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T H E

WITNESS OF TRUTH.

VOL. III.

OSHAWA, MARCH, 1848.

NO. 3.

THE TIMES.

No. II.

OUR readers will have already seen, without an explanation, that it is not the past but the present times which we are considering. It is true that we require to refer to what has been, in order the more clearly to discern and appreciate the things of the present. Comparison is the principal element of knowledge. Where there is no comparison, there is no knowledge, experience, or wisdom. God himself teaches the sons of men after this manner. The bible is a volume of comparisons. Hence, as we have said, although it be our object to speak of the present times, and while all that we say is designed to aid us in the knowledge of what now is, and what we require, yet, in justice to the subject, we must occasionally throw ourselves into the past, for the purpose of impressing us with the realities of those things which are happening before our eyes daily.

There is, at the present moment, two great divisions, and a thousand sub-divisions, of the christian world. Popery and protestantism are the chief heads, and the minors we shall not wait to count. At the time protestantism was born, the religious earth and the spiritual heavens called for a change. Here, if no where else, we all, with one consent, agree. Quarrel as we may, and differ as we shall, upon other things, to this sentiment there is not one opposing syllable in the whole world of protestants. Let it then be understood, from Rome to London, from London to Washington, and from Washington to the north side of the north pole, that there is at least one article of a confession upon which all protestants agree, and this one article of agreement is,

that there was a time in the world when a religious change—a change for the better—was necessary.

With this admission before us, a question arises of some consequence to all who are interested in the present investigation. What was the state of things three hundred years ago, when, as it is conceded, a reformation was required? Perhaps some one may answer, in general terms, that the people were all Catholics then, and hence there was an absolute need for reform. But is not the name Catholic as lovely, as sound, and as scriptural as the name protestant? It is not names, but things, we have under examination. Was there no piety in those days? Was there no sound doctrine? Were there no holy ceremonies? Could men of learning, of zeal, of sanctity, of sterling worth, and of determined opposition to the spirit of the times, not be found? What was Zwingli, and who was Myconius? In what age did Reuchlin and Erasmus live? What shall we say of Melancthon, and of Staupitz, and of Luther before even the principles of the reformation were in embryo? Where was the people who embraced the doctrine of Huss? And what shall we say of the Waldenses?

But we approach the question in another form, and elicit an answer in which again we shall all concur. When we say that the state of things which called for the protestant reformation, was a state of things contrary to the simplicity, order, and purity of the oracles of God, we say what receives a universal response from every party in the protestant ranks. In one word, a departure from the New Testament, in theory and in practice, was the sole occasion of the need of a reformation in the days when princes and people protested against the papacy. Once more, then, we are all agreed. This makes two things in which every protestant from Dan to Beersheba is united. First, that a reformation was once absolutely needful; and second, that it was needful because the professed members of the christian church had so widely departed from the New Testament standard. We are happy in agreeing thus far with the whole protestant world. And since there is a concurrence upon these very important premises, shall we not be united in reference to all the conclusions legitimately deduced from them? These two points of agreement must be regarded as the basis of a complete union, provided we can show how they are brought to bear upon the state of things in this our own day.

First of all we hesitate not to say that modern protestantism is as far from New Testament excellence, as the protestant world is now in advance of the papal world in the days of Reuchlin or of Calvin.

This is only assertion, broad and bold assertion; but the testimony is in good keeping, and will appear in its place. Nothing shall pass without proof. We shall look protestantism in the face, and exhibit its features; we shall feel its pulse, and tell its spasms and hectic fits; we shall hear its words, and report its systems of doctrine and best compound theories; we shall examine and exhibit its aspects, tendencies, and operations, as good testimony shall justify, and give the evidence as we proceed. Reader, we ask you, for your own sake, and for the sake of others, to examine what we say.

The general features of protestantism—what are they? A single glance from two or three well chosen points of view, will answer our present purpose. Here we shall permit a sample of its prime members and robust advocates to stand forward and represent the system in its own color:—

“Every bishop and every clergyman of the Church of England has it in his power to trace up the succession of bishops through whom he received his authority, beginning with the bishop who laid his hands upon him, and going upwards from bishop to bishop, to the very hands of St. Peter and St. Paul.”

The above is the language of a doctor of divinity, while attending with other divine doctors to consecrate a new building, called a church, by imparting some papal unction through modern episcopacy, in the town of Dundas, not quite a hundred miles from the place where this pen now moves. The bishops of the English Church, it must be confessed, are a favoured race, if the preceding divinity be really divine. We take it for granted that no one even supposes that a bishop of the Roman Lady Church, past or present, could touch a chain more full of the grace of ministerial power. If this doctor of the episcopal order is not upon the same step with the ecclesiastics of Rome, he certainly stands upon something as high. If he sits not upon the same seat, undoubtedly he has a seat of the same order, and is fully as near the skies. The following, also, from its general tone, will be recognized as coming from a brother in full connexion:—

“If it were necessary, I could add a hundred instances from the bible, all going to show that it is *there* a prominent and oft-repeated doctrine, that *the act of God's authorized ministers is the act of God himself.*”

So speaks the editor of an Episcopal paper, called “The Church,” published in the city of Toronto. It must, however, mean the church of England, not the church of Christ. There is certainly a difference;

part of the proof of which may perhaps be furnished by some of the master-builder Puseyites, who are industrious in their efforts to cement Rome and London, and raise a temple upon the pillars of the papacy and episcopacy. Now the doctrine of this "church," is the very doctrine of His Holiness, who assumes the throne of the prince of the apostles.

But is our own country the only portion of the world where the general traits of protestantism are so much at variance with the pure image of the gospel of Christ? We shall post off to Europe, and hear a dissenter speak:—

"Wherein is the difference betwixt the church of Rome and the Church of England as *state churches*? Have not both shed human blood to propagate their creeds? Do not both acknowledge an earthly head? Is not the Prayer-Book principally taken from the Mass-Book, and do not both churches condemn as heretics, and exclude from salvation, all who differ from them? The chief difference is, that the Church of England is a much more expensive establishment than the Catholic Church ever was. The Church of Rome gave one-third of her income to the poor, one-third for repairing churches, and one-third to support the clergy. This was the original design of tithes; but the clergy of the Church of England *pocket the whole*: they have robbed the poor of this right; they have thrown the repairs of the churches upon the country; and this they call a *reformation from popery*.

"No wonder we have to *pay thirty thousand soldiers to keep down the Irish*, in order to *keep up the church*, and collect tithes for the state priests. This they call religion—the religion of the New Testament. It has nothing to do with christianity, or the church of Christ; it is the religion of a state church, and no other."

We could furnish documents and proofs almost without number in reference to the same subject; but a few testimonies, exactly to the point, are as convincing and impressive as a score of scores.

But the eldest daughter of Rome is not the only daughter whose features take after the harlot parent, and therefore we shall attempt to show that protestants of various complexions, if beheld without artificials, are only a slight degree fairer and better favoured than the child at which we have been looking. Still, before advancing into this department, it may be well to pause for another chapter.

Meanwhile, it is to be hoped that no one will charge us with being an enemy to protestantism; nay, in one grand aspect, we love and respect it, and would have it protest solemnly, decidedly, unyieldingly against all Roman, English, French, Scotch, and American corruptions ever invented or loved either by the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of ancient or modern theology.

CONDUCTOR.

[From the Christian Baptist.]

A RETURN TO PRIMITIVE ORDER.

It will be confessed, without argument to prove, that the conversion of men, or of the world, and the unity, purity, and happiness of the disciples of the Messiah, were the sublime subjects of his humiliation to death. For this, he prayed in language never heard on earth before, in words which not only expressed the ardency of his desires, but at the same time unfolded the plan, which his benevolence and philanthropy were to be triumphant.

The words to which we refer express one petition of that prayer recorded by the apostle John, commonly styled his intercessory prayer. With his eyes raised to heaven he says, — Holy Father—now, I do not pray for these only (for the unity and success of the apostles) but for these also who shall believe on me through, or by means of their words—that they, and may be one—that the world may believe that you have sent me. Who does not see in this petition, that the words or testimony of the apostles, the unity of the disciples, and the conviction of the world are bound together by the wisdom and the love of the Father, by the devotion and philanthropy of the Son. The order of heaven, the plan of the Great King, his throne and government, are here unfolded in full splendor to our view. The words of the apostles are laid as the basis, the unity of the disciples the glorious result, and the only successful means of converting the world to the acknowledgement, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah or the Son of the Blessed, the only Saviour of men.

Let us attend to the argument of the prayer. The will of Jesus was the same as the will of him who sent him. The will of heaven, that is, the will of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is, that all who believe on the Messiah through the testimony of the apostles may be one; consequently, they do not will that those who believe on him through the Westminster divines shall be one. The words of the prayer alone demonstrate this. And who does not see, and who will not confess, that the fact proves, the fact now existing, that those who believe in him through the words of the Westminster divines are not one? They are cut up or divided into seven sects at this moment. While the Saviour prays that those who believe on him through the apostles may be one, he in fact, and in the plain meaning of terms, prays that they who believe on him through any other media or means may be divided; and not be one.

To attempt to unite the professing disciples by any other means

than the word of the apostles, by the Westminster, or any other creed, is, then, an attempt to overrule the will of heaven, to subvert the throne of the Great King, to frustrate the prayers of the Son of the Blessed. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's thoughts and ways higher than ours. He knows, for he has willed, and planned, and determined, that neither the Popish, the Protestant, the Presbyterian, the Methodistic, nor the Baptist creed shall be honored more than the apostle's testimony, shall be honored as much as the apostle's testimony, shall be honored at all. These creeds the Saviour proscribed forever; they are rebellion against his plan and throne, and they are aimed at the dethronement of the Holy Twelve—he put them on thrones, he gave them this honor. All creed makers have disputed their right to the throne, have attempted, *ipso facto*, their degradation, and have usurped their government. But he that sits in heaven has laughed at them, he has vexed them in his sore displeasure, he has dispersed them in his anger, and confounded their language as he did their predecessors, who sought to subvert his throne and dominion by the erection of a tower and citadel reaching to the skies. The votaries of those creed makers have also concurred with their masters, and have attempted to raise them upon their shoulders to the apostolic thrones; but he has broken their necks, and they go bowed down always. He has made them lick the dust, and caused children to reign over them.

But the conversion of the world is planned and ordered by the will of heaven to be dependant on the unity of the disciples, as well as this unity dependant upon the apostle's testimony. An attempt to convert Pagans and Mahometans to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and the sent of the Father, until christians are united, is also an attempt to frustrate the prayer of the Messiah, to subvert his throne and government. There are unalterable laws in the moral world, as in the natural. There are also unalterable laws in the government of the moral and religious world, as in the government of the natural. Those laws cannot, by human interference, be set aside or frustrated—we might as reasonably expect that Indian corn will grow in the open fields in the midst of the frost and snows of winter, as that Pagan nations can be converted to Jesus Christ, till christians are united through the belief of the apostle's testimony. We may force corn to grow by artificial means in the depth of winter, but it is not like the corn of August. So may a few disciples be made in Pagan lands by such means in the moral empire; as those by which corn is made to grow in winter in the natural empire, but they are not like the disciples of primitive times,

before sectarian creeds came into being. It is enough to say, on this topic, that the Saviour made the unity of the disciples essential to the conviction of the world; and he that attempts it independent of this essential, sets himself against the wisdom and plans of heaven, and aims at overruling the dominion and government of the Great King. On this subject we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, because the people are dull of hearing. But we shall leave this prayer for the present, having just introduced it, and noticed the argument of it, by reminding the reader that instead of human creeds, promoting the unity of the disciples, they have always operated just the reverse; and are in diametrical opposition to the wisdom and benevolence of the Heavens. Should the christian community be united upon the Westminster, or Methodistic, Baptist, or any human creed, then the plan of heaven is defeated, the apostles disgraced, the Saviour's prayer unanswered, and the whole order of heaven frustrated, and the throne of the universe subverted. He that advocates the necessity of creeds of human contrivance to the unity of the church unconsciously impeaches the wisdom of God, arraigns the benevolence of the Saviour, and censures the revelation of the Spirit. He, without reflection, attempts to new modify the empire of reason, of morality and religion; to rise above, not only the apostles, but the Saviour himself, and arrogates to himself a wisdom and philanthropy that far surpasses, and in fact covers with disgrace, all those attributes that rise to our view, and shine with incomparable effulgence in the redemption of man

THE GOSPEL.

No. XIV.

LETTERS TO A FRIEND—No. 2.

MY FRIEND:—The penetrating mind which I have always regarded you as possessing, will have enabled you to perceive, that, in treating upon the subject of faith, I have not been speaking of what is generally or popularly called faith. It is to the New Testament, and not to popular opinion, that you have been referred. A Roman faith, a Mormon faith, a camp-meeting faith, or any other faith but that which results from the hearing of the gospel, is not a faith worthy of any recommendation whatever. Please bear this in mind, and judge of what is said, not by prevailing theories, or the gentilities of newly contrived and humanly maintained views, but by the word of the living God, by which word we ourselves shall be judged.

And permit me here to explain myself relative to the propriety of speaking so fully, freely, and emphatically upon this topic. It is a very common practice for professors of all schools, when they differ from each other, to argue upon the subject of baptism, weekly observances, and the externals of religion. Like most of our popular customs, this practice is extremely pernicious. Old Babylon is the city whence this practice came. It seems to argue that religion is a system of abstract ceremonies, and perpendicular externals, rather than impress upon us that ordinances are simply the medium of enjoying a living reality which engages and happiness the mind, soul, and spirit. There is no beauty, no utility, no propriety in any of the gospel ordinances to a person destitute of faith. Coaches and rail-cars will as readily move of themselves without motive power, as any of the sons of Adam will perform a single act in attending to any ordinance in Christ's house without faith. You will find this sentiment in strict consistency with the apostles' word and the apostles' practice. The first thing with them, was, the testimony concerning Jesus to produce faith, which immediately produced a yielding and obedient disposition; and when this faith, producing this disposition, was produced in the heart, the believer was fully prepared to observe and obey without reserve the whole commandments of God. Hence the excellent apology I have for speaking largely upon the subject of faith.

You are more fortunate than myself if you have not been touched to the quick, and partially if not wholly disgusted, by a carping zeal which over-strains itself to make converts by a half debating and half declamatory dogmatism upon what I shall call the physicals of religion. The gospel, with me, taken as a whole, may be compared to a living man. Every man has a mind and a body. His body is not himself—his body is not his mind; but his mind is in his body; and his body and mind together, constitute himself. A man has arms, hands, and a head; but arms, hands, and heads, numbered by the dozen, score, or hundred, would not make the being we call man. Now the gospel is a system of spiritual life. It embraces ordinances. But ordinances are not the gospel. Neither are they the life of the gospel. True, we have no spiritual life without ordinances, any more than we have natural life without physical functions. The gospel has its testimony, its faith, its precepts, and its hopes; and what "God has joined together let no man separate."

If, then, we are desirous of possessing and enjoying the life divine, it is imperative that we begin where the first teachers began, and end

where they ended. They began with testimony. This testimony wrought faith. And this faith, producing a compliant disposition, made every subject of it practice all that the Saviour commanded.

But it must not be forgotten that something definite was to be said concerning what I hinted in my last. I have now arrived at the proper place to redeem my pledge. It was stated, and, in fact, agreed, first, that Christ on his departure left a will; second, that there must be confidence in this will of Jesus; third, that this confidence is found in faith, or to express the same thing in other words, wherever faith is found we find confidence. Now what is implied in a will? Let us place before us, if you please, a human will, and see what it imports. You cannot object to agreeing with me when I say that two things at least are implied in every will that is made. First, it is not a vague and indefinite document which can be made to speak a thousand different people may please, but a document in which certain things are definitely, positively, and unalterably stated. Second, the will, according to the fair meaning of its words, is to be executed. To express the two ideas in brief, a will is a plain and positive instrument, and, after the decease of its author, it requires to be enforced, executed, carried out, or fulfilled.

These two things granted, two other things follow as certainly as light comes from the sun. The administrator of a will is not allowed to act as he pleases, but he must be governed by the document legally prepared by the authority of the deceased. And every person to whom the will refers, or to whom the will appropriates something, is not permitted to receive and accept as it seems to him desirable, but he obtains his just portion according to the terms of the will.

The apostles are the divine administrators of the divine will. You and I, and all others, have our inheritance appointed, as specified by the Saviour's will, made known to us by the rightful administrators. Now remember, that we are of one mind respecting the duty of the administrator, and the person for whom he administers. Both parties, we agree, are to be regulated by the will. One more point settled, and I shall be ready to take a destructive aim at the unedifying doctrine of various faiths, and the monk-made doctrine of faith surrounded and clouded with doubts. This one point will be settled by proving that the Saviour in his will makes provision to test every man who makes any pretention to acknowledge him.

The will of the Saviour in respect to the apostles, in effect, was, Go—preach—be my witnesses—make disciples. Hence, according to this

message, the apostles at least had something to do—something not only to believe, but to perform. They were to go among the nations; they were to preach Jesus; they were to make disciples. How did they make disciples? Without a knowledge of the gospel? No. Without faith? No. Without a new disposition? No. Without making the christian confession? No. Without baptism? No. The proof of all these I may therefore reserve, for you admit enough for my present object. We are united in saying that the will of Christ appointed something for the apostles to do, and something for every one to do who was made a disciple. The premises are now complete, and let us gather up the admissions:—

1st. Christ has a will.

2nd. This will is both definite and unchangeable.

3d. The apostles are its administrators.

4th. Faith is required.

5th. This faith signifies confidence.

6th. Confidence is tested by obedience, and hence it follows wherever there is confidence there is obedience.

Now, my friend, please join together the first and last link of this chain, and observe as they meet each other how they crush your two faiths into lifelessness. There is, you perceive, one obedience of one will: for we have agreed that a will is an instrument which does not signify everything, nothing, or anything, according as taste may dictate, but something definitely positive and positively definite; and we agree also, that, as there is one will, and this will calls for confidence, there cannot be two faiths, for we have said that faith signifies confidence, and therefore two faiths would imply two kinds of confidence, which would be an absurdity equal to saying that two kinds of light came from the one sun in the heavens. As there cannot be two descriptions of light emanating from one source of light, so there cannot be two descriptions of confidence growing out of one will. Different kinds of confidence is intelligible, but different kinds of confidence is impossible.

Hence, I shall regard your two faiths as being struck on both sides of the head, ready to expire, if they have not already given up the ghost. Testimony there is in abundance to show, that there is one Saviour, having one will, with one plain meaning, executed by one class of administrators, calling for one faith, and requiring one uniform obedience. Soon as our speculators in religious systems prove to the world there is two Saviours and two wills, I shall for my part be prepared to

reconsider and retract the preceding facts and logical deductions. But I will illustrate this subject still further in another letter.

I have as much paper left as I have patience and time, to consider the question of doubts intermixed with faith. My pen is extremely restless when some of these delusions require attack. Let me ask, if some rich gentleman left to you in his will a piece of land upon condition that you added his name to your own, could there be any room to doubt your title to the gift, after complying with the terms of the will? If doubts arose in your mind, one of two things would be evident. Either the gentleman's title to what he willed was not legal, or that you had not obeyed the conditions of the will. Leaving you for the present to your own reflections,

I am,

Yours most faithfully,

D. OLIPHANT.

RIGHTS OF LAYMEN.

For more than half a century past no theme has been more popular, no topic has been more fully discussed, than the rights of men. But our theme is not the rights of men, but the rights of laymen.

Some, no doubt, will inquire, What is a layman? We answer, a man is the creature of God, but a lay-man is the creature of priests. God made men, but priests made laymen. In the religious world we often hear of clergy and laity. These are terms of Grecian extraction. The term clergy denotes the Lord's lot, or people; the term laity denotes the common herd of mankind, or the clergy's lot or people. We shall attend first to the inalienable rights of the laity, and secondly to the inalienable rights of the brethren in Christ.

In the first place, a layman has a right to consider himself as possessed of five senses, viz. seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling. If misfortune or vice has not deprived him of the use of any of them, he is always to bear in mind that his Creator gave him eyes, ears, a mouth, nose, and hands, and that he designed he should use them all. These five senses completely adapt man to this present world.

Now a layman is endowed with all these senses as well as a priest. Therefore he is to use them, and believe their testimony in preference to any thing a priest tells him. For example: If a priest tell him that he can turn wine into blood, and bread into flesh, the layman must taste them, and if this blood have still the taste of wine, and this flesh of bread, he must believe his senses in preference to the priest's tongue.

For God gave him those senses, and they are to be relied on more firmly than the words of any man. But let it be remembered that those five senses give a man no other intelligence than what concerns the material world around him. they cannot introduce him to an acquaintance with a world of spirits, or a future state. But in order to fit him for this, God has given him another class of faculties which exist in his spirit, as those senses exist in his body. These faculties are all comprized in one sentence, which affirms man to be a reasonable being: But each of the faculties which constitute a reasonable being, are as distinct from one another as are his five senses. The eye and the ear are not more distinct than perception and reflection, than memory and judgment. These being within the man, are not so easily apprehended as his senses which are without. The spirit of a man dwells within him, and as through windows, views, through the five senses, the objects around him. What it cannot perceive through one of those windows, it can discern through another. Besides this, it can look upon itself and become conscious of its own actions. But these are not so obvious to all mankind. The mass of men attend much more to what is passing without than to what is passing within them, and therefore know more of the former than of the latter. But of all the faculties with which the spirit of man is endowed, none exalt him so high, none put him in the possession of intelligence so important as the *faculty of believing*. Whether this faculty be a combination of other faculties, or one distinct from all others, is not worthy of a moment's investigation, as every man knows that he *can* and *does* believe human testimony when it possesses certain attributes. Indeed, all that we do know, and all that we are assured of beyond the narrow sphere of our own experience and observation, all that we know of the past, the present, and the future, beyond the limits of our horizon, we have acquired by this faculty of believing.

The testimony of God is addressed to, and fitted for, this faculty of believing, with which he has endowed man, and of which he cannot be deprived so long as he is rational, except by his own depravity—as by an abandoned course a man may destroy, or scar his own conscience until it is past feeling, so he may abuse his faculty of believing, so far as to believe a lie and reject the truth.

But in making a Bible, the author of it has indirectly given us some of the best lessons in the world upon this faculty of believing. By attaching to it, and stamping upon it, and working into it certain evidences of its origin, he has taught us what a being like man requires, in

order to giving full credence to testimony, human or divine. In adapting this book to fallen men, he has shown us what this faculty of believing now is, and not what it once was. And he has given so much of this sort of evidence as to render every man inexcusable who continues in unbelief.

To conclude this item, we would add, that by our reasoning faculties we are to try and determine whether the book called the Bible came from heaven or from men; and having determined that God is its author, we are then to receive its instructions and implicitly to follow them. It is, then in the second place, the inalienable right of all laymen to examine the sacred writings for themselves, and to exercise this faculty with which God has endowed them and not to believe what the church believes, nor how the church believes, because the church believes it; but to judge and act for, and from themselves.—*Extract.*

COVETOUSNESS—BENEVOLENCE.

No. II.

“As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all.”

THE author whom we quoted so largely in our first article, has furnished us with ample proof that covetous professors are sufficiently numerous on the other side of the Atlantic; and before we apply his observations and evidences to our own country and our own people, we are willing to relieve the subject by a brief consideration of the pleasure implied in benevolence. We are fully persuaded that every principle and practice of the religion of Jesus tends to happiness, and therefore we argue that as benevolence occupies a very prominent place in the christian institution, every fellow-citizen who is possessed of benevolence must be happy in the precise ratio that happiness is related to benevolence.

Few indeed seem to be aware that the Saviour designs our happiness in all the arrangements and ordinances of the christian house, and hence there exists a full degree of scepticism when we speak of the connexion between christian generosity and true enjoyment. Still, we contend for this divine medium of delight. A community whose members love one another, must be happy: for “love works no ill,” but always works good, and allows no opportunity to pass without seeking the advantage and happiness of all. Now benevolence is one of the chief ingredients of love; for there is no possibility of loving another without at the same time experiencing a well proportioned desire to administer benefit. Hence a society of benevolent persons, is a society where we find hap-

ness as complete as can be found in this earthly tabernacle, because each member of such a society aims to alleviate the suffering and promote the enjoyment of all with whom he is associated.

Covetousness, in all its moods and operations, stands in bold contrast with benevolence; and, therefore, while benevolence looks with a kindly eye upon the interests of others, the spirit of covetousness has no power to see any object as worthy of regard beyond self. While, therefore, benevolence seeks the advantage of all, covetousness seeks only its own advantage: and here we begin to prove the disparity of pleasure experienced by the covetous man and the man of benevolence. For, in the first place, the person who desires to benefit himself to the exclusion of all others, admitting he seeks real benefit, has too small a scope in which to operate. The field, if we may use the figure, is not large enough; so that although the fruit should be of the right quality, there can be no abundance. If, then, he derives pleasure from administering good to himself, his pleasure must be comparatively limited, for the benefit, which is the source of his joy, is narrowed to a single man.

But secondly, the selfish man's pleasure is really not of the proper quality. The enjoyment accruing from benevolence, and the enjoyment derived from covetousness, bear no greater resemblance to each other than an angel in the realms of light, and a demon in the blackness of darkness. The selfish soul is contracted to the dimensions of a needle's eye, and becomes at length so base, griping, callous, and narrow, that, instead of producing delight, a constant increasing remorse and dissatisfaction accrues to its possessor upon every anxious movement.

Still, in the third place, even if the personal pleasure of a covetous principle, both as respects quality and extent, was, in the exercise of it, equal to the personal pleasure of a benevolent principle, the man of christian benevolence would be greatly richer in happiness; for the pleasure of benevolence multiplies, increases, and continues, while the pleasure of covetousness must always be short-lived. A benevolent act may not only be reflected upon for years with as much satisfaction to the actor as when he first acted benevolently, but the remembrance of it in the mind of many others who were receivers of benefit, and the accumulated blessings they pronounce upon the benefactor, perpetuate and swell the enjoyment which benevolence invariably carries with it.

A fourth consideration will further show the advantage and pleasure of benevolence. Independently of all earthly benefit in the manner already described, secured either to ourselves or others, there is a boundless satisfaction resulting from christian benevolence, when it is

known that it meets the approbation of God, and that there is a reward for it in another world. The Lord smiles upon benevolent action. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

If, then, we have not strayed away from sound reasoning and correct conclusions, there is, we must acknowledge, an intimate and inseparable connexion between benevolence and happiness. God himself is perfectly benevolent. He is also perfectly happy. And he designs that the children of his love shall be happy as they are conformed to himself in his benevolence. Accordingly, all who are, in deed and in truth, among the "peculiar people," experience with joy the saying of the Saviour, "It is more blessed to give than to receive;" for this is a reality, and not a mere expression.

But still it may be argued that while the benevolence to which we refer is altogether excellent in securing the welfare of the many, it is not so beneficial to ourselves. To this class of objectors, we, in the meantime, reply in the language of the following extract, taken from a newspaper, and entitled, "*The Way to be Happy*":—

"A story is told of two travellers in Lapland, which throws more light on the art of being happy than a whole volume of precepts and aphorisms. Upon a very cold day in winter, they were driving along in a sledge, wrapped up in furs from head to foot. Even their faces were mostly covered; and you could see hardly anything but their eye brows, and these were white and glistening with frost. At length they saw a poor man who had sunk down, benumbed and frozen in the snow. "We must stop and help him," said one of the travellers. "Stop and help him!" replied the other; "you will never think of stopping on such a day as this! We are half frozen ourselves, and ought to be at our journey's end as soon as possible." "But I cannot leave this man to perish," rejoined the more humane traveller; "I must go to his relief;" and he stopped his sledge. "Come," said he, "come help me to rouse him." "Not I," replied the other, "I have too much regard for my own life to expose myself to this freezing atmosphere any more than is necessary. I will sit here and keep myself as warm as I can, till you come back."

So saying he resolutely kept his seat, while his companion hastened to the relief of the perishing man, whom they had providentially discovered. The ordinary means for restoring consciousness and activity were tried with complete success. But the kind-hearted traveller was so intent upon saving the life of a fellow-creature, that he had forgotten his own exposure; and what was the consequence? Why, the very effort which he had made to warm the stranger warmed himself! And thus he had a two-fold reward. He had the sweet consciousness of doing a benevolent act, and he also found himself glowing from head to foot by reason of the exertions which he had made. And how was it with his

companion, who had been so much afraid of exposing himself? He was almost ready to freeze, notwithstanding the efforts he had been making to keep warm! The lesson derived from this little incident is very obvious. We are all travellers to a distant country. At every step of our journey we find other travellers, who need our friendly aid. Nay, God has brought them around our path in great numbers;—and, far as the eye can reach, we see their dense and gloomy rank. Now there are two ways of meeting these objects of Christian sympathy and brotherly regard. We can go forward with the stern purpose of a selfish and unloving spirit, saying, in reply to every appeal which is addressed to our better feelings, “Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled;” or we can say with the warm-hearted traveller, “I cannot see this man perish; I must hasten to his relief.” And the rule which we adopt for our guidance in such cases will determine the question, whether we are to be happy or unhappy.—The man who lives only for himself, cannot be happy. God does not smile upon him; and his conscience will give him no peace. But he forgets himself in his desire to do good, not only becomes a blessing to others, but opens a perpetual fountain of joy in his own bosom.”

Here we shall leave the subject for the present.

CONDUCTOR.

[From the New York Observer.]

THE DEAD DISCIPLE.

I was speaking of such an one, when my friend exclaimed, in surprise, “But I saw him pass here not an hour ago, apparently as well as any man.” I cannot help that. The disciple I saw was dead, and I have so many proofs that he was dead that I cannot be mistaken about it. I will hand the facts over to you, and you may judge for yourself.

1. He was *motionless*. Something of a sign of death that, I think. The book that treats of such things, which I am in the habit of consulting, says that living disciples “*run* the race that is set before them,” and “*walk* and are not faint;” and that they “*labour*” and “*strive*,” and “*fight* the good fight of faith,” and all that. But not one of these things did I see the disciple in question doing.

2. And he was *cold* too, which is death-like certainly. And cold he was, at the place where, if there be coldness, there certainly must be death, i. e. at the heart. A man’s heart cold, and yet he alive! Who ever heard of such a thing? The heart keeps warm till the last, as I have always understood the matter, and when the warmth there is all gone, then it is all over with a man, and he is dead.

3. And when I add that he was *speechless*, you will certainly begin

to think I am not mistaken about his being dead. Living disciples know how to talk, for I have it from the eminent medical work above referred to; that they that "of old feared the Lord, spake often one to another." And much is said about "exhorting one another." And disciples that have life are known to pray, and to beseech and to entreat, and council, and advise, and so on; all of which implies speech. But he was speechless of whom I now write. And I could not but put this in as one of the proofs that he was dead.

4. I shall add but one proof more. *All the efforts made to bring him to life utterly failed.* There were some very stringent applications used. I saw some of the physicians in the country take him in hand. And verily they used such agencies, that if there had been any life in him, they must have brought it to light. They looked up the old medical books, and in the best one of them all, they found an account of a very extraordinary remedy, which was to be used in such cases. It was "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the joints and the marrow, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The medical men united in affirming that there was nothing in their whole stock that was to be compared with this. And they said if this did not restore animation, there was an end to all their resources, and they must give up that the disciple was really dead. And they tried it, and I am a witness that they did it faithfully, but not a spark of life could they find. He was a dead disciple. That is the whole of it.

That disciple being dead as the above facts amply testify, I shall take the liberty to deliver a short sermon over him.

1. He died as a fool dieth. He had no business to die. It was his business to live. There was a human being more unworthily occupied than that disciple when he let the spiritual pulse stop beating. The highest authority that is known in the universe had enjoined, that he should be "*alive to God*;" and he was as much bound to obey that injunction as any other. And not to keep it, was as great an act of folly as any human being could possibly commit.

2. He was a suicide. People have to die, when certain circumstances occur. They cannot help it. But it was not so with this disciple. There was no more need of his parting with spiritual life than of his committing theft or murder. And he knew it. He was bidden to live, by voices sweet as the angels, and louder than the waves of the sea. And he ought to have obeyed them. And a shame it was, and a great sin, that he did not obey them. The Bible told him he must not die,

and conscience told him to *live* godly in Christ Jesus. And faithful christian friends lifted up their voice. But it was all in vain. He would die.

A dead disciple! There is something sad in the thought. If it was only natural death we might be comforted. But it was worse than that. It is spiritual death. There is occasion for great lamentation over him. He will take part in that lamentation himself by and by. I wish to see him weep now, that he may not lament forever while suffering the death that never dies!

SIMON.

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REPLY.

*Ira, N. Y., February 8th, 1848.*

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—I found an exception taken to a single sentence in one of my articles, in the first number of the "Witness," to which I should have replied ere now, had I not been prevented by illness; and my hand is now so unsteady that I am not certain that you will be able to decipher what I may write.

I incidentally stated, that "there is a wide difference between the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Christ." I am asked to "make the 'wide difference' more clear;" and 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, and 12, is quoted as militating against my position. I might pass this passage in silence, as the objector was logically bound to show that it had some bearing on the argument, but for his benefit and the benefit of others, I will say, that passage proves nothing with me so far as this subject is concerned, for the following reasons:—

1. The phrase, "*of Christ*," is not to be found in many copies of the original; in which it reads, "*the Spirit which was in them*," not affirming whose Spirit it was.

2. Other copies of the original read as follows:—" *The Spirit of God which was in them.*"

3. Because of its singularity;—for if the Greek concordance can be trusted, there is no place where this phrase is applied to the Spirit dwelling in the prophets; which being in all other places called "the Spirit," "the Holy Spirit," &c. is strong *presumptive* evidence that the phrase "of Christ" is an interpolation. So I dispose of that passage.

I believe there is a difference between the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Christ for the reasons following:—

1. Christ, in speaking of the Holy Spirit, says—"I will *pray* the Father, and *He* shall give you another Comfortor;" and "the Comfortor, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the *Father will send* in my name,

he shall teach you all things," &c. Now, if they are the same, why did Christ use this language? I have shown in a former essay, that when the Holy Spirit was received it conferred the power of working miracles; now it is said, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," from which it follows that, if the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Christ are one and the same, no man is Christ's except he have the power of working miracles. While Christ was here he said, "*if I go not away the Comfortor (Holy Spirit) will not come unto you,*" and that it "*proceedeth from the Father.*" Christ's Spirit (in our brother's sense) must necessarily have "proceeded" from himself, and was with him when here, which would be in direct opposition to the foregoing passages.

2. Paul says, "because you *are sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son (Christ) into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," which Spirit a man must have to be one of Christ's. Now the Samaritans "received the word of God," and as a consequence, "believed," and "were baptized, both men and women." They were now Christians, and had, therefore, received the "Spirit of Christ," but they had not received the "Holy Spirit," and did not for some days, therefore they are not one and the same Spirit.

3. The "Spirit of Christ" is received because we "are sons," and not *before* we are adopted into the family of God. But when Peter first preached to the Gentiles, they received the Holy Spirit before they obeyed Christ, before they were sons, and even before Peter had finished speaking.

4. Paul says, that the "mighty signs and wonders" exhibited by him, or the miracles performed were "*by the power of the Spirit of God.*" Why, then, say that it is by the spirit of Christ?

But I am also asked what "Paul and Peter mean by the term, Spirit of Christ." I have already shown that there is no good reason for believing that Peter ever used this phrase, and will, therefore, proceed to give my *opinion* with regard to Paul's use of it. The word here translated "spirit," is also defined "temper, disposition, affections, inclination, &c." I understand it to mean mind, temper, or disposition, in Romans, and also in Galatians, and in this sense it can be properly said that God "hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son." Mr. Macknight, in his critical notes on Gal. iv. 6, says—"as the phrase *sent forth* is used, verse 4, to express the coming down of Christ from heaven, many are of opinion that the apostle is here speaking, not of God's infusing the temper of his Son into the hearts of the believing Gentiles, but the

effusion of the Holy Ghost upon them," &c. The reason here given for this belief is worth just nothing, and our author does not appear to accept of it, for he says, if "the apostle meant the dispositions of God's Son infused into their hearts, his reasoning is equally conclusive." So say I. He again says that the adoption "implies that they are the sons of God by possessing the dispositions of his sons." In this we agree. By submitting to Christ we become the *adopted* sons of God, and when the obedience required to constitute us sons is rendered, we feel that we are sons, and we have all those filial feelings which no man can have before becoming a christian.

I would write more if my health would permit; but I am constrained to close by hoping that these hasty thoughts may prove satisfactory to father Menzies, and useful to the world.

Yours in search of Truth,

J. M. SHEPARD.

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LETTER FROM BROTHER ASH.

*Oshawa, February 6th, 1848.*

BROTHER OLIPHANT—Dear Sir:—I have just finished reading the 2d number of the third volume of the "Witness." I have carefully observed the progress of the "Witness," since its youthful commencement, both in matter and manner. I think I can observe in it a marked progress towards maturity. I am more than pleased with the 1st and 2d numbers of volume three. You no doubt feel more at home in your own office, where those were published, and will of course be better prepared to make future numbers more interesting and profitable.

I observe you have quite an increase in the number of your correspondents. I am not a little gratified to observe among them the name of my friend and brother, James Buchanan, Esq., ex British Consul at New York. The old man, although loaded with this world's honors, and his hair white as the paper upon which I write, is still vigorous and active in the discharge of christian duty. While in attendance at his delightful residence, at the Falls of Niagara, about a year and a half ago, I was shown a large room where himself, family, and a few disciples of the blessed Lord met *every* Lord's day to break the emblematic loaf. No ordinary effect was produced upon my own mind while in conversation with him. To see a man whose name is registered among kings and nobles, who might fill some high seat in the fashionable places of worship in popular christendom, I say to see such an one step aside, and in that secluded and unpopular manner worship

his adorable Redeemer—is no small proof of the power of pure and undefiled religion upon the heart.

Let no one think I am flattering while I thus write. My object is to show the possibility of being a humble and devoted christian notwithstanding he may be highly honorable in the *world's* estimation.

I hope he may with you continue to witness to the truth—and shall I be gratified to see his name often at the end of something good? I hope so.

I also observe the names of brother James Menzies, of Esquesing, and brother Wm. Bradt, of Bronte Mills, have become correspondents. I trust they will often grace the pages of the Witness. What has become of brother Thornton and brother Elliot, of Dundas? Have they forgotten how to write? or are they so engaged with pills, bottles, and drugs that they have no time? If so, what a pity.

Your brother in truth and virtue,

JOSEPH ASH.

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#### VALUE OF RELIGION.

“Scripture is the only cure of wo!  
That field of promise, how it flings abroad  
Its odor o'er the christian's thorny road:  
The soul reposing on assured relief,  
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,  
Forgets her labor, as she toils along;  
Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.”

Nothing, to every person whose views are enlightened and dispassionate, is so valuable, so momentous as religion; the religion of the New Testament—the religion of the cross of Christ; that religion which flows from heaven, which is derived immediately from the Saviour, which centres in the Redeemer's character and work, and which is communicated and enjoyed by the agency of his Spirit. It is identified with everything that is great and ennobling, it is associated with everything that is engaging and lovely. It is inseparable from everything that is holy. It is allied to everything that is benevolent and useful. It embraces all that is essential to our best interests in every condition of life, and in the prospect of every change of life. If this religion so clearly unfolded by the Son of God, be understood and enjoyed by us, what, that is really valuable, can we want? if it be not possessed by us, what, that is in the highest degree desirable and important, do we not require?

It is ‘the pearl of great price,’ to enrich us for ever. It is the ‘balm of Gilead;’ a celestial cure for every wound—a celestial remedy for every disorder. It is the ‘well of salvation’ opened with the express design to purify and bless. It is the ‘water of life,’ intended and calculated to enliven, and to render happy, throughout eternity. Nothing that is earthly, however costly and precious, can for a moment be compared

with the religion of the bible; indeed everything else is valueless, and utter vanity when compared with it. Let then the first, the last, the unceasing inquiry be, 'is this religion ours?' Never let us think of comparing anything with religion; should we do so, we are chargeable with ignorance the most profound, with error the most pernicious, with folly the most criminal.—*Extract.*

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### POWER OF TRUTH.

"A learned Dominican, and most fanatical champion of the Catholic faith, had presented himself at the general council assembled by Gustavas Vasa. Incited by the continual references to Luther, he resolved to proceed to Germany, and undertake the conversion of that Reformer. Confident of success, the zealous Dominican set forward. But what befell? He returned from Wittemberg an earnest Protestant, became one of the most powerful advocates of Lutherism that Sweden could boast, and united himself in marriage to a nun. He became in many ways a highly influential agent in the firm establishment of Protestantism, and remained a most zealous defender of the doctrines he had vowed himself to subvert."

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### SPECIAL NEWS.

*Wainfleet, 31st January, 1848.*

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—More good news. Yesterday, (Lord's day,) two happy young sisters were buried with their Saviour in baptism, in accordance with primitive custom. The old Jerusalem gospel is beginning to take effect here. It was a joyful sight, to behold these females in the presence of nearly all the young people in the vicinity, descend boldly into the stream, the ice having been removed, and thus proclaim to the world by this act a determination to live for Jesus the rest of their days. The older one while advancing to the water sung some appropriate lines, which rendered the scene interesting and impressive. I never before felt so solemn as on this occasion. Pray earnestly, dear brother, that these precious souls may be "lively stones" in the Redeemer's kingdom.

A. CLENDENAN.

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A letter from brother Thomas Bradt, who was the first to "feed the flock" in these parts, confirms the above testimony. These reports are altogether welcome. While many seem to "grow weary" and linger on their way with "drooping hearts," it is doubly animating to learn that in some localities there is life, joy, and prosperity. From the very

first we have entertained strong hopes of Wainfleet. The brethren there began right. They were serious; they were pious; they were exemplary; and no community, however hardened, ignorant, and "slow of heart to believe," can long withstand the mighty grace of the gospel when recommended by living examples of its life-giving and love-producing power.

We have been invited, kindly, repeatedly, and pressingly invited, to visit Wainfleet again. The time, we think, has nearly arrived. Former promises are still remembered. A little patience, brethren, and we shall be with you, the Lord willing.

It is cheering also to announce, that the brethren in Jordan have determined to make renewed efforts both to save themselves and those around them. Brother William Palmer, in behalf of the church, requests us to state, that arrangements have been made to sustain an Evangelist in that vicinity. A workman of some experience, possessing, among other qualities, the wisdom of years, will be preferred. Who can be found? Is there no one who reads this paper, a teacher in Israel, either in Canada or the United States, who may be disposed to say, 'I will go to Jordan?' No necessity to say, 'I will pass over Jordan;' but rather let the words be, 'I am bound for Jordan.' Any communication from a brother who inclines to labour for said church, may be addressed to elder John Sammons.

From these indications, then, we may expect good fruits in the Niagara District. May we not hope that the celebrated Falls, making music for the inhabitants of one part of the District, will not make more noise to the praise of the great Author, than the voice of the brotherhood throughout Niagara in proclaiming "the glorious gospel of the blessed God."

D. O.

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#### PERIODICALS—RELIGIOUS AND LITERARY.

*The Christian*, volume iv, St. Johns, New Brunswick, appears in an enlarged form, 32 pages, every month, stitched and covered, and only One Dollar per volume in advance. Its devoted editor, brother W. W. Eaton, is doing everything in his power to store its pages with interesting and edifying matter. We shall cheerfully act as agent for the "Christian."

*The Canadian Gem, and Family Visitor*.—"The design of the work, is to present a useful and interesting periodical to the reading public—one that shall interest, elevate, and purify: a work that shall



do its share toward promoting useful knowledge, benevolent enterprize, education and religion in our country. Light literature, such as love-tales, foolish stories, and literary trash, will find no place in its pages." So speaks the prospectus of *The Gem*, published monthly by Joseph H. Leonard, Cobourg, Canada West, and furnished to subscribers at the low price of One Dollar per year in advance.

*The Calliopean*, published semi-monthly, Hamilton, C. W., One Dollar per annum, payable in advance. This is a neatly printed work in quarto form, under the superintendance of the Ladies in Burlington Academy. The effort, so far, is creditable.

D. O.

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### THE SAINT'S ARMOUR.

BY W. A. STEPHENS.

(*Ephesians 6th chap., 13-19 verses.*)

ALL clad with armour from above,  
 United let us stand,  
 With loins all girded round with truth,  
 A bold determin'd band.

With breast-plates form'd of righteousness,  
 And feet securely shod,  
 Resolv'd and ready to obey  
 The gospel of our God.

And in our hands the spirit's sword  
 We all must bravely wield,  
 And hold aloft for our defence  
 Faith's bright celestial shield.

To finish then our panoply,  
 And make the foemen bow,  
 Salvation's helmet safe must guard  
 Each firm undaunted brow.

And thus equipp'd, the stoutest foe  
 We each may safely dare,  
 But we must watch, and add to all,  
 Our earnest daily pray'r.

And then, through Him that loved us,  
 The victory is ours,  
 And more than conquerors we'll be  
 O'er all opposing pow'rs.