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THE
CHRISTIAN BANNER.

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

VOL. VI.

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NO. 2.

From the Christian Baptist.

THE BOOK AND SPIRIT OF GOD.

We are apt, in interpreting the holy scriptures, to suppose a hundred things said of "sinners," of "natural men," of "children of wrath," of "the dead," of "those without strength," were spoken of persons who were circumstanced as the inhabitants of the British Isles, or the citizens of the United States; never taking thought that there are essential differences between those without, and those under, the revelation of God. This single fact, clearly apprehended, is like applying the pruning hook to the vine: it lops off a great many quotations and applications of scripture which are thought to bear upon the sons and daughters, the brothers and sisters of christians, as if they were born in tribes, and nations where the name of Jesus has not been heard.

I have long felt an unconquerable repugnance to that system of religion which destroys the use of the holy scriptures to unconverted or unregenerate men. The doctrine of physical and irresistible energies of God's Spirit upon unbelieving men, as absolutely and indispensably prerequisite to their deriving any religious benefit from all that is written on the sacred pages: from all that is spoken by christian tongues, from all prayer and supplication addressed to the Father of all; from all and every moral and religious means, is, in my view, at war with Moses and the prophets; with the Lord Jesus and the apostles; with the whole Bible; with all rational analogies; with all the faculties yet belonging to the human race; with all and every thing, natural, moral, and religious, except the sheer, inoperative dogma of some indoctrinated fatalist. I do therefore, with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength, oppose every proposition, position, and sentiment, which either grows out of, is connected with, or looks towards, the establishment of such a cold, lifeless, and inoperative system. believing it to be entirely unauthorized by the Holy Spirit, and that it is the most genuine wresting of the scriptures to the destruction of thousands, who are now, as they have been for centuries, standing all the day idle; some running into all manner of excess: and others looking with aching hearts for some irresistible wind, afflatus, or spirit, to carry them, not literally, but figuratively,

as Elijah was taken, in a whirlwind to heaven.

I see some systems tinctured with this principle, which disavow it, and I have felt a good measure of it in all these theories about the Holy Spirit's operations upon unconverted men.

I have contended that the Spirit of God has done something which renders unbelief and unregeneracy a sin in all men who have access to the Bible; independent of any thing to be done; and I have taught that it will do something for those, who, from what it has done, are immersed into the faith of the gospel.

What it has done, has given strength to the weak, life to the dead, and reclaimed enemies to God—what it will do, is to beget a holy spirit and temper, to fill with peace and joy, and righteousness, those who believe. I will not therefore, with the speculative philosopher, make what the spirit of God has already done of none effect, to make way for something yet to be done. Nor will I ascribe every thing to what the spirit has done, in the inditing and confirming the testimony to the exclusion of any influence upon the minds who, through faith, have been immersed for the remission of sins and this heavenly gift. Thus the scriptures encourage all to activities. The whole world with whom this Spirit of God strives in the written word now as it once did in the mouths of the prophets and apostles, have no excuse for their infidelity or unregeneracy—and those who have put on the Lord Jesus are invited to abound in all the joys, consolations, and purifying influences of this Holy Spirit. Such is the operative system of supernatural truth—the scope of the practical principles of the Bible.

Those who have contended for physical and irresistible influences, have found themselves at variance with the manifest scope and bearing of a large portion of the apostolic addresses to their auditors.—They, to prevent or to obviate the charge of making the word of God of none effect by their traditions, have invented a curious doctrine of “common operations,” contradistinguished from the special; and, like the pious Mr. Baxter, have attempted to reconcile the jarring systems by making it possible for all gospel hearers to be saved and certain for some—possible for all who did not resist the common operations; and certain for all upon whom the irresistible or special operations were employed. This is a lame expedient. Their doctrine of common operations is as unscriptural, as their special operation is subversive of all praise or blame, of all virtue and vice, of all excellency in faith, or criminality in unbelief. The Bible doctrine requires not the aid of either system.

Let no man say that in explicitly opposing both systems, we argue that men are converted without the Holy Spirit. By no means. The Spirit of God works upon the human mind as well as dwells in it. It works by the record which God has given of his Son, as the spirit works by the body of a man—clothed with this record, it enlightens, convinces, and converts men. It is never once said to work in any other way upon the minds of men since it consummated the record. Even in convincing the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, in the age of miracles, it did this in words concerning Jesus. When

men hearken to the word, they hear the Spirit of God; when they will not hearken, they resist the Spirit of God. It makes every man who hears the word able to believe, by adapting its testimony to his capacity, so that his unbelief is wholly his own sin, owing to aversion, and not to incapacity.

Men are not made christians as Balaam's ass was made to speak, or the whale to vomit Jonah upon dry ground. Yet still they are enabled to believe by the Holy Spirit, and without its aid no man ever could have believed in Jesus, as God's own Son. In one sentence all men who hear the Spirit of God, (and every man born in these United States may hear this life giving Spirit,) have all natural inability removed. Salvation, or the heavenly inheritance, "is of faith, that it might be by grace or favor," says an apostle.

That the Spirit of the living God has made it so to every man, and so works upon all men who read or hear the record which God has given of his Son as to remove all natural incapacity out of the way, is just what makes the record of Jesus glad tidings of great joy to all people. And nothing less than the views above given make the gospel glad tidings of great joy to every body. There is not a phrase, word, or syllable in the New Testament that is in the least irreconcilable with this simple view of the Gospel. Where the Spirit of God is not heard, men are without strength, and cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. Where it is heard, every person is empowered to believe.

And in the mean time I will only add, that while many agree with this view of the Gospel on one side, they take a view of it on another side incompatible with the nature of grace or favor altogether, by representing the whole matter as dependent upon some *will* subduing operation as physical as the creation of light—without which it is all a dead letter.

PRAYER.

No. II.

Having urged the duty of prayer, we would not lose sight of its spirit or the manner in which it should be offered. He who prays lest his conscience should upbraid him, is near akin to him who kneels down and "says his prayers" while his heart and mind are on something as far removed from God as the "man of sin" is from the Apostle Peter. "He who comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who dilligently seek him." Nor is love to God and man less essential than faith, if we would be blessed in our approaches to the great author of our being: When we call on the name of the Lord because we love him, then is the exercise joyful, peaceful and blessed. Hence the necessity of a dilligent study of the divine record. He who "looketh into the perfect law of liberty" with the intenseness of a dilligent student, sees so much of the wisdom and might and love of Jehovah as concentrated and made mani-

fest in the Lord Jesus Christ, that his soul is filled with admiration and love. He exclaims, "Lord what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou hast visited him." "What am I, or my father's house, that thou deignest to make us kings and priests to dwell with thee forever!" "Is it possible that Jesus loves me and has given himself for me!" "Blessed be his holy name—may I never cease to love, praise, and adore him!" Thus he cultivates a suitable state of mind to come into his presence.

To be able to hold converse with kings and emperors; to thank them for favors and to implore their continuance;—we are greatly assisted and encouraged by listening for some time to what they have to communicate. If we find them well disposed towards us—if they seem kind and affable, we are greatly relieved from our embarrassments, and much encouraged to address them freely; we fear not to pour out before them our whole heart. Such is the state of mind possessed by the disciple of Jesus who diligently ponders the Living Oracles—not as a "dead letter," but as God's message of love and mercy to lost and ruined man. He believes that God loves him. He exclaims, "We love him because he has first loved us;" and he approaches him with courage and confidence. The more he is with the Lord in secret, the more delight he takes in doing the will of God from the heart. No duties are irksome to the servant who delights in the will of his master. "Lord it is my meat and my drink to do thy will."

In this state of mind the true hearted disciple of Jesus, whether in the social circle or great congregation, will not order his words or his tones to please his auditors. He will speak as in the presence of God. How much, alas! men pray to their hearers! Certain expressions and passages of scripture are warped in, because men of peculiar opinions are present; and there are men sufficiently ingenious to establish or refute any doctrine while ostensibly speaking to Jehovah! Will a man mock God? Yet this is mocking him! We would not dare thus to trifle in the presence of our rulers.

Many must get on just such a tone and their voice at a certain key, or they do not enjoy prayer! They would be ashamed to speak to one of their neighbors in such a style. Indeed, if some of our vociferous "able men" in prayer—who slap their hands together and rock to and fro like a ship at sea—were to speak thus to one of their neighbors, they would be avoided as mad-men; and yet with the masses this is the height of devotion. Others there are who mutter or speak so low that they are barbarians to all who would be otherwise edified.

I have known men who would abruptly break off from an animated discussion of some common-place topic, and the next moment speak to the Lord, and the succeeding moment renew the conversation!—Such persons have singular conceptions of the might and majesty of Jehovah. I have heard some christians pray in a careless, familiar tone—addressing Jehovah without the interjection O! or any other prefix. My spirit has been relieved when they said amen.

I now call to mind two excellent brethren—so far as human eye could discern, equally devout—but exact contrasts in the manner in which they spoke to the Lord. When one pronounced the final amen, we arose slowly from our knees. Indeed, we wished longer to remain in that position. It was otherwise when the other concluded. After the prayer of the latter, we hung our heads for several minutes! The sound of a water fall had suddenly stopped. We were in amazement.

As we would contrast proprieties and improprieties, a brief sketch of these brethren may be the best way of giving to the reader our ideas of the true style of addressing the Great Jehovah,—whose name a Jew never dared to utter! The scribe cleaned his pen and then dipped it anew into the ink before he even presumed to write it!

But to the sketch: Brother E. was a zealous, good man. When he said “let us pray,” every one heard him; but the next moment he was speaking to the Lord! His language was common-place, but strong, often extravagant. “Look down, O Lord, from thy topless throne and bless us, &c.” is an expression that may convey some faint idea to the reader of the peculiar expressions to which allusion has been made. After praying a few minutes you would suppose that he was about to conclude; and then he would launch out again into the deep, and you would doubt what the end would be! You would feel that the prayer was very long, and suddenly you would be let down from an intense height, and you would open your eyes in amazement that he alone seemed affected by the prayer. The silence for sometime was oppressive. You were not relieved till some other exercise was called for; it was exceedingly difficult to realize that you were engaged in worship. Nothing but the conviction that he was a sincerely good man could prevent your thinking of the priests of Baal who cried aloud and cut themselves with knives and lancets!

Brother D. was a large patriarchal looking disciple—with venerable and commanding aspect. When he said “let us pray,” he arose calmly and carefully—he bowed down slowly and reverently. Every sound was hushed—all rustling ceased. So still was the house that every one seemed to breathe as softly as possible. After the stillness

of a few moments, his first words, clear and distinct, fell upon the ear, and found a response in every devotional heart. Having acknowledged the presence, greatness, wisdom, goodness and mercy of the Lord, he brought us all before the Lord. Every one felt that he was remembered before the throne of grace. No words or phrases were used for effect, but just the language necessary to bring us all into the presence of the Lord. The tone was natural. He plead for us with the confidence of a believer in God, as the fountain of life, light, and immortality; yet as one wholly dependent upon Heaven's mercy for all blessings for time and eternity. We felt that we were in the presence of God. As he drew near to the end of his petition, his voice gradually fell but such was the stillness that reigned, every word was audible; and when he ceased every one responded amen. No one hastily arose from his knees, or seemed anxious to assume his seat; all were calm but deeply affected. The language of every eye and countenance seemed to be—

“ My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
Till called to rise and soar away
To everlasting bliss.”

O, that all who profess to be the disciples of Jesus would take greater delight in dwelling in his presence. Paul prayed that Christ might dwell in our hearts by faith, that we being rooted and grounded in love, might prove with all saints the height and depth of the love of Christ, and thus be filled with all the fullness of God.

The secret of power and usefulness in prayer is living before God according to his word; walking with God as did Enoch. To cultivate this state of mind and heart, we must like David retire regularly and at stated periods to our closets and call upon our God. Though cares as burthensome as his press upon us—though reputation and even life itself be at stake, we must keep Christ and eternal life uppermost in our souls, and serve him with an undivided affection; and then we shall have power over men for good, whether we speak to them or to God.

W. W. E.

TRUTH—ERROR.—Truth courts investigation, but error shrinks from scrutiny. Truth fears no evil from the most ridged examination, but error always fears the consequences. Truth is immutable and will stand criticism. Truth, like its author, is eternal, and will exist amidst the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds, while error will be swept away with the refuge of lies. The more you examine truth, like gold, the brighter it shines. Truth is not tarnished by inspection, but discovers more splendor. Any system which shrinks from scrutiny, discovers corruption in its premises, and is unworthy the attention of an intelligent mind.

POSITION AND PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLES.

No. II.

Our doctrine, we have said to the reader, begins with the sublime theme that Jesus is Lord of all—all in heaven and earth—and that he is Immanuel. The Saviour of man is no more a created being than the Eternal God. By him, as well as for Him, were all things made; and the highest principalities and the loftiest powers yield to him as the rightful sovereign wearing the sceptre of the universe.

From the character of Jesus we pass in natural order to speak of his special messengers called Apostles. These we regard as his ambassadors—his only ambassadors—his ambassadors for all time, until the church shall cease to be the institution required for man's redemption. This to many is a new thought—a thought that seems at first view to be incorrect. Every ordained man, called orthodox, is counted by the religious world an ambassador of Christ. It is not possible that this can be true, for at least three reasons: first, not one minister, clergyman, or bishop now living has come out from the immediate presence of King Jesus; secondly, not one of them can prove his ambassadorship when called upon for the evidence; and in the third place, those who are in these last days ambassadors do not agree in their teaching and authority. Now every ambassador constituted by Christ was sent by him in power, and every man thus sent by the Great King could demonstrate that he was divinely commissioned, and they all spoke the same thing. Paul therefore could speak of the "signs of an apostle"—the proofs of an ambassador.

But neither the church nor the world needs ambassadors, other than those whom Jesus called and sent when his kingdom began.—He made them perfect, and they, in fulfilment of the duties assigned them, left no work for other ambassadors. They communicated "all truth"—they exercised under their Master "all power"—they were made the repositories of this truth and this power for "all the world" and for all time. "I am with you alway, even to the end of time," said the great King when he gave the world for their parish. The apostles are therefore still the ambassadors of Jesus, and they require no help to fulfil their mission in that character.

Let no one however think or say that the Disciples reject the idea of a Christian Ministry. Christ will need for his service many living witnesses and workmen to plead for him and to re-publish the word of the apostles so long as sin and sinners are in the world. The gospel cause needs ministers of various capacities and orders—evangelists, overseers, deacons, teachers, exhorters, messengers and helpers.

Both for itself and the community, the church of God must have a full quorum of officers. None of them, however, by the apostolic creed, can be called clergymen, priests, arch-bishops, or popes. What we insist on, is, that we appoint men to duties authorized by Heaven, and that we call each one so appointed by the name that Heaven designates. Reader, are not those correct principles? Please examine them, and decide whether they are right or wrong by the testimony of God.

But the apostles come before us in a new aspect—as preachers of the Gospel. When we ask, What was the gospel they preached? the Disciple cannot answer the question in all respects as do others.—Mark, friendly reader, the course pursued by the primitive heralds of the cross whom we may call apostle-preachers. These chosen preachers (truly both *called* and *sent*) were not sermonizers, orators, reasoners, declaimers, or sectarianizers. They visited from house to house, from city to city, and from country to country, announcing to the people that a new age had come—that Messiah had commenced his reign—that the Lord of Glory was crucified on Mount Calvary—that the best news was, that every dying man might have life, every sorrow yield to joy, every friendless mortal befriended by an unchanging friend, every sin-burdened son of Adam relieved from his oppressive load, every wanderer from the gate of happiness turned into the highway of holiness and bliss—all through Him who is, and was, and is to come, the Only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace, full of Truth.

They sounded in the people's ears the wonderful history concerning Christ Jesus, what he had taught and what he had done, how he was abused and how he was exalted, telling them that he was the author of eternal life. Thus did these preachers, full of the spirit of their Divine Master, point to the great salvation, shew what it was, and bring it home to every man's conscience either to receive or reject.—But they laboured still further. They first then called for faith—faith in Jesus, faith in the Gospel. Or perhaps it might rather be said that the apostle by the things they spoke produced conviction in the minds of the hearers, which ultimated in faith. Then they called for the obedience of faith.

The grandest contrast between what is primitive and modern, in the things of Christianity, is to be found in the gospel as preached by the preachers appointed by Jesus, and the gospel as preached by Doctors of Divinity who have sat at the feet of the Gamaliels of the nineteenth century. O how simple the scheme of salvation as offered to Jew and Gentile by the herald who first proclaimed it; but how

complex, perplexing, and obtruse is the singular mixture called gospel in the year 1852 by the best sermonizers who ask us to believe they stand between the living and the dead ! Gentle reader, we entertain most friendly personal feelings toward all men—even toward those who, by their own or by other men's counsels, set at naught the authority of the Lord who bought them ; but we do, in the name of all that is sacred, *enter our solemn protest against any other gospel than that offered to a world of benighted and dying men by the original inspired missionaries.*

Let it then be distinctly understood, that, in the proclamation of the gospel, the Disciples go forward by going back—back to the gospel models furnished by Paul, Philip, Peter, James and John. Our position on this point, is, that we cannot preach a new gospel partly or wholly devised by ourselves—we cannot borrow the gospels taught by cotemporaries, fraught as they are with human as well as divine grace—we cannot go to the “Fathers” who have given the world whole libraries of traditions and receive their gospel ; and therefore disturbing ourselves, our cotemporaries, and the fathers of traditions, we place our dependence on the apostolic word and pattern. Will any one object to this resolution ? Can the most fastidious find fault with this position ? Shall those who claim to be ambassadors and special ministers of Christ discountenance the resolve to put little trust in human authority and the fullest confidence in the authority of inspiration ?

There is another topic, intimately connected with the announcement of the gospel, respecting which we are perhaps less understood than any other. We mean the Holy Spirit's power. Because the Disciples have ascribed much of the popular spiritual influence in religious circles to man's own spirit instead of to God, thinking that humanity and not divinity has elicited the power, it is taken for granted without ceremony that the Holy Spirit is not acknowledged. A greater mistake could not be made. There is not a people in Canada—America—the world, that speak more decidedly relative to the existence, office, influence, and living presence of the Holy Spirit than the people calling themselves Disciples. True, indeed, they can not find the Spirit in many cases where others say it is to be found—in visions of the night, in dreams by day, in certain preacher's lectures and prayers, in long-continued meetings, and in many other places and operations where it is said to be present. The fruit of the spirit, the Disciples believe, will always be found where the spirit moves or influences. When therefore it is manifestly proved that

what is called "the influence of the Spirit" is in direct opposition to what the Spirit has testified by those who spake as they were moved by it, the simple ground is taken 1st, that the Spirit, in all its operations, never contradicts itself, and 2nd, that apostolic spiritual influence should be trusted rather than the popular spiritual influence of the times.

God, the Spirit of God, Jesus the Son of God, and the Apostles who were inspired by God, all speak alike to man in order to his salvation and direction in righteousness. In doctrine, in precepts, in promises, in faith, love, hope, joy, they agree in one, and with unerring harmony direct the poor sin-blinded wanderer to the path of life. Hence as there are "many false spirits," the apostolic injunction is to "try the spirits" for the purpose of learning whether they are "of God." To reject God's Spirit, indeed, is to reject God himself; for without the Spirit what do we know of him, or how shall we be taught concerning him?

But the apostles (who are our authority, first and last, in divine teaching) never spoke of the Spirit as many pious and honest men who teach from Sunday to Sunday in Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and some of the United States. There is not a word or sentence in the whole Christian Oracles intimating that any apostle told a sinner to wait and watch for the Spirit to descend upon him—that he could not move hand or foot no more than a dead man in acceptance of the gospel until the Spirit forcibly and sensibly enabled him—that the Spirit should operate upon his heart before the gospel could be realized. The apostles, we confidently affirm, never addressed sinners in this style. They told sinners what the Lord had done for them; what the gospel message meant; what the gospel would do for them; and pressed with all the eloquence of Almighty love and truth the message of salvation upon their hearts: and when their hearers, under the power of Christ's teaching through their instrumentality, responded to the call of love which the gospel both exhibited and conveyed, they were taught not to wait, but to confess the Lord Jesus and enjoy by obedience the spiritual life graciously promised.

The proof of this as well as the simple character of the gospel, concerning which we have already spoken, shall close our remarks for the present. Kind reader, then, will you open your New Testament and accompany us to a primitive meeting. Or let us attend two meetings at once, that we may gather from both what we cannot from one. Let us therefore wend our way to the capitals of the provinces

of Samaria and Judea, to hear Philip in the one and Peter in the other, and let us take heed that we have both ears open.

Opening the eighth chapter of the Acts, we are first informed that persecution upon a large scale was raging against the Church of Christ in Jerusalem city. All saving the apostles, were scattered abroad, some in remote sections of the province of Judea, and others in the province of Samaria. And while Saul—the afterwards zealous Paul—was actively assisting the persecuting party, (much more popular than the friends of the gospel (deacon Philip, also Philip the evangelist, made his appearance in the city of Samaria as a messenger of the cross. The faithful Philip “preached Christ to them.” How? Here let us turn to Peter and listen to him in Jerusalem while he preaches Christ to the people; for the historian records a portion of Peter's address, but Philip's words are not given. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, in the midst of his brethren apostles, standing before an assembly numbering its thousands, on the most interesting of the Jewish Feast Days, Pentecost, preaches Christ to his hearers by telling them that God had recommended Jesus of Nazareth to them by miracles, wonders, and signs—that He, by the counsel of God being given up, was taken by them and with their wicked hands crucified—that it was not possible for him to remain with the dead, and that he arose after he was buried—that he was crucified as a wretch unfit to live, now occupied the throne of David and was always David's Lord—that he was at the right hand of God, and had shed forth the Holy Spirit, which could then be seen resting upon the apostles—and that this Jesus, being both Lord and Christ, the whole Jewish people should assuredly know he was not a Malefactor nor a Martyr, but a Saviour—that He whom they had judged worthy of death by the cross for blasphemy and disloyalty, was now worshipped by angels, and with the wreath of coronation on his brow shared the throne of God, and rightfully claimed the homage of men. These sublime particulars are taken from Acts ii, verses 22 to 26.

Such was the apostolic way of preaching Christ, and such, therefore, was the preaching of Philip in the Samaritan capital; for Philip and Peter were not sectarians, and hence they would not preach against each other, or the one contrary to the other.

Following the narrative given of Philip's labours among the Samaritan citizens, we learn that the people unanimously give heed “to the things” spoken by Philip. We are told by the inspired penman that there was “great joy” among those who gave heed to the things preached by the evangelist. It is related that “they believe

Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ." This is something of which we do not hear at the Jerusalem meeting on the occasion of Peter's preaching. Not a word said about faith! But at Peter's meeting, while there is nothing said about faith, there is something said about repentance; and in Samaria, there is something said about believing, but nothing said about repenting. Still there was faith and repentance in both instances; for Peter's audience asked what they should do, which they would not have done without faith, and Philip's hearers must have determined to forsake their sins, else they could not have shared so much joy. Yet our friends, the Baptists, may take courage, for baptism is mentioned in both instances.

An interesting question comes up just here. When did the Holy Spirit visit the city of Samaria? or rather when was the Spirit granted to these gospel pupils of Philip? Let us attend to the narrative. The introduction of the truth into Samaria, and the success of Philip, came to the ears of the apostles in Jerusalem, who, notwithstanding the fearful persecution, were by the protecting hand of God permitted to remain in that city. When the good news came to them that many Samaritan citizens had owned the Saviour and bowed to the claims of the gospel, they sent to them Peter and John.—For what? To pray for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for as yet he was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. These same persons, thus receiving the Holy Spirit, had been made partakers of the blessings of the Gospel, and had received and enjoyed the Spirit of Christ in the gospel, previous to Peter and John's visit; for the great joy they had was a fruit of the Spirit. In those days was the ordinary and the extraordinary reception of the Spirit; and those who in these days desire to be full grown men in the gospel of the grace of God, would do well "to rightly divide the word of truth" in relation to the times and places of the ordinary and the extraordinary power of the Spirit of God as manifested and enjoyed in the history of the apostles' labours. We respectfully submit these hints to our fellow citizens and friendly readers.

D. OLIPHANT.

A TRUE MAN.—After speaking of the evils of a false man, an author says—"A true man is the focal point of an innumerable number of telegraphic wires, and at every pulsation of his heart, the electric current, still and silent, but swift as thought, starts in every direction, and trembles along those spiritual wires, on its mission of mercy, through the wide domain of mind. He has established a communication with universal mind. He lives to bless all who inhabit the wide universe."

THE HOPE OF THE CHRISTIAN.

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive what God hath prepared for those who love him; but God hath revealed it unto us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.”

It is only in the gospel of Jesus Christ that man's true destiny is revealed. “Jesus Christ abolished death,” says an Apostle, “and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” No system of mythology, or religion of any nation, from the creation of the world to the advent of Christ, and the establishment of his kingdom, was ever able to develope and establish the sublime and soul-cheering doctrine of eternal felicity in heaven. The highest point in this splendid reality to which the unaided mind of man could ever arrive, was a mere vague and uncertain conjecture that they were destined to enjoy without interruption a continuation of earthly and sensual pleasures in this imaginary Elyseum. They could conceive no higher state of enjoyment than that which constituted their greatest pleasures here. The most eminent sages of antiquity (though some of them did not deny the doctrine of the immortality of the soul) had no ground of hope on which to rest with any degree of certainty, but were driven from one absurd theory to another, and left like the foundering barque in the midst of the fluctuating element without anchor, helm, or compass, to be at length wrecked on the shoals and quicksands of their own absurd speculations. Cicero, that splendid orator and statesman, the thunder of whose eloquence once shook the frame of Rome, after enunciating some of the opinions of the best philosophers in support of his theory of immortality, seems all at once to yield up his mind to that prevalent doubt that obscured the dim rays of philosophy, and exclaim in hopeless despair, “some God must tell us which of these is right.” The Aborigines of the American forest, though they worshipped the Great Spirit and the genius of storms and darkness, and paid homage to the rising king of day and bowed to his parting beams as he sank in his golden bed behind the western mountains, could fancy no other enjoyment in another state of existence than their favourite sport of the chase. They fancied that the great spirit would allot to them some favoured spot beyond the western mountains, some happy island in the watery waste abounding with game, where they might pursue the wild deer or fan through verdent fields, strewed with flowers and watered with murmuring fountains. But the Bible that God has given us to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our paths, does not leave us thus to grope our way in darkness and uncertainty, and build the airy castle of vague conjecture as delusive as the misty phantom of philosophy. Ah no! but it developes to us a source of hope on which we can hang our everlasting all! for time and eternity. “I am come,” says our Saviour, “a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness but should have the light of life.” Had it not been for the glorious manifestations of the Son of God and the introduction of the living oracle, the soul-cheering doctrine of immortality beyond this state of existence never would have entered to

pierce the dark gloom of heathen philosophy and superstition, or lit up one ray of hope to cheer us through the dark valley and shadow of death. But thanks to God for the inestimable gift of revelation which teaches us what shall be our true state in a future world, and develops to us a source "of everlasting consolation and good hope through grace," that when we are done with all the fleeting and transitory things of this sublinary world, we shall be received into mansions of happiness and unalloyed felicity. In anticipation of this, the good old Apostle could say, "we know that if this earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands eternally in the heavens." And this hope did not forsake him in the moment when it was most needed, but stood like a bulwark in the hour of his severest affliction, when loaded with chains in the prison of Rome, and there about to offer up his life under the hand of the ruthless Nero, we hear him exclaim, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, finished my course, and kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them who love his appearing." This hope is indeed an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. It is this that brightens the stormy pathway of life, imparts courage to the sinking soul, and renders death a welcome messenger. As he who has promised cannot lie, the Christian has strong consolation who has fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them. Though every friend should forsake him, and every vestige of earthly possessions should be bereft from him by the unrelenting hand of adversity; though foes should combine to render more bitter the last dregs of affliction, he can confidently look up to heaven to a friend who will never forsake him. Deprive the Christian of this hope and he sinks in despair, tear from him his glorious destiny revealed in the Bible, and you rob him of all that can render him happy or sweeten the bitter cup of adversity. Ay—rob him of this and you rob him of all, shake his faith in God's promise and you leave him nothing to cling to in the hour of affliction. No bosom of Omnipotence on which to pillow his dying head. But give him this divine assurance and you kindle a ray of hope in his soul that the floods of affliction or death cannot quench. Let him repose on the immutable promise of Jehovah and he is happy. Let him know that heaven is his home and he fears not the rack or the fire. How many have been put to the most excruciating torture that human ingenuity could invent, and yet have been sustained even in the midst of the flame with unshaken hope, which nothing but christianity could bestow. When we contemplate the glorious promise revealed to us in God's word, we are ready to exclaim with Paul, "who shall separate us from the love of God; shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or peril, or sword." No says he, "I am persuaded that principalities nor powers, things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." He that spared not his only begotten Son but gave him up freely for us all,

shall he not freely give us all things. All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephus, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's.

Such is the hope of the Christian, and such will be realized by every child of grace who continue steadfast unto the end. "Be thou faithful until death," says the Saviour, "and I will give you a crown of life.

W. W. CLAYTON.

Temperanceville, Feb. 4th, 1852.

FALSE TEACHERS.

King, February, 1852.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—I came here some time since expecting to meet you, in order to conduct a series of meetings among our brethren, and endeavour to assist them in holding forth the word of life to their neighbours.

As I did not meet you, I was unwilling to commence the proposed meetings alone, and so I went to the West side of the Township and preached in English and Gaelic for some days. I found a few Baptists who were very friendly, and would have felt if possible more cordial were it not for my being charged with holding the heresy of "Campbellism." Upon enquiry I learned that the Campbellisms which they dreaded was certain speculations subversive of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, taught by a person to the north-west calling himself a Disciple, and though I was shocked at the impious fraud attempted to be imposed (without success however) in the place of Primitive Christianity, I could not doubt the facts stated to me to have taken place. All I could say was that I would not hesitate for one moment to declare my abhorrence of such teaching, and that as far as my acquaintance extended among Disciples, they uniformly taught the reverse of that doctrine. Can a guilty creature rest satisfied with a system that has no Divine Saviour, no Sacrifice for sin, no Spirit of God nor any other spirit. Such a system may delight a mere speculator, but never will recommend itself to any who knows himself according to the Bible. Mr. Pyper of Toronto, in the *Christian Observer* of this month, animadverting on such treachery, truly says that A. Campbell "will no more endorse the sentiments of these teachers than he would the doctrines of Mahomet."

I hope to see you soon, in order to engage more regularly in the service of the co-operation. Our brethren East and West are, I have reason to say, determined to aid us by their prayers, their counsels, and their substance. The whole field of Scripture Truth is before us. The throne of favour is acceptable to us by the blood of Jesus. Mercy and grace in time of need are promised to us, and notwithstanding the many annoyances and discouragements which we may have to encounter, if we remain strong in the Lord and in the power of *his* might, all will be overcome

I cannot yet report any case of baptism. You know I have no

faculty for urging men to be baptized. When they know and love the Lord they require no coaxing to make them obey. I have been endeavouring to the best of my ability to sow the seed that may bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. Let us pray for the prosperity of Zion.

I am, dear brother, Yours, &c.,

JAMES BLACK.

The preceding from the experienced and truly esteemed brother Black, who has been a standard bearer in the gospel for over a quarter of a century, deserves to be carefully pondered. The fact that one or more person or persons calling himself or themselves Disciples can be found in our country who delude the community with the belief that the people called Disciples hold forth a gospel wherein there is a human Saviour, and which offers a framework of cold language and a doctrinal theory, without life, spirit, or godly energy.—is a fact not only astounding and mortifying, but a fact which calls for something more than a sigh or a tear. We are ready to publish the name and surname of every such so-called Disciple, and hold him up to the community as “giving heed to fables,” a “false teacher,” and a “deceiver,” “denying the Lord that bought him,” “sensual, having not the Spirit.”

Surely “by reason of such the way of truth is evil spoken of,” and we cannot too soon proclaim to all who know us, and as far as our influence can reach, that we not only have no Christian fellowship with men of this character, but that we cannot view them as in any sense entitled to religious friendship. It is reported, and we think correctly reported, that there are a few misguided men in the Province west of Cobourg claiming the name “Disciple” as a distinctive badge, who ridicule the idea of Satan’s existence, affirm that angels are a sectarian delusion, declare and teach that Christ died not as a sacrifice but as an example, proclaim that sins are remitted by a species of obedience on the part of man himself, &c.; but can it be possible that men of this stamp are capable of deceiving any enlightened community, or that intelligent men look upon such as in anywise representing the Disciples of Christ in Canada, who, co-operating with the Scotch Baptists and other Baptists, plead for the Scriptures as the sole standard of religious teaching, and seek a purer and more perfect religious community than the principles of partyism either offer or produce.

D. O.

IMMERSION.

In shunning one extreme, we are wont to run into the contrary. The Papists in former times made the mere act of immersion or of sprinkling, irrespective of the sentiments, faith, or feelings, of the subject, wash away all sins. They used the name of the "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," or of "the Trinity," as they termed it, just as conjurors use the words of a charm. They supposed that the mere pronounciation of the names constituting "the Holy Trinity," together with two or three drops of water from the baptized finger of an ignorant priest, forgave all sins, whether "original or actual," and therefore contended, "no baptism, no salvation." Because they terminated in this abominable delusion and carried their notions to this immense extreme, the Protestants ran to an equal extreme on the other side of the equator of truth; and therefore gave to baptism, however administered, no connexion with the remission of sins. So much did they hate the errors of popery, that they did scarcely name "the forgiveness of sins" on the same day on which they "administered baptism." This is not the only instance in which the Protestants were driven entirely to neglect their duty, because the Catholics ran into some absurdity. Thus, as the Romanists laid so much stress upon fasting, as to make it almost more than "a sacrament," the Protestants will not fast at all, lest they should become Papists; and therefore, although they have some days called "fast days," they take good care to eat as abundantly on those holy days as upon other occasions.

Now, methinks we are not to be scared out of our duty or privilege because of the errors or follies of others. Nor do we lose sight of the forgiveness of our sins in immersion, because Papists have made a saviour of a mere ceremony. We connect faith with immersion as essential to forgiveness—and therefore, as was said of old, "According to your faith, so be it to you," so say we of immersion. He that goes down into the water to put on Christ, in the faith that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin, and that he has appointed immersion as the medium, and the act of ours, through and in which he actually and formally remits our sins, has when immersed the actual remission of his sins. So that he is dead by sin, buried with Jesus, and is born again, or raised to life again, a life new and divine, in and through the act of immersion. This we have seen in the preceding essays is the Bible import of the one immersion. In it we put on Christ, are buried with him, rise with him, have our sins remitted, enter upon a new life, receive the Holy Spirit, and begin to rejoice in the Lord.

Infidels and skeptics in general, as well as some weak minded christians, object to this doctrine because it is not complex or mysterious enough. It is too easy, too cheap, too simple to have such immense advantages attached thereto. What! say they, is a man to put on Christ, to be born again, to begin a new life, to rise with Christ to a heavenly inheritance, to have all his sins remitted, to receive the Holy Spirit, to be filled with joy and peace, through the mere act of a mere believing immersion in water into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I say yea—most assuredly; and re-

quest the weak christian who objects to all this goodness and mercy, obtained so easily, so simply, so cheaply, to consider that it is just "thus and so," that God has always dealt with man in things natural and supernatural. Does not a man enjoy life itself and all its thousand joys, by the simple, cheap, and easy method of breathing atmospheric air? and is this not done with so much ease as never to interfere with eating, talking, sleeping, &c.? What so common and so accessible as the oxygen, which is the very food of animal life—Are not all heaven's best blessings the cheapest, the most common, the most accessible of all others? And who from natural analogies can object to the communication of so many heavenly blessings through the medium of a believing immersion in water into the sacred name of the *Holies*? But is not this also analogous to every thing in the Bible? What, says the sceptic, can the Deity, so wise and benevolent, doom mankind to temporal, and, in some instances, to perpetual miseries, because Adam took a bite of an apple in Eden! Tell me, Mr. Sceptic, why should one drop of prusic acid, or a simple inhalation of a few mouthfuls of mephitic gas, be able to deprive the strongest man on this continent of temporal or animal life for ever and ever! Tell me why a puncture from the point of a needle should deprive the wife of a beloved husband, and the children of a kind and useful parent for ever and ever:—tell me this, and I will tell you why the "eating of one apple," to speak in your own style, should entail so many calamities on the human race. You christians, who object to the import of immersion as here taught, remind me of Naaman, the Syrian, who you know was a leper. When told to dip in Jordon seven times and he should be healed of his leprosy, he replied as you—"Are not any of the streams of Damascus or of Egypt as good as the waters of Jordon?" Yes, says his servant, if the Lord had required you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? But he has offered his cure too cheap. It is too easy, too simple. Go, Naaman, and try, but go in faith. He went, he dipped himself in Jordon, and came up from its waters sound and cleansed. The divine appointment and faith gave all this efficacy to the waters of Jordon. Why then should it be thought incredible that the divine appointment should give such efficacy to believing immersion?

BEAUTIFUL SENTIMENT.—The late eminent Judge Sir Allen Park once said at a public meeting in London:

"We live in the midst of blessings till we are utterly insensible of their greatness and of the source from whence they flow. We speak of our civilization, our arts, our freedom, our laws, and forget entirely how large a share is due to christianity. Blot Christiansty out of man's history, and what would his laws have been, what his civilization? Christianity is mixed up with our very being and our very life; there is not a familiar object around us which does not wear a different aspect because the light of Christian love is upon it; not a law which does not owe its truth and gentleness to Christianity; not a custom which cannot be traced in all its holy, beautiful parts from the gospel."

THE RELIGIOUS SPIRIT.

WESTERN STAR, O., 17th Feb. 1852.

BROTHER OLIPHANT :—I am sorry to conclude from your recent address to the readers of your paper, that many are in arrears, and that the prospect looks dark for its continuance. Why is it so? that people have so little taste for religious reading? Many of the miscellaneous papers of the day can boast of their ten thousand subscribers who pay down for the paper, and only regret that the year is so near gone. Many professed Christians take them as well as many of the Magazines of the day, which abound in fiction, or if truths, truths of no other good quality than the amusing style in which the tale is told. While many a religious paper has to go a begging all its life, and finally die for want of support!

It seems to me as if I should hardly know how to keep house without one or more religious papers. I already take five, (all religious,) and still wish for more. I take a religious paper for the following reasons:

1st. I want more knowledge of divine things, and in addition to the study of the Bible, I can learn much by conversing with others. But more by listening to the servants of the Lord as they rightly divide the word of truth. But where I have the instruction in a religious paper, I can often be reminded of religious truths, which might otherwise be forgotten.

2nd. I want to know what is going on in the religious world. When I read of the prosperity of the cause in other places, I am refreshed and stirred up to greater diligence myself.

3rd. I want my children continually under the influence of religious instruction. And what is better for them to read when not reading the Bible, than a religious paper.

4th. When called on by friends, I love to treat them with the Bible, and a half a dozen well edited religious papers.

True, I am sometimes pressed to find means to pay for so many papers. Then I encourage myself by asking what is more important than religious instruction? And how can I obtain it more easily than by availing myself of the labors of others.

But people sometimes say, "I can scarcely get time to read the Bible now, and if I have so much religious reading on hand, I am afraid I shall neglect the Bible altogether. But that is a mistaken idea. The more we read, and hear, and converse on religious subjects, the more we shall be stimulated to read the Bible.

Give us my dear brother, a few essays on the importance of reading religious instruction. Do not be discouraged; the cause we plead is worthy of our untiring efforts.

But let me ask, Is it true that the brotherhood in Canada cannot support one religious paper? Or are they not pleased with the *Christian Banner*? Or have they no love for religious reading? If the latter be the cause, then "cry aloud and spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show the people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins."

But I must close this hasty note. Peace be with thee, dear Brother.

A. B. GREEN.

TEACHERS AND TEACHING.

We have received a private communication from a brother in the western part of the Province, in which he informs us that in the region where he resides and labours as a minister there are individuals calling themselves Disciples, professing Baptist principles; and yet teaching erroneous and dangerous doctrines. "They repudiate all ministers as not being necessary, and contrary to the gospel. They deny the existence of the Holy Spirit, as a person in the Trinity;— and say the Spirit is in the Word, that Jesus Christ is not God equal with the Father." &c. It is really matter of wonder that such teachers should in a land of Bibles obtain a second hearing; but it is still a patent truth that men have itching ears. We have only to think of the success which has crowned the efforts of the darkest apostate from the truth in all ages; the success which has, in enlightened lands, attended the irrational ravings of the Mormon fanatics: we have only to think of the gifted minds who have been bewildered amid the reveries of Emanuel Swedenbourg, in order to be convinced that no teacher, however impure his life or destructive his doctrines will fail to secure disciples. In the sentiments above mentioned, and said to be taught in Canada, the gospel system is not even discernable, all that is valuable in the plan of justifying the ungodly, and much that is essential to the order of a Christian church is completely ignored. They regard all ministers as unnecessary. This is exalting human wisdom above the wisdom which the Holy Spirit teaches. It would be difficult to conceive how any arrangement could be more unequivocally stated, than is the arrangement concerning pastors— The qualifications of Bishops are specifically given, their duties as rulers and teachers distinctly stated and the nature and extent of their authority clearly indicated, while the brethren are taught to submit to their authority, to give them a generous support, for the labourer is worthy of his hire, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. In the days of the apostles, Elders or Bishops were ordained in every city, and for the very purpose of completing the order of the churches. And the divine injunction "lay hands suddenly on no man," exhibits the care which the Spirit has taken to guard the sacred office against being filled by persons not qualified for such an important position. We reject in toto the dogma of a successional order in the church of Christ, and all the mummery and nonsense therewith connected; but must ever contend for that God-established institution, the pastor's office. Churches are not complete without these officers, and to be voluntarily without them, must be displeasing to God. How wretched the teaching that would annihilate the office altogether.

But the second error specified is infinitely worse than the first. It is twofold: first, the divinity of the Spirit is denied; and second, His work amongst men. The first sentiment is destructive to the soul that is enlightened by Bible truth, and ought to be resisted and deprecated by God's people wherever it exists. Who but a divine being could accomplish the Spirit's work. But we shall speak more fully of the divinity of the Spirit in our next issue. The sacred sentiment,

namely confounding the Spirit and the word, though less pernicious than the first, is equally far from the truth. It is not the word which opens the sinner's heart to attend to the things that accompany salvation, but the Spirit. It is not the word that convinces of sin, of righteousness, and judgment, but the Spirit. A dead man is born again by the Spirit's power. But some will tell us that in such operations the word is introduced in Scripture as effecting the results stated. True, in the work of conversion and sanctification the Spirit employs the truth, as a warrior employs his sword. We might say, the entrance of the sword of man giveth death, as it is said the entrance of thy word giveth light. We might say, being struck, not by a muffled weapon which could do little harm, but by a sharp sword, which finished its work effectually—just as it is said, being born again not of corruptible seed . . . but of the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. The truth is the Spirit's weapon—and it is only as the Spirit employs that instrument that saving results follow. Paul may plant Apollas water, but God giveth the increase. The sinner is dead in trespasses and sins, and all the persuasive eloquence of the word, apart from the renewing of the Holy Spirit, is unequal to the work of awakening him to spiritual life. If the power of the Spirit were not essential to the conversion of the sinner, and the sanctification of the believer, prayer would be a farce—the command to pray for all men, and such an example as that of the publican, introduced to our notice by the Saviour, would be mere mockery. Why should we ask God to be merciful to sinners, if He, in giving them his word, has done all for them He ever will do? To print Bibles and preach the gospel, would exhaust our duty to them. How fundamentally erroneous is such a system.

There are some who imagine that God's Spirit does dwell in the hearts of believers *after* baptism, but does not move them at all *prior* to that act; an act which in some way, is thought, to complete the work of salvation in the soul. This idea represents the Spirit as leaving the dead soul to make itself alive, and then protecting it in the lesser work of keeping itself alive. How foreign to the teaching of the word of God is all this. And is it not to be feared that Christians generally, too much dishonour the Spirit; rely too much upon their own strength, or the strength of the means which they employ, and hence fail to pray with that earnestness which ought to characterise those who are deeply conscious of their own weakness.

The last error referred to, namely, the denial of our Lord's essential divinity, taken in connection with the second, completely subverts the gospel system, and leaves a fallen and ruined mortal no refuge from the coming storm; no bright point on which to hang our hope. Take the divine Spirit and God manifest in the flesh out of the Bible, and what remains?—a splendid system of morals, certainly; but a system at once lifeless, cold, motionless. No man can preach the gospel who does not hold up *that Christ* which the gospel reveals.—To preach a *creature*, however exalted, is not to preach Christ, nor the way of salvation. As well might we look to one of Popery's canonized saints for deliverance from sin, as look to Jesus of Nazareth, if he

was not God manifest in the flesh. Our hope, our confidence, rests in the finished work of our divine Saviour. We trust in the Word which was with God, and which was God; our Lord and our God.

Because the errorists referred to above, practise immersion, they are said to hold Baptist principles. As well might it be affirmed of Romanists that they are Presbyterians, because they practice sprinkling. We have not so learned Christ.

We cannot close this article without, in common justice to the denomination called Disciples, saying that so far as we understand their sentiments they do not harmonize with the errors noted above.—Their leading journals teach the very reverse of these. Alexander Campbell is the leading spirit amongst them in the United States, and he would no more endorse the sentiments of those western teachers than he would the doctrines of Mahomet.

The preceding is taken from the columns of the *Christian Observer*, edited by Mr. Pyper, Toronto. Our readers know how to read it; and they will thank the editor of the *Observer* for the closing sentences of the article. Can brother Sheppard, of Dorchester, or brother Morison, of Chatham, inform us more particularly of "individuals calling themselves Disciples," and yet teach that the Lord's ministry is superfluous, that the Holy Spirit is a Phantom, that the Word is all Spirit and the Spirit all Word, and speak disparagingly of the Lord of all? May we ask our Baptist brother, Mr. Pyper, to name and surname the correspondent in the west who knows such individuals calling themselves Disciples, thus disgracing the sacred name they profess, and bringing reproach upon all who bear that name?

D. O.

CURE FOR SCANDAL.

"The North wind driveth away rain; so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue."—*Solomon*.

Mrs. Chalmers, of Anstruther, mother of the Doctor, had an extreme dislike to all petty scandal. She had one rule, which she made known among her acquaintances, and which she rigidly followed. "Whenever told of anything that a neighbour had said or done amiss, she instantly put on her bonnet, and went at once to the person, and told what had been said, and who had said it, and asked if it was true." Those who follow this rule, we opine, will seldom have occasion to execute it. They who smile at scandal, or listen to it complacently, obey not the injunction of the wise man. He who pours scandal into my ears, gives me just occasion to be angry. He offends my good sense, by presuming that I wish to make my head a lumber-room, instead of a storehouse of useful knowledge; he offends my good taste, by presuming that I love gossip. He offends my piety, by thinking that I will "rejoice in iniquity." I am justified, by the wisest of men, in "looking him out of countenance."

LABOURS OF EVANGELISTS.

REPORT, No. I.

TO THE SAINTS AND FAITHFUL BREHREN IN CANADA:—We, as your labourers in and for the truth, desire to make known to all interested that we have entered upon the work to which we have been appointed. Through the providence of the Lord, having left our respective homes about the same date, we met each other in the Township of King, according to previous arrangement, February 28th, and found ourselves happy in the company of the few intelligent and zealous brethren in this region. On Lord's day the 29th we commenced holding forth the word in the usual place of meeting—a School House—occupied by the brethren. A severe storm prevented a large attendance; but it was regarded expedient to discourse to those who assembled on Lord's day afternoon, on Lord's day evening, on Monday evening, and on Tuesday evening. In the meantime, one of the brethren made arrangements for a series of meetings about five miles east and north, a little distance from Yonge Street. Through the kindness and frankness of an independent minded farmer, whose house was large and commodious, and who was desirous of permitting us to speak to the people, we were enabled to address a goodly number of those resident in the neighbourhood on the great theme of the gospel. While one of us spoke on Tuesday evening to the friends at the School House where the brethren meet, the other spoke for the first time assembled at the private house to which we have above referred. We have held three meetings here, and contemplate holding one or two more. What may be the result, immediate or remote, we know not; but we trust that the Lord will honor his word and bless it among the people who have thus heard it.

There is a large field before us—many openings any many opposers. We trust to have the prayers of our brethren and the blessing of the Father of every good gift while engaged in the solemn work of endeavouring to turn men's hearts to the Lord Jesus.

JAMES BLACK,
D. OLIPHANT.

King, 5th March, 1852.

 TRUTH AND ERROR.

Harwick, February 7th, 1852.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—I have neglected writing to you on account of my mind being deeply engaged and delighted in reading your Magazine, and also with the spirit of mind that you are possessed with. We should as members of the body of Christ make the enquiry of ourselves, are we possessed with the spirit of Christ. I am

highly pleased with your mind, regarding the operation of the spirit of God upon the mind of man,—not through dreams, nor yet through imaginations of their own minds, but through faith in Christ, embracing the word of God which is of the spirit.

I hear professed ministers of the Gospel of Christ denying the reliability of sinners believing the word of God, and also that the atonement of Christ is limited to a certain number, which I believe to be putting a stumbling block before the world. I am anxious to hear your opinion upon this subject. And may the blessing of God rest upon all his under-shepherds, both body and spirit, and upon all the flock of Christ—is the sincere prayer of your humble Brother. And to Father, Son and Holy Spirit be all the praise. Farewell.

D. C.

Orono, February 15th, 1852.

DEAR SIR:—I have received twelve of your pamphlets, and I wish to have them discontinued. I am a plain fellow, and I must tell you boldly, that I do not believe the doctrine which you advocate. I belong to no church or sect of men whatever. I find that all denominations are seasoned more or less with sectarianism. They may pretend they have none; but after all when talked with, they consider their way to be a little superior to others.

I doubt not your sincerity in the doctrine which you advocate; but you know it is impossible for all men to think alike. I will now tell you my firm belief—which is this: I believe in the universal salvation of all mankind. You know if a man is a good British tory at heart, he wishes to take a true-blue Tory paper, and if he is a warm hearted Democrat he would like to take a Republican paper. In this letter I enclose one dollar, if you think this not sufficient to cancel the debt you will please remember, &c. If you send more pamphlets it will be at your own expense.

I remain your friend, if I am blunt.

HORACE WELLS.

Cobourg, 17th Feb. 1852.

FRIEND WELLS:—So far as the subscription to the periodical is concerned, we are even; you have paid me in full according to agreement. If my memory serves me, you were to receive the paper for twelve months, and if you thought it worth any thing at the end of the year, you might draw upon your funds; if otherwise, we were still to remain friends. So far so good. I am gratified that you think my sincerity worth paying for.

I will send you the *Christian Banner* for 1852 gratuitously. I incline to do this for two reasons: 1st, because the paper for the present year will be greatly superior to the last year's efforts, if I am not greatly mistaken; and 2nd, because you have avowed your conviction that you believe you will be saved whether you love and obey

the Saviour or not. While I give you all credit for sincerely believing this doctrine, and can respect your honesty in avowing without disguise your true conviction, I should consider myself far from duty in not attempting to lead your mind, your heart, your soul, to rest on a foundation more secure; in other words, more in harmony with the great principles of truth graciously uttered by the Eternal Father—the Father of all mankind.

With your permission I will publish your free expression of the doctrine I advocate, and in the meantime will take the liberty of inquiring into the ground of your faith respecting the salvation of all men. Did I believe this doctrine true, you would find me actively advancing it—contending for it with all my might. But, my friend, I can believe nothing without divine evidence: and inasmuch as God's Word has been and continues to be silent on the subject of all men's salvation from sin, obedient or non-obedient to the gospel. You perceive how inconsistent it would be for me to believe in a system professedly divine without divine testimony. Let me therefore ask whether you depend on your own reasoning for the soundness of the said doctrine, or on the facts and precepts, promises and sanctions, of that Sacred Book which is the *Book of Books*? Come, friend Wells, let us talk over these things calmly, rationally, patiently, evincing that we are willing to be social in our views. Of course I may expect your courtesy and good will: for certainly, according to the doctrine you express, however much we differ, I will share with you the honours and partake with you the joys of that salvation which awaits all the sons of men without exception. Be pleased, therefore, to respond with friendly frankness to my inquiries.

Yours interrogatively,

D. OLIPHANT.

Eastport, Maine, February 2nd, 1852.

BROTHER OLIPHANT.—In the 8th No. of the *Mirror*, over the signature of John Butchart, Senior, I saw an article headed "Is the Sabbath abolished?" but I cannot see that he has thrown much light upon the subject. I must confess that it is the first time I ever heard that the Ten Commandments were given to Adam, or to any one else till they were given to the Children of Israel, neither was the Sabbath ever mentioned till the children of Israel had been near two months on their journey. True, God ceased from his labour on the seventh day and sanctified it, but this by no means constituted it a Sabbath, which signifies a day of worship and consecration as well as a day of rest. God's day of rest was not to be perpetuated, he had no more work to do and he had no one to consecrate it to, but the Jews were to keep the Sabbath throughout their generations and consecrate

it to the Lord. I know it is almost universally believed that the sabbath was instituted at the creation, but it is a mistake. It is certainly very singular that if God intended that his day of rest should be perpetuated as a sabbath that he should not mention it to any mortal nor the subject to be hinted at for near three thousand years. No doubt but God had reference to his day of rest when he gave the Sabbath to the Jews, but no one will presume to say that the Sabbath was instituted till the manna had been gathered six days, and as it was necessary that man and beast should have a day of rest, it was to be perpetuated. We are by no means certain that the day God gave the Sabbath to the Jews corresponded with his seventh day of rest, but it was the seventh day of gathering Manna. Our Saviour said "the sabbath was made for man" and it was given to the Jews alone.

The appliances and duties were not all given with the Sabbath, but were added as occasion required. The gentiles had no more to do with the Sabbath than they had with circumcision as I can learn. They certainly had nothing to do with it for forty years, and I cannot find the place where it was assigned to them. And further, they used to carry their wares &c. to the Jews to sell on the sabbath, but the Jews refused to buy them, and if the Gentiles were bound to keep the Sabbath why did not the Jews put them to death for violating the day. If the Jewish sabbath is still to be observed why not circumcision? The Jews were commanded to keep both. It is true that the Saviour and his disciples used to keep the Sabbath when they were among the Jews, professedly to show their submission to the laws of the Jews, and likewise to avail themselves of the opportunity of speaking to their assemblies, but I do not find that the Saviour or his disciples ever appointed a meeting for their own worship on the Jewish Sabbath, and as they set apart the first day of the week for their worship, at the very commencement of the new dispensation and kept it up, I should not hesitate to answer Brother Butchart's question ("Is the Sabbath abolished?") in the affirmative as far as it respects the disciples of the Messiah. Paul said it was only a shadow of things to come, and he is pretty good authority. If God had intended that the seventh day should have been observed as a sabbath, it is certainly very strange that he did not give the order to Adam or some other one till ages had passed away. I know there are many people who think they must believe and practice many things that God never directed, although they say he implied it; but I challenge any one to produce an order from the Lord to his people on any subject, that he did not give it in the most plain and positive manner. He meant that man should be left without excuse; therefore if he had intended his day of rest should have been kept as a sabbath, he would have said so in plain words. Witness how often the subject is mentioned after the institution

J. B.

TRUTH itself becomes falsehood if it be presented in any other than its right relations. There is no truth but the "whole truth."

REVIVALS.

The Lutheran Observer says:—We learn that the Spirit has again been poured out on the Rev. Mr. Uhl's church, in Somceset, Pa., and that a number of individuals have been hopefully converted; among them a professional gentleman of high standing in that section of country. For the last three years that church has been in a constant state of revival, and has received an unusually large number of accessions.

We are gratified to learn, that the Rev. J. K. Booker, Guernsey Co., Ohio, has also been favoured with several seasons of refreshing in his district. In one neighbourhood where there never had been a Lutheran church, there was a powerful work of grace; and as the consequence, a church is now organized, and measures are being adopted to erect a house of worship.

If any one unacquainted with us desires to know what kind of spiritual influence we are sometimes called upon to oppose, we refer to the above, copied from a New York paper. To believe that the Spirit of God is poured out again and again upon Rev. Lutheran Clergyman's church in Pennsylvania, and at the same time execute a "powerful work of grace" in some Unitarian Clergyman's church in New York, is too much for the faith of any Disciple. Because we stoutly affirm that such influences are neither from nor of the Holy Spirit, is confidently asserted that we deny the Spirit.

D. O.

THE FOOL'S REPROOF.

There was a certain nobleman, says Bishop Hall, who kept a fool, to whom he one day gave a staff, with a charge to keep it until he should meet with one who was a greater fool than himself. Not many years after the nobleman fell sick unto death. The fool came to see him.

"I must shortly leave you," said the nobleman.

"And whither art thou going?"

"Into the other world," said his lordship.

"And when will you return again; within a month?"

"No."

"Within a year?"

"No?"

"When then?"

"Never!"

"Never!" said the fool; "and what preparation and provision hast thou made for so long a journey and for thy happy entertainment there. whither thou goest?"

"None at all!"

"None!" said the fool: "none at all! Here, then, take my staff, for with all my folly, I am not guilty of such folly as this."

LATIMER.

It is related of Latimer, that when he once preached before that tyrant, Henry VIII., he took a plain, straightforward text and in his sermon assailed those very sins for which the monarch was notorious, and he was stung to the quick, for truth always finds a response in the worst man's conscience. He would not bend beneath the authority of his God; but sent for Latimer, and said: "Your life is in jeopardy, if you do not recant all you said to-day when you preach next Sunday." The trimming courtiers were all anxious to know the consequences of this, and the chapel was crowded. The venerable man took his text, and after a pause, began with a soliloquy, thus:

"Now, Hugh Latimer, bethink thee, thou art in the presence of thy earthly monarch—thy life is in his hands, and if thou dost not suit his fancies, he will bring down thy grey hairs to the grave; but Hugh Latimer, bethink thee, thou art in the presence of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, who hath told thee, 'fear not them that kill the body, and can do no more; but rather fear him who can kill both body and soul, and cast thee into hell forever!' Yea, I say, Hugh Latimer, fear him."

He then went on, and not only repeated what he had before advanced, but, if possible, enforced it with greater emphasis. After he had finished, Henry sent for him, and said: "How durst thou insult thy monarch so?" Latimer replied, "I thought if I were unfaithful to my God, I could not be loyal to my King." The King embraced the good old Bishop, exclaiming, "There is yet one man left who is bold enough to tell me the truth."

LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth," of all the varied forms of kindness and of good. Stand in your lot and work around you; in your own home; in your own neighborhood, your own town, county, or State, and if God enlarge the ability and opportunity, "break forth upon the right hand and upon the left;" but don't wait for a large field; cultivate the spot you have and help your neighbors.

Don't forget the prayer-meeting and the Sabbath school; nor "to do good and communicate," for "with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Remember that to put a sound Gospel tract into a family, is like giving them a draught of the water of life; to put there an evangelical volume is like furnishing them a "water-pot of two or three firkins;" (nay, some volumes might rather be likened to a reservoir) but to supply them with the Bible is to open a fountain of living waters by the very hearthstone. It is like planting a perennial spring in the travellers track across the Great Sahara.

Do any of all these, and a blessing shall return into your own bosom and God shall be glorified in you.

I know no evil under the sun so great as the abuse of the understanding, and yet there is no one vice more common.