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THE

# WITNESS OF TRUTH.

VOL. III. OSHAWA, NOVEMBER, 1848. NO. 11.

## RELIGION ADAPTED TO OUR NATURE.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT.—You are I doubt not fully aware, that the position you occupy as conductor of a religious periodical, and through its pages bearing witness to the excellency of truth, is both an important and a responsible one. But whilst I by no means design to assume that I possess the ability to instruct you in regard to the nature and magnitude of those obligations, allow me to assure you, that I entirely approve of the motives which induce you to devote yourself to the work of disseminating light and truth. The restoration of primitive Christianity in spirit and practice, is the cause we love. We desire to present its claims before our fellow-men in all their amplitude and adaptation to meet the necessities of our common nature. To assist us then, in carrying out our desires in this respect, it was in my humble judgment desirable and expedient that we should avail ourselves of that powerful auxiliary to all moral improvement—the Press, and have a periodical established and circulating amongst us, through the medium of which the brethren in Canada might enjoy the privilege of enterchanging their thoughts; and of encouraging one another “to contend earnestly for the faith formerly delivered to the saints.”

Believing the work in which you are engaged, to be a laudable one, and that it is the duty of the brethren to assist you—allow me to contribute my humble mite, that I may thereby encourage (and with more consistency solicit) others, whose abilities are superior to my own—to take their pens and write for the *Witness*, that its monthly visits may continue to be interesting and profitable.

Do we, my dear brother, fully appreciate the advantages we possess for the attainment of moral character, in having the oracles of God,

our own language, placed in our hands? Do we indeed realize the inestimable blessing thus conferred upon us by our God and Saviour, who, notwithstanding the waywardness of our race in perverting his institutions, has preserved his Word from being corrupted, and caused it to be transmitted in its purity down to the present time? How unlike the abstruse deductions and metaphysical inferences of theologians are the communications of the Holy Spirit, as unfolded in the sacred record; wherein are contained the priceless treasures of Divine wisdom and knowledge. Full of all the attributes of truth, the bible commends itself to the conscience of every rational individual, possessed of an upright mind. When we look abroad upon the physical world countless adaptations exhibiting wisdom and goodness in their design present themselves to our view; and when we, in a proper spirit, and with a suitable degree of attention, pursue the word of God, we discover the same wisdom in design—the same perfection in adaptation. And thus, by the clearest analogy, evidently show that nature and revelation have a common origin, and that they are both the production of Him who is boundless in goodness, excellent in counsel, and wonderful in working. How rich, how ample, the provision which the Creator has made in the “book divine” for the intellectual and moral necessities of Adam’s race—the fallen creatures of his love! Those things that man most ardently desires to know are there revealed. The questions—from whence came I? and, whether am I bound? which arise in the human mind, demanding to be answered with all the urgency of reasonable desire, are here, alone, satisfactorily explained.

Before we become enlightened by the truth—and knowing in some measure the insufficiency of our knowledge to guide our feet in the path of wisdom and virtue—did we not realize in our experience the truth of that saying of the prophet which declares: “that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” (*Jer. x: 23.*) In view, then, of having to guide our frail bark across the ocean of life; and seeing many of our fellow-men making shipwreck of character; we therefore felt that we required instruction upon which we could rely with unwavering confidence; that it would direct us aright, and finally bring us to the haven of rest. We required not merely theoretical, or abstract instruction. For abstract principles however correct possess not sufficient power over the human mind, to lead to the perfection of moral character. To accomplish this end, it requires perfect instruction exemplified by its teacher, or

embodied in action. Have we not then, my dear brother, reason to praise God that our feet were turned into the way of his testimonies; and that we were led to come to that important decision, to receive His word as the only infallible and unerring source of religious and moral instruction. For we then found that all our wants had been kindly anticipated, and richly provided for by "the Father of Spirits." And Oh! how sweet was the voice of the Saviour's condescending mercy and love, which we heard through his word saying unto us, "come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and *learn of me* and you shall find rest unto your souls."

We then learned, that the Messiah was not only a teacher sent from God; but also our Immanuel. And that he took upon him our nature; that he might *die for our sins* and *live our example*. Let us then, in all our labors, to benefit our fellow-men, endeavour to call their attention to the perfect adaptation of the Book of God to redeem our race from ignorance and crime, and make them wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Let us also exhibit in ourselves the excellency of its moralizing power, by having all our conduct regulated by those precepts of righteousness and life unfolded therein.

In the love of the truth, I remain,

Affectionately your brother,

L. PARKINSON.

*Eramosa, September 3rd, 1848.*

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THE TIMES.

No. VI.

PARTY animosity, pious trickery, bitterness, hatred, and strife, form a prominent chapter in the sayings and doings of our times. As sects multiply, and as the spirit of strife ripens into refined variety, the fruits of fleshly divisions and petty organizations are flavoured with something not so sweet as the new wine of Canaan. Sour indeed are the grapes that the children of this generation gather, and bitter is the taste of all that comes from the winepress. The vine of Carmel has failed; and the wild grape of the wilderness is the unwelcome substitute.

Where is the peace that Jesus left to his people?—the love?—the joy?—the purity?—the unity?—the truth?—the grace? The precious fruits of the Spirit are blasted and withered into something more

famine-like than Pharaoh's lean kine by the quarrels and divisions of piously ungodly men.

Fractured into a thousand parts, and distorted into ten thousand forms, christianity exhibits the melancholy beauties of a populous desert—a wilderness thickly peopled with emaciated tribes, hateful and hostile, quarrelling for empire even while suffering under almost every form of starving privation. The bickerings and strife are endless, and the selfish proscription beyond endurance. The pride of party, like a raving demon, levels the shafts of its fury against all that will not take rank with it, and in the pomp of its might, triumphs in the weakness of its strength.

These are the days in which creeds and opinions are increased, and the seeds of strife are sown broadcast. The sect-spirit is the master spirit of the times, and it raises itself proudly and boldly for the spoils of victory and the conqueror's crown. Unity has lost its charm,—peace is too old-fashioned,—and love is altogether tame and tasteless! Humility is out of date, and forbearance is only found in the bible, and as for brotherly kindness it is an outcast from every assembly and synagogue!

What an unbrotherly brotherhood we have in the protestant ranks! Each party having inherited and preserved a large portion of the unction of the gentleman who sits on the papal chair, it aspiringly and arrogantly claims to itself the title and character of the only legal and divinely established Church; and, as a consequence, looks with the eye of disparagement and contempt upon all others. And singular to tell, amid the general denouncement and war of extermination, there is a lip-belief common to each so-called evangelical party, that all the others, or the most of them, are evangelically safe and orthodoxly sound.

The heart bleeds and the soul sickens when we contemplate these jarring elements of sectarian conflict and confusion. Shall we despair, and faint, and yield up the ghost? Rather shall we not ask the cause of all this tumult, bitter animosity, and deadly encounter,—and bravely press to the standard of Zion's King, and call out loudly and stand up valiantly for the truth of God and the peace of his people? Now there is nothing more certain in this world of causes and effects, that truth comes from God, and that love comes from truth, and that peace flows from love,—and that all these make unity, holiness, and joy. God speaks, and truth is born; truth is received, and love takes possession of the heart; love prevails, and peace, unity, and every good work follows. A people therefore who hear God, or his Son Jesus Christ, is a people united,

holy, and happy. Here, then, we have not only the remedy of division, strife, and sectarian rivalry, but a full and effectual cure for all the false doctrines, cold ceremonies, and unhallowed practices of the times that we have glanced at from the beginning of these essays.

Men are turned away from the bible—the record of the sayings and doings of the Almighty in behalf of sinful men. Mankind are studying themselves and each other, in their own misleading reason, and giving heed to their feelings and their cotemporaries, rather than giving a full ear to the voice of God, in order to know, obey, and enjoy him. So soon therefore as our party leaders are held in disrepute—men who have philosophized upon the character, government, and revelation of God, and who have succeeded in attracting certain classes of individuals to themselves as leaders and lawgivers,—so soon, we say, as such men are properly disregarded, and the bible allowed to take its true and proper place as the instrument through which God himself speaks to us; immediately shall we have a sovereign balm for every bruise and plague-spot that now distorts, disfigures, and dismembers the body of Christ.

The old standard is the only true standard. We must go back to go forward. God must be heard. His Word must be honored. It must be read, studied, revered, learned, loved, obeyed. No substitute was, is, or ever can be found. There is in fact only one evil—one mighty mainspring of apostacy—in all christendom:—a practical rejection of Heaven's pure truth found in that book we call the bible. All divisions will be healed—all animosities quelled—all cold-hearted rituals dissolved—all tyranny and proscription chased into the regions of non-existence—all human headship and leadership effectually curbed and forever bound over to keep the peace;—all this, and much more, will result to the world of professors when the writings of the Spirit, the unmixed teachings of God, shall hold the rank among men they were designed by Heaven to occupy.

CONDUCTOR.

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## REFORMATION.

### No. VIII.

THE influence of personal attachments in religion is a matter of too much importance not to merit a greater degree of consideration than we have yet given it.

It would be a small matter, indeed, to exchange the dicta of one fallible teacher for those of another; or to transfer spiritual fealty from

one spiritual usurper to another. Yet such has been the result, for the most part, of religious revolutions which have even moved the very foundations of society, and changed the entire political condition of nations. Such movements, indeed have often more affinity to politics than piety, and will never fail to betray their true nature, in the course of their progress, by the character of their effects. Allied to mere temporal interests, and based upon worldly ambition, they can accomplish only selfish ends, or, at most, give rise to beneficial changes accidentally, rather than necessarily and legitimately.

But how different was the progress of that spiritual revolution effected under the labors of Christ and the Apostles! With what sedulous care did they avoid all entangling connexions with the world; all corrupting admixture of things temporal with things spiritual; all substitution of interior interests and objects for the transcendent glories of the heavenly kingdom. With what singular ingenuity did our Lord escape from the snares of political religionists, and with what consummate skill did he introduce doctrines and principles directly opposed to all that the world admires and worships. And with what watchfulness did his Apostles guard against the carnality of selfish attachment, and with what noble indignation repel all love and homage which were not rendered to Christ alone! It is to the influence of their precepts, and to the power of these examples of unselfish devotion and self-denying obedience, that we may justly attribute whatever the world has since witnessed of the triumphs of the divine principle of faith, and the disinterestedness of Christian love.

The perversion or misdirection of the sentiment of personal regard, and a corruption of Christianity by worldly or political alliances, are naturally associated. The self-complacency that can willingly receive misplaced attachment, or venture to interpose unfounded claims, or transient popularity, between Christ and the entire affections of the human heart, can seek only to promote thereby the selfish purposes of an ambition which belongs exclusively to the world, and which however disguised by the mask of religion, find its highest enjoyment in the pride of power, and in a domination, which will be always found, at length, to be a true political, as well as a spiritual despotism.

Every such misdirection of regard, however, is disloyalty to the Messiah. To him alone should be "the gathering of the people:" to him alone the subjection of the soul, and the homage of the affections. His character should be the constant subject of contemplation; his actions and his teachings unfailing sources of edification and delight.

A sacred intimacy should be established with him in the heart. A conviction of his presence, and an undoubting reliance upon his faithfulness and power, should sustain and encourage amidst every trial. In short, the relations which are to be created and maintained with him are of a nature so close; so endearing; so social; so absorbing, that the real Christian desires to know him only, and to dwell with him for ever.

There is nothing in Christianity, indeed, which does not indicate that the great Leader it has presented to the world is to be accepted as such to the exclusion of every other; and that the ties which are to unite him with his followers, are of the closest and most enduring nature. Their intercommunion is of necessity personal, since it occurs between individual beings, and is carried on without any intermediate agency. The address in PRAYER is direct; particular; personal. The divine presence which it invokes can be no less so. The righteous still "walk with God," as they still address to him their petitions. He also "dwells" with his people, and "hearkens" to their supplications. He never leaves them nor forsakes them. He is "a God at hand, and not a God afar off." Indeed, the great purpose of the gospel is expressly declared to be to introduce the faithful into a high and holy "fellowship" with "the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." To be without this, is to be "without God and without hope in the world;" while to enjoy it, is to possess that eternal life which was "with the Father and was manifested to the world."

Hence it is that every thing in true religion is designed to create and promote this direct and personal communion. The New Testament itself is almost wholly a history of a person—of the "things" which Jesus did and said, by which his character is fully developed before us, and he is presented to the heart as an object of supreme love, veneration, and trust. It is, for the most part, of a simple narration of the past events, or a prophetic annunciation of future facts concerning him who is "the First and the Last," "the Alpha and the Omega" in all the revelations of God. It is not a formal treatise upon abstract doctrine; it presents no philosophical or systematized theology; it delivers no regularly digested plan of church government, and establishes no specific code of laws. On the contrary, it addresses itself to man who is a *person*; in order to reveal to him Christ who is also a *person*; so that Christianity is personal both as respects its subject and its object, as it is also in the nature of its application. It presents actions, and develops principles of action, and seeks to secure confor-



mity to its dictates by renewing the affections, and enthroning in these a once crucified, but now living and exalted Saviour.

It is to him also that the *institutions* of the gospel have a direct relation. The ordinance of baptism is strikingly commemorative of the three great facts which the gospel reveals. The Lord's day is a memorial of the resurrection; and it is Jesus himself who has instructed his disciples when partaking of the emblems of his sacrifice, to "do this in remembrance" of HIM.

It is, indeed the abiding consciousness of this individual and personal relationship to Christ, through faith, and hope and love, that is the very means of the renovation of human character. He appeared in the likeness of man, to men, that he might be an *example* and a *leader* to his people. In the character of that fellowship which he, while on earth, maintained with the Father, we have a just exhibition of the communion which is to be enjoyed by the faithful in Christ Jesus. He, too, prayed to God, and "was heard." He entreated that his disciples should be admitted to that union and fellowship which he enjoyed, and be made perfect in that oneness with the Father which it was the very object of his mission to accomplish. John; c. xvii.

He while on earth, had respect constantly to the approbation of the Father. To do the will of him that sent him was his delight. To rest in his love and fellowship was his only solace. And as he continually looked to God for love, for honor, for approval, so has he counselled his disciples, in leaving with them the light of his example. It is this constant and direct reference to God through Jesus Christ, that is the very means appointed for the renovation of human character. All may be briefly summed up in that imitation of the divine character; that "walking with God;" that fellowship with the Father;" that "labor to be accepted of him," and to "please" him, to which we have so many apostolic exhortations. It is not a mere slavish submission to law, or a scrupulous adherence to forms, that Christianity enjoins. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"—not, indeed, the liberty to dispense with any of the divine commands, or change the institutions of religion; but the emancipation of the soul from the bondage of ignorance and vice, to the freedom of righteousness; from the reluctant submission of a slave, to the willing service of a son; from the thralldom of the letter, to the liberty imparted by holy and heartfelt principles. We are not called by the gospel to be again enslaved by traditions; to have our minds subjected to the tyranny of doctrinal opinions, or to be bound hand and foot by the grave-clothes of Judaism.

The very excellency of the gospel consists in its power to release the soul from the chains of darkness, and to give life to the dead. And when it has thus raised an individual from the corruption and darkness of the world, its command is, "Loose him and let him go." He is now to walk abroad in the light and liberty of heaven; to have companionship with Jesus; to enjoy the confidence of friendship, and to experience the sympathies of a pure and exalted love,—a personal affection which can have no other aim or purpose than to please the object on which it rests.

How superior such a position; such principles; such relations, to a cold and barren intellectual assent to theological abstractions elaborated by a party leader; to sentences arranged by art and man's device, and regarded with almost superstitious reverence, as a religious amulet, an effectual charm against the wiles of Satan, and all the dangers of reprobation! How strange the infatuation through which men can be induced to rely for salvation upon a mere belief of certain points of doctrine; a tenacious adherence to a nicely adjusted system of religious philosophy, or a cabalistic regard for a particular form of expression! The divine philanthropy has certainly not based the enjoyment of eternal life upon the capacity to understand metaphysical subtleties, or upon the power of making nice distinctions in language. Yet what have been the chief strifes and controversies of Christendom, but debates of words, and contentions about matters remote, recondite, and even unrevealed! These, however ingeniously elaborated and arranged, have no power to warm the affections or renovate the character. On the contrary, they serve but to cultivate the pride of opinion and the intolerance of bigotry. They lead not the soul to Christ, but to the founder and supporter of a party. They fill not the heart with divine love, but with an earthly and a selfish passion. Nothing but that which tells of Jesus, and presents him to the mind as an everliving object of personal regard and imitation, can elevate and enoble human nature.

The Christian should hence be exceedingly jealous of any influence which interposes itself between him and this direct and personal attachment, or which leads him to substitute an overweening reverence for a fallible and mere human teacher, for an abiding sense of the condescension and love of God, or that entire devotion to Him which is its legitimate result. It is not, indeed, primarily so much our regard for others as *our sense of what we seem to them*, that moulds and fashions us through life. It is the consciousness of the value which God has put

upon us; of the love which He entertains for us, which must ever be the formative principle in the renewal of the character. We love Him because he first loved us, and His love to us shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, gives assurance that our hope in Him shall never be disappointed. It is, then, upon this love that the minds of men should be concentrated, and upon the person and character of Christ that their affections should be placed, and it is the object of this reformation to produce this result by withdrawing the religious community from party tenets and party leaders, and fixing their attention upon the gospel facts and the great basis on which Christianity itself reposes.

R. R.

*For the Witness of Truth.*

### INTERESTING FROM BROTHER A. CLENDENAN.

*Wainfleet, September, 1848.*

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—Desiring to enjoy a rich spiritual feast, I left home, Aug. 22nd, to attend the yearly meeting in Canfield, Ohio. Landing at Ashtabula, I proceeded the best way I could, having arrived two hours too late for the stage. A stranger, and in a strange country, I travelled not knowing the habitation of a brother short of the meeting; but walking on supported with the hope of being soon in the midst of a joyful multitude, I fortunately fell in with an individual professing the primitive faith, who gladly directed me to brethren living in Eagleville, only a few miles distant. I thanked God and took courage. A few hours walk brought me to the welcome and comfortable mansion of brother Bartholomew, an evangelist.

Onward I marched to the meeting, which began Friday, 3 o'clock P. M., 25th August. The house being soon filled, brother Green addressed the audience, to the edification of all, after which the assembly appointed brother Cyrus Bosworth, assisted by brother Perkey, to preside over the meeting. Saturday morning, 9 o'clock, we met at the tent, under which some three or four thousand persons were comfortably seated. This tent swinging in the air, and situated within the borders of a beautiful forest, was a delightful object to behold. The assemblage on this day was great, and the preaching edifying. The speakers were, brethren Army, Dr. Robison, A. S. Hayden, and I. Erret. Several presented themselves for baptism. The scene was glorious.

The idea was quite prevalent that brother Campbell would not be present in consequence of ill health, and my anxiety was considerable on

this account; but we were not assembled more than an hour ere he, to the joy of the congregated thousands, was seen ascending the stand in which some thirty evangelists were seated. Brother Campbell spoke none this day, but simply remained an humble and devoted hearer. The day was closed by an address from David Bernard, a baptist clergyman, on the necessity of having a correct translation of the Bible, a copy of which he presented to our view, much improved by certain gifted individuals in the State of New York.

Met. Lord's day morning at 9 o'clock. After prayer and energetic exhortation, brother Bosworth announced that we would receive an address from Alexander Campbell. The number of the people assembled was truly astonishing—estimated at 7000 souls. He read from the 13th to the 20th verse of *Mat.* 16th chap.; also *Isaiah* 28th chap. and 16th verse, in order to show the foundation of the christian Church and the christian hope. Elder Bernard was so well pleased with the address that he publicly expressed his approbation, and requested brother Campbell to prepare a copy of the discourse for publication. The speakers who occupied the day after this address, were brethren Robison, Erret, and A. S. Hayden. The multitude partaking of the Lord's supper was very great. How consoling to meet with thousands of saints, and in harmony sit down to honor the institution of the Saviour. At the conclusion of this day several were immersed, when we all separated feeling to rejoice and thank God for the things heard and done. Monday morning met again at the usual hour. The brethren occupying the time were Lauphear, Green, Arny, Robison, Erret, and A. Campbell. My pen is too feeble to describe the scene of this day. It was decidedly the happiest day of my whole existence. Zeal, harmony, and solemnity prevailed. O how I wished that an angel, with his celestial trumpet, might bid the brethren and sisters in Canada to assemble quickly to this hallowed spot, to share the scene replete with heavenly bliss. The things of earth were here forgotten. The consolation of the christian and the salvation of sinners, were topics filling every heart. It should be remembered that a principal source of the happiness flowing from this meeting was the singing—the best I ever heard, and in my judgement not to be excelled. While on the subject of vocal music I wish to state that brother A. S. Hayden is now publishing a new Music-book, to appear about the middle of December next. The work is on an improved plan, and because of its simplicity it will no doubt meet the approbation of the whole brotherhood. Good music in the christian church has charms

for me. There was a sweet melodious voice distinctly heard amid the thousands composing the Canfield meeting. Its rich enchanting strains reached my soul and carried me in imagination amid supernatural beings. It was the voice of Rhoda Dean, brother Hayden's sister. Brother and sister Dean, whose mansion was my home during the meeting, are burning and shining lights in the kingdom of the Saviour.

The meeting came to a most happy conclusion—the whole number immersed was thirty-eight. Brother Campbell giving the concluding prayer, we separated to meet again, a few of us, if the Lord willed, at Bedford, near Cleveland, the Friday following the termination of the Canfield meeting, to enjoy another luxurious spiritual feast.

Friday afternoon came, and we were once more pleasantly seated under the same circular tent brought from Canfield to Bedford, a distance of 60 miles. This day was occupied with addresses delivered to the church by brethren A. B. Green, J. H. Jones, W. Hayden, and A. S. Hayden. These discourses were eloquent, encouraging, and animating, particularly that spoken by the bold athletic and energetic pioneer, Wm Hayden. Saturday morning brought a multitude assembled from various parts of the state. Elder Clark, a baptist, arose to unfold the claims of the "American and Foreign Bible Society," and brother Campbell followed with an address on the same subject, showing the importance of christians uniting to send the holy Bible to the destitute in foreign lands.

The remainder of the day was taken up with addresses delivered by brethren Green, Jones, and W. Hayden, after which three arose for baptism, one of whom was a little girl about nine years of age. O how pleasant to behold this tender, lovely, dove-like child buried with the Lord in baptism. Brethren and sisters wept for joy, and angels sweetly singing, carried the joyful news above. "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you, for his name's sake."

Lord's day morning the audience numbered about five thousand, and brother Wm. Hayden being called upon, gave a most energetic exhortation to the saints, after which brother Campbell arose in much feebleness of body to address us upon a passage found in 1st *Tim.* 3rd ch., last verse, making his remarks principally upon the declaration "justified in the spirit." This address was considered by all to be of great strength, and most towering sublimity, especially that portion referring to the coronation of Messiah. O that the whole world could have heard this discourse! This interesting meeting closed on Monday. The number immersed during the meeting, twenty-two. Being filled

with all good things I left for Cleveland, where, to my great joy, I accidentally fell in with brother Wilcox who was one of the pioneers of the reformation in this province. Through the mercy of the Lord I safely arrived home—glad once more to see my brethren and sisters.

Farewell,

A. CLENDENAN.

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### OUR JOURNEY TO OHIO.

It is due to the brethren to know how and where we employ our time. We have lately enjoyed a trip to the State of Ohio, and more especially have we enjoyed the society of the Lord's people in that State; and as we seldom have occasion to keep any secrets either regarding our locality or employment, we are ready to take a few notes of our travels

About a week after the 1st of September, we were on our way to Cleveland, with the double design of attending one or two of the Western Reserve annual meetings, and afterwards to attend an assembly of Editors at Cincinnati, announced to meet on the 22nd of September. Each of these principal objects was again divided into two; for we not only desired to be present at the great meetings on the Reserve for our own individual happiness and advancement, but also for the purpose of finding a speaking brother to labour as an Evangelist in Canada; and in our visit to Cincinnati, we anticipated a useful personal acquaintance with a majority of the public writers in the Reformation, and also a large budget of knowledge and experience such as editors have occasion to possess and develope.

We made it convenient to take a passing note of the great annual Agricultural Exhibition at Buffalo. It was not without religious edification and improvement we mixed with the multitude that flocked to this large convention of the friends of agriculture, art, and science. Immediately after witnessing the energy, enterprise, and active policy of the principal agents and actors of this grand Show, we could have desired to meet a few hundred of those sleepy-souled professors of Christianity, who, like some of ancient memory, will not be active themselves, and who corrode the activity of others, and to have preached to them from what we saw and heard at the Fair. The affairs of the "children of this world" are managed with a dexterity and a policy altogether worthy of wise men, while the "children of light," with all their wisdom, are left far in the advance rear.

On the 10th of September, Lord's day morning, we assembled with the

brethren who were holding a meeting of four days, at Mogadore, some fifty miles south east of Cleveland. It was computed that between three and five thousand were present. Fifteen preachers, the most of whom we knew personally, were in attendance. Forthwith we declared our mission, and searched as for hid treasure to find a good workman to labor in this province. Remaining until Monday, and making all inquiry, we found it a fruitless effort to gain over or convert a preacher to our cause. One or two, indeed, as it respects disposition, would have consented with all readiness; but other engagements prevented.

There was indeed one indication on the part of one or two brethren at this meeting, in reference to our errand, that we are free to confess, did not to us appear amiable. And what gave it more weight, was the fact of its publicity. In answer to our request for assistance, it was in substance said—"You have more talent in Canada than we have here in Ohio: go to work and help yourselves." Taking for granted, in our intellectual charity for ourselves, that this assertion was true, the spirit and sympathy of the expression are at variance with the spirit and sympathy of our religion. There is no magnanimity here: for if the brethren in Canada possess much talent, the fact of their sending for additional assistance argued one of two things; either that they did not know their own talents, or that they did not use them. And in either case, the language of benevolence would have been—"We will hear this call; the brethren in Canada have abundant talent, but they are not using it, either because they do not know they have it, or because they are not enterprising enough to use it. We will go and teach them their own gifts, or if necessary show by precept and example how they should be stirred up to use their gifts."

Still, the rebuke, had those who are guilty been present, was deserved and therefore just. And is it true that we are in this country to continue like a great watch, containing valuable works and excellent workmanship, but without a mainspring?

But the meeting in Mogadore, notwithstanding this aberration from christian amiability, was, in other respects, highly entertaining and edifying. For our part we had a feast of good things. It was, we heartily believe, an assembly where the Lord was honored. We felt that we were amply paid for our journey by this single meeting. During its continuance, between twenty and twenty-five confessed Jesus. The brethren proved themselves greatly persevering and nobly earnest in persuading sinners to obey the Lord—there was in their efforts a powerful zeal, worthy of themselves and the Lord's cause.

Kindly helped forward by brother Army, of Bethany, whom we met at the above meeting, we proceeded to the Ohio River and thence to Bethany. This was on our way to Cincinnati; but we learned on reaching the *Harbinger* office that the Editors' meeting was postponed for a whole month. Not being prepared to remain so long from home, the resolution was made to return immediately. It was our privilege however to remain in Bethany over Lord's day, September 17th, and to spend the greater part of the day with brethren known in times past. We heard an address by the Principal of the College at the morning meeting; and as it was announced that "brother Oliphant, from Canada, would deliver an address at five o'clock," we had not the honour of hearing, but the privilege of speaking in the afternoon. Standing in the same spot, where, six years before, in making our first public effort, we made a splendid failure, it was not without thanks to God we reflected upon the power and self-control attainable by the combined merits of resolution and application.

Finding no available proclaimer in that region, and little prospect of meeting with one in any direction, we bid farewell and deliberately hasted toward Oshawa. While on our return, having proceeded as far as Warren, Ohio, still on the alert for a co-labourer, by a peculiar train of incidents—which some would call accidental and others providential—we were taken to Youngstown, the residence of brother Wesley Lanphear, whom, we are happy to say, consented to labour for a short period on Canadian ground, much to our own consolation, and the consolation of many. The brethren for whom brother Lanphear laboured, are entitled to the registry of their magnanimity and comprehensive good feeling; for although much attached to their speaker, and ardently desirous of his continued presence and assistance, they "with all readiness" consented to his departure for a season to labour in this province.

Through the goodness of Him who is the "Keeper of Israel," brother Lanphear and myself arrived safely in Oshawa, Friday evening, October 6th, being prepared after one day's recreation to begin a week's meeting on the Lord's day following.

We shall endeavour to furnish a definite account of brother Lanphear's labours both in this and other places in our next.

CONDUCTOR.

October, 19th.



*For the Witness of Truth.*

## A SHORT DISCOURSE

FOR THOSE WHO EXCUSE THEMSELVES FOR LIVING IN DISOBEDIENCE TO  
THE GOSPEL, ON THE GROUND OF INABILITY.

TEXT: *John xv. 22*, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak (excuse) for their sin."

The language of Jesus, and the language of modern theories, differ widely from each other. Jesus taught that the man that heard the truth, was left without an excuse before God. But teachers now, often say, we have lost all power or ability to think, speak, or do that which is right and exceptable to God; until the Lord shall by an act of special power, regenerate us, and make us alive to God through Jesus Christ. Reader, remember it was the *lost* that Jesus came to *save*. It was those dead in sin, that he came to make alive to righteousness. And he affirms that he has left the world without excuse before him: will you presume before God to make one? Pause, I beseech you, and consider with whom you have to deal.

But we are told, that an Apostle has said, we were "*Dead* in trespasses and sins." So we were, but does that prove that we were *disabled*, and had no power to do the will of God *when it was told to us!* Jesus said that by his teaching the will of God, he had left the people without excuse. Does his language then justify the doctrine that it is "as much of a miracle to convert a sinner, as it was to raise Lazarus from the dead?" I know we are met with "the living act, the dead have no power in them; and the fleshly man cannot put forth spiritual power." Let us try this logic.

Paul says, *Rom. vi. 11*, that the *saints* were "*dead to sin.*" And in *Eph. ii. 1*, that *sinner*s were "*dead in sin.*" Now if the man dead *in sin*, cannot do that which is *right*, in order to be accepted, *for the want of power*, then the saints who are dead *to sin*, cannot do that which is *wrong*, for the want of the same power to act. And so it comes to pass that as the fleshly man cannot put forth spiritual power, so neither can the spiritual man put forth carnal power. What then becomes of all the commands given to sinners to repent, and the exhortations to the saints to "present their bodies a living sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable!" Call on a sinner to repent, when he can no more repent than he can create a world! Call on the saints to "shun every appearance of evil," when they could no more do wrong than they could raise the foundations of the earth! What strange liberties we take with the Bible!

But let us enquire again. Did not Satan address our mother Eve just as he found her,—in all her innocence and purity; just as she came from the hand of her Maker? And notwithstanding her purity, did she not understand him? Or, did he convert her to himself, and destroy all power to serve the Lord before he spoke to her? If Satan by his word turned the heart of Eve to his will, is the Lord's word less effectual than Satan's? But why spend so much time in refuting such things? Let us come to facts. Jesus and the Apostles preached to the people just as they found them. And as Satan spake to Eve in the state of purity in which he found her, and with the same innocence in which she came from the hand of her Creator, so Paul preached to the Athenians, *Acts xvii*, who were dead in sin, and held in Satan's bondage. And what is his language? "The times of this *ignorance*, God winked at, but *now* commands *all men every where* to repent." He told them of no inability *now*, when they had heard the truth. But there was a time, when they could not believe, nor repent for the want of a knowledge of God and his will. But that was a "time of *ignorance*." Hence Paul says, *Eph. iv*: 18, "being alienated from the life of God through the *ignorance* that is in them" &c. Ignorance and alienation of necessity go together. So does knowledge and love. Hence says *John*, 1st Epistle, *iv*: 8, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." He that knows God loves him, for he is love. The inspired teachers do not disagree. Let their words then have their full weight, and remember, you have no excuse for your sin. Your duty is before you; *and your eternal destiny is at stake*. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little." "Blessed are all those that put their trust in him." Amen.

A. B. GREEN.

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## DISCUSSION.

### INFLUENCE OF THE SPIRIT.

*To the Editor of the Witness of Truth.*

THE heart of man being depraved and hardened by sin, blinded by the deceitfulness of its own vain imaginations, disposed to sin as the sparks fly upwards, it cannot change itself; and hence if man is to be changed, it must be by some other power than that which he possesses. That he is to be changed, or never see the kingdom of God, or enter it, is certain: for no impure thing shall enter there. God cannot look upon sin with the least allowance. Purity only dwells in His holy

presence, in the presence of Him who is a Spirit, and the Father of Spirits.

Now although man is thus blind, hardened, and corrupt from his rebellions against God, God pities man in his degraded, sunken, lost, and ruined condition. He was once the noblest of his creation, created for glory and immortality and eternal life. God still delights, not in his death, but that he would turn and live. Hence the Spirit comes to teach man, to reprove him of his sins, to tell of righteousness and the necessity of being righteous, and warn him of a future judgment, in order to his conversion to, and acceptance with, God. By it the heart which is so deceitful and desperately wicked becomes changed. "Son, give me thy heart." "I will take away your stony heart, and give you a heart of flesh," says God, "and I will write my law upon it." The Spirit's work is to change the heart, and to lead man into the good and right way, in the pure path of peace, for God says, "I will lead you by my Spirit," and as many as are "led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God." Those who are taught of the Spirit, do "mind the things of the Spirit."

Thus it is evident that it is the work of the Spirit to dispose the heart to know God, and to love and obey him, doing that which the Spirit teaches, which is pleasing to God, mortifying the deeds of the body through the Spirit, for the apostle says, those who thus do "shall live," consequently are accepted of God. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and death." It teaches the sinner to pray; for they know not what they should ask for as they should except the "Spirit maketh intercession for them with groanings that cannot be uttered." "And he that searcheth the hearts," who is God, "knows what is the mind of the Spirit." Was it not for this, the sinner would still remain in his ignorance, consequently in his sins; therefore well may the sinner say "Come Holy Spirit, heavenly dove, with all thy quickening powers; kindle a flame of sacred love, and that shall kindle ours." The sinner's heart is cold and deadened while in his sins, "but the Spirit giveth life."

Yours in hope of that life,

A METHODIST.

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REMARKS BY WAY OF REPLY.

*Friend Methodist* :—Whatever the weight, cogency, or logical power of your arguments, you are, I am pleased to see, pursuing "the even

tenor of your way" with a zeal and a resolute devotion worthy of the cardinal question under review. I will follow you, for a time, "whithersoever you go."

Your first sentence declares three vital truths, acknowledged by the whole protestant world. First, that man's heart is depraved, deceived, and hardened; secondly, that man cannot change his own heart; and in the third place, the heart, if changed, must be influenced by something superior to human power. To these specifications I yield my hearty concurrence. It is however in the application of these we are led into controversy; for while both you and I say that no man has the power to convert himself, and while we also agree that no man is converted without the Spirit, we forthwith come into contact respecting the manner of the Spirit's operation. You say the Spirit operates without means: I say it operates by or through means. This is the jet of the whole discussion; and I shall keep it in dazzling brightness, like crystal before the sun, that all may see it.

I will now select three of the strongest passages you quote, of popular currency on your side of the question, and ascertain how much justice you have done either to your own cause or to God's book.

"The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God." First, then, Paul believed in a Spirit that bore witness: I understand you to believe in a Spirit that bears no witness, but is itself the naked power of God to seize a sinner by the heart, and set him free without law, judge, jury, or witness. In the second place, the apostle is speaking of "children of God" as the subjects of the power, comfort, and influence of the Spirit: you, I understand, are expressing yourself concerning the Spirit's influence on sinners, and therefore you are far from the bounds of logic or sound theology to quote what Paul says of children of God and apply it to children of this world. We should all learn that there are three ways of quoting scripture;—to rightly divide it; to wrongly divide it; and not to divide it at all.

Again, you quote, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free" &c. *The law of the Spirit*, is not the Spirit singly and alone. A better passage to prove what I believe, and disprove what you believe, you could not perhaps find in the whole epistle to the Romans. We have, then, authority for saying that the Spirit has a law, and by that law there is life and freedom. Have you quoted this passage so often, and never observed this word *law*? Although then the apostle has not here in his eye the conversion of sinners, but the position of the Jew in reference to the Mosaic and Christian institu-

tions, yet he gives evidence to those who hear him that the Spirit operates by law.

The third passage to be reviewed is the greatest perversion of all—greatest, not in character but in degree. To bring forward your proof, you first assert that the Spirit teaches sinners to pray, (an assertion as groundless as a Mahomedan paradise,) and then you say that the “Spirit makes intercession for them with groanings that cannot be uttered.” What havoc this makes of the divine writings. Now, my friend, hear the apostle, for he is writing to his brethren in Rome, and says, “We know not what we”—we who? we God’s people—“should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us”—us? ah! us sinners?—no, but us the people of God. In the next verse also he speaks of the Spirit making intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And besides, the weakest reader might know by the effects that this Spirit could not possibly be the one in which you believe; for its groanings cannot be uttered; but the Spirit in your theory is full of groanings which are uttered in all possible forms.

May I yet hope for some proofs of your theory of conversion?

Respectfully yours,

D. OLIPHANT.

“TAKE HEED.”

PERMIT me to say to brother Oliphant, and to all his correspondents, to *beware of speculations*. Many of our reasonings are unreasonable, and many of our truths are untrue. Not so with *revealed truths*. They are all true. Many of our own truths that are true, are nevertheless unimportant. Not so of revealed truths. They are all important. Many of our truths are very obscure. Not so of revealed truths. They are all clear. The love of philosophy, since the days of Melancthon and Calvin, has wrought much evil. The time has arrived to seek a return to what is “written for our learning.” We ought to be men of *faith* rather than men of philosophy. Let no man pride himself in his reasoning powers, but let him enjoy himself in his *faith in God*.

Yours in the truth,

A. P. J.

AFFAIRS OF THE WITNESS.

Unexpectedly, on my late return, taking up the October number of this paper. my attention was called to an address from two esteemed

brethren, mainly designed for the brotherhood of these regions. My first impression, on glancing over the address, was, that nothing had been communicated by me which could have originated or been the occasion of a document of this character; but after reflecting, it was recollected that a letter had been penned to a brother who resides in the direction whence the address came, and that possibly through this medium the information was obtained leading to the preparation of the article to which allusion is now made.

The letter already mentioned was written to a brother, who is a brother to me both in the flesh and in the spirit, and a faithful counsellor in all matters which pertain to christian duty. A few facts were stated, and a single question asked. That question, in substance, was, *Will I be justifiable, morally and religiously justifiable, in discontinuing the Witness at the close of its third volume?* It was not the expediency or the in expediency of the discontinuance; it was not my personal pleasure in the existence or non-existence of the work; it was not whether I could or would be more extensively employed in this country or some other country; but it was in simple terms, whether, as a man and a christian, under the circumstances, I would be justified in ceasing to Edit the Witness. The facts and data were conclusive to myself: I only waited the concurrence of one mind and one heart to carry this conclusion into execution.

I am, or profess to be, a matter-of-fact man. I have only one life to live, and this one life must not be thrown away. Thrown away it will be, should I make the attempt to perform singly the work of more than a score. This has been seen from the commencement. Nothing new leading to this conclusion has been developed. My views, my designs, my principles, in reference to this chapter of duty, were distinctly and fearlessly declared in the first volume. It is well known to those who should know, that, in accordance with those views, designs and principles, I had resolved to retire from the position of a public writer; and it is well known that the arrangements, promises, and pledges of some eight or ten churches prevented for the time being this resolution from actual and legitimate enforcement.

My creed, in reference to the affair of Editing, has always been about the same, and seems to run thus:—

1st. No Editor, any more than an Elder, should appoint himself.

2nd. An Editor, when appointed, should have the co-operating sympathy, pecuniary aid, and corresponding assistance of those inter-

ested in the cause he pleads,—else his appointment virtually becomes a nullity.

3rd. No Editor should be his own agent, or at least not his own agent exclusively.

4th. A religious Editor, especially, since engaged in a work which emphatically belongs to every good man as he has ability, should have the most active sympathy of all, not only to keep him at his post, but to render his labours extensively useful. Counsels, prayers, means, letters, essays, new readers, come under this head.

It will be seen by the following Circular that a plan is now proposed, which, if executed with spirit and electric resolution, will operate as a resurrection and give vigour and enduring power to this paper. Unity of effort, and activity of effort, are the two things most in demand. These we must have, or be frozen in the valleys that lie on the other side of "Greenland's icy mountains." Did the continuance and prosperity of this work depend solely or chiefly upon the perseverance, patience, and enterprize of a single person, I have enough personal charity to say that it would not only live, but give life, and that abundantly. But it calls for more than single-handed perseverance. Co-operation, in some form, is indispensable. A periodical may exist for a year or two by the extra interest and self-sacrifice of a very few; but death will finally be pronounced upon it unless heartily received and actively assisted by its leading readers. Hence we find new periodicals springing into existence—living a sickly and briefly troublesome life—passing speedily into the grave, seized with a fatal fit of asthma, or smit with the quick consumption. Better for us all to become acquainted with the history of periodicals, religious as well as literary and political, and we shall then know precisely where we are, and where we may expect to be, according to all reasonable or human reckoning.

The *Witness* is itself among the proofs of what is here affirmed. Among the brethren where the proposition was first submitted that I should get up a religious paper, there were three members who gave twenty dollars each for the first year. This could not continue. No man could expect it. Nor could it be rationally expected that an editor would continue to devote time and perform labour equal in value annually to some fifteen or twenty times that sum, and part of his own means besides, for the purpose of continuing a work in which all are considered to be equally interested. It is true that the hope of glory and immortality is a reliable promissory reward; available at the second appearing of the Saviour, but it must be remembered that bills

of exchange payable on sight are often necessary in our present transactions. But let us attend to the

## C I R C U L A R.

At a meeting of the Disciples in Oshawa with reference to the *Witness of Truth*, the address to the brethren in Canada, published in the last Number of the *Witness*, having been read and approved,—in answer to the questions therein contained, it was

*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this church the *Witness of Truth* should become the property of the brethren in Canada; that in order to insure its success the churches should pledge themselves to receive and pay for 700 copies, to be paid half yearly in advance.

*Resolved*, That brother Stone be sent as an agent to the several churches in the province, to obtain the names of two or more persons in each church, who will become liable for the number of copies to be received by the church to which they belong.

*Resolved*, That brother D. Oliphant continue the Conductor of the *Witness*, and that he receive the security as aforesaid for the above number of copies.

A. FAREWELL, ESQ.,  
W. MCGILL, M. D.,  
M. B. STONE,  
J. ASH.

Oshawa, 19th October, 1848.

A request was made that I should accompany brother Stone while visiting the churches agreeably to the preceding resolves; and this may be expected in all cases when practicable. Brethren, now is the time to act. Think calmly; resolve deliberately; speak freely and candidly; but act determinedly and enterprisingly. "What you do, do quickly." "Work while it is day." "Night cometh when no man can work." God still has a book of record,—angels can still take unerring note of our actions,—and it will not be long before each hears for himself, the irresistible summons, saying, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

"Happy that servant who is found watching at his master's return."

Your brother and fellow-labourer,

D. OLIPHANT.

## SPECIAL NEWS.

Wainfleet, Sept. 16th, 1848.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—Since my return from the Canfield Meeting, we have enjoyed a visit from brother Stewart, who has spoken three discourses in this place, to the edification of the church and the instruction of the community. The result is an addition to our num-



ber of six happy converts, who were this day immersed in the waters of Lake Erie. Thank the Lord for the power of truth.

A. CLENDENAN.

*Wainfleet, Oct. 6th, 1848.*

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—I have occasion again to write to you. Every christian no doubt rejoices to hear of the progress of the glad tidings which proclaims deliverance to the captives and liberty to them that are bound. No sight more pleasing—no sound more harmonious, than to see and hear of sinners obeying the gospel of salvation. We have lately enjoyed seasons of refreshment and encouragement in our congregation. Since my letter to you of September 16th, three persons—two of whom amid fierce opposition—have been baptized in conformity with the apostle's declaration—"repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ." Others are almost persuaded to do likewise. O may they

"Haste and escape the threatening storm,  
Believe in Jesus and reform."

A. CLENDENAN.

Some other documents forwarded by our brother Clendenan will appear in our next.

D. O.

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### OBITUARY.

*Berlin, August 25th, 1848.*

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—Permit me to record upon the pages of the *Witness* the death of our sister ANN WISLER, eldest daughter of brother John D. Wisler, who departed this life on the 17th of July, in the triumph of faith and the blessed hope of a glorious Immortality, in the 13th year of her age.

The closing scene of her earthly career was very affecting. When she felt that the "silver chord" was about to be "loosed," she called her friends around her, and admonished them all, particularly her younger sister, to be kind and dutiful; after which she gave them the parting kiss and the final farewell, and said she had made her peace with God, and then closed her eyes and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus without a sigh or a groan.

Much as I sympathized with her sorrowing relations, I said to myself, weep not but rejoice that another of the Lord's loved ones is safely landed on the other side of Jordan, in that land where the "wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

CYRUS N. BOWERS.

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☞ A number of communications will receive attention when we enter another month.

D. O.