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THE

# CHRISTIAN BANNER.

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

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## CHALMERS' EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

Dr. Chalmers was not, in the current acceptation of the term, a partizan. He had a mind too noble, a spirituality too large and wide, to move in the modern semi-circle of scholastic divinity. He spoke and wrote the height of a high mountain above the mere party men of his day. If any man asks a new proof of this, and will accept at the same time of a most valuable train of reflections appertaining to the testimony which the Christian Religion carries with it, let him peruse with care the following extract from his Evidences of Christianity:—

Were a verbal communication to come to us from a person at a distance, there are two ways in which we might try to satisfy ourselves that this was a true communication, and that there was no imposition in the affair. We might either sit in examination upon the substance of the message; and then from what we knew of the person from whom it professed to come, judge whether it was probable that such a message would be sent by him; or we may sit in examination upon the credibility of the messengers.

It is evident, that in carrying on the first examination, we might be subject to very great uncertainty. The professed author of the communication in question may live at such a distance from us that we may never have it in our power to verify his message by any personal conversation with him. We may be so far ignorant of his character and designs, as to be unqualified to judge of the kind of communication that should proceed from him. To estimate aright the probable authenticity of the message from what we know of its author, would require an acquaintance with his plans, and views, and circumstances, of which we may not be in possession. We may bring the greatest degree of sagacity to this investigation; but then the highest sagacity is of no avail, when there is an insufficiency of data. Our ingenuity may be unbounded; but then we may want the materials. The principle which we assume may be untrue in itself, and therefore may be fallacious in its application.

Thus, we may derive very little light from our first argument. But there is still a second in reserve,—the credibility of the messen-

gers. We may be no judges of the kind of communication which is natural, or likely to proceed from a person with whom we are but imperfectly acquainted; but we may be very competent judges of the degree of faith that is to be reposed in the bearers of the communication. We may know and appreciate the natural signs of veracity. There is a tone and a manner characteristic of honesty, which may be both intelligible and convincing. There may be a concurrence of several messengers. There may be their substantial agreement.— There may be the total want of any thing like concert or conclusion among them. There may be their determined and unanimous perseverance, in spite of all the incredulity and all the opposition which they meet with. The subject of the communication may be most unpalatable to us; and we may be so unreasonable, as to wreak our unpleasant feelings upon the bearers of it. In this way, they may not only have no earthly interest to deceive us, but have the strongest inducement possible to abstain from insisting upon that message which they were charged to deliver. Last of all, as the conclusive seal of their authenticity, they may all agree in giving us a watchword, which we previously knew could be given by none but their master; and which none but his messengers could ever obtain the possession of. In this way, unfruitful as all our efforts may have been upon the first subject of examination, we may derive from the second the most decisive evidence that the message in question is a real message, and was actually transmitted to us by its professed author.

Now, this consideration applies in all its parts to a message from God. The argument for the truth of this message resolves itself into the same two topics of examination. We may sit in judgment upon the subject of the message; or we may sit in judgment upon the credibility of its bearers.

The first forms a great part of that argument for the truth of the Christian religion, which comes under the head of its *internal evidences*. The substance of the message is neither more nor less than that particular scheme of the divine economy which is revealed to us in the New Testament; and the point of inquiry is, whether this scheme be consistent with that knowledge of God and his attributes which we are previously in possession of?

It appears to many, that no effectual argument can be founded upon this consideration, because they do not count themselves enough acquainted with the design or character of the being from whom the message professes to have come. Were the author of the message some distant and unknown individual of our own species, we would scarcely be entitled to found an argument upon any comparison of ours, betwixt the import of the message and the character of the individual, even though we had our general experience of human nature to help us in the speculation. Now, of the invisible God, we have no experience whatever. We are still further removed from all direct and personal observation of him or of his counsels. Whether we think of the eternity of his government, or the mighty range of its influence over the wide departments of nature and providence, he

stands at such a distance from us, as to make the management of his empire a subject inaccessible to all our faculties.

It is evident, however, that this does not apply to the second topic of examination. The bearers of the message were beings like ourselves; and we can apply our safe and certain experience of man to their conduct and testimony. We may know too little of God, to found any argument upon the coincidence which we conceive to exist between the scope of the message and our previous conceptions of its author. But we may know enough of man to pronounce upon the credibility of the messengers. Had they the manner and physiognomy of honest men? Was their testimony resisted, and did they persevere in it? Had they any interest in fabricating the message; or did they suffer in consequence of this perseverance? Did they suffer to such a degree as to constitute a satisfying pledge of their integrity? Was there more than one messenger, did they agree as to the substance of that communication which they made to the world? Did they exhibit any special mark of their office as the messengers of God; such a mark as none but God could give, and none but his approved messengers could obtain the possession of? Was this mark the power of working miracles; and were these miracles so obviously addressed to the senses, as to leave no suspicion of deceit behind them? These are questions which we feel our competency to take up and decide upon. They lie within the legitimate boundaries of human observation; and upon the solution of these do we rest the question of the truth of the Christian religion.

This, then, is the state of the question with those to whom the message was originally addressed. They had personal access to the messengers; and the evidences of their veracity lay before them. They were the eye and ear-witnesses of those facts which occurred at the commencement of the Christian religion, and upon which its credibility rests. What met their observation must have been enough to satisfy them; but we live at the distance of nearly 2000 years, and is there enough to satisfy us? Those facts, which constitute the evidences of Christianity, might have been credible and convincing to them, if they really saw them; but is there any way by which they can be rendered credible and convincing to us who only read of them? What is the expedient by which the knowledge and belief of the men of other times can be transmitted to posterity? Can we distinguish between a corrupt and a faithful transmission? Have we evidence before us, by which we can ascertain what was the belief of those to whom the message was first communicated? And can the belief which existed in their minds be derived to ours, by our sitting in judgment upon the reasons which produce it?

The surest way in which the belief and knowledge of the men of former ages can be transmitted to their descendants is through the medium of written testimony; and it is fortunate for us, that the records of the Christian religion are not the only historical documents which have come down to us. A great variety of information has come down to us in this way; and a great part of that information is firmly believed, and as confidently proceeded upon, as if the thing narrated had happened within the limits of our eye-sight. No

man doubts the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar; and no man doubts, therefore, that a conviction of the truth of past events may be fairly produced in the mind by the instrumentality of a written memorial. This is the kind of evidence which is chiefly appealed to for the truth of ancient history; and it is counted satisfying evidence for all that part of it, which is received and depended upon.

In laying before the reader, then, the evidence for the truth of Christianity, we do not call his mind to any singular or unprecedented exercises of its faculties. We call upon him to pronounce upon the credibility of written documents, which profess to have been published at a certain age, by certain authors. The inquiry involves in it no principle which is not appealed to every day in questions of ordinary criticism. To sit in judgment on the credibility of a written document, is a frequent and familiar exercise of the understanding with literary men. It is fortunate for the human mind, when so interesting a question as its religious faith can be placed under the tribunal of such evidence as it is competent to pronounce upon. It was fortunate for those to whom Christianity (a professed communication from heaven) was first addressed, that they could decide upon the genuineness of the communication by such familiar and every day principles, as the mark of truth or falsehood in the human bearers of that communication. And it is fortunate for us that when, after that communication has assumed the form of a historical document, we can pronounce upon the degree of credit which should be attached to it, by the very same exercise of the mind which we so confidently engage in, when sitting in examination upon other historical documents that have come down to us from antiquity.

We are ready to admit, that as the object of the inquiry is not the character, but the truth of Christianity, the philosopher should be careful to protect his mind from the delusion of its charms. He should separate the exercises of the understanding from the tendencies of the fancy or of the heart. He should be prepared to follow the light of evidence, though it may lead him to conclusions the most painful and melancholy. He should train his mind to all the hardihood of abstract and unfeeling intelligence. He should give up every thing to the supremacy of argument, and be able to renounce, without a sigh, all the tenderest possessions of infancy, the moment that truth demands of him the sacrifice.

Had the subject not been sacred, and had the same testimony been given to the facts that are connected with it, we are satisfied that the history of Jesus in the New Testament would have been looked upon as the best supported by evidence of any history that has come down to us. It would assist us in appreciating the evidence for the truth of the gospel history, if we could conceive for a moment, that Jesus instead of being the founder of a new school of philosophy, and that the different histories which have come down to us had merely represented him as an extraordinary person, who had rendered himself illustrious among his countrymen by the wisdom of his sayings, and the beneficence of his actions. We venture to say, that had this been the case, a tenth part of the testimony which has actually been given, would have been enough to satisfy us. Had it been

a question of mere erudition, where neither a predilection in favor of a religion, nor an antipathy against it, could have impressed a bias in any one direction, the testimony, both in weight and in quantity, would have been looked upon as quite unexampled in the whole compass of ancient literature.

There is something in the very sacredness of the subject which intimidates the understanding, and restrains it from making the same firm and confident application of its faculties, which it would have felt itself perfectly warranted to do, had it been a question of ordinary history. Had the apostles been the disciples of some eminent philosopher, and the fathers of the church, their immediate successors in the office of presiding over the discipline and instruction of the numerous schools which they had established, this would have given a secular complexion to the argument, which we think would have been more satisfying to the mind, and have impressed upon it a closer and more familiar conviction of the history in question. We should have immediately brought it into comparison with the history of other philosophers, and could not have failed to recognise that, in minuteness of information, in weight and quantity of evidence, in the concurrence of numerous and independent testimonies, and in the total absence of every circumstance that should dispose us to annex suspicion to the account which lay before us, it far surpassed any thing that had come down to us from antiquity. It so happens, however, that, instead of being the history of a philosopher, it is the history of a prophet. The veneration we annex to the sacredness of such a character, mingles with our belief in the truth of his history. From a question of simple truth, it becomes a question in which the heart is interested; and the subject from that moment assumes a certain holiness and mystery, which veil the strength of the argument, and takes off from that familiar and intimate conviction which we annex to the far less authenticated histories of profane authors.

It may be further observed, that every part of the Christian argument has been made to undergo a most severe scrutiny. The same degree of evidence which in questions of ordinary history commands the easy and universal acquiescence of every inquirer, has, in the subject before us, been taken most thoroughly to pieces, and pursued, both by friends and enemies, into all its ramifications. The effect of this is unquestionable. The genuineness and authenticity of the profane historian, are admitted upon much inferior evidence to what we can adduce for the different pieces which make up the New Testament.

#### A SOLILOQUY.

From the Christian Baptist.

The following brief soliloquy originated from a temptation to be on the strong side:—

How happy are they who sail with wind and tide down the stream of popular esteem, having the banks of the stream on which they are embarked lined with admiring crowds, waving their hats and

bowing their heads in sign of approbation and admiration. How tranquilly they glide along. When the sun shines and all is calm how easy and happy their voyage. When storms arise, they betake themselves to the shore, and find themselves safe and happy in the caresses of admiring thousands. How enviable they ! Who would not desire and seek their happy lot. Contrast it with that of yonder small company in a little bark, toiling against wind and current ascending the rapid stream of vulgar applause. How imperceptible their advances.—After whole nights and days of toilsome rowing, they appear not to have distanced the shadow of a man of tall stature. No choers nor congratulations from the spectators who chance to cast an eye upon them from the bank, except now and then a solitary 'God speed' from some obscure one perched upon some rock or island who has himself been buffeted with hardships.

Such was the prospect before me while I viewed the landscape with the wrong end of the telescope next my eye ; but all of a sudden I turned the other end, and strange indeed was the change in the scenery. I now could read the inscription on the colors of the descending barge and that on the ascending skiff. I could see all devoted to present happiness, and those to who sought happiness in both worlds, on the sign of those descending, but not one of the admirers of their course, nor of those embarked on that voyage, had yet died. I looked up the stream, and found, from the inscription and other hieroglyphics upon the skiff, that their destiny was not to any port on earth, and that their eye was fixed upon some invisible and distant good, of such charms as to make them sing and triumph at every pull they gave the oar. A small company of the living and all that had ever died looked upon them either with perfect complacency—with a wishful, or an envious eye. In presenting the two rival courses of the whole human race thus to the eye of my mind, I could better appreciate the wisdom and happiness which distinguish the respective courses of the sons of men. But am I not, said I, thus confounding my own reflections with a descriptive and symbolic representation of things addressed to the consideration of the others. True, it appears so. But if I gain my end this way more readily, what is the difference ?

O my soul, do you not know that every good intention of yours, and every good effort of yours, were it only to subdue one evil inclination, is witnessed with admiration by all the excellent that ever lived. Do you not remember that the Saviour said there is joy in heaven over one reforming sinner, and even too amongst the angels of God ; and can you think that one good deed of yours is viewed with indifference by any of the exalted dignitaries of the heavens ! When you make one righteous effort to promise goodness in yourself, or in any human being, know, that every good man on earth approves your course, and is upon your side ; yes, and all the spirits of the dead. The wicked spirits know that you are wise, and cannot but approve your way ; and all the holy and happy from righteous Abel, look down upon you with delight, and congratulate you on every advance you can make in goodness. Stronger and more

numerous are those upon your side than they that are on the side of your opposers. When you are tempted to consult your reputation and your worldly advancement amongst men, O reflect how little they can do for you, and how much against your happiness. Can they soothe your troubles, can they heal your wounds, can they remove your fears, or tranquilize your agitations? No, no—full well you might know, from your past experience, how little they can do for you. When they once smiled upon you and congratulated you, were not your acts foolish, and did not the very deeds for which they praised you give you pain? Have you not found yourself distressed beyond the reach of mortal power and earthborn remedies to relieve, and will you now, when God has smiled upon you, pay your homage to human adulation, and seek to please the proud and the vain who cannot bless you? No, my soul, you cannot thus sin against your own felicity. Will it be not more than a reward for all privations and affronts in the way of goodness and self-denied obedience, to reflect how all the good and wise in Heaven's estimation have toiled with you and now approbate your progress; and when you struggle with allurements, they all with intense interest await the issue, and are ready to hail you with triumphant joy as victor. Be assured, then, in all your struggles in behalf of truth and goodness, that every just man upon earth, every happy spirit in the invisible world, every angel in heaven, and what is more than all, your Redeemer and your Heavenly Father, are all upon your side, and ready to put the incorruptible crown upon your head, and to greet you with a hearty welcome, saying, Well done, you good and faithful servant. Let these reflections cause you never to despond amidst difficulties; never to faint in adversity; never to yield to temptation; never to seek the praise of men at the risque of forfeiting the praise of God. Remember that day hastens with every pulse, when you would rather have the smiles of your Lord and Saviour, when you would rather be approved by him, than to be hailed by an admiring world as the paragon of every worldly excellence, as the sovereign arbiter of all the crowns and thrones that morals ever coveted. Think, O think how many smiles attest your conquests, and how many eyes with sadness would behold your discomfiture in this glorious struggle.—Fired by these considerations, the weak side becomes the stronger, and it is easy to burst through all the restraints which worldly pride and worldly policy would throw as obstacles in your way. 'Remember Lot's wife.'

#### THE PAMPHLET FROM NASHVILLE.

This pamphlet, prepared by our old friend J. B. Ferguson, whose religious views have undergone a very great change, is of some interest from the fact that its author, in this document, gives us a tolerably clear understanding of his position relative to Unitarianism, Universalism, Spiritualism, and Progression. Mr. Ferguson has in this pamphlet written honestly, kindly, and candidly. His

style and manner throughout, will, we judge, be acceptable to a majority of the class for which he has written. That many who neither criticize nor read the Lord's oracles, will welcome Mr. F.'s "statement of belief," body, soul, and spirit, we have little reason to doubt.

But we have neither leisure nor taste for an orderly and lengthened review of the "Pastor" of the "People" of Nashville, or peradventure of the "People" of all Tennessee. On turning the leaves of the pamphlet this morning, some four brief sections were found marked, the penciling of a former day, when the "Pastor" and his pages had been glancingly examined. Reader, here are the extracts:

For myself I would candidly say, I do not believe in the eternity of punishment for any creature of God. I did once accept this doctrine, but could never state it with the earnestness of conviction, and in my early ministry generally avoided it as a subject to be further examined. But my convictions are now matured, and I hesitate not to avow, most solemnly, that I believe the idea of an eternity of torture has no basis in a just interpretation of any Revelation of God—that it is opposed to the characteristic principle of Christianity—repugnant to right reason and every pure instinct of the soul of man.

If God is perfect in goodness—if his nature is the very essence of love or benevolence, he must have designed the happiness of his creatures. In giving them existence he must have given it as a blessing. If perfectly wise, he must have adopted the best possible method of securing that existence as a blessing; and if infinitely powerful, every circumstance must have been so guarded as to promote and not defeat that purpose. A being of absolute goodness cannot form a creature for unending wretchedness. Through the evils, then, of our present lot, by which alone it was possible to give us such an existence as we have received, he is leading us from immaturity (not natural depravity) to maturity; and as our earth life does not, could not secure this end, he has made us heirs of another life, where he also reigns supreme—supreme in goodness to design, wisdom to provide for, and power to secure the farther and eternal advances of his offspring.

The idea of a future life is not a mistake. It is an instinct with man, and is provided for in his nature. Like the idea of God, it is universal, and the rude form in which it clothes itself according to the culture of the individual and the times are no mean evidences of its universal existence. Minds truly illuminated, such as the Prophets of Israel and the Apostles of Christianity, taught their religious truths concerning human duty and divine worship in the forms of their prevalent culture. Hence it would be as rational to believe God a great man, because the Scriptures describe him as having eyes, ears, hands, and human passions; as so believe in the eternity of fire and torment in an under world, because the overthrow

of governments and the issues of false conduct in individuals are so described. Any truth, therefore, which they address to our intuition and the existing state of our culture, we receive, not because they deliver it, but because it is truth, and we find a response to it in our own development. Here, as everywhere, we must distinguish between the human and divine.

Let it be remembered that Jesus never wrote a book, and that we have his teaching in the imperfect language of his times, and we will have no difficulty in finding the origin of the crude idea of God and absurd notions of the future that still cling, as the debris of revolutionary ages, to many of our churches, who in profession at least, receive the Scriptures only too liberally.

When Mr. Ferguson avers that "A being of absolute goodness cannot form a creature for unending wretchedness," he can be understood without an interpreter. Now it is to be regretted that Rationalism and that peculiar limb of it called Universalism are always chargeable with irrationality in making and combatting propositions whom no man on earth—Turk, Jew, or Christian—believes. "Form a creature for unending wretchedness"—! Such a sentiment, couched in such language, we expect to find when infidels in their own wise wisdom attempt to caricature the God whom Christians worship. Who ever yet found a thorough bred Infidel or a full grown Rationalist join issue on any proposition believed in or maintained by a man of faith? of faith in Jesus the Lord?

The gracious Parent who created the universe never formed a creature for either ending or unending wretchedness. All that came from his forming hand was "Good," and harmony, happiness, holiness were included in this term that characterized the Divine handiwork. God created man a noble being, modeling him after the noblest of all models—himself; and it would be just as rational for Rationalism to assert that the Great Father planned and arranged unhappiness for himself, as to argue that he created man for wretchedness either with end or without end.

Let us re-vamp and trim up the declaration thus, "A being of absolute goodness can form a creature for ending wretchedness," and send it back to Nashville for acceptance. What say you, friend Ferguson? Will you endorse? If you do not perceive that this is your logic, theologized, it is far too evident that your organs of vision are filmy. And what a character does this Rationalism give to the "Father of Mercies:" he did create, says Universalism, a race of intelligent beings for wretchedness!! but, blessed *universal* benevolence, he arranged in their creation that their wretchedness should endure only for a limited period!!!

It is indeed far more sickening than a heavy dose of lobelia to examine even slightly such impertinent, undignified, and bat-eyed Rationalism, hatched in Germany, fed to the fluttering point at Boston, and made to soar to undefinable regions from Nashville. While God enunciates in a clear tone that sin has been superinduced, seeing that he "cannot tempt any man," and while over every spot where wretchedness appears there is written in readable language, "AN ENEMY HATH DONE THIS," the adventuring doctor of divinity, with a zeal for new discovery, and regardless of heaven's unerring oracles, pitches headlong into the ditch of perverted reason and boasts of his height when he is constantly sinking.

It never seems to have occurred to the new school of philosophers, whose sparks of reason are so bright, that punishment, in the government of God, is not even a primary effect. Temptation first; transgression next; punishment third. Brother James, one of the ordained Twelve, makes it out in these terms:—first, lust; second, sin; third, death. This is precisely what we mean by temptation, transgression, punishment; and if the "God of all grace" does not lead any man into temptation and hence does not induce him into transgression, it is quite evident that in yielding to temptation and becoming a transgressor, he is the active and immediate agent in bringing and continuing punishment upon himself.

This being true, the two fanciful conceptions relative to 'forming a creature for wretchedness' and 'the eternity of punishment' planned and designed for man, are fatally smitten and cast among nonentities.

Man, formed with intelligence, blessed with freedom and noble endowments, and having the offer of divine truth, divine love, and divine happiness, but rejecting heaven's overtures and choosing the guidance, influence, and waywardness of the great Enemy, why, yes, why, O Rationalist, should he not be a joint partaker in all that appertains to the destiny of this Enemy? Why should any one, even the most wicked, be deprived of his wages?

Now who but a daring and novel-loving speculatist ever thought seriously of the old adversary repending or reforming? And if wicked men have a common doom with the unrepenting, unreformable Enemy, who with any degree of right-reason thinks of a time when God will be willing to say to these impure spirits, 'Come, ye blessed who were banished my presence; your long association with the adversary has made you at length fit for the inheritance of the saints: you are henceforth all saints together—they by the Lord Jesus and you by the devil'—?—!—!!

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem; would that all men might go up and hear the prophets and apostles whom God sent to you, and hence to all the world, that all might hear the voice of God, unerringly, and be saved not only from one weak species of speculation, but from sin, death, and eternal connexion with the author all ill. D. O.

### MEN AND MONKS.

The New York Crusader can touch off some portraits to a nicety. In describing the genus monk, he says—

The *Monk* is an anthropomorphous animal; cowed; howling at night; always thirsty.

The body of the monk is biped, erect, with a somewhat crooked back; head hanging down and crowned; the whole body covered with a woollen garment, with the exception of certain varieties, that have some parts uncovered. It is a greedy, stinking, and unclean animal, always tormented with thirst, and would sooner starve than work, in order to obtain food. The monks herd together at sunrise and sunset, and some varieties at midnight. Whenever one monk begins to howl, the whole herd does the same. They flock together at the sound of a bell and usually walk in couples. They live by rapine or begging; and they maintain, that the world was created for their benefit.

The female monk, vulgarly called a *nun* is scarcely different from the male, except that she wears a veil and is more cleanly, laborious and less thirsty. When young she is generally as playful as a kitten, and catches at everything she sees: when old, gossiping, quarrelsome, and ill-natured.

Hear him as he thus declares the difference between man and the monk:

Man speaks, reasons, wills; the monk is frequently mute and has neither reason nor will, being entirely governed by the will of his superior. Man works with his head erect—a monk's hangs down, and his eyes fixed upon the ground. Man eats his bread in the sweat of his brow; the Monk fattens in idleness. Man lives among his fellow-creatures; the monk seeks solitude and flies from daylight. Hence, it is evident that the monk forms a distinct genus of mammalia, which hold a middle place and forms a connecting link between man and the monkey.

The genus monk may be divided into three great families: the omnivorous, the ichthyophagus, and the graminivorous.

The characters by which the various species of monks are defined are taken from the head, the feet, the cowl, and the dress.

The head is either hairy, or bristly, or shaven. It is futhermore diversified by a secular crop of hair, by a hairy or furrowed crown, and by a beardless or bearded chin.

The feet are shod, half shod, or bare.

The cowl is either reversible, or loose, or removable. It is furthermore acuminate, funnel-shaped, heart-shaped, short, elongated, with a pointed top.

### ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

MR. OLIPHANT:—Please insert in the pages of the *Banner*, the following remarks on Church Government, and oblige,  
Yours, Truly,

A BIBLE CHRISTIAN.

Presuming that the Christian Oracles are alone sufficient, without the aid of Creeds and Confessions, to guide the Christian enquirer into all truth, and satisfied as I am that an impartial examination of the Word of God will prove to a demonstration, that *independency* is the *only form of Church polity* taught therein; and that Presbyterianism, whom Milton designated as "old priest writ large," conjointly with the Episcopacy of the English church and Episcopacy among Methodists, cannot trace their origin to the Christian primitive church, but rather to the "Mother of Abominations," who has her seat on the banks of the Tiber, I proceed to prove from the Bible the "divine origin" of that form of Church Government called "Independency."

What, then, is the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood? What is its *nature* and *constitution*? and what are the permanent officers and ordinances of a Christian Church?

1st. It is well known that the lapse of time alters the signification of words, so as to make it difficult to ascertain their original import. And perhaps this remark holds good respecting the various appropriated appellations used in the Scriptures as generally as with any class of words whatever. The word *Church* is the one we have to do with at present. In the language of the New Testament, it means in its civil and unappropriated application, an assembly of any description in a state of association. And in a religious sense it means an assembly of Christians, called out from the world, and united by the bonds of christian love; or the whole society of God's people. But as Professor Campbell says, "in any intermediate sense between a *single congregation*, and the whole community of Christians, not *one* instance can be brought of the application of the word in sacred writ."

In the language of modern sectarians, however, its meaning is very different. When used by a Romanist it means, the Pope and Cardinals in conclave assembled. When used by Protestant Episcopalians it means an assembly of Bishops, Archbishops, &c., associated together; and in the mouth of a Presbyterian it is used for the purpose of showing that a number of congregational delegates, viz. Ministers and Elders, assembled as a synod form a Church. When used by a Methodist it means the Presiding Elders and Preachers meeting in Conference; and among all these not one of them has any resemblance to the use made of it in the word of God.

That the word Church, in Scripture, is descriptive of an individual

worshipping assembly of Christians, and is the appropriated designation by which such assemblies are usually designated, will appear from the following passages: "Greet Priscilla and Acquila, likewise the Church that is in their house." "The churches of Asia salute you." "Salute the brethren who are in Laodicea and Nymphas, and the Church which is in his house." Who can read these texts, and feel any doubt respecting the proper and literal import of the title in question as it here occurs? Is there any thing equivocal in the matter? Whether can it mean in these places, *one* congregation in each house, or a *number* of congregations in Presbytery or Conference assembled? Let the man of common sense decide.

2d. Again I remark, that not only does the apostle Paul and the other sacred writers uniformly use the title, *Church*, in the singular number to mean but one worshipping assembly, but when they come to speak of a greater number they never use the singular, but always without exception, the plural,—never *Church*, but always *Churches*. In proof of this, among a multitude, let a few passages suffice:—"Then had the *Churches* rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria." Had some of our modern Presbyterians, Methodists or Episcopalians been narrating this fact, instead of saying the *Churches* had rest, they would have informed us "that those *branches* of the *Church* in Judea, &c. had rest, for they are always dreaming of a united and consolidated hierarchy, placed under their *own* management and control, not being satisfied that Jesus Christ *alone* should regulate the concerns of his entire Kingdom.

3d. That no combinations, or Church judicatories, existed in primitive times, will appear from the fact that the Seven Churches in Asia are called upon to reform their own abuses. Also, when Diotrephes abused his power and tyrannized over the disciples, the Church was *not* ordered to lodge an appeal to any Superior Court, in order to rectify the evils of his improper conduct. John simply declares that when he came he would remember his deeds. Having no such Court to refer to, he was obliged to leave them for the present, to set matters to rights *themselves*. But had some of our moderns been there, they would have found no difficulty in the case at all. They would have summoned a few of their brethren even from the distance of 40 or 50 miles perhaps, to examine and pass judgement and after having found means to blindfold the unreflecting multitude they would have exonerated the accused from the charge and reinstated him as pastor, sometimes even in the face of all evidence. But, Mr. Editor, what has the History of Church courts been but the History of tyranny often in favor of wealth against the lowly and the down trodden. They seldom "take the part" of the poor and the oppressed. Their master evinced a different spirit.

1st. In the Sacred oracles, it is more than to be inferred, the only classes of officers required in a *Church* are Elders, or Bishops, and deacons—and such officers as, Archbishops, Rectors, curates, Ruling elders, and presiding Elders, are mere human inventions, and alike destitute of Scriptural authority. And in order to establish the position from the Bible that but two officers continue to be

requisite for a Christian Church, I remark that all the appellatives by which the presiding officers are distinguished are evidently intended to represent the pastoral office. In Acts xx, 17, it is said "Paul sent from Miletus to Ephesus and called the Elders of the Church, and when they were come to him, he said unto them,—Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers" or Bishops.

2nd. That the titles Elder, Overseer and Bishop are synonymous, and are used interchangeably, and that they are descriptive of the same office must be obvious to every unprejudiced reader of the Christian Scriptures.

3rd. When the apostle addressed the believers at Philippi, he specified but *two* classes of officers; "To all the saints who are at Philippi with their *Bishops and Deacons*," from which it appears most obvious that no such officers as *lay elders* then existed. Had such been necessary for the order of a christian community, doubtless they would have been appointed. And as regards the office of Deacon, it is well known to every attentive reader of the Scriptures, that the deacon's office was instituted for the purpose of providing for the temporal wants of the poor brethren.

4th The assumption of the title, *The Clergy*, by any class of men is a gross imposition on the world. Some of these "Reverends" dub themselves successors of the apostles, scarcely one of whom can preach the doctrines the apostles taught, and who assume an order and power these never pretended unto—an order and power not known in the New Testament, in name, nor thing, and anti-christian root and branch, is the very climax of imposture. But Mr. Editor, these lofty pretensions are not confined to High Church Episcopacy. The same Spiritual pretensions and clerical tyranny are to be found in the Presbyterian Synod and Methodist conference, and History testifies that *they* can tyrannize as well as the men of Oxford or Cambridge. From all such *systems* and *men*, let us pray "Good Lord deliver us." And when any one enquires what is the Primitive policy of the Christian Church? let not the answer be, what saith the Book of *discipline* or the confession? but what saith the Scriptures? They alone must decide, *not* Synods or convocations. I now come to the last part of my subject. The ordinances of a church, and these are baptism and the Lord's Supper. I will not dwell here on Baptism, nor enter into the controversy which has long divided the Christian Church, as to Sprinkling and Immersion, but come at once to the other—viz:—the Lord's Supper. I do not wish to provoke argument on this point, although I am perfectly satisfied Infant Baptism is Scriptural.

That the Lord's Supper was observed in apostolic times every Lord's day, can be established by the clearest evidences. When Paul came to Troas, he tarried seven days, knowing that on the Lord's day, he was sure to meet the Brethren. "And on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them," &c. This determines two important facts respecting those early Christians,—First, that the *Lord's day*, or as it is here called the *first day of the week*, was observed by them

as a day set apart in commemoration of Christ's resurrection, and the second fact is, that the principal way in which it was observed, was by their assembling to attend the ordinances of his appointment, especially to the *Lord's Supper*.—Such was apostolic practice—but not so in these days. “Our Reformers” laid the foundation of the Reformation, and left it to those who followed, to carry it on; but instead of progressing in their work, they have been retrograding, until it is manifest that many of them is as corrupt as their predecessors. (speaking comparatively) and in nothing is their corruption more manifest, than in the attachment evinced by them, to the law and commandments of men. O, for some of the luminous spirits of olden times—for another Luther—or Calvin—or Knox to *reform the Reformed!!!*

### HAVE WE A PURE SPEECH IN CANADA ?

A very respectable religious journal published in Hamilton—a journal conducted with much candor and ability—contains the following paragraphs. Let every reader for himself compare the majority of the principal expressions with the pure speech of the creed of christianity :—

D. O.

One of the most pleasing evidences that the ministry and church are divinely blessed in their appropriate work, is the numerous and extensive revivals which have been experienced during the past year. At these seasons of truly spiritual refreshing, scores and hundreds of sinners have been converted from the error of their ways and added to the church as the saved of the Lord. Among the instrumentalities employed for this purpose, a larger number of Camp-meetings have been held than in almost any former year; and we are happy to know that these means which have been signally owned for good in the early history of Methodism in Canada, have lost none of their attractions, and their efficiency for the accomplishment of the chief end for which the agencies of the church are engaged—the conversion of souls. Nearly, if not all the meetings held last year, were seasons of great interest and power; and we rejoice to see from the notices already given, that similar efforts are to be continued and multiplied for the extension of the work of salvation amongst the people. May the future be as the past, and more gloriously abundant in the displays of the saving power of the Gospel.

Amongst the salutary influences upon the Church in general which accompany and result from these gracious showers of awakening and converting grace; is that of producing a more devout and regular attendance upon the ordinances of Christianity, and in particular upon those means which are more intimately instrumental in promoting the spirituality of the believer. Under the spirit inspired by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, private devotion will become a more frequent and regular exercise. The ministry of the word is found more attractive and profitable. The prayer meeting is not neglected.

The Lord's Supper will not be a mere formal ceremony; but a means of quickening the spiritual life. And as Methodists the class meeting will display its peculiar adaption to meet the aspirations of those who are contending earnestly for the faith which overcometh the world. And with the spirit of increased spirituality imparted to the church in connection with the revival influences; there will be little danger of any tendency to relax the enforcement of the rule which requires an attendance upon this means of grace, as an evidence of "having a form and seeking the power of godliness."

We need scarce remind the friends of our Zion, that the annual assembling of their ministers in Conference, is an occasion which should call forth earnest and united prayers to the Giver of all wisdom and grace, that they may be divinely directed in their counsels and decisions. With the numerous openings and calls for additional ministerial service, we apprehend that one great subject of inquiry with the Conference, in its present session, will be, how all these demands are to be supplied? And if ever there was time which required the united supplications of the church it is now—"Pray ye, therefore the Lord of the harvest to send more labourers into the harvest."

#### HOW WESLEY AND WESLEYANISM WERE ONCE VIEWED.

Teplady and others in the days of Wesley handled him as roughly and contemptuously as any man has been treated in this century. Our friends the Wesleyans at this day cannot, if they try ever so hard, show more opposition to Disciples than some of the opposers of Wesley showed to him. In the *Gospel Magazine*, a poet, under the title of "the Serpent and the Fox," made poetry about the Devil and Wesley, or "Old Nick and old John" as follows:

There's a fox, who resideth hard-by  
The most perfect, and holy, and sly,  
That e'er turn'd a coat, or could pillar and lye.  
As this reverend Reynard, one day,  
Sat thinking what game next to play;  
Old Nick came a seas'nable visit to pay.

"O your servant, my friend," quoth the priest,  
"Tho' you carry the mark of the beast,  
I never shook paws with a welcomer guest."  
'Many thanks, holy man,' cry'd the fiend;  
'T' was because you're my very good friend,  
That I dropt in, with you a few moments to spend."

Behold also the following Warrant, showing how Methodist preachers were loved in some portions of England in 1743, one hundred and eleven years ago:—

#### STAFFORDSHIRE.

"To all high constables, and others of His Majesty's peace officers within the said County, and particularly to the constable of Tipton:

"Whereas, we, His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said

County of Stafford, have received information that several disorderly persons styling themselves methodist preachers, go about raising routs and riots, to the great damage of His Majesty's liege subjects, and against the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King :

"These are in His Majesty's name, to command you and every one of you, within you respective districts to make dilligent search after the said methodist preachers, and to bring him or them before some of us, His said Justices of the Peace, to be examined concerning their unlawful doings.

"Given under our hands and seals, Oct., 1743.

"J. JANE,

"W. W. PERSEHOUSE."

### NAPOLEON AND MRS. JUDSON.

THEIR GRAVES AT ST. HELENA.

On our voyage from China, our ship was to stop at St. Helena.— There were spots of unusual interest which I expected to visit.

One was the grave of Napoleon the other was the grave of Mrs. Judson. The one had acquired a world-wide renown for his surpassing ability and skill as a general, and for his equally remarkable sagacity as a statesman. The other was less extensively known, it is true, though by no means obscure, as having manifested a degree of self-sacrificing devotion, of patient, enduring fortitude; of high moral courage, and of intrepid bearing on the field of Christian conquest, well worthy the palmiest days of Christian heroism.

Napoleon in prosecuting his ambitious schemes for his own aggrandizement and the glory of France, had been the means of killing I know not how many thousand of his fellow men, and of sending the immortal souls of these unknown thousands, unprepared, to the dread tribunal of final audit with their righteous judge; of spreading devastation and woe among I know not how many thousand firesides, of breaking the hearts and crushing the hopes I know not how many thousand fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters, and wives and children, making parents childless, wives widows, and children orphans; of scattering with remorseless hand, the blight and mildew and pestilence of death and desolation over I know not how many thousand fields and landscapes, before all bright and blooming with peace and loveliness, with happiness and plenty.

Mrs. Judson had exiled herself from the home of her youth, and all its endearing associations; had torn her heart loose from its tenderest ties; had toiled most arduously for long, long years, among a barbarous people, under a torrid sun, with many discouragements, and through great privations and hardships, with all the calm, yet earnest energy of a noble holy enthusiasm, in breaking to the famishing Pagan the bread of life. I can no more compute the number of souls she may have been instrumental in saving, than I can the number Napoleon may have in destroying.

Then I turned my thoughts to the day of judgment. Napoleon

will stand there stripped of all the adventitious circumstances of rank and power, not one of the brilliant qualities which so pre-eminently distinguished him here, will avail him there. Such currency, however high in the markets of earth, is at a fearful discount at the bank of heaven. He will there stand on the same footing with the meanest human being—that of his own single, individual character. And that character not measured by the standard that obtains among men, but by a directly opposite one set up by the pure and holy God.—Then, thought I, if the spirits of the lost shall be permitted to upbraid those who have been the means of hurrying them on to destruction, what terrific bursts of curses, what thunder tones of execration will be eternally poured upon his defenceless head!

Mrs. Judson will stand there too. It is not too much to presume that some Burmans, saved through her instrumentality, will meet her there,—perhaps many—perhaps thousands—for the seed she sowed is still vegetating, and will go on to increase and bear fruit till the end of time. And will they not lavish blessings on her head? Oh will they not bless the day and the hour in which she first set foot upon their shores? and will not heaven's high arches ring with their rejoicings? God has said, they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.

The dead, small and great, shall stand before God, but the scale of estimation will be entirely reversed. The Lord seeth not as man seeth for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. Most of those whom men consider great, will then be found to be small; and many, very many, now regarded as small, will then be seen to be truly great. It is sadly to be feared that Napoleon will appear among the small; and there is little doubt but Mrs. Judson will be among the great. At any rate, I had a million times rather have been Mrs. Judson than to have been Napoleon.

CHARLES TAYLOR.

### WORK OUT YOUR SALVATION.

A little London tract not long since fell into our hands, entitled "The Working Christian," from which the subjoined sentences are copied: D. O.

A flourishing Christian community is in the way to become more flourishing. It has all the materials in itself; and only let them be called forth, and they will charm, and attract, and sanctify many around. No man likes to go into an ice cellar: it is too cold. Few people like to be in a room half filled with dead bodies: there is death. And a sleepy, lukewarm congregation has something in it both insipid and repelling. Let the members of a congregation shine forth in all the splendour of "holy living," and the influence of it on others will be astonishing. Look at them. Their heads planning for God, their hands working for God, their hearts panting for God, their tongues crying, "Behold the Lamb of God." Is there nothing in all this to attract an inquiring youth; nothing to catch the sympathies of a sinner just brought out of darkness into mar-

vellous light? Oh yes, much every way. But look on the contrary side, and let the following incident teach you. The writer was once walking with a minister, when a young man passed us. "There," said my friend, "I never see that youth but I am ready to weep." "What for?" said I: "is he not pious?" "Oh yes, very pious, and he was converted under my ministry; but, alas! he left us, because we gave him nothing to do." Nothing to do! What! give a young convert nothing to do, when a large part of the inhabitants in every town are unconverted! Yes, there is something for everybody to do. God never made a hand to be idle.

### RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF METHODISM.

There is such a thing as denominational zoology. There is a certain temperament, there are certain mental tendencies, from which, if a man is not content to remain a Presbyterian in Scotland, or an Episcopalian in England, it may be predicted which other section of the Christian community he will join. The Wesleyan body is the great absorbant of warm hearts and fervid spirits. In the frequency of its devotional meetings, in the frankness and unreserve of its Christian intercourse, in the vigor of its responses, the soaring of its hymns, and in the benevolent vivacity which finds a post and an employment for every member, it meets many cravings of the young and ardent convert. Is he crying in the gladness of his soul, 'Sing aloud unto God our strength; make a joyful noise unto God our Jacob!' Alike in the cathedral and the conventicle, he is apt to be depressed by an organic sole or a rueful dirge, but escaping to the Methodist meeting, he finds their 'glory! all awake:' they are 'taking the psalm, and bringing the pleasant harp with the psaltery, and and blowing up the trumpet,' and with exulting rivalry, 'young men and maidens, old men and children,' are praising the Lord. In the eagerness of first love, is he exclaiming, 'Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul!' But nobody will stop to listen; and so, for an audience, he is driven away to the love-feast or class-meeting. In the exuberance of a newly awakened zeal, would he like an outlet for his energies, a field of Christian activity? In the sanctuary which he has hitherto frequented he feels himself a cipher. He has never been invited to engage in any scheme of usefulness, and except the neat and noiseless sexton, who bows him into his pew, no one seems to know him. But he has not worshipped three Sabbaths with the Methodists when he is recognized and accosted, and three months have not passed before he is installed in the Sunday school, or with a bundle of tracts and a roving commission, is sent out into the highways and hedges. The portrait of the great founder on the wall, a box for Wesleyan Missions on the mantelshelf, placards of the next anniversaries in the shop window, the occasional dropping in of a brother during the day with friendly enquiry as to evening prayer-meeting, and a vesper stanza from the consecrated hymn-book, all betoken the activity, the brotherly kindness, and the cheerful piety, in the midst of which

the young Theophilus has found his ecclesiastical habitation and his congenial home.

A 'D. D.' called the 'Rev.' James Hamilton, a Wesleyan, is the author of the above. He is more than half right respecting a 'denominational zoology.' Systems of religion not so old as the Christianity of the New Testament gather much of their force and influence in being specifically adapted to certain classes of mind and natural temperament. The founders of these systems having stamped their mental and moral image upon them, they are all suited to captivate distinct classes mentally and morally like those who founded them. Hence, as we find the lion, the elephant, the monkey, the fox, the elk, the beaver, the white bear, and the sea-horse in different countries and climes, so we discover these systems meeting with greater or less favor according to the intellectual caste, moral tone, and social predilections of the people where they are presented. Genuine Churchism works vigorously among the aristocracy, John Calvin's decrees are powerful among sedate fatalist reasoners; Congregationalism flourishes among men whose fathers have had enlarged conceptions of civil and ecclesiastical liberty; New Lightism must have a good degree of speculation and fancy to work to advantage; Methodism spreads where feelings predominate. Dr. Hamilton's idea of denominational zoology is therefore not so far astray.

But the gospel of the apostles has an influence much more perfect than such systems. It is divinely adapted, not to one class of men, but to all classes and conditions. Its appeals reach the honest logician, the man of warm social temperament, the high, the low, the rude, the learned—all who can be moved by the arguments, motives, and love of God. And it links each to each, and throws a bond of perfectness round all, not by narrow peculiarities, but by the celestial cement of Jesus' authority, mercy, and philanthropy.

D. O.

### CURIOUS SERMON FROM A CURIOUS TEXT.

JESSE LEE.

Preaching without notes was a great innovation on New England customs. The Established ministers averred that Lee could preach only a few sermons which he had learned by heart. One of those ministers, a sour, morose, and tyrannical bigot, whose oppression in the collection of his salary the people had often felt, gave permission for Lee to preach in his church on condition that he should use a text to be given him after the people had been collected, and the introductory services were performed. To this Lee consented. No-

tice was given of the appointment, and on the arrival of the day the house was densely crowded by an overwhelming multitude, many of them eager to witness the discomfiture of Lee, and ruinous demolition of all his reputation for talent and his popularity in the country. The first hymn was sung, the opening prayer made, and the second hymn sung, when Lee arose and advanced to the minister to receive his text. The passage given was numbers 221 chapter, and first part of the 21st verse: 'And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass.' Rather a hard text this, thought Lee, though he said nothing, to preach on at so short notice. Being well acquainted with the story of Balaam, he proceeded at once to describe his character, descending largely on his avarice and love of the wages of unrighteousness, denouncing in severe language the baseness of the man who could use the prophetic office as a means of gain, and could endanger the very souls of the people of Israel for the sake of the wages which Balak offered. He then proceeded to describe the oppressed, enslaved, and pitiable condition of the ass. He spoke affecting of the patience of the creature under burdens, and spurs, and whippings, and abuses. He said the ass usually endured, without complaining, all the abuse heaped on him. Indeed, except the one in the history of Balaam, there had never been known an instance of an ass speaking and expostulating under ill treatment. He then alluded to the saddle, and then described how galling and oppressive it might become, especially under the weight of a large, fat, heavy man. At this point he cast a knowing look to the minister, who happened to be a very large and corpulent person. Having gone through with an exposition of the subject, he proceeded to the application. He said that the idea might be new to them. Indeed, it had never thus struck him till the text was given him; but he thought Balaam might be considered a type and representative of their minister. Balaam's ass, in many respects, reminded him of themselves, the congregation of that town; and the saddle bound on the poor ass by cords and girths evidently represented the minister's salary fastened on them by legal cords. Its galling and oppressive influence they had often felt, inasmuch as, in some instances as he had been informed, the last and only cow of a poor man with a large family had been taken and sold to pay the tax for the salary of the well fed incumbent of the saddle.

After this most notable and famous discourse, of which I have often heard floating accounts in New England, though I have not seen the anecdote in any written sketch of Lee, no one chose to try his skill at preaching on random and inappropriate texts with short notice, and under disadvantageous circumstances.

### THE JEWS.

The following remarks are a portion of a speech delivered in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, at its recent sitting, by Dr. BRECKENRIDGE:

There were, as all knew, very various views entertained in the Church touching the language of prophecy on the restoration of the

Jews, as there was on the Millennium. It would not be edifying for the Assembly to go into all that; but all were agreed in embracing the Jews as a fit subject for missionary enterprise, and the interest was one altogether too great to be omitted by a Committee on Foreign Missions. There was a great solution to come, some day, of all these great questions. The language of prophecy certainly did cover the whole ground of the Jewish restoration, the destruction of Popery and the conversion of the heathen; it covered the whole vast field of foreign missions. And it was impossible to strike out the Jews from our programme of missionary effort, without turning away from our duty, and mutilating the scheme of general good to be accomplished. There might be in the Divine mind a synchronism as to the great wants for the blessing of the world, and it was not for us to turn away from any portion of the promise or the prospect set before us in the Bible. Jerusalem was to be trodden down of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled, and then all Israel should be saved. There was a definite time distinctly alluded to; and if there was one thing clearly taught, it was that God loved those who loved and cared for his ancient covenant people, and that he would execute his fierce judgments on all who oppressed them. He had never given Jerusalem a bill of divorcement; and it was a striking difference between Protestantism and Popery, that the one cherished and cared for the poor outcast exiles, while Popery every where hated and oppressed them.

#### WHAT THINK YOU OF IT!

A communication has been received, not only highly flattering as respects the value of this monthly paper, but suggesting that each able reader "advance the sum of \$2 per annum," for the purpose of forwarding the interests of the Banner in various ways, and among others to assist us "to send to those who would be instructed by the Christian Banner and who have not the means to pay." We have not space to say much on this proposition, but we give it to our readers to be disposed of as it is deemed expedient and wise. Several friends within the past three years have voluntarily attended to what is equivalent to the suggestion, and have regularly forwarded to us from two to three dollars a-year to aid in maintaining and circulating this work.

D. O.

#### TO SUBSCRIBERS IN THE EAST.

According to a purpose long cherished and a promise of long standing, I prepared to make a visit to friends in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island during the past summer. My trunk was packed for the journey in the month of July, and I actually proceeded as far as Picton, sixty miles east of Cobourg, on my way to the Provinces on the Atlantic. I was on all hands advised

to postpone my journey—the fatality attendant on the march of cholera through the land being one of the principal arguments in the persuasive efforts of friends. Though not at all fearful for myself, believing that I would be just as safe on my journey as in the vicinity of home, yet for the sake of relatives and friends I abandoned for the time my intended tour. We may doubtless call this a Providential hinderance. Meanwhile then I must continue my only mode of visiting the friends in the East—by sending myself in the Christian Banner, trusting that the period may yet arrive when a personal acquaintance will be formed with many in the East 'whom, though not having seen, I love.'

D. O.

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#### NOTE FROM A MILLENNARIAN.

To the Editor of the Christian Banner:

DEAR SIR:—I am an occasional reader, and have been instructed by your Banner.

Excuse a line from a writer not known to you; I send you this or account of what I read in a piece signed J\*\*\*; in the Number for October. Will you tell me what is intended by the assertion that the expectation of a new dispensation termed the millennium is a "vagary." It is a pleasure to me to exercise faith in the revealed vagary that Christ shall reign with his people or his people with him a thousand years. I do not like the negative stand of Mr. J\*\*\*; he has what he thinks important truth, and the world he believes should be corrected, and it is not like a reformer to have to be dragged out by some person bold enough to attack his hints

Yours, in hopes of a millennium,

L.

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#### CIRCULATION OF THE BANNER.

Friends ask us, How are you getting along with the "Banner?"—are you succeeding?—have you help enough to keep the work up? We desire all friends and all foes to know that the year of grace 1854 has been a successful year with us so far as relates to the increase of our circulation. We have never before obtained so many new readers within one year. Whether our receipts may be correspondingly increased we cannot as yet speak very definitely; though we have great pleasure in testifying that some of our readers are becoming approvingly punctual—examples worthy of commendation and imitation.

D. O.

## PARAGRAPH FOR SOME READERS.

On turning the leaves of our subscription book, it is noticeable that a goodly few names have the mark "free" attached to them. Some of these free readers will not receive the periodical after the present Number. Those that are presumed to be rich enough to order the work, will be lopped from our list, to make room, in due time, for others who are too rich in devotion to feel like doing without religious reading, and not so rich in temporals as to have the wherewithal to recompense.

**IS** The regular essays in this volume have, according to evidence which has come to us, been read with a good per cent. of interestedness. The six articles on the Religion of Jesus, and the four articles on the subject of Deacons, Elders, and Evangelists, have attracted unusual attention. To any one who sends us three subscribers for 1855, we will forward the volume for 1854, to pay him for his day's work. We have a number of sets of volume 6, and a few sets of volume 7, which will be freely distributed to those who give us their cooperation in getting readers and keeping up our supply of oil to make the Banner machinery work briskly and constantly. D. O.

**IS** Another paper or essay on the labors included in the office of Evangelist was mentally prepared, to accompany the series of articles under the head of Deacons, Elders, and Evangelists. In particular we desired to bring out a regiment of reflections on the fourth question we proposed in our last article. We have not been able to appropriate the necessary number of moments to put the proposed essay on paper, nor have we room for it in this No. D. O.

**IS** The second edition of the Letters on the modern means of conversion is nearly exhausted; but we have a few to send to those who obtain subscribers for 1855. Every one who sends us two new readers will receive, if he so desires, a copy of the three Letters, and six of the twin Tracts on the Holy Spirit.

**IS** Will our friend, "A Bible Christian," please read carefully the article headed "The Ethiopian Eunuch Baptized by Sprinkling" in our last Number, and send us his reflections? D. O.

**IS** In mentioning the names of fellow-helpers in New York State last month, we omitted to name brother Jonas Hersey, who sent a fine list of readers' names some time ago. D. O.