring upon his people Israel for their iniquities. The fearful denunciations he uttered through Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and the other prophets he from time to time sent to warn or to save them, have been brought to pass, until at the present day the Jews are dispersed among all nations of the earth, a despised and persecuted race. Their country is desolate, their cities have been burned with fire, and their land strangers devour it in their presence. The judgments poured out upon Israel are facts, matters of history, patent to the world. It is a logical argument, that if God has literally fulfilled all his threats, so that to read them is to read the history of what has transpired, he will as literally fulfil all his promises, so that to read *them*, after they have been accomplished, will be to read the history of the approaching age. That when he says, "Zion shall be ploughed as a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high place of the forest." Micah iii. 12 "I will cast you out of this land, into a land that you know not, neither you nor your fathers—" Jer. xvi. 13, and when we find Mount Zion converted into a wheat-field, every stone of Jerusalem overturned, so that in some places the modern city is built upon heaps 20 feet above the ancient ground, and the mountain of the house (mount Moriah) for many centuries the site of a Mahomedan mosque—we are justified in expecting when he says, "They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolation of many generations." Isaiah lxxv. 4. "I will bring them again into the land that I gave unto their fathers" Jer. xvi. 15—that Jerusalem and all the waste cities will be rebuilt, and the descendants of Abraham restored to their beloved fartherland. But this argument is unnecessary, a single reference to the thirty first of Jeremiah at the twenty eighth verse, shows that the blessings are to be as literal as the punishments. The words are, "Like as I have watched over them to pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy, and to afflict, so will I watch over them to build up and to plant, saith the Lord."

About 984 years before the Christian Era, the Kingdom of Israel was divided; ten tribes following Jereboam the son of Nebat and only adhering to the house of David. This breach was never healed. The ten tribes known as Israel, maintained a separate national existence for more than three hundred years, until carried into captivity by Shalmanezzer, king of Assyria, from which they have not returned. The two tribes known as Judah, continued to be governed by princes of David's line till the Babylonish captivity. Seventy years afterwards part of them returned and eked out a precarious existence till Titus burned the temple, destroyed the city, and carrying away the inhabitants sold them as slaves. Since that time, the holy city has been trodden

down of the Gentiles, and her children scattered among the heathen, a persecuted and degraded people. No scion of David's family has exercised kingly authority since the Jereboam disruption and with the deposition of Zedekiah, departed the last semblance of royalty. The whole family, with one exception, has long ago mixed with kindred dust. Has God cast off his people? by no means—as sure as they have been scattered, so sure will they be gathered together—“Thus saith the Lord God, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land, and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all, and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions—But I will save them out of all their dwelling places whercin they have sinned and will cleanse them, so shall they be my people, and I will be their God, and David my servant shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd, they shall also walk in my judgements, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land which I have given to Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children's children for ever—and my servant David shall be their prince for ever, &c.” Ezk. xxxvii. 21. No language can be more explicit than this. Confirmed as it is by numerous prophesies as distinct and unequivocal, we are warranted in concluding, that the descendants of Abraham, scattered though they be, well yet be gathered into Canaan, the land in which their fathers dwelt, and which God has promised to give to Abraham for an everlasting possession—that they will there be constituted one nation, under the dominion of Jesus of Nazareth Jehovah's anointed king. It will be real and tangible—the territory, part of Syria—the subjects, the sons and grandsons of the present American, European, Asiatic and African Jews—the king, the son of Mary—and the princes and nobles, the twelve apostles, and those who have obeyed the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The thirty eighth, and thirty ninth of Ezekiel contain an account of the events immediately preceding and accompanying, the appearing of the Messiah—the Gog (Gog means chief, a leader,) of Magog comes up against the people of Israel who have been brought back from the sword, and gathered out of the nations. The riches of the returned outcasts being the bait which lures him and his army to destruction. Thus it is evident that prior to the advent of Jesus Christ a rich and prosperous colony of Jews will people the land of Canaan—that they will believe that Jesus is the Christ, is however very improbable—after the city has been taken, and half of the people carried into captivity “the Lord shall go forth and fight against those nations, the nations composing Gog's army as when he fought in the day of battle” Zech xiv. 2. “Pleading against him”—the Gog—“with pestilence and with blood; and raising upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain and great hailstones, fire and brimstone”—It is only after the city has

been delivered, by the destruction of Gog and five sixths of his army, that the Jews will discover that their deliverer, the long expected Messiah, is none other than the now despised Jesus. "They will mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and be in bitterness for him as one is in bitterness for his firstborn"—this is more evident from the fact that all the accounts of the great battle, and the subsequent event, represent the putting away of the idols from the house of Israel, as the work of the deliverer. Thus Zechariah says, "In that day"—the day in which the inhabitants of Jerusalem are defended by the Lord of Hosts—"I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered, and I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land," &c., chap. xiii. 2. The existence of images and unclean spirits are incompatible with any thing like a general belief in the Messiahship of Jesus.

This gathering of a numerous and wealthy community of unbelieving Jews in the holy land, cannot be accounted as the fulfilling of the prophecy already quoted from the thirty seventh chapter of Ezekiel. The honor and glory of assembling the outcasts of Israel and gathering together the dispersed of Judah; belong of right to the "Root out of the stem of Jesse," and the Branch "that has grown out of his roots." The Jews are now dispersed among the nations where they are oppressed and afflicted, the command must go forth for "the North to give up and the South to keep not back," before they can leave the lands of their captivity. Nor will this command be obeyed, while the power of the Dragon prevails in the world. No human power can subdue these proud and haughty tyrants who now hold the governments of the peoples, they must be subdued by divine power and compelled to let Israel go.

Again, the solemn oath of Jehovah declares—"Thus saith the Lord which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of Hosts is his name—If these ordinances depart from before me saith the Lord; then the seed of Abraham shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord, if heaven above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out from beneath, I will also cast off the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord," Jer. xxxi. 35. 37. This oath comes into effect after the captivity of Jacob's tents has been brought again and the wicked have been punished with the whirlwind of the Lord, which will fall with pain upon their heads. Showing that when once the nation is fully gathered into its own land it will remain there for ever. There will be no more casting off and scattering:

Ezekiel's prophecies against Gog, chaps. xxxiii. and xxxix, Daniel's of the smiting of the image upon the feet, chap. iii, and of Michael standing up for the children of his people, chap. xii. 1, Joel's and Zechariah's, of the destruction of the nations fighting against Jerusalem. chap. iii, and xii. and xiv., respectively, are all so many accounts of the same events resulting in the destruction of the Dragon power, which, since the days of Babylon's golden empire, has not

ceased to oppose the seed of Abraham; and the resurrection of the long suppressed kingdom of David with David II, "the man whose name is the Branch" reigning as Lord of hosts in mount Zion in Jerusalem and before his ancients gloriously." The image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, in his dream of the latter days, is already in the course of erection. At the present moment, the prince of Mesheck and Tubal is invading the territory of the image's eastern iron leg. The head of the western leg, the holy Roman empire of Austria, is already his puppet. A few more years will see the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron, and the clay, united into one grand empire, and its empire, like the chief of the brazen coated Greeks, aiming at universal dominion. As a cloud to cover the land will he come up against the city of the Great King. No human power can stem the torrent of the nations, rushing like mighty waters. It will be a time of fearful tribulation, even the time of Jacob's trouble. At the critical moment when the conqueror gets possession of the city and carries away its inhabitants, the stone, rejected by the builders, descends, smiting the image on the feet, bring it in fragments to the ground. Then will the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold, be broken to peices, or more correctly, ground to powder, and carried away as the chaff of the summer thrashing floor before the wind. The stone in the mean time becoming a great mountain and filling the whole earth. It is during this grinding process that "Zion's God," "the root of Jesse," shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four winds of the earth. The destruction of the Gentile powers will open up the north and the south, and enable the captive Jews to flock to the standard of the "Lion of the tribe of Judah." As their fathers were of old under Moses and Joshua, so will the Jews of the rising generation be under the "prophet like unto Moses"—the means of reducing them under the dominion of the king of kings. At the conclusion of the war, all the rebels having been purged out of the camp, a new covenant will be made with the house of Judah and the house of Israel; the soldiers of the king will enter into the rest prepared for them; and after a lapse of nearly 3000 years will the two houses of Israel be re-united into one kingdom. "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are accepted of Israel; and it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem."

G. L. S.

Paris, C. W. Dec., 1853.

* * * There is some wheat in the preceding—some chaff and some chaff. We have not leisure to separate them; and besides, it will be a pleasing task for every friend of divine history and divine prophecy to make "a due use of the ordinary means" in finding out for himself the erroneous and the reliable. It requires however

little more than an average degree of perception to see that our good friend the writer is working around a new centre—a centre in the future instead of *the* centre in the past.

D. O.

For the Christian Banner.

THE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM--BY FLESH AND BY FAITH.

North Ely; C. E., Nov. 27, 1853.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST :

I have seen in the Christian Banner, and more particularly in the number for this month, a disposition to look upon the subject of the "return of the Jews," as if we were plainly taught by the Holy Spirit that the natural descendants of Abraham were to return to the "land of their fathers" and be "gathered from the countries," &c.

Now it seems to me there is a degree of importance attached to this subject which ought not to be overlooked. I hope you will bear with me while I present my views, as I hope I do sincerely wish to know the truth; and I also with pleasure give credit to my brother of the Banner for like sincerity. I allow there is a degree of mystery spread over the sacred page where figures, symbols, and metaphors are used, and upon this subject where figurative language is employed.

Let us look at the Jew as he is. He thinks he believes in God; but does he? Let the Saviour answer. "Every one that hath learned of the Father, cometh to me." He thinks he believes in Abraham. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." He thinks he believes in Moses. "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." And so we see the Jews still, with a vague and darkened knowledge of God, and in possession of the prophecies, rejecting the counsel of God against themselves.

I have lately seen the Jewish statistics in the United States. They boast of their numbers, the number of their synagogues, and that even quite a number of Americans have embraced their faith; still persisting in the soul-destroying sin of unbelief. Now if the Jew be restored because he is a Jew, where shall we find the warrant? In the teachings of Christ? No. In the teachings of the apostles? No. We are taught that the Jew has had his day, and now the Gentile has his. Romans xi. 7, 9, 10, 11, 23, 29.

We are taught by the Lord Jesus that the Jews should be carried away captive into all nations, and their city trodden under foot of the Gentiles, until their times should be fulfilled; but he has not taught us to believe that they should then return and their city be rebuilt: but the next event he mentions worthy of our especial notice is "And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory." Luke xxi. 24, 27. There is a numerous class of passages that speak of the gathering of the Jews; but let us see who these Jews are. The Apostle to the Gentiles, himself a Jew, says, "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham," Gal. iii. 7; "For as many as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ; and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abra-

ham's seed and heirs according to the promise," verses 27, 29. "The promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" Rom. iv. 13. "He is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men but of God." Rom. iv. 29. The burthen of the apostle's teaching in the 11th chap. is, God hath not cast off all Israel, for as in the time of Elijah, so in his time, there was a remnant that would be saved: but he gives us to understand distinctly that they are no longer the present stock, but if they abide not in unbelief they shall be grafted in, and that such of them as believe in Christ with the fullness of the Gentiles shall constitute the whole Israel, which are to be saved; and to this view agree the words of the prophesy, as it is written, "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David that is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord." James, Acts xv. 15, 16, 17.

And here allow me to ask, Where are the descendants of those Jews that did believe? We are told that many believed in Christ—that the common people heard him gladly—a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith; showing that a great number of the Jews did believe. Where are they or their descendants? The answer is plain. They have become amalgamated with other christians, and their nationality is completely lost, and their descendants can no more be found. And this is one blessed and glorious effect of the working of pure christianity. It destroys nationality. God's people are one in Christ Jesus. I have witnessed with a full heart the truth of this when I have seen an Englishman, an American, an Irishman, and an Indian standing upon one platform, speaking in honor of the common salvation. Now let us go with that master-builder the Apostle Paul, and look at his master-piece, the epistle to the Hebrews, and see how he tears down the old building and scatters it to the winds until we come to the eighth chapter, which he commences by saying, "This is the sum of what I have written: we have such an High Priest, set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens—a minister of the sanctuary, of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man, having obtained a more excellent ministry, being the mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises; for verily they [the Jews] brake the first covenant, ready to vanish away; but this is the new covenant that I will make with the house of Israel—I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts, and will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people. And they shall all know me from the least to the greatest."

In the 9th chapter he shows us that Christ is entered into the real Holy of Holies, to appear in the presence of God for the Hebrews, or children of faith, and he tells us in conclusion of this part of his subject, that to them who look for him he will appear the second

time without a sin offering unto salvation. Query: are these promises and declarations made to the literal Jew only? Or may we not comfort our hearts in them also?—Yea, verily, blessed be God.

Coming to the 11th chapter and 13th verse, it is said, "All these died in faith, not having received the promise, but beheld it afar off and confessed themselves pilgrims and strangers on the earth." "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly," verse 16th: "and God hath prepared for them a city;" "and these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect," verses 39, 40. "But you are come to mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," xii. 22. Here, then, is the country, the city of Jerusalem which is above and is free, and into which all the redeemed of the Lord, the real Jews, shall be gathered. The present literal Jew is an infidel of the worst class, and in his prayer, as quoted in the November Banner, he denies three times having either Advocate or Priest, persisting still in unbelief. We can see in the prophets that mention is made of his return many times, which has been fulfilled in returning from Babylonish captivity, but now we read, Acts ii. 16, 21, that God has poured out his Spirit upon all flesh, and as Peter says, there is no respect of persons. I desire the truth, and nothing but the truth. If I am in error, may the Lord stir up some good brother to set me right.

W. BARTLET.

With brother Bartlet, of North Ely, we very cordially agree that the Jews are in gross unbelief—that those who have the faith of Abraham are blessed with him—that the new Jerusalem is to be looked for as the city of all the ransomed sons of God—and that they are true Israelites, and they only, in this dispensation, who belong to the family of the Lord Jesus. Still, there is a nation of the sons of Abraham, not after the spirit, but after the flesh. It is at present a nation "scattered and peeled." The sons of father Abraham have been driven as outcasts among the nations; and not to specify various prophecies in relation to them, there is a divine oracle which intimates that God will gather them from all countries. This prophecy has either been fulfilled or it has not. We are somewhat inclined to the impression that this prophetic announcement has yet to be fulfilled: for when the Jews were brought into Canaan from the power of Pharaoh, they were gathered, not from all countries, but from Egypt only; and when restored from Babylon, they were gathered to their own country only from one country. Still, on a topic of this character we dogmatize not.

D. O.

EPISTLE FROM PICTOU, BY QUARTUS.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—I have long cherished the purpose of writing a communication for the *Christian Banner*; but whether from indolence, timidity, or other causes it has been deferred hitherto. As there are two grand departments of effort in the Christian cause:—namely, the conversion of the world, and the edification of the con-

verted, and as it is indispensable to the former, that the church be healthy and vigorous, I would humbly offer a few observations in the department of edification. The subject to which I would at this time invite the attention of your readers, is that of ADOPTION.

Man in his primitive state was not the subject of adoption. The result of the creative energy of Omnipotence, he stood forth in natural simplicity and beauty, a child of God, Gen. i. 31, Eccles. iii. 29, Mal. ii. 10, Luke iii. 38. While in this state, he seems to have enjoyed the fullest measure of felicity; loving God and loved by him; at peace with God, himself and the whole creation, having no wish ungratified, made only a little lower than the angels—crowned with glory and honor, and set over the work of God on earth. Can we imagine anything that could enhance his bliss? But alas! "man being created in honor, continued not." And as it is a truth of universal application, that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God;" so if our primitive parents had continued under the guidance of that Spirit which at the first quickened them, they would have continued the children of God. Satan assailed our mother Eve on a most vulnerable point. He presented the acquisition of knowledge, and consequent elevation of character, as the alluring object; "ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," said the tempter. Now to make progress in knowledge was highly necessary for man, even in his first estate: witness the lesson given Gen. i. 28, to the end. The sin of our parents consisted in believing, and acting upon testimony, in direct contradiction to the word of Jehovah.

And so sin entered into the world, and death by sin. Man became alien from the life of God—dead in trespasses and sins—all corrupted their way. The earth was filled with violence through them. So spiritual darkness and death enveloped our fair world; for man, the natural lord of it, and repository of the will of God on earth, had become an alien, and an outcast from the family of God, and but for his mercy must have sunk down to swell the number of the tenants of that place prepared for the devil and his angels.

Darkness and death have a very close affinity; the former is directly and immediately induced by the latter; it is its inseparable and necessary concomitant; and hence the Spirit of God has used these terms as figures, to indicate to us the deplorable nature of that state into which man fell through sin. To be alien from the life of God is equivalent to being outcast from his family. All who serve him not "are of their father the devil;" and "do the deeds of their father," as Jesus told the Jews, and Paul told the Romans that he "had proved both Jews and Gentiles all under sin—none righteous, not one."

But thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift of love and mercy,—the life has been manifested—the light has shone in darkness. It was necessary in the wisdom of God in his plan for the restoration of fallen man that his Son should be the "light of the world." That he, the "true light"—the Sun of Righteousness, should arise and shine upon those who sat in the region and shadow of darkness and death, that all men through him might believe, and believing have

life through his name. And as the Father hath life in himself, the Son has life in himself, that the dead might hear the voice of the Son of God, and that those that hear might live. Oh! that none might "turn away from him who speaks from heaven!"

As in the kingdom of nature, there is first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear, and as man left to himself sinks deeper and deeper in the labyrinths of darkness and sin: so in the spiritual kingdom, God by a gradual process introduced the light of life into the world. It shone first in the promise to our fallen parents, then in the institution of sacrifice, whereby the virtues of the "Lamb Slain," were available since the beginning—in the promise to Abraham—in the written law, and the tabernacle with its apartments, furniture, ordinances, &c., and in the prophecies concerning Christ, in his incarnation, righteousness, humiliation, sufferings and death, and glorious exaltation. And through the revelations given, and means instituted, a way of access to God was set forth in every age; and nothing on God's part to prevent the return to him of his erring creatures, so that they might enjoy the adoption of God.

"But when the fulness of the time was come God sent forth his Son," &c. And says the apostle, "because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." God in his Son has sent forth in the world a perfect example of heavenly light and life. God has demonstrated his pleasure in his Son; he "is well pleased for his righteousness' sake;" and Jesus has sent the Spirit to convince the world of righteousness, for he has gone to the Father. He is the only way, the truth, and life unto the Father. There is no other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved. And he that hears his word and believes on him that sent him has everlasting life—he that follows him shall not abide in darkness, and he has become the author of eternal salvation to them that obey him. The children of God, then, are such in the Son, and in him alone. They are begotten by his word, "the word of truth." They "live by the faith of the Son of God." They "walk by faith." They "fight the good fight of faith." And they obtain "the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ."

Adam before he fell was not adopted into the family of God, but enjoyed all the privileges of it as his natural right. Jesus the second Adam was not adopted a Son; He and the Father are one—the Father loved him before the foundation of the world. The children of God are chosen in him before the foundation of the world. God has given them the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, and as sin has reigned unto death by one, so by the one, Jesus Christ our Lord, grace reigns unto eternal life.

Yours in Christ,

QUARTUS.

Pietou N. S., 15th Dec., 1853.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE—From the *Christian Record*, Indianapolis. February and March Numbers, we see that 778 additions have been made to the churches, all in Indiana, saving a very few in Illinois. D. O.