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THE

WITNESS OF TRUTH.

Vol. V.

OSHAWA, MARCH, 1850.

No. 3.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH—ITS FOUNDATION AND STRUCTURE.

No. I. THE CHURCH.

What is the Christian Church? What its foundation? What the nature, manner, and order of its structure? These are important inquiries, at this age of the world; and as much so to the British public, as to any people. The *church*, is a *phrase* of undisputed consequence, in the conversation of politicians, on both sides of the water. It is in the mouths of lords, ministers, and commons—in the columns of court journals, and borough newspapers—in the pages of state papers, quarterlies, and volumes of history; and yet, from hearing and reading all these, one would sometimes be quite forcibly impressed with the conviction that “the church” was some aerial, invisible, ideal, irresponsible entity, which existed among men, but was not of men—to which all men, except the representatives of “the church,” are bound to pay shillings and homage. There are the church, the church of Scotland, the church of Rome, the Greek church; and from among these, it would not be a very easy task to select the “church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.” But we are sometimes told that these are but several elements of the *visible* church, and that the *invisible*, or true church is the concentration, or *spiritual*, of these several elements. An *invisible* church may serve the purposes of politicians and worldlings, much better than it will serve serious and conscientious men, who expect to give an account to God of their sayings and doings in life; and who therefore, conceive that the primary business of the present life is, to lay a good foundation for the future—who realize that “it is not all of life to live, nor all of death to die.” Enough has been said to direct the mind of the reader to the present unhappy state of things.

Beyond all controversy, the Christian church is composed of the faithful men and women who keep the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the widest sense that can attach to “the church” as used in the sacred oracles—see Acts. xx: 28. Ephes. i. 22., iii. 10, Phil. iii: 6, Col. i: 18, 24, and kindred passages. The word church

is very frequently used in a more particular or limited sense—signifying the faithful in Christ in any particular locality—as the church of the Thessalonians, 1 Thes. i: 1, “Ordained elders in every church,” Acts xiv: 23, and numerous other passages. The word church occurs about thirty times in the New Testament—church of God seven or eight times—church, plural, twenty times—churches of God three times—churches of Christ, once—making in all more than thirty times. The easy manner in which the word is used, and the frequency of its occurrence, render it almost impossible to be misunderstood by the student of the Bible, and certainly make it unnecessary to offer any further argument that the church consists of the saints, the faithful in Christ Jesus, and that Jesus our Lord, is “head over all to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that fills all in all,” and that through the church might be known, to the principalities and powers in the heavenly regions, the manifold wisdom of God.

In this view of the matter, it will be difficult to harmonise with propriety the remark which is often made in some sections, “that a person can be a christian without belonging to the church, as well as with it.” To belong to Christ is to belong to his church—to belong to the church is to belong to Christ. The wisdom of the present age is very different from this. The church of God is a holy place. It has a holy calling. Its relations, its spirit, its labors are holy. It has no seat for the scorner nor trifier—nor has it any labor for the envious or busybody. It has no garments for the proud or the ambitious. The lovers of God are there. The men of faith are there. Meekness, simplicity, and truth are there. The spirit of God is there. Spirituality and heavenly mindedness are characterized in all that it does.

“Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion city of our God
He whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for his own abode.”

The church is the antipodes of the institutions of the world. It is natural that *worldly organizations* should care for the world. No one should blame them for it; for they spring of it, and the child should reverence the parent—and the parent love and nurture the child—“the world loves its own.” Each flatters each; and thus each by each is drawn into the arms of each in a time-serving friendship. But alas! “the friendship of the world is death.”

The labors of the church are labors of love internally and externally. “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,” said the Saviour.

He has gone to prepare a place for his people. In his absence, the church is his representative. He "went about doing good" while here. Such should be the employment of the church. It is not as an army, quartered upon a community, and drawing its supplies therefrom, and thus rendering itself burdensome; but, being "zealous of good works," its charities are distributive, running over its bounds in all directions, binding up the broken hearted, drying the tear of the orphan, and bearing the light of "the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God," to the poor and benighted. It can never become conformed to the world, for its mission is to convert the world to God. It is ready to every good word and work; but knows nothing about fashionable compromise.

The church, like the body, has many members. They should be all employed. There is work for the weakest sister, and for the most talented brother—for the aged and the youth—for the rich and the poor. They all keep their hearts before God; and strive, individually and jointly, for the faith of the gospel. To do good is of God. From the smallest incident of life, to the largest scheme of benevolence, the praise of God is the pulsation of the heart. The child by the way side is grieved and weeping, at the loss of his toy—a soothing word and a penny from a kind heart and hand, have turned sorrow to gladness—good is done—Heaven is pleased. Nations are in darkness and death—the church in its strength from above, having put on its "beautiful garments," goes forth, bearing the word of light and life, and the solitary places rejoice—here, too, good is done, and God is pleased. All the range between these lies open for action. Let the church then put on her strength. "To your tents, O, Israel!" was the watchword in the ancient times. To our own times, might this sentiment be transferred with profit. When every one is in his proper place—the aged and youth—male and female—strong and weak—then is the church strong. When the church is strong, then will the cause be prosperous.

A. P. JONES.

Williamsville, N. Y., Feb., 1850.

MARRIAGE WITH UNBELIEVERS.

A Christian occupies a glorious position. He is now a "son of God." He is going on in a magnificent career to a transcendently glorious consummation. When Christ shall appear, he will be like

him, he will see him as he is.* The condition of his being a son of God is, his being separated from the world.† The condition of his final glory is, his continuing steadfastly unto the end in the path of purity and holiness.‡ Hence every alliance that would connect him with the world is condemned. Every means that may turn him out of the way is reprobated.

Not that we would teach that the reception of christianity should supersede *all* communication with the world. "For then must we needs go out of the world;" but that it should set aside all intercourse avoidable, that might influence our character. God has given injunctions and advice how we shall conduct ourselves, as Christians, in every department of our social, political, and religious duties. The gospel is adapted to us as we are. It meets our exigencies as inhabitants of this world. It teaches us as social and domestic beings. The king and the subject, the father and the son, the husband and the wife, the master and the servant, are admonished and advised how they shall behave in their several relations.

All the ties of consanguinity and affinity of wedlock that existed previous to conversion remain, whether their objects be believers or unbelievers. A Christian son may have an unbelieving father, or a Christian husband an unbelieving wife, and be blameless. He is not condemned for an alliance that existed or was made before he knew the truth. All that is required of him is that the existence of the relation shall not interfere with the discharge of his Christian duties—that he shall be ready to cut asunder all other ties rather than the one that binds him to Christ.§

But if his choice of a wife is to be made subsequent to the enlightenment of his mind, christianity dictates, and expediency suggests, that the object of his choice should be "in the Lord." The apostle very reasonably asks, "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" "What communion hath light with darkness, or what concord hath Christ with Belial, or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" "Evil communications," at all times "corrupt good manners," but the corrupting influence is much greater when the "evil communications" come from some sources than when they come from others. Vice in itself is hideous. Sin is hateful. They need but to be seen in their native hideousness to be abhorred and shunned. Virtue in itself is beautiful. Piety is lovely. They require only to be

* 1st John iii :2.

† 2 Cor. vi : 17.

‡ Rev. xxi : 20.

§ Luke xiv : 28.

seen in all their beauty and loveliness to be loved and embraced.— But alas! we are deceivable and satan is a deceiver. He has gilded the baits of vice, and defaced the inducements to virtue. He has given things a false appearance. Going about as “a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour,” he sometimes finds it convenient to transform himself to an angel of light that he may accomplish his ends more easily.

We are almost imperceptibly led to love and hate a thing more by the extrinsic associations that attend it than by its intrinsic worth or worthlessness. A fault is overlooked in a friend. A virtue is lost sight of in an enemy. Intoxicating liquor is loved in the convivial glass. It is hated in the drunkard. Peace is despised when the hero is praised, and war is detested when the scene of its horrors is beheld. What then we ask (with this truth before us) are the associations that cluster around a wife? They are altogether pleasing and joyous.— She is identified with our home and all our domestic joys. She is the object of our love. She is our constant companion, and is so intimately connected with us, that man and wife are said to become “one.”— What then, we ask, is so likely to lead us astray as an unbelieving wife? Whose communications will influence us so much as hers? In whom will sin or disregard of sacred things appear more excusable than in her? Who will tie us more closely to this world or alienate our affections from the things that are above? The downfall of hundreds furnishes the answer, and it would be well if the Christian would lay it to heart,—if he would consult the word of God, and be regulated by Christian duty, rather than by the bent of inclination or worldly advantage, in making this near and dear connection.

Let then the Christian, who understands his calling, and appreciates the dignity of his station, avoid a connection that may prevent his usefulness, endanger his salvation, or bring a reproach upon the cause of Christ.

M. THETES.

Jan. 1850.

A PATRIARCH'S MESSAGE.

The subjoined is copied from an American paper. It embraces sundry sentiments worthy of a place in every professor's heart. While we oppose with great freedom and independence the sectarianism of sectarian papers, we may also with the utmost readiness give credit

for what they contain of a commendable character. Omitting the words "clergyman," "laymen," and "laity," the reader will find in the following much to approve:—

D. O.

A WORD OF EXHORTATION TO MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE
CHURCH.

We extract from the Home and Foreign Record, the following solemn and affecting remarks from the pen of the venerable Dr. Archibald Alexander of Princeton, it being better adapted to benefit our readers than anything it is in our power to spread before them. The exhortation will tell on the hearts of hundreds of ministers, who ascribe to Dr. A. under God a large portion of their usefulness, and of thousands of laymen to whom his name is dear, and to whom his memory will be precious.

"In the close, I would address myself to the ministers and members of the Presbyterian church, knowing that I must soon put off this my tabernacle. Dear brethren, suffer the word of exhortation from an aged minister, now on the confines of another world, whose chief regret on the retrospect of a long life is, that he has done so little, in rescuing immortal souls from impending ruin. His days of active exertion are nearly ended, and he, having now no other means of doing much for this blessed cause, would earnestly and affectionately call upon his younger brethren in the ministry, and those preparing for this sacred office, to "work while it is day;" *to preach the word*, being "instant in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, and exhorting." How great will be your honor and reward, if when you appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, you can say, "Here am I and the children thou hast given me." But on the other hand, how dreadful to have the voice of blood, the blood of souls lost through your neglect, sounding in your ears! By the love of a dying Saviour, I entreat you, be in earnest in your exertions to pluck sinners as brands from the burning. And you must not only be zealous, but wise, "to win souls."—You have skill to cast the gospel net in the right place, and so to bait the gospel hook that sinners may be brought home to God. Deserve the title of "Fishers of men." Be not afraid, my young brethren, to go wherever God in his providence calls you. Go to the heathen; go to Oregon, to California, to the swarming population of our north western and south western States. Be ready as good soldiers, to endure hardships for Christ. In this warfare, "count not your own lives dear, so that you may finish your course with joy, and the ministry which

you have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

And now, my Christian brethren of the laity, permit me to remind you of your duty, and of the solemn responsibility that rests upon you. The ministry can accomplish little without your aid. It is yours to supply the means of support for those who give themselves to the ministry of the Word. If you suffer your gold or silver to lie useless in your strong box, or in the bank, when the Lord has need of it, for the support and propagation of the gospel, your riches will be as a canker on your souls, which will eat them as rust does iron. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth," is a divine precept. They that will be rich, fall into a snare, and many hurtful temptations. Every dollar given to promote the cause of Christ, will yield a rich interest. "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." Be liberal to the treasury of the Lord, and you will never repent it.—Many should do ten times as much as they have done, and all should double their efforts. And while you give, forget not to pray. Pray without ceasing for the peace and prosperity of the church, and for the conversion of the world."

THE WITNESS.

An effectual veto, for a considerable period, was put upon all complimentary or commendatory allusions to this work. We had a full suit of reasons for laying down this rule and acting upon it. Some, if not all, of these reasons are now dispensable, and hence we permit the following to be heard. The writer, indeed, Dr. Lewis, of Buffalo, we have never seen, but have a personal acquaintance with some of his near relatives, members also of the christian family, in the vicinity of Auburn:—

Buffalo, Jan. 29, 1850.

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—Almost weekly for several months past I have been resolving to write you a brother's greeting, and perhaps a word for your excellent paper. By the suggestion of some kind friend I received a number of the "Witness of Truth" last summer, and have continued to enjoy its visits ever since.

A good *paper*, like a good man, depends, for its influence and usefulness, upon its *good spirit*.

A paper with a bad spirit, like a man with a bad spirit, is a curse though it may possess great talents. Christians are painfully careless

in regard to the choice of their family periodicals. In the selection of a teacher for their congregation or their school, they are most scrupulously cautious. He *must* be a man of good temper, of cultivated heart. It certainly cannot be less important that those silent instructors, lying constantly before us and always in the hands of our children, should be of like character.

If a paper is filled with intellectual combat, always *discussion, discussion*, and nothing of the virtues of christianity, I should distrust its ability to make men better.

But really, brother Oliphant, I like the temper of your sheet exceedingly. I hope to see the Editor before long. If you visit Buffalo, you will receive a most hearty welcome at my residence, 349, Washington street. This invitation I would extend to any brother from Canada who may visit this city.

Yours fraternally,

D. LEWIS.

MR. NOEL AND HIS REVILERS.

The scribe of the *Church* newspaper, in late numbers of that rampant advocate of State religion, referring to the late meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in Glasgow, at one of whose conventions Mr. Noel presided, could not restrain the swellings of his indignation against that noble champion of truth, but poured it forth in the following elegant "*platitudes*:"—

"That notorious theological *democrat*, the Honourable (can we still call him the *reverend*) Baptist Wriothlesley Noel."

For what is Mr. Noel notorious? For his eminent virtues and Christian philanthropy—for his zeal in behalf of truth—for his fearless exposure of error—for his having left the State Church, and published to the world the anti-Christian enormities of that hierarchy, and the evil of all State religion. But Mr. Noel is "a theological *democrat*." What meaning does this convey? Democracy implies the government of the people under fixed and immutable laws, in contrast with *Priestocracy*, or the government of *Priests*, under laws of their own creation, for their own special aggrandizement and interest. Which of these is most in unison with the laws and genius of Christianity, the most simple-minded reader of the New Testament can readily determine. But Mr. Noel is also termed a "*reckless and unscrupulous Schismatic*." Now this is simply nonsense. Had he

remained within "the lesser Babylon," and while living upon her delicacies, had, at the same time, been labouring to undermine her character and influence, he would have been a schismatic. But Mr. Noel came out from the polluted association, and with great propriety, and in accordance with duty and obligation, he proclaims the truth concerning the unholy and mercenary confederacy, both for the interests of religion and the good of man, and is, therefore, no schismatic; schism is one thing—separation another.

He is also styled, by our charitable cotemporary, "a recreant priest," and an "ecclesiastical apostate." Mr. Noel, no doubt, anticipated all this before his secession. Yet he would remember that better men had suffered worse things in the cause, and were yet happy, because they were right. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and say all manner of evil against you *falsely* for my sake." Mr. Noel's moral position with the curses of the daughter of Babylon pouring out upon his head, while with a light heart and pure conscience he is battling against ignorance and iniquity, is better far than were he upon the throne of a Metropolitan, with all its riches—its purple and fine linen—its gorgeous pride—its indolence—its luxury—and *crime*. Luther and Calvin we suppose, upon the same mode of reasoning, are regarded, by the same party as "recreant Priests"—Ecclesiastical apostates." "The *Church's*" motto seems to be—"Get a LIVING and keep it;"—Noel's motto is "*Buy THE TRUTH and sell it not.*" There is an essential difference here, which the editor of the *Church* appears unable to comprehend. He cannot understand how any man could give up a living in the State Church for the sake of principle. He, I presume, was never guilty of such "apostacy," and, with his confederates, appears well inclined to luxuriate upon the plunder derived from the Reserves and Rectories—the wages of unrighteousness—"till his life's end," if the democracy of the Province will only permit.

If "the *Church*" continue its insane career in denouncing and insulting Nonconformists, as it has done, from its fancied right to elevation over them, we may be constrained to bring some of the antique relics of Babylon to light, which may be serviceable in teaching the editor some of the proprieties of civil life, if not the virtue of sectarian humility. The history of Episcopal pretension to the right of being the principal pauper on the public chest of Canada, is morally a very black affair, from which we have, at other times, but partially removed the veil.—*Examiner*.

THE DISCIPLES AND THE QUESTION OF COMMUNION.

To the Editor of the *Witness of Truth*.

DEAR SIR :—Cramped as I am for time, having just returned from a tour in the western part of my circuit, and being just on the eve of departure again toward the east; I snatch a few moments ere I start to converse with you and the readers of the *Witness*. In the February Number of your periodical, which has just come to hand, I perceive a letter from Mr. Rattray, the last paragraph of which has arrested my attention—in connexion with your reply, and led me again, quite unexpectedly, to take up my pen.

It appears that Mr. R. on reading the fifth letter you addressed to me, caught the idea that you there stated *open communion* views, and that after being assured by his Baptist brother that you were as close communion as your “hard-shell” brethren, he resolved to end the doubt by making a direct inquiry on the subject. For my own share I have always understood with my “Baptist brother,” that the Disciples were as close on the subject of communion, aye, and even more so, than their close communion Baptist brethren: nor am I yet convinced to the contrary. I am somewhat surprised that Mr. Rattray should have caught the impression from the letter, in question, that you held *open communion* views: as it was quite plain to me from that same letter; that notwithstanding the cant you there indulged in with reference to the Baptists as a *body*, that you yourself would have quite as much “Roman rigidity” as the Particular Baptists with reference to the same subject; if not a little more. What other idea could I have entertained on reading such expressions as the following: “The Disciples in their weekly gatherings, in imitation of the primitive model, spread the Lord’s table, seat themselves around it, and invite all who number with the saved,—all who acknowledge the “one faith—the one Lord—and the one baptism,” to partake with them.” Now Sir,—I would ask what did you there mean by the “one baptism”? Did you not mean *believers’ immersion*? I am perfectly satisfied you did not mean *infant sprinkling*; as you in common with all Baptists do not regard that as baptism in any sense. Then again, take another phrase as being yet even more precise on the point. “If you ask for a more definite knowledge of our practice and desire to ascertain how we know who are our brethren in the Lord, the answer is also at hand. Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ—who has confessed him as the one Lord, and who has openly obeyed him in having submitted to the *baptismal death and resurrection*—every professor I say who has thus

shown" (mark it) "that he has the one faith, acknowledging the "one Lord" and yielded to the "one baptism" (the italicising is mine) is divinely and not humanly introduced into a state to receive all the privileges in the Christian Church." Every man I should suppose who knew your sentiments and those of your body on reading the above would understand that you meant in plain language, *Every immersed believer who has &c.* He could understand nothing else. Now friend Oliphant, so much is the above sentiment in accordance with our views that there is not a Baptist in the world that would not endorse it with his whole heart, other things being equal. Once more in the same letter you say, "to commune with any one who is called a brother, we ask not if he is called a Baptist, or a Disciple, or neither" (how carefully you eschew the use of the term Congregationalist, Methodist, Presbyterian &c., &c., using only the words Baptist and Disciple both of which terms imply *immersed believers*; professedly I mean :) "but we ask if he believes in Jesus, confesses him as the only Lord and Saviour, and (again mark) *if he has put on Christ after the primitive fashion.*" What "*fashion*" was that, friend Oliphant? You believe, and so do I, that *immersion upon a profession of faith* was this "*primitive fashion*" and *nothing* else. So far we are agreed, and I thought so at the time I first read the letter,—an impression which was strengthened by reading your closing remarks, one of which is as follows, "If you have supposed from anything I have said that *we hold loose views* of communion, or that our views lead to a loose practice, I will at once protest against your interpretation of the language employed." How prompt and careful you seem to be in using the above language to prevent me and your readers, from imagining that you numbered with "the zig-zag reasoners" or "unscrupulous fold keepers."

With these views of your teaching in letter five, no marvel that I stood aghast when I read your *open communion* sally contained in your answer to Mr. Rattray's query. I confess that I do not see the consistency between your faith and practice in *Oshawa*.

Dr. Comstock used say that the best way to fight prejudice was to *dodge* it. I am of opinion that you and your brethren are well versed in this method of *dodging* in striving to combat prejudice. It is quite evident to me that Mr. Rattray has not yet seen the "*one baptism*" in the same light as you do: that consequently he has not yet seen that Divine precept and Apostolic practice call for a profession of faith in Christ by baptism as a pre-requisite to communion at the Lord's table:—hence that he is at present open communion in his views, and

in proportion as he is prepared to adopt your views, in such proportion he is afraid lest you should hold rigid or illiberal views on that subject. I cannot but admire the measure of candour you evinced in your reply to said query, while I am not a little amused by the tact you have displayed at the close in piously wishing to stand aloof from the use of the terms "close" and "open." Nevertheless I understand your position much better than I should desire to occupy it. You adduce your practice in Oshawa,—and what is it? Why this. 1st. "After sitting down you are careful to explain, as occasion may require, that the table is not yours." Perfectly right. 2d. "You teach that the author has designed it for those who are redeemed &c." Purely scriptural that. 3rd. "You also teach, *that those who have proved their knowledge of the gospel, their faith, their penitence, their resolve to reform by having openly professed Christ in baptism,—maintaining a consistent character, are by the Lord invited to eat and sup with him.*" Quite Baptistical this. But, and here the climax is,—*"you further say"* 4th. "That if there be others present who are *assured they are the Lord's people*, and hence desire to participate in the Lord's feast, you will *not say no.*" How cold. "Such," you add, "is our teaching and such our practice," that is, in Oshawa, for from the following sentence it is quite clear that such is *not* the uniform practice of Disciples, as we *know* and are well assured. The above is a clever *dodge*.

Now if I were a pædobaptist, and were in Oshawa when you were sitting down at the Lord's table, and heard all the above four sayings, as I know I should, I would be quite convinced by the 3d. that though if I was determined to come forward you would "not say no," yet you considered "that I had not proved my knowledge of the gospel, my faith, my penitence, nor my resolve to reform," because (why?) I had not been baptised, that is, according to your lexicon "*immersed.*" That is going a bit a head of the "double safety valve" Baptists. Do you think I could come and sit down with you while I was well assured you viewed me in *such a light*? no, and I should blush for that pædobaptist who over the third declaration has or will sit down with you. What, under the circumstances, my esteemed friend Mr. Rattray *might do*, I know not. I would like to be informed on two or three points. You will oblige me, I know.

1st. Is your practice in Oshawa the general practice of your body, or vice versa?

2d. Would you welcome to the table of the Lord with you those:

who deny the Divinity of our Lord, and have been baptized on a profession of their faith?

3rd. In churches of your order are *meetings for prayer* attended to, or do you meet only on the Sabbath day?

Ere I close I would just say that the work goes on in the name of the Lord gloriously. Since I wrote to you, I have baptized thirty-six persons on profession of faith, and we are to organize a Second Baptist Church in this Township this week, which will number seventy strong. I must not omit to say that I have not yet received any injunctions from those "high in authority."

Hoping you will excuse my trespassing thus on your space,
I remain, ever yours, affectionately.

THOS. L. DAVIDSON.

Markham, March 12th., 1850.

OUR REPLY.

To Thos. L. Davidson:

MY DEAR SIR:—Happily your leisure and love of peace permitted you to pen the preceding strictures upon a letter addressed to a gentleman who eschews creeds, while not an extra moment could be found to answer six letters addressed to yourself. This, if I mistake not, will be considered a satisfactory confirmation of what was hinted in my last—that you failed to find in these letters subject matter of attack, and hence, under the circumstances, prudently declined making a trial of your valour. But I am happy to find that you are yet neither dead nor speechless. You have my sympathies in your present effort to point out error in what appeared in a former number of this work. If, too, in the spirit of prayer, religious candour, zeal for the oracles, and a desire for victory "not after the flesh but after the spirit," you put on the "armour of God" in this instance, without doubt you will experience that it is more edifying to reason with those who differ with you than to turn upon your heel and walk off in silence, or perhaps vow hard things and utter hard words.

Before coming to a direct response to your exposure of what you are pleased to regard as inconsistency, it may not be inexpedient to notice several items of minor moment scattered with a liberal hand through your communication.

You seem to be, for a religious teacher, more than usually familiar with the word "dodge," having employed this term some three or four times in as many pages. Whether the word itself and the thing

it imports were forcibly stamped upon your mind when you made such a vigorous escape from my six letters, it would perhaps be presumptuous to say; but really there is some recent reason for your frequent use of a word so little used among those who speak to one another religiously. Of this no notice would be taken, had you not made it apply to the disciples generally—a people, who, with all their faults, are seldom found “dodging,” unless indeed you have some peculiar interpretation for the term, as there is some ground to suppose, from the fact that while you “cannot but admire my candour,” you still discover in this candour a “clever dodge.” How you can associate these together in animadverting upon the same effort, is, to me, not readily solved, unless you go beyond the dictionary-makers. Candour and dodging have about the same relation to each other as openness and cunning; or at least such was the case when “friend Oliphant” went to school. Let me say here, that an apostle had certain opposers who charged him with having caught the members of a certain church with guile; and if his noble and honourable course was not sufficient to keep some from misrepresenting him, I cannot hope to pursue a course invariably securing me against misrepresentation.

So far as known to me, you take for granted that the gentleman to whom I wrote the letter that you criticise, has not been baptized, or that he is in any degree disposed to adopt the views of any particular body of professors. I would rather opine, in the spirit of magnanimity, that the gentleman has, by a close inspection of his Bible, seen the error of human systems, dogmas, and ecclesiastic convocations, and has therefore resolved to separate himself and his influence from them, independently of any views or any people with which he has been or may be acquainted. And as it regards baptism, you are aware that a goodly number of those who have submitted to it, are free to teach that it is a “non-essential” as a term of communion, and as freely unite with those who have not been baptized as with those who have attended to this ordinance; in other words, they are what has been called open communionists.

It is both curious and irreconcilable to hear you affirm that you “have always understood” and “not yet convinced to the contrary,” that we are “more close on the subject of communion than the close communion Baptists.” After having yourself given some species of reproof to elder Bettes for sitting down with us, and after declaring your conviction that I spoke the truth as it relates to our practice here in what you call my “open communion sally,” to hear you say that

the disciples are more close than the regular or particular Baptists who fence themselves round with gates and bars unapproachable except to the elect who have subscribed to the articles of the creed they have made, is, to say the least, a mystery that requires an interpreter.

These lesser points touched, I am now prepared to consider, 1st, The position we take on the subject of communion, in accordance with the Bible, and as compared with the Baptists; and 2nd, The consistency of my letter of February as compared with former statements. Now, friend Davidson, put on your clearest spectacles, and perfume yourself with a slight sprinkling of the sweet odor of religious candour if there be any of this in Markham, and hence rigidly scrutinize the following paragraphs.

As the disciples in Judea in the year of our Lord 33, were neither open nor close communion, so the disciples in Canada in the year of grace 1850 are neither open nor close communion. We are opposed to both, as distinctly and unequivocally avowed in one of said letters addressed to Mr. Davidson. The Spirit's armour is employed by us against the exclusiveness of the one and the lawless charity of the other. They are disclaimed, indeed, not because we have a bundle of prejudice against them, nor because we are desirous of building up a party between them, but in deed and in truth because they are unsanctioned and unauthorized by apostolic precept or example. Our position, then, takes in neither extreme, as all extremes have a human and not a divine origin. By opening up and rightly dividing the word of truth, evidently exhibiting the position the Lord's table occupies, and that the disciples of Jesus are to feast at this table, and that disciples are those who gladly receive the Lord's doctrine and obey it from the heart, we expect to successfully resist the spirit of error on the right side and on the left; and hence the regular and the irregular Baptists, the particular and the general Baptists, all the Baptists and the pædo Baptists who cling to earthly systems instead of giving unprejudiced ear to the heavenly oracles, must feel more or less opposed to us in pursuing a course so primitively independent.

The Book, then, and the author of the Book, the letter of the Book and the spirit of the Book, we take for our guidance at the communion table. And how with the Baptists? Facts will answer; and certain it is I have no desire to misrepresent them. Up to the year of grace 1847 the Baptists in Canada were a united Body, when, as you are fully aware, a number of churches became more "particular" on the subject of communion, and made new screws to their creed to fasten or guard themselves from those of their brethren who taught and ad-

mitted the unbaptized to sit with them at the table of communion. Then, on the other hand, the Baptists thus sternly excluded, were almost if not altogether as much at fault, for allowing their charitable feelings instead of the divine laws to govern in the church, since they not only permitted the unbaptized to sit with them when they communed, but received them into the church as members, and taught this as an article of faith. I will say here, in justification of many a noble minded and honorable Baptist, that these party developments were not so much the fruits of the majority of the members on one side or the other, but the work of a few little great spirits "clothed in a little brief authority" that ecclesiastical institutions gave them.

Now, so far from being so close as the one division of Baptists, we heartily invite, in the Lord's own name, all who have put on Christ to commune with us; and so far from being so open as the other division of Baptists, we hold that Christ's table is not scripturally exhibited when members are made independently of the laws of the oracles for the purpose of seating them to take part in this divine institution.

Such, then, on the subject of communion, is our real position to the Bible and to the Baptists.

But you give me credit for a share of inconsistency, and judge that I have contradicted myself, in my letter upon communion in the February Number. Here then I am, in my own proper person, to confess my guilt on conviction, or show that your witness is incomplete and illusory. Now, although you say that you "understand my position much better than you would desire to occupy it," I am apprehensive that had you understood it, ten chances to one if you would have appeared before me with sword, shield, and helmet. The difference between the views and practice I approve and the views and practice of the open communionist consists in these cardinal points, 1st. I never, like him, open new doors for entrance into the kingdom of Jesus, or make subjects of the kingdom other than by Christ's authority; and 2nd, I never teach that any man has a divine right to the Lord's table who has not complied with Jesus' command "Be baptized." The distinction between *teaching* and *permitting*—between *inviting* and *allowing*, is a distinction, I apprehend, that you cannot religiously comprehend; for the creed to which you have been accustomed, and to which you are now willingly subject, binds up all matters of this description so stringently that you have no opportunity of perceiving or learning this liberty.

My friends the Baptists build; a walk around the communion table,

and place a keeper at the door of entrance. Agreeably to instructions, before the keeper admits an applicant, or one who desires to approach the table, he first ascertains how tall he stands, then measures his breadth, and finally puts him upon a pair of scales; and if he happens to suit the creed in his measurement and weight, the door is open for him; but if he prove not to be a "particular" Baptist, although he may be a subject of the one baptism, in honor of the one Lord, by faith, he is accounted as an alien, and thrust out from the feast. The disciples, on the other hand, teach that all who have put on Christ have a right to the privileges of Christ's house, and we invite all such to sit with us; and in the meantime, if others, whose love for the Lord so far overbalances their love of party as to desire to partake with us, we allow or permit them, with the full understanding that they take upon themselves the responsibility.

No people with which I am acquainted, so distinctly and unitedly as the disciples, teach that Jesus has only one church, with one divine entrance, having one order of subjects, one code of duties, and one class of rights. But the difference between what is faith and what is opinion, what is law and what is expediency, we keep well marked; and hence, in reference to your first query, as admitted in my letter of February, there is not a uniformity of expediency in allowing the liberty to the Lord's table that some professors are desirous of taking, while there is the happiest uniformity in our teaching and principles. But in those exceptions where the rigidity is discoverable, some previous bias produced and nurtured in some unfriendly and uncongenial school, is generally entitled to the praise, if there be praise.

In reply to your query whether we would welcome to the table of the spiritual feast those who deny Christ's Divinity, permit me to say that we would as soon welcome an Egyptian worshipper of the crocodile, or a Roman who pays homage to a Deified saint. He who denies the Divinity of Jesus, denies Jesus himself,—knows not the one faith, the one Lord, nor the one baptism. Christian baptism, with us, is a burial with Christ; and there is no burial with Christ unless there be an acknowledgement of him as the "Son of God" or "God with us;" neither is there faith in him without an apprehension of his power to "save to the uttermost;" hence he who denies the Divinity of the Redeemer, has not the one faith, knows not the one Lord, nor is a subject of the one baptism.

Concerning your question on the subject of prayer meetings, I feel somewhat inclined to desire you had been in Oshawa during the past

winter. Had you attended some of our Thursday evening meetings for reading the oracles, exhortation, and prayer, the most of which were as animating and spiritually living as I ever witnessed, you would not now so sceptically ask if we believe in prayer meetings. These questions that you propound, my friend, only show the depth of the deep rooted prejudice that exists in your mind in reference to all that goes by the name of disciple. You are jealous of us at every step. Because we take the weapons of the holy Spirit, and boldly protest against praying sinners into the Christian church, you are disposed to hint that we are averse to assembling ourselves together for prayer. Could we strike from our banner the word Bible, and place in its stead 'Baptists and the Baptist Creed', your telescope would not, I opine, make such distorted figures when pointed toward us. Still, I will continue to hope, perhaps against hope, that you and your brethren may become less prejudiced.

It gives me a degree of pleasure to hear of your success in Markham. Go on, friend Davidson, to perfection. Teach these converts the way of the Lord, apart from all systems of men. Point them to calvary and to the crown of victory. Recommend to them the Spirit of God instead of the spirit of man. Bind them not with the straitened confessions of pious councils, but with the "good confession" of the gospel of our Lord.

That you may thus "save thyself and those who hear thee," is the desire of

Yours respectfully,

D. OLIPHANT.

March, 23d. 1850.

THE COVETOUS.

The man who is under the dominion of the love of money, "shall not inherit the kingdom of God." In the present life he has a foretaste of the fruits of his sin. He is restless, anxious, dissatisfied; at one time harrassed by uncertainty as to the probable result of his projects; at another, soured by the failure of them; at another, disappointed in the midst of success, by discerning, too late, that the same exertions employed in some other line of advantage would have been more productive. But suppose him to have been, through life, as free from the effects of these sources of vexation as the most favourable picture could represent him, "he shall not inherit the kingdom of God." He may not have been a miser, but he was a lover of money. He may not have been an extortioner, but he was a lover of money. He may not have been fraudulent, but he was a lover of money. "He shall not inherit the kingdom of God." He

has had his day and his object. He has sought, and he may have accumulated earthly possessions. By their instrumentality he may have gratified many other appetites and desires. But he did not seek first the kingdom of God, therefore he shall not obtain it. He "loved the world," therefore he shall perish with the world. He has wilfully bartered his soul for money. In vain does he now detest the idol which he worshipped. The gate of salvation is closed against him. He inherits the bitterness of unavailing remorse, the horrors of eternal death.—*T. Gisborne.*

SPECIAL NEWS.

EVANGELISTS TOUR—REPORT NO. II.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT :—At the close of our last correspondence with you, it was stated that we intended to visit North East Hope. We did so, and found our good brother W. Milne alive and zealous. There is a small church in the rear of this Township where this brother is located. In the front where the brethren Campbells reside, there is no church. We delivered some seven or eight discourses in these places.

We next visited the Township of Norwich, and addressed three congregations. They were large and attentive. While here, our efforts were particularly directed to awaken the brethren; exhorting them to attend to the ordinances appointed by the Head of the church, and to build each other up in the faith. Leaving this place we came to Windham, and here there were a few of the few brethren meeting as a church. In this place as in Norwich we endeavored to arouse the brethren to a sense of their duty and privileges; to bring them together in order to a brotherly cordiality. We are persuaded that some good in this respect was accomplished. Each evening while there we "held forth" to large, attentive audiences. While in Windham, it was our happiness to see our brother Bently (formerly of Markham) at one of the public meetings. He requested us to pay a visit to the brethren in his locality (Malibide and South Dorchester) and finally he affectionately compelled us to go. Here we found the right hearted,—the brethren were alive and at their posts. We could not refrain from "thanking God and taking courage." We laboured around this locality for one week, and had large congregations. Our esteemed and zealous brother Sheppard who resides here will send you a more detailed account of our labours in this section of country.

We returned through the Townships previously mentioned, and held one meeting in passing. At Mount Pleasant we left for home, to leave our winter conveyance and take our saddles. We have again set out and are near Bronte at the residence of brother W. Bradt. We leave here by the end of the week for Jordan, the Lake shore, Wainfleet, Rainham, Mount Pleasant, Windham, Hamilton, Dundas, and the Pine Woods on the Brock Road.

Before closing our remarks we are anxious to state a few reflections

that have passed through our minds while travelling. It is impossible for evangelists to accomplish anything good in a community where those that profess the truth are living without Christian intercourse and devotion—little acquainted with what the scriptures teach in reference to Christian character. How much, then, should the brethren be stirred up to a sense of their responsibility. Professors are to “hold forth the word of life” by their conduct. By a holy walk and conversation they are to recommend the truth unto the consciences of all men. Let us, then, beloved brethren, ponder upon the great purpose of the gospel. The disciple of Christ has given unto him “the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” Let us then be imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love, redeeming the time.

Another reflection is—from an over anxiety to gain converts, persons are often brought into the church of an unworthy description. The feelings are appealed to before the judgment is enlightened. They are converted to the theory of conversion, and brought out to obey through excitement. This is decidedly injurious to the cause; for it often happens that when the scriptures are opened to teach the “all things” commanded, these characters who were conceived in, and born by, excitement, languish and die away. They are a trouble to themselves and all connected. If we would then desire to see the church pure and living, the cause prosperous and flourishing, we must enlighten the judgment by holding forth the truth, and wait with patience the result of our labours.

May the heavenly Father bestow wisdom on us that we may all be qualified for the various duties devolving upon us.

Yours in the good cause,

J. KILGOUR

A. ANDERSON.

Bronte, 28th Feb., 1850.

Our brethren thus labouring are engaged in no easy task. Too long, far too long, have we been without “able workmen” to travel from place to place through the province to watch over, build up, counsel, strengthen, admonish, and establish infant churches scattered over a territory of hundreds of miles. A garden left to be dressed for weeks or months after the time, or an orchard left to be pruned and cultivated several years after date, imposes double or treble labour upon the gardener or husbandman. So with “God’s husbandry” in Canada. But although long neglected, we still cherish the hope, that, by holy care and patient zeal, by much pious courage and devout energy on the part of labourers, the “fruits of the Spirit” will have a large growth even in those sections where at present there is scarcely anything green or living. The Lord grant it! And will the brethren everywhere, who have the cause at heart, encourage these servants now em-

ployed in this work by earnest and scriptural prayer for their success, by holy sympathy for them in all their trials and efforts, and by all other means that God has sanctified for sustaining and blessing them in their present work of love ?

While, however, we openly publish to the world these unsavoury proofs that some of our churches, small and feeble, in certain localities, are sadly beneath the elevated standard held up to us in the living oracles, it is only justice and not human glorying to say, that we enjoy the example, the influence, the spiritual power of churches in this same Canada that will compare favourably with any other churches on the American continent. This is saying more than a little, but it is not saying more than the truth; and justice, gratitude, a proper regard for the divine cause, an impartial desire for the welfare of saint and sinner, who read this periodical, equally call for the expression of this truth in this connexion. True, "he that glories, let him glory in the Lord." We speak, therefore, of what the Lord has done in us, for us, and by us—and not what we have done of or for ourselves. Would, however, that it were more in accordance with religious fashion for those who make a profession to "*adorn the doctrine of God in all things,*" and for those called by the Lord's name to prove themselves a "*peculiar people*" by being and continuing "*zealous of good works.*" "*Let he that stands, take heed lest he fall,*" is counsel to us all as wise as it is inspired.

D. O.

Greenc, Harrison Co., O., March 8th, 1850.

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—I am not disposed to ask your attention too frequently, but I imagine you would not be unwilling to read another well-meant epistle. Your *Witness* is always welcome. Among the first things after its reception, I glance over the news department, anxious to learn the progress of the cause, and who are engaged in the work of saving men; standing on the border of death, like Aaron with his burning incense, to stay the progress of the plague. Your acquaintance in North Eastern Ohio will make it pleasing for you to learn that the word of reconciliation has found its way to the hearts of very many lost sinners, and brought them to the love of Christ. For several years we have not enjoyed such a general interest among the churches. At least four or five hundred souls are now rejoicing in the hope of the gospel, who, six months ago, were dead in sin. The work commenced with our annual meetings in the beginning of Fall; many of the churches have enjoyed seasons of great refreshing. In Trumbull County, Brookfield, Hartford, Bloomfield, Warren, Niles, Newton Falls, and others also, have received many additions, and in other parts of the Reserve, Garrettsville, Hiram, Shalersville, Aurora, Rus-

sell, Bedford, Euclid, Chardon, Stow, and also many others. Wayne county has partaken of the joyful work. In Wooster and some neighbouring churches, scores have turned to the Lord.

In all of these places, the method of procedure has been substantially the same. Some brother, with sufficient aid has gone to a place, taken his stand in the midst of the population, and commenced both publicly and privately, teaching the things pertaining to the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. In every case success has followed earnest, persevering continuance. The holy, inspiring, regenerating influence of the truth of the gospel, instructs the understanding, touches and softens the heart, and captivates the affections for Jesus Christ. The word of the Lord is a "hammer and a fire;" and it melts or breaks all that come within its influence. There is power in truth: there is divine power in divine truth. There is saving power in the gospel, because the saving truth is there. It is the power of God to salvation to every one; that believeth it. It has light for the head, and love for the heart. It teaches us and wins our confidence and affections. It tells us joyful tidings, which we love to hear; and yielding to the transporting intelligence, we become the joyful converts and followers of the Captain of Salvation. In all the above places, the people after hearing the proclamation of the gospel, and declaring their faith in it, were conducted to a place of much water, and buried with the Lord in baptism, and with strong faith in their hearts in the almighty energy which raised up Christ from the dead, arose with him to walk in newness of life.

The labourers in this great and good work, I need not here record. Their names I doubt not are in the Book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. May the Lord make them a blessing yet to thousands on thousands.

My heart is yet full of good intentions, but I must here restrain my pen. I long to see you and again commune with you on the things of the Kingdom. Are we not strangers and pilgrims here, travelling to a better land? That land is yet before us. Abraham saw it, and all his faithful sons died in the hope it.

In the cherished hope of meeting all our Father's children at our Father's throne,

Your truly sincere

A. S. HAYDEN.

Brother Hayden—the readers of the *Witness* will thank you should you frequently "imagine" so correctly as you have in this instance. The moments employed in conveying your thoughts to this office, to be distributed among hundreds, and then among thousands, will not, I trust, on your part, be regretted. Grace and peace be thine!

D. O.

Williamsville, N. Y., Feb., 1850.

About forty persons were added to the churches here this fall and
and winter.

A. P. J.

GOOD NEWS FROM ST. VINCENT.—Brother Layton recently writes that four have been added to the congregation at St. Vincent.

Two have lately been received by baptism into the church at Bowmanville. D. O.

WHENCE DO GREAT REFORMERS SPRING.

In societies, the order of reformations will be found to be the same; from the native force and inspired insight of some individual mind, that kindles, first itself, and then, by its irresistible intensity, a wider and wider sphere of souls—spirit being born of spirit, life of life, thought of thought. A higher civilization, by which I understand neither superior clothes, nor better houses, nor richer wines, nor even more destructive gunpowder; but a nobler system of ideas and aspirations, possessing a community, must commence, where alone ideas and aspirations can have a beginning, in somebody's mind. Hence, of all the more remarkable social revolutions, the seminal principles, the primitive type, may be traced to some one man, whose spiritual greatness had force enough to convert generations, and constitute an era in the world's life, who preached with power some mighty repentance, or transition of sentiment within the hearts of men, and thus rendered more near at hand that "kingdom of heaven" for which all men sigh and good men toil. Private "repentance," individual moral energy, deep personal faith in some great conception of duty or religion, are the prerequisites and causes of social amelioration.—*Rev. J. Marlineau.*

A PRACTICAL SARCASTIC —There is an anecdote told of the late Rev. Robert Hall. When discussing one day the necessity of church reform with a clergyman who, after being educated by the Dissenters, obtained a conviction of the purity of the Established church, and a lucrative living within her pale, at the same time, Mr. Hall illustrated this kind of logical process in a way unsurpassed in the history of sarcasm. This gentleman's constant refuge, when hard driven by the arguments of Mr. Hall, was, "I can't see it," "I don't see it," "I can't see that at all." At last, Mr. Hall took a letter from his pocket and wrote on the back of it with his pencil, in small letters, the word "God." "Do you see that?" "Yes." He then covered it with a piece of Gold. "Do you see it now?" "No." 'I must wish you good morning, sir,' said Hall; and left him to his meditations.

THE JEWS AND THE TEMPLE.—Quite a movement is taking place among the Jews in relation to the re-building of the Temple at Jerusalem. The Sultan has granted permission to God's ancient people to "build the Temple of the Lord;" and in America, as well as in different parts of Europe and elsewhere, active measures are being adopted to secure the necessary means for the accomplishment of this purpose. In New York quite a spirit of enthusiasm is being got up among the Jews in reference to this subject. The spirit is increasing and extending.

POWER OF THE PRESS—An accomplished writer says: "The power of the newspaper is infinite. It is like the calorific nature; it over-spreads the whole face of society; it insinuates itself into the darkest and coldest, and penetrates the most obtuse regions. The ever recurring 'article' is like the water-drop, which will, oft repeated, pierce the hardest rock. To the religious Press, the obligations of the friends of every good cause are unspeakable."

NEGLECTED SPOTS.—An agent has recently traversed, on foot, fifteen islands on the coast of Maine, some of them having only three families on them, and others two or three hundred. Of five hundred and eighty-two families, sixty-eight were utterly destitute of the Scriptures, and others have only a part of the sacred volume. The inhabitants of these islands are very poor.—*American paper.*

COMPLAINTS are sometimes heard because of the lateness of the appearance of the *Witness*. Our readers will bear with us at present, as we exert ourselves to issue every number as early in the month as practicable. We expect to be nearer the usual regular time by the lapse of a few months. A great press of business at our office has occasioned the delay.

D. O.

THE GUARDIAN and *Pioneer* are at war on the subject of baptism. We shall endeavour to find room for an extract from the *Guardian* in a future number, and should take pleasure in giving both sides if the other paper came to us.

D. O.