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THE CHRISTIAN.

Vol. III. }

SAINT JOHN, N. B., MAY 1847.

{ No. 5.

CONDUCTED BY W. W. EATON.

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

LETTERS TO A YOUNGER BROTHER.

No. 2.

MY DEAR BROTHER—Faith is the main spring of every truly religious effort. “Without faith it is impossible to please God. He who comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Christianity is necessarily a subject of faith before it possibly can be of knowledge. “We walk by faith, not by sight.” Faith is a better principle by which to be governed than either sense or reason. I do not mean by *faith*, that peculiar something which many imagine comes into the soul as electricity descends a lightning rod; nor that something called “the faith,” that individuals can give no better reason for than, “my father, grandfather, and the good old fathers who have gone to heaven before me, believed thus and so, and I think as they did; the religion that carried them safe to heaven will do for me!”

The hearty reception of *facts*, on good and sufficient *testimony*, is the faith of which I speak. “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” “The world by wisdom knew not God.” Intelligent faith in Jehovah springs from a reception of the communications made by him to man. He who rejects these tramples on the only means of true knowledge. He who closes his eyes to the Bible can give no account of his origin or destiny: whence he came; whither he is going, are subjects of mere conjecture. The past to him is doubtful, and the future dark and dreary. Youth and pleasure are fast passing; old age, sickness, sorrow, and something called death, are all before him, and without the lamp of God not a ray of dim star-light or moon-light falls upon his path! The condemner of the Bible is truly an object of commiseration!

I write not thus, my brother, supposing that *you* have a single doubt relative to the truth of the sacred scriptures. But the young men of your generation will be surrounded with sceptical influences. I wish, not only that you should be fully persuaded in your own mind, but that you may be prepared to swell the current of truth and rational thought in opposition to the infidelity into which many in their haste have run, to show themselves independent of their fathers, and the superstitions of their predecessors.

The change that has taken place in sceptical tactics, since Paine's “Age of Reason” was their text book has been very great. Without

a fixed standard of doubt, doubters have endeavoured to suit their views to the times. When the religious part of the community argued the existence of a God from the works of creation, they acknowledged that, and then contended that no other light than that of nature was requisite. Since the commencement of the nineteenth century, Infidels have had another and a very different school of theologians with whom to contend.—These men of God, like Paul, say “the world by wisdom knew not God.” They called upon the disciples of Paine to prove their own faith. “You say, gentlemen, that you believe in the existence of the Supreme. What is the testimony on which you base your faith?” It was found to be on the intelligence they had obtained from their parents and teachers. Not one could point to a higher source of information. It soon became necessary for them to adopt views that contained no affirmation—leaving every thing beyond the ken of vision in doubt and uncertainty. This is the common ground of sceptics at the present time. Anxiously desirous of overturning christianity, they favour and discard by turns every thing. Phrenology, Animal Magnetism, Mesmerism, Neurology, Pathetism, Slavery or Anti-slavery, Temperance or Intemperance, Republicanism or Monarchism, freedom of speech or a muzzled press, as best suits the propagation of doubt and unbelief of the great facts on which rests the christian superstructure—the congregation of the Lord.

“He who comes to God must believe that HE IS.” This is the central idea of all knowledge worth possessing. When once this great truth is suggested to the human mind, it is impossible to forget it. Witnesses from earth, sea, and sky, attest its certainty. Though nature *alone* is inadequate to the task of communicating spiritual knowledge to man; yet when the great truth is once developed to the human mind, it gives to the whole creation another aspect. Every thing proclaims his wisdom and power.

Infidelity is a disease of the heart rather than of the head. The few individuals who have had the temerity to stand before the world and merely utter their *doubts*, relative to the existence of a great *first* cause, have not done so until after they have had a long contest with their own consciousness; until they have created some god of their own; for a god every man must and will have! Riches, honours, fame, pleasure; some appetite or passion, has claimed the strong affections of the most stoical of ancient and modern philosophers. Some one or more of these gains such an ascendancy, that the question arises “Shall I serve the author of my being or yield to that power on which my heart is placed?” The struggle is often long continued; but when the mind yields to the world, the flesh, and the devil, scepticism and infidelity are sure of a victim.

Having given himself up to the dominion of the flesh, it is not surprising that he should try to believe that there is nothing in the universe but matter; that God is every thing, and every thing is God; and that it is no matter whether there be any God or not! In this way I can account for Atheism, and only in this way. I view it in the light of a mental disease, brought on in a manner not unlike intemperance. The victim thinks he can see contradictions in God’s word—some things to him inexplicable; he takes draught after draught—often in the company of those who are inebriated already; and after having been frequently

shocked by his profanity and the grossness of his own views, his conscience becomes seared, and he can without one anxious thought or desire plunge into the very vortex of Atheism!! When once committed in favour of scepticism, he feels that he is arrayed against the great mass of his fellow-men. His pride of opinion prevents his taking any serious notice of the reasoning and arguments of those on whom he is wont to look as superstitious ignoramuses; and his modes of reasoning unfit him for the task of a careful examination of the downward tendencies of his sceptical non-descript system!

I have already, in substance, remarked that it is more difficult to disbelieve in the existence of a Great First Cause, than to give it a hearty reception; but you must not hence infer, that there is on the part of any intelligent believer, any reluctance to go into the examination of this, the first article of his faith. By no means. In all the living, moving, life-giving and life-receiving objects by which he is surrounded, he beholds multiplied testimonies of the existence, wisdom, power and goodness of his Almighty Friend.

One class of theologians argue the question *a posteriori*; from the effects to the cause. They spread before themselves the wonders of earth, air and sea: They go into an examination of the materials of which the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms are composed: in all which they behold order, beauty, harmony, and adaptation of means to the end designed to be attained. Examined by the philosopher or the uneducated peasant; the smallest particle of dust to the globe on which we live; the hyssop that grows out of the wall to the cedar of Lebanon; the anamalcula of a drop of water to the huge mammoth: all testify the presence of an intelligent contriver. Whether the system to which we belong be examined in the abstract or the concrete, the conclusion is the same;—*There is a great incomprehensible MIND that has superintended not only the frame-work but also the smallest minutia of this great superstructure which we call nature.*

The devout admirer of the works of God lifts his soul from a survey of them, and exclaims, with a heart filled with emotion, "Great and marvellous are thy works Lord God Almighty—just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints!"

I have written a very different letter from what I designed when I commenced. It is rather an essay on scepticism than a familiar conversation, such as I purposed. Excuse this, and I will endeavour to resume my letter writing style in the next, *Deo volente.*

Most affectionately, your brother WENTWORTH.

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

BY A. CAMPBELL.

OUR present business is with the interpretations or propositions submitted by the Evangelical Alliance as their basis of union and co-operation. Four propositions have been examined. Five yet remain to be examined. The fifth will suffice for the present. It is in the words following:—

"*The justification of the sinner by faith alone.*"

The interpretations of sacred scripture on the subject of a sinner's justification before God, entertained by this Alliance, is, then, that God justifies a sinner by faith alone. This is the essence of the gospel, or

the essential doctrine of the Bible, according to the philology of the Evangelical Alliance. It is perspicuous, definite, and brief, and therefore free from ambiguity. But is there any identical or even similar proposition in the Christian Scriptures! Not one. It is therefore a philological deduction—an interpretation of some one passage, or of several passages. We have sundry declarations of scripture upon this subject. We shall, therefore, collate them as the premises from which this conclusion or doctrine is deduced:—

1. "By his knowledge" (or *by the knowledge of him*) "my righteous servant shall justify many." Isaiah liiii. 11.
2. "The just shall live by faith." Heb. x. 38.
3. "All that believe are justified from all things." Acts xiii. 39.
4. "Being justified freely by his grace." Rom. iii. 24.
5. "Being now justified by his blood." Rom. 4. 9.
6. "You are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus." 1 Cor. 6, 11.
7. "You see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." James ii. 24.

Such are the causes, reasons, or instruments of a sinner's justification, assigned by Prophets and Apostles. Why, then, in the name, or by the authority of philology, give a new proposition, or a proposition different from any and every one of these? To say that the just shall live by faith, is the breadth of the heavens different from saying the just shall live by faith alone. A man lives by breathing; but who but a simpleton would thence infer that a man lives by breathing alone!

But the proposition of the Alliance in the form of its enunciation amounts to a literal contradiction of an apostolic proposition.

The Alliance says, *a man is justified by faith alone*.

James says, "A man is justified by works, and not by faith only." Is not the predicate '*by faith alone*,' and the predicate '*not by faith only*,' literally a contradiction? The Apostle James, then, and the Alliance are clearly at issue.

When, then, the divine oracles assign evangelical justification to six distinct causes, why should the Alliance choose to assign it to one only, and that one so ambiguously expressed as in its simple form, to amount to a flat contradiction! I presume they rely much upon such sayings as these: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight"—"Knowing that a man is not justified by the deeds of the law"—"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith; for before *faith* came," (i. e. before *Christ* came,) "we were kept under the law," &c. But, as before said, a man's being justified by faith without circumcision or by any legal observance whatsoever, is very different from saying that a man is "justified by faith only," or "faith alone." I still ask why, according to all the laws of philological interpretation—six causes—such as, 1, the *grace* of God—2, the *blood* of Christ—3, the *name* of Christ—4, *knowledge*—5, *faith*, and 6, *works*—should be compressed or resolved into *faith alone*? Are *grace*, *blood*, *name*, *knowledge*, *faith*, *works*, logically or philologically equal to *faith alone*!!

If they had said the moving or *original* cause of a sinner's justification is the favor of God—the *meritorious* or procuring cause, the *blood* of Christ—the *instrumental* causes, the application of the *name* of the Lord,

the *knowledge* of Christ's person, office, and character—*faith* in him, and obedience to him, are the reasons that justify God in justifying a sinner—they would have spoken incomparably more in harmony with the Holy Spirit than they have done. For my own part, I believe that evangelical justification implies all these six causes. Justification flows from the pure favor of God—*through* the blood of Christ—in *virtue* of the name or dignity of the Lord Jesus—*apprehended* through the revelation of the gospel, *received by faith*, and *operating* in obedience to every divine precept.

But the Alliance, mindful of Pelagian, Arminian, and Jewish error, falls into another. Sundry commentators have fallen into the same hallucination. Because the Jews, as a people, rejected the gospel and adhered to the works of their own law against faith in Christ, and the practical acknowledgment of his divine mission, they place their mere notion of faith against every thing else, so far as justification is concerned; and thus virtually, without intending it, give it the same place in the minds of their admirers as the works of the law held in the minds of the Jew. Multitudes of professors in these schools of extreme orthodoxy, rely as much upon their "faith alone" theory for their personal justification as ever did Jew, Pelagian, or Arminian upon his works of law or his works of gospel.

There is just as much Pelagianism in making "faith alone" a ground of justification, as there is in making works of law or works of gospel a ground of justification. Jesus Christ says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Now may we not speak as the Lord spoke, without incurring the condemnation of God or the reprobation of man; and, without fear of excommunication, say with an Apostle, that, "as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also!"

READING THE SCRIPTURES.—The venerable Dr. Woods, in addressing the students of Andover, stated that when he first commenced his duties as Professor of Theology, he feared that the frequency with which he would have to pass over the same portions of scripture would abate the interest in his own mind in reading them; but after years of study, he stated it as his experience that with every class his interest increased. This we believe is the experience of every true christian. Why is it so? There is no other volume in the world which grows in interest by repeated reading. We may study Bacon, Butler, and Boyle; but so soon as the argument is appreciated and the truth appropriated, the mind labours through another reading. But every passage in the New Testament is fruitful of varied suggestions, and the more spiritual the mind of the reader the more fruitful of good is the passage read. This is not because the New Testament is an ancient book; the morals of Seneca, written in the same age, produce no such effect. It is not because of its sublime or beautiful diction: Ossian wearies the mind, and the sentences of Dr. Johnson and Washington Irving do not invite to repeated reading. It is because there is spiritual interest and spiritual alimient in the words of inspiration for the pious mind. Because one passage suggests others, and thus like the links of a chain the mind is led onward and upward, until it attains some new or some impressive views of God's character, and of human duty. IT IS BECAUSE IT IS THE WORD OF GOD.—*Herald*.

QUERY.

SECULAR EMPLOYMENT ON THE LORD'S DAY.

BRO. EATON—Will you give your views, in some number of *The Christian*, on the propriety of vending any kind of articles on the Lord's day? Some take this liberty, sheltering themselves behind the supposed fact, that no positive law guards this day; at least what part of it should be devoted to worship is not stated, as they understand, and as they judge that if *one seventh* part of the time is given the day is of no consequence. I may on some other opportunity give you my thoughts on the subject.

Yours &c.

UHLMAN.

Halifax, N. S., April 10, 1847.

REMARKS.

The *Christian* was never designed to be a vehicle of my opinions or speculations. Should I however indulge an expression of opinion in reference to that professor who would engage in ordinary buying and selling, the usual employments of the week, or (except in extreme cases) any thing secular, under the plea that there is not in the new covenant any positive prohibition, I would say his heart was not right in the sight of God! Those long conversant with "men and things" testify that a large majority of such professors eventually make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. So far as my limited observation has extended these views have become confirmed.

The observance of the first day of the week is, with me, the standard of morality and civilization in any community. Spend but one Lord's day in each of the principal cities in America, and make an accurate estimate of the number of shops open, parties of pleasure, &c., and then the number who meet where God's word is read, and just in the proportion that this latter class bears to the former will you find those who fear God and love their fellow men. In some of the eastern cities of the United States, where good old puritanical habits have not yet been discarded, such as Portland, Salem, &c., there is a calmness and sobriety on the Lord's day that make it pleasant to repair to the house of prayer. But in New Orleans, and many of the southwestern cities, where they keep open their tippling shops and theatres; where they race horses and fight duels on the first day of the week; morality and civilization, love to God and man, are at a low ebb: scarcely salt enough to preserve the mass. Men may call themselves reformers, and endeavour to serve God part of the Lord's day, and devote the other to some secular pursuit; but they will soon lose all relish for the sanctuary: they cannot serve God and mammon.

It may be asked, if we ought not to serve God in every thing we say or do? To this we respond, unhesitatingly, in the affirmative. But our Heavenly Father has given us bodies, souls, and spirits; animal, intellectual, and moral natures; and we serve him not with all our faculties, unless a proper proportion of our time be devoted to their developement and exercise. To these conclusions, we presume, no one will object. Now then comes the central question, shall every man be his own judge *when, how often, and how much* of his time he shall spend in the cultivation of his moral powers &c.? Were we to say *yea* to this, we would

forever give up social worship. In harvest time, the farmer would find it inconvenient to spend any time with his brethren in the house of prayer; in fresher time, the lumberers and mill-men would have too much business, to think of attending religious meetings; and so every season would claim the entire occupation of some large class of the community; the public worship of God would be entirely neglected; the animal man would gain the complete ascendancy, and christianity would become extinct!

During the first four thousand years a certain day was fixed; not a certain part of the time, but "*the seventh day* is the sabbath of the Lord thy God" &c. On the first day of the week the Saviour rose from the dead. Since then, believers in him have honored his memory by meeting for worship on that day. To the Apostles the Messiah said, "He that hears you hears me, and he that hears me hears him that sent me." The conduct of the early christians, under the teaching of the apostles, must certainly be equivalent to a divine injunction. No one who has any respect for his own intellect—who has given any attention to the Word of the Lord, church history, or even tradition—doubts that the christians of the pure ages of christianity met every first day of the week to worship God. If it was necessary for them to do so it is for us. We base the duty then, in the first place, on *the example of the early christians*. In the next place, the title that the resurrection day has obtained shews that it should be wholly devoted to the cultivation of the moral nature of man, and that nothing should be engaged in calculated to take off the mind from the great facts to be commemorated on that day, namely, the death of Christ for our sins and his resurrection for our justification. In the New Testament we have the expressions "Lord's Day," "Lord's Supper," "Lord's Table," &c. Supper and table are specific objects. No one supposes that they allude to ordinary meals: why then should any one doubt that the designation "Lord's day" has a specific object—to point out one day to be distinguished in some way from all the rest? The "Lord's day" as certainly points out some one particular day that has a particular relation to the Lord, as the expression "Lord's supper" refers to a particular supper to be received in honour or in remembrance of the Lord Messiah.

The early christian writers can be implicitly relied on as witnesses in matters of fact. They are referred to by us for this purpose only.—We are informed by Eusebius, that from the beginning the christians assembled on the first day of the week, called by them the "Lord's day," for the purposes of religious worship, "to read the scriptures, to preach and to celebrate the Lord's supper;" and Justin Martyr observes; "that on the Lord's day, all christians in the city, or country, meet together, because that is the day of our Lord's resurrection, and then we read the writings of the apostles and prophets: this being done the president makes an oration to the assembly, to exhort them to imitate, and to practice the things they have heard; then we all join in prayer, and after that we celebrate the sacrament. Then they who are able and willing, give what they think proper, and what is collected is laid up in the hands of the president, who distributes it to orphans and widows, and other necessitous christians, as their wants require." Even the ene-

mies of christianity testify to the fact of the early christians meeting on a "set solemn day" for religious purposes. Pliny, governor of Bythia, in a letter to the Roman Emperor, says of the christians in his day: "Upon a *set solemn day* they were wont to meet together, and oblige themselves by a sacrament, or, solemn oath, not to commit any wickedness," &c.

From these facts I conclude that it is the duty of christians to observe the first day of the week sacredly to the Lord. With the Bible before them they ought to inquire how shall I in the best manner promote the cause of the Lord? The spiritual interest of our fellow men should be kept distinctly in view. All our words and our actions should have special reference to the death and resurrection of our Lord, and thus we shall best promote the present and future salvation of the human family. And on every other day, "whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, all should be done to the glory of God." W. W. E.

STUDY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

No. 3.

EPISTOLARY WRITINGS.

BY A. CAMPBELL.

EPISTOLARY communications are not so easily understood as historic writings. The historian writes upon the hypothesis that the reader is ignorant of the facts and information which he communicates, and therefore explains himself as he proceeds. The letter-writer proceeds upon the hypothesis that the person or community addressed is already in possession of such information as will explain things to which he only alludes or simply mentions. This is more especially the fact when the writer of a letter addresses a people with whom he is personally acquainted, amongst whom he has been, and with whom he has already conversed upon most of the subjects on which he writes. A letter to persons who have heard the writer before, who know his peculiarity; and, above all, who are perfectly acquainted with their own circumstances, questions, debates, difficulties, conduct, &c. may be every way plain and of easy apprehension to them, when it may be very difficult, and in some places unintelligible, to persons altogether strangers to these things. It is a saying to which little exception can be made, that every man best understands the letters addressed to himself. It is true, if another person were made minutely acquainted with all the business from first to last, with all the peculiarities of the writer, and circumstances of the person addressed, and with all the items of correspondence, he might as fully and as clearly understand the letter, as those to whom it was addressed.

There is no doubt but that the apostolic letters were plain and of easy apprehension, as respected the style and sentiment, to the persons who first received them, though some of *the things* contained in them might be difficult to be comprehended or fully understood even by them. The difficulties that lie in our way of perfectly understanding them, though much greater than those in the way of the persons to whom they were first sent, are not at all insurmountable. The golden key of interpretation is very similar to the golden rule of morality. To ascertain what we

ought to do to others, on moral principle, we must place ourselves in their circumstances; and to ascertain the meaning of the apostolic epistles, we must place ourselves in the circumstances of the persons to whom they were written. So far a resemblance exists between the golden key and the golden rule. But to develop the principle and to exhibit its practical use, we shall lay before the reader a few considerations which will embrace the chief difficulties in our way, and the best means of surmounting them. What we advance on this subject may be considered as an answer to the question, *How shall we place ourselves in the circumstances of the persons addressed?*

In the first place then, *we are to remember that these letters were written nearly eighteen centuries ago.* This fact has much meaning in it: for it follows from it, that except the prophetic part of the writings, not a word or sentence in them can be explained or understood by all that has happened in the world for eighteen hundred years. We might as well expect to find the meaning of Cicero's orations, or Horace's epistles, from reading the debates of the British Parliament, or of the American Congress of last year, as to expect to find the meaning of these epistles from the debates and decisions of the Council of Nice, or of Trent, or of Westminster—from the ecclesiastic history, the moral philosophy, or the scholastic divinity of any age since John the Apostle resigned his spirit.

From the above fact it follows that the most accurate acquaintance with all those questions of the different sects, with all their creeds and controversies, which have engrossed so much of the public attention, if it does not impede, most certainly does not facilitate, our progress in the knowledge of the Apostolic epistles. As the Apostles did not write with any of our questions before their minds, or with a reference to any of our systems, it is presumptuous in the extreme to apply what they have said on other questions, to those which have originated since. And as they did not write with any design of making out a system of doctrine, it is preposterous to attempt to make out a system for them, and oblige them to approve it.

In the second place, as the Apostles wrote these letters with a reference to their own times, to the character and circumstances of the people with whom they were conversant, a knowledge of the character and circumstances of these people is of essential importance in order to understand the letters addressed to them.

By the *character* of the people we mean not only their character at the time the letter was written, but also their previous character—what sort of persons they were before their conversion, as respected religion and morality—what their peculiar views and prejudices—and what their attainments in the learning and science of their age and country. By the *circumstances* of the people, we mean not merely their political and commercial standing, but as regards unity of views and co-operation—whether they were living in peace and harmony among themselves—whether they were persecuted by those of different sentiments—or whether they were enjoying tranquility unmolested from without.

In the third place, a knowledge of the character and circumstances of the writer of an epistle, is of essential importance in understanding it.

His character as respects style and method—what his peculiar art of reasoning and modes of expression—what relation he bears to the persons addressed—whether personally acquainted with them, or by report—whether their father or brother in the faith—whether his letter is the first or second to them, or one of a series not extant—whether it was solicited on their part, an answer to one from them, or written of his own accord—whether he addresses them alone, or others in conjunction with them—and whether he writes in his own name, or associated with others—and what their character and standing.

In the next place, great attention must be paid to his *design* in writing to them at that time. It must be ascertained whether he writes with a reference to their whole circumstances, or to some one more urgent consideration—whether that consideration was one that respected themselves merely, or others equally with them—whether he aimed at the full accomplishment of his design in one letter, or in more—or whether he reserved some things to a special interview, or to some persons soon to visit them.

In the fifth place, the reader must recollect that no one sentence in the argumentative part of a letter is to be explained as a proposition, theorem, proverb, or maxim, detached from the drift and scope of the passage. Indeed, neither words or sentences in any argumentative composition, have any meaning but what the scope, connexion, and design of the writer give them. Inattention to this most obvious fact has beclouded the apostolic epistles, has introduced more errors into the views, and unmeaning ceremonies into the practice of professing Christians, than any other cause in the world. To this the cutting up the sacred text into morsels, called *verses*, has greatly contributed. Many passages, otherwise plain and forcible, have been weakened and obscured by this absurd interference.

The difficulties in the way of our understanding these epistles, may be easily gathered from the preceding items. We must place ourselves in Judea, in Rome, or in Corinth, and not in these places in the present day; but we must live in them nearly two thousand years before we lived at all. We must mingle with the Jews in their temple and synagogues. We must visit the temples and the altars of the Pagan Gentiles. We must converse with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers—with the Pharisees and Sadducees—with priests and people that died centuries before we were born. We must place before us manuscript copies of these epistles, written without a break, a chapter, or a verse. We must remember what the writers *spoke* to the people before they *wrote* to them. We must not only attend to what they said and wrote, but what they did. And we must always bear in mind the numerous and diversified enemies, in and out of authority, with whom they had to conflict. Now all these are apparently great difficulties, and, at first view, would seem to put the golden key of interpretation out of the reach of all.

They are not, however, insurmountable. In reading any epistle, on any subject, written by any person, we are accustomed to attend to all these things, in substance, if not in form. Indeed, these are but the dictates of common sense, regarded by every person in the common occur-

rences of every day. Who is there that reads a letter from any correspondent without placing before his mind the character, views, and all the circumstances of the writer? Who is it that reads a letter addressed to himself or any other person, that does not attend to his own circumstances, or those of the person addressed, with a reference to the items of correspondence? Does he not regard the date, the place, the occasion, and the apparent design of the communication? Does he divide the letters into chapters and verses, and make every period or semicolon in it a proverb, like one of Solomon's; a theorem, like one of Euclid's; an axiom, like one of Newton's? Does he not rather read the whole of it together, and view every sentence in it in the light of the whole, and with a reference to the main design? Most certainly he does. All that is contended for in these remarks, is, that the same common sense should be applied to the apostolic epistles which we apply to all other epistolary communications.

We have said that the above-mentioned difficulties are not insurmountable; and in proof that they are not, and that we may place ourselves in the circumstances of those addressed in the epistles, with more ease than at first sight appears, we would call the reader's attention to the documents which the New Testament itself furnishes, to aid us in an effort of so much importance.

In the first place, then, the historical and epistolary books of the New Covenant afford us the necessary documents to place ourselves in the circumstances of those addressed, in all these points essential to an accurate apprehension of what is written to them. It presupposes that the reader is in possession of the ancient oracles; or that he has, or may have, the information contained in them. As much is required of the peculiar character and views of the Jews and Gentiles in the apostolic age, of the sects and parties of both people, as is necessary to understand the allusions to them in these writings; and in proportion to the important bearings that any historic facts have upon the apostolic epistles, is the amount of information afforded. For example: there is no historic fact which explains so much of Paul's epistles, as the opposition which the Jewish brethren made to the reception of the Gentile converts into the Christian congregations, on the same footing with themselves; and there is no historic fact in the history of the lives and labours of the Apostles, so frequently and fully presented to the view of the reader as this one.

Indeed the number of facts necessary to be known in order to our associating around ourselves the circumstances of those addressed, in most of the apostolic epistles, is by no means great. It is rather the *importance* than the *number* of them which illustrates these writings. A few facts belonging to the apostolic mission explain a large proportion of the writings of the Apostles. For instance, they were to announce and proclaim to Pharisees, Sadducees, Samaritans, and men of all nations, that **JESUS THE NAZARENE WAS THE SON OF GOD AND THE SAVIOUR OF MEN.** When this was done, and some of all these people were persuaded of the truth of this proposition, the next work of the Apostles was, to associate them in one religious community by opening to their apprehension the import and design of the facts which

they already believed. In making one new religious body or association of persons, whose former views, prejudices, partialities, and antipathies were so discordant, lay the chief difficulty, and constituted the most arduous part of the apostolic labors. The Jew with great reluctance abandoned his prejudices against the Gentile; and the Gentile, with no less difficulty, was reconciled to the Jew. The Jew conceived that it would be an improvement upon the Christian religion to incorporate with it a few of the essentials of Judaism; and the Gentile fancied that some of his former much-loved philosophy would be a great acquisition to a Christian congregation. The infidel, or unbelieving Jews, attacked their brethren who associated with the Apostles—first by arguments, and lastly by political power; and the Gentile philosophers and magistrates alternately ridiculed and persecuted such of their brethren as united with this sect every where spoken against. The Apostles labored to keep the doctrine of the Messiah pure from any mixture with Judaism and Gentile philosophy, and to fortify the minds of the disciples with arguments to maintain their controversy against their opponents, and with patience and resolution to persevere amidst all sufferings and persecutions. Now these few facts, so frequently and fully stated in these writings, go a great way in explaining some entire epistles, and many passages in others.

RULES FOR GOVERNING CHILDREN.

“Sow in the morn thy seed,
At eve hold not thy hand.”

1. Threaten seldom, and be careful *how* you threaten;—never lie. Some parents tell lies: no wonder the children become liars.

2. Never scold your children, nor tell them to do any thing, (no not the merest trifle,) unless you intend them to do it, and do it *now*.

3. Never give them any thing for their crying. Some parents (very unwise) endeavour to pacify their little ones by promises of sweet meats, &c., sometimes by telling them of witches, ghosts, and hobgoblins, or that bears or the “black man,” will catch them: Abominable! Such impressions are often ruinous, lasting as eternity. Some children have actually been frightened to death!

4. Never allow your children to be wasteful; this evil will follow them to the grave. Bread, pie, cakes, and other fragments of food, partially eaten, are often thrown away! Shameful! Thousands are now perishing for the crumbs that fall from your table. Christ said, when he fed the multitude miraculously, “gather up the fragments that nothing be lost.”

5. Never suffer your children to cry at mere trifles; some acquire this habit very young, and will cry, fret, whine or snivel continually!—their little faces actually become *wrinkled* from crying. Stop this thing, stop it *now*, stop it *forever*. Your own happiness and those around you demand it.

6. Govern the appetites of your children; let their meals be regular, their diet plain and simple; always keeping in view their ages, circum-

stances, exercise, &c. Self denial is the first, and most important thing, the very *essence* of well-being. Lay your hand here *firmly*. Let self denial be first, last, always.

7. Never permit your children to be tempters of others. We know one family of children perfect tormentors of all around them. *Imprudent?* Most intolerable!

8. Do you punish sometimes for wilful disobedience?—chastise corporeally? Very well; be calm as a clock, yet decisive; keep down passion. Do not kick, beat, or slap; take the rod, so Solomon says, so say we, take the rod, let it *tingle*, do up the work; do it *thoroughly*. work well done, is done forever. Ask God to bless it. Is the stubborn will subdued? Keep it subdued always. Seest thou a spark of the "old man" rising?—*put it out*, as you value the soul;—**PUT IT OUT!**—keep it out.

9. Parents, dear, train your little ones for God. Lay out your strength here; stretch every nerve, you will never regret it. Polish these jewels, polish them highly; put on the finishing touch. God commands it—the world demands it.—*Golden Rule*.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN.]

"If the blind lead the blind shall not both fall into the ditch?"

"Justified by faith *alone*."

BROTHER EATON—In reading over a few items got up by the "Evangelical Alliance," my eye fastened impressively upon the *one* above stated, "Justified by faith *alone*." Never was I more surprised than at this moment to hear "A World's Convention" an "Evangelical Alliance" (the *heads* of a select body of Christendom, meeting together for the purpose of emancipating the christian world from the servitude of Romish, *error*) assert, saying "The sinner is justified by faith *alone*." "Surely wisdom is perished from the ancients." Hear another assertion from the same "Evangelical" body, similar to the one before mentioned: "The sinner is utterly *depraved*." "If the light that is in man be darkness how great is that darkness." Let us therefore try these two dogmas (dressed up in their metaphysical terminology) by the standard of *unerring Truth*. And first, it is asserted that "the sinner is justified by faith *alone*." Well this is making, to say the least, a sweeping declaration: *alone*, means solitary, single, and without company. In the first place it is impossible for faith to exist alone: "Jesus (is) the author and finisher of faith." Heb. xii. 2. And again, faith is the product of testimony, and testimony is the product of a fact, and the product of a fact arises from something *done*. Well the truth of the fact, or something done, is this "*Jesus Christ* died for our sins, and rose again for our justification." 1 Cor. xv. 3; Rom. iv. 25. Now where there is no fact existing there is no room for testimony to exist, and of course no faith. The wise master builder (as Paul styles himself) who laid the foundation of salvation among the Gentiles, once asserted (in writing to his Corinthian brethren) that they had been "*washed, sanctified, and justified*, (not by faith alone, but) *in the NAME* of the Lord Jesus, and by the *spirit* of our God." 1 Cor. vi. 11. Here we have washing and sanc-

tifying and justifying ascribed.—to what? “Faith alone?” No; far from it. But hear it: *In the NAME of the Lord Jesus and by the SPIRIT of our God.* Again (Acts xviii. 8), it is written, “Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”

Question.—But what did they (the Corinthians) hear?

Answer.—“For I delivered unto you [mark] *first* of all that which I also received, how that *Christ* died for our sins according to the scriptures. And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” I Cor. xv. 3, &c. In this chapter the facts concerning the Messiah are clearly stated. But in the examination of this portion of “holy writ” we shall see what becomes of “*Faith alone.*”

1. Christ died, was buried, and rose again. This testimony is a real FACT; the preaching of this fact composed Paul’s gospel or TESTIMONY; this gospel or testimony produced FAITH in the Corinthians; and this faith or believing led them to baptism. But let us pursue this subject a little farther. Well then, *first of all* stands Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. These are the FACTS; preaching them is the TESTIMONY; believing them is the FAITH. Now, it is as much impossible for faith to exist, to say nothing of justification, without fact and testimony, as it would be for the human family to exist without a Creator and the vegetable productions of the earth. The apostle James testifies, that as the body without the spirit is dead, so is faith being ALONE. And that a man is *not justified by faith only.* James ii. 17. 24. 26. On the examination of this point of my subject I will add one proof more, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Rom. x. 17. It is more than all Christendom can do, to prove from the whole or any part or portion of the inspired volume of Divine Truth, that faith alone justifies the sinner, or that any ancient patriarch, prophet or apostle, did any thing by faith alone.

And now, for the examination of the other dogma, the sinner being utterly depraved. Paul, when standing in the midst of Mars hill, told the Athenians that God “now commandeth *all men every where* to repent.” Acts xvii. 30. The Saviour once testified, saying, “I tell you, nay; but except ye repent ye shall *all likewise* perish.” Luke xiii. 3. 5. “For if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins.” John viii. 24. Again, Paul said, he testified “both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Acts xx. 21. In these plain portions of scripture, man, nay all men, are commanded to repent and believe: if they will not, they shall perish; therefore the sinner must believe for himself and repent for himself also. The Lord does not, nor will not believe or repent for the sinner. By the above testimony it is conclusively shewn that the sinner is not utterly depraved, as was asserted. Once more: *He that believeth and is baptized shall* be saved. There is no such thing in the Bible as utterly depraved or totally depraved.

Yours, with respect,

CONDONO.

“THINGS AS THEY ARE.”

BROTHER EATON—It is written that “Evil communications corrupt good manners.” It is also certain that evil habits corrupt good morals.

It is a universal fashion of the present "young and rising generation" to employ themselves, in the time of public worship on the Lord's day, in laughing, talking, and whispering, and to be winking and blinking the one to the other through the congregation; and in addition to this there is another indecent performance, that of chewing spruce gum; and another class, equally as indecent, are constantly chewing and spitting tobacco juice about the floor. Now to my mind the above performances are exceedingly disgusting to any decent assembly of christians; and above all this, it is most inexpressibly annoying to the speaker. And there is still something more to try the speaker's patience—to see several persons in the assembly *sleeping* and to hear them *snoring*; others jumping up, and running out and in again in time of service; and others outside, standing under the windows, talking so loud as to draw the attention of persons within. How annoying to the speaker and to every pious worshipper to be thus disturebd. Why, sir, I look upon it to be a real disgrace, and quite unbecoming in any community to have so much evil and wickedness manifested by a large number of young persons, who thus conduct themselves on the Lord's day, and that too in and outside of God's house in the time of divine service. Why, sir, before I ever made any pretensions to the religion of Heaven, there was a certain awe that always rested on my feelings when in the house of prayer. If those ill-behaved young persons would only take the pains to go and observe the conduct of the *Indian tribes*, who are taught to pray to the saints, and count their beads, and cross themselves &c., there (to their praise be it spoken) would they behold a solemnity becoming the occasion. Why, sir, if the red men of the wood were to come to our places of worship, they would not be guilty of such base and wicked conduct. These statements, Brother Eaton, are true with regard to the conduct of the young persons where I reside; and in too many places in this Province where I have travelled, I have seen on the Lord's day in places of worship such conduct manifested among the young people. I wish those very same young persons who thus conduct themselves, could only for *once* see themselves as others see them, I think they would for ever abandon it in themselves, and do all in their power to persuade others to forsake such *unholy* actions on the Lord's day and in the Lord's house. If this way a day of *miraculous discipline*, as it was in the apostle Paul's day, I fear that many of those who act so wickedly on the Lord's day, would be made a public example, by being cut off for their sins. I wish, Brother Eaton, that you or some of your able correspondents would take up your pen, and write on this growing, soul-destroying, and alarming evil. Satan is busy, depend upon it, "working in the children of disobedience." These are times spoken of by Paul: see 2 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

I remain, yours respectfully,

CONDONO.

SUCCESS OF THE ANCIENT GOSPEL.

Oshawa, C. W. April 8th, 1847.

DEAR BROTHER EATON—The cause of the Master is still prospering. I recently spent eight days in the city of Toronto in company with brother Jackson of Owen Sound; during which time we discoursed several times on the things of the Kingdom. While we remained, *five* individuals con-

fessed the Lord, and were baptized for the remission of sins. The brethren here are striving to exhibit the Gospel before the world both in word and practice: May the Lord bless them abundantly. * * *

Yours in hope of eternal life.

L. J. CORRELL.

THE TRUE STAR.—There is one star that will never disappoint the hopes it awakens ; its ray is never dimmed and it knows no going down ; its cheering light streams on through ages of tempest and change. Earth may be darkened, systems convulsed, planets shaken from their sphere—but this star will pour its steady and undiminished light ; the eye that is turned to it will gladden in its tears ; the countenance that it lights, sorrow can never overcast. The footstep that falls in its radiance finds no gloom even at the portals of the grave. It is the star—

“First in night's Diadem,
The Star, the Star of Bethlehem.”

Ch. Cit.

HOMAGE TO REVELATION.—The Bible is a book of facts at least as well authenticated as any in history—a book of miracles, incontestably avouched—a book of prophecies confirmed by past as well as present fulfilment—a book of poetry, pure, natural and elevated—a book of morals, such as human wisdom never framed for the perfection of human happiness. I will abide by the precepts, admire the beauty, revere the mysteries, and as far as in me lies practise the mandates of this sacred volume ; and should the ridicule of earth, and the blasphemy of hell assail me, I shall console myself by the contemplation of those blessed spirits, who in the same holy cause have toiled and suffered. In the “goodly fellowship of the saints,” “in the noble army of the martyrs,” in the society of the great, and good, and wise of every nation—if my sinfulness be not cleansed, and my darkness illumined, at least my pretensionless submission may be excused. If I err with the luminaries I have chosen for my guides, I confess myself captivated by the loveliness of their aberrations. If they err, it is in a heavenly region ; if they wander, it is in the fields of light ; if they aspire, it is at least a glorious daring ;—and rather than sink with infidelity into the dust, I am content to cheat myself with the vision of eternity. If I err, I err with the disciples of philosophy and virtue—with men who have drank deep at the fountain of human knowledge, but who dissolved not the pearl of their salvation in the draught. I err with Bacon, the confidant of nature, fraught with all the learning of the past, and almost prescient of the future, yet too wise not to know his weakness, and too philosophic not to feel his ignorance. I err with Milton, rising on angel's wing toward heaven, and, like the bird of morn, soaring out of sight amid the music of his grateful piety. I err with Locke, whose pure philosophy only taught him to admire its Source ; whose warm love of genuine liberty was never chilled into rebellion with its Author. I err with Newton, whose star-like spirit shot across the darkness of the sphere, too soon to re-ascend to the home of its nativity. With men like these I shall remain in error. Nor shall I desert those errors, even for the drunken death bed of a Paine, or the delirious war-whoop of those men who would erect their altar on the ruins of society.—*Chs. Phillips.*