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THE

WITNESS OF TRUTH.

Vol. IV. OSHAWA, NOVEMBER, 1849.

No. 11.

A DISCOURSE.

THE following is a discourse from the pen of brother William Hayden. It is like himself—bold, independent, strong, scriptural, useful. We speak for it a well digested reading. We are assured, that, on both sides of the line running between Canada and the American territory, there are places where this discourse will be peculiarly applicable:—D O.

Chagrin Falls, Ohio.

“And there was a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.”

False ambition has perhaps been productive of more evil to the human race, than any other cause. It is nothing else than supreme selfishness. It sometimes assumes very specious names and appearances. When it strives for the mastery in the political world, it styles itself patriotism. Then you hear the demagogue eloquently pleading the interests of the “dear people,” the honor of his country, &c., while denouncing his competitors, as enemies to both. When it seeks for pre-eminence in the church, it shows itself in zeal for orthodoxy, for long established usages, &c. Or perchance it grows dissatisfied with all these, and would throw society into a ferment and proclaim “reform,” “progress with the spirit of the age,” placing itself at the head of parties, armies, and nations, or if disappointed in this, turning misanthrope, finds fault with every thing and complains of the ingratitude of mankind. In the Church, the individual no longer able to endure or fellowship the corruption and hypocrisy of his brethren, leaves the Church and concludes he can best serve his God, (i. e.) his own pride and envy, alone. Such persons are very zealous Christians so long as they can be put forward and have things in their own way. If an individual is suspected of possessing more of the confidence and esteem of the brethren than himself, he can never hear without pain, such brother commended, but to ease his mind with as good a grace as may be, he will admit there are some good qualities in the brother, “but” he has certain faults, which ought to be known in order to form a just estimate of his character.

Doubtless many deceive themselves into a notion that their motive

are pure, that it is the glory of God, and the interest of his cause they have at heart, when pride, envy, and jealousy lie at the bottom of all they say and do. Even the pure in heart, will have enough to do to keep themselves pure. The religion and morals of Paganism were quite consistent with, nay encouraged and patronized, this love of pre-eminence, insomuch that "a strife for mastery," in all their games and pursuits in peace and war, was most manifest. Their historians and poets, their painters and sculptors, published and extolled, celebrated and gave a sort of immortality to the successful aspirant, which in turn inflamed the ardor and fired the ambition of others. The consequences were, pride and all the warring passions of their nature were let loose and stimulated to the utmost, and the very gods indeed are supposed to be delighted with the contest, insomuch that envy, rage, malevolence, with all their consequences, filled the world.

The world could not possibly be reformed without a religion essentially different, which should cut off the very root of all those principles of action, and institute others, which should implant, cherish, and cultivate to perfection, the opposite of the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride or ambition of the world.

Christianity is the only system of religion and morals, that *can* bless the human race. Instead of pride, humility, instead of envy, esteem for others, instead of hatred and revenge gentleness, brotherly kindness and benevolence.

The gospel reveals to us the true state and condition of mankind, i. e. *all* guilty before God. With all their boasted attainments, discoveries, and improvements, their wisdom, learning, arts, pleasures and religion, *all wrong*, ignorant, false, vain, destructive to man, offensive to God, without God, without hope, lost. At the same time, the companion of the everlasting God, His truth, justice and mercy revealed in the sacrificing for our sins his only begotten Son, the humbling, repenting and submitting of ourselves to him, the infallible assurance of forgiveness, of resurrection and eternal life, and his eternal love, and the eternal condemnation of all who neglect the gospel, the whole sustained by miracles, signs, wonders and prophecies, addressed to the senses and reason of mankind, calling for immediate submission. Such a Proclamation honestly heeded, could not fail to reform the human race. Nothing else could do it. Hence the gospel, and nothing but the gospel, is "the power of God to the salvation of all who *really* believe it." 'Tis this and only this that makes man to know himself,—his origin, destiny, nature, relations, wants, wounds, sorrows and remedies. 'The value his Maker sets upon him, the vanity of the world and all its ambition and pomp, how empty and foolish its pleasures, how good and gracious is the Lord, how kind and gentle the Saviour, how dignified, majestic, powerful, rich and glorious, till his heart delighted and his soul enraptured with the love and philanthropy of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is reconciled in feeling, and obeys from the heart the gospel, being then free from sin, he is a child of God, an heir of glory; his spirit is full of joy abounding in all compassion to man his fellow.

True christianity makes true Christians, corrupt christianity makes at best imperfect Christians. In the latter case, however sincere, pride and all its attendant evils, will more or less prevail, in the former, union, humility, love, peace and good will, and all moral excellency, must be the fruit.

The first thing Christ said in his sermon on the mount, was. "Blessed are the the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Instead of extolling pride, ambition, turbulence &c. which have filled the earth with carnage, crimes and tears, he condemns them all and inculcates those principles which, however despised by heroes, poets, orators, statesman &c., are the only principles, that can promote "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will among men."

But alas! How slow to learn, how slow to practice the pure religion, the holy gospel of the Redeemer! And the disciples making their boasts of the Bible alone, how far from appreciating, honoring, and exhibiting pure christianity. Have we not seen envy and strife, insubordination, jealousy, rivalry and recklessness. "Which of us shall be accounted the greatest." I am not sure that this demon has not pursued at times persons of all stations, the obscure and private disciples, deacons, overseers, preachers, exhorters, editors. 'My sacred honor' is too often mistaken for the honor of Christ and his cause.— It is true, while we are clothed with mortality we shall be liable to faults and imperfections of character. We see such things every where, even in the "twelve," before they received power from on high. It is also to be lamented that men of the world choose rather to look at the imperfections of Christians, than at the perfections of christianity and its glorious author. But we cannot prevent it: they will not look at the religion of Christ but through its advocates; and therefore the Saviour said "let your light so shine before men, that others seeing your good works shall glorify your Father which is in heaven." And an Apostle said, "so is the will of God that with *well doing* you put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." And in no other way can we open the way to the human heart. Therefore how pertinent all the exhortations of the apostles to purity, humility, peace and love.

I would not be understood, however, to say there is no ambition to be cherished by the gospel, or that there is no true greatness to be aimed at by the Christian. Far from it. But the ambition and greatness here, is free from envy, and is compatible with the most pure and sincere esteem for all, even those who excel us. Christ said whoever wishes to be great must be servant. Now suppose a brother superior for talent, education, or property. That brother is not haughty nor overbearing; but gentle, kind, condescending, full of liberality and all goodness; affects no superiority in apparel, style or manners; seeks not applause, rather diffident than assuming, delighting in the happiness of others, taking pleasure in doing all he can to happy all around him, in his family, neighborhood, the Church and the world abroad; *who can envy him?* A man whose only superiority con-

sists in goodness, can not be envied by any man, saint or sinner, scarcely by a hypocrite.

Goodness, supreme goodness, no man can hate. No matter how much worth, talent, learning or fame be connected with it, if these be subordinate to goodness, and directed by wisdom, they *will* command the admiration and affection of the human heart. Therefore it is that we love God. Therefore it is that certain men will have an influence in society beyond others, and are not envied but beloved.

So, also, the *good man* cannot envy the rich brother while himself is poor, if the rich one is governed by goodness. And if rich, or learned, or talented, be he not a good man, though he be famed and admired and have an influence beyond what moral worth gives him, still his fame and influence must have an end, and his pride will have a fall; consequently he is not to be envied.—The sanction of the Lord reveals the end of such and we pity rather than envy them.

The true Christian may sing,

The world may round me rage and fight,
And lay in dust their highest throne,
There's nothing can that soul affright,
Who lives for God and him alone!

The greatest man in the world, then, is he who is most like the Saviour of men; who lays all his honor, gifts or attainments at the feet of Jesus, and gives him all the glory. It is he who abounds in all goodness, purity and godly fear. It is he whose soul is moved at the wretchedness of mankind, and is only concerned to see men redeemed and God glorified through Jesus Christ. It is he who has the last taste and is least attracted by the things admired and pursued by the giddy, gay, ungodly world of mankind, while he glories in the Lord.

Let us, dear brethren, be humble and love one another with pure hearts, fervently, and be careful to treat each other, and all men with kindness.

(From the Christian Baptist.)

WHAT DOES A 'SPECIAL CALL' IMPLY?

Every one moved by the Holy Spirit, or specially called to the preaching or teaching of christianity, is possessed of these three requisites—

- 1st. He has heard the voice of God calling him.
- 2d. He is qualified to speak infallibly.
- 3d. He is capable of confirming his testimony by divine attestations, or by the working of miracles.

Every ambassador of Christ, mentioned in the New Testament, possessed these three requisites. It is absurd, vain and presumptuous for any now to call themselves ambassadors of Christ, or to say that they are especially called to the ministry of the New Testament, who possess not these three essential attributes of the called ministers of the New Testament.

But some, unable to resist the evidence of the preceding facts and reasons, exclaim, What! have we no men among us called and sent by God? Stop my friend. What use have we for such men? Do we need any new message from the skies? No. *Divine messages require divine messengers.* If there be no need of a message from God, or a new revelation of the Spirit, then there is no need of new ambassadors, of new revealers, or new prophets. If the message of the twelve apostles, or if the revelation of the New Testament is incomplete, is imperfect, is inadequate, then we have need of a new message and new messengers from the skies. But until some bold genius undertakes to prove that there is need for a new revelation or a new message from God, we shall fearlessly declare, that while we have the writings of the four evangelists, the writings of Paul, of Peter, of James, of Jude and John, we want no new message from the skies—no ambassadors from Christ. In short, there is no need to have men among us professing to be “called and sent by God.” In the natural world we might as reasonably look for, and expect a new sun, or a new moon, and new stars; as, in the kingdom of Christ, to expect new ambassadors, new messages from God, new revelations of the Spirit. On this subject we have much to say; but in the meantime, we shall simply add, to prevent misapprehensions, that, as we have a revelation developing all the myteries of the love and benevolence of God toward sinners, through Christ, a revelation clear, simple, full and complete; it is the duty of every one who acknowledges it to be such, to devote his mind to it, and study it for himself.

Amongst those who believe and understand the Christian religion, there are individuals called, in the subordinate sense of the phrase, to sundry good works, of much profit to men. Those that are rich in this world, professing the faith, are called by the word God, written and read by all men, to communicate of their substance to the wants of the poor, to be ready to distribute, to be willing to communicate to the wants of the brotherhood, and to the wants of others. When a brother in distress appears in the presence of a brother rich in this world, the brother of a high degree is called by the word of God and the providence of God, or the circumstances of the case call upon him to put his hand into his pocket and to communicate to his distress. Just in the same sense, a brother who is well instructed into the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven who has attained to the full assurance of understanding of what Paul, and Peter, and James, and John, and the other writers of the New Testament have taught concerning the way of life and salvation; when he finds persons ignorant and unbelieving, either in public or private, is called by the word of God, and the circumstances of the case, to teach and preach Christ, or to show the things that the ambassadors have taught and authenticated; these things he may urge on their authority who confirmed their testimony with signs and wonders. And as it would be absurd and vain for the rich man to say that he was specially called and sent by God, or moved by the Spirit of God to give alms; so it would be absurd and vain for

the person possessed of the knowledge of the New Testament, to say that he was moved by the Holy Spirit, or specially called by its operations and sent by God to preach.

Besides this, there is another fact to which we would advert, viz, that when there is a voluntary association of any number of disciples of Christ, met in any one place to attend to the duties and privileges of a church, should they call any one of their own number, who possesses the qualifications belonging to the bishop or overseer, laid down by the Holy Spirit in the written word; and should they appoint him to office, as the Holy Spirit has taught them in the same written word—then it may be said to such a person, "Take heed to yourself and to the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseer." But this bishop, of whom we have now spoken, is neither priest, ambassador, minister of religion, clergyman, nor a reverend divine; but simply one that has the oversight of one voluntary society, who, when he leaves that society, has no other office in any other in consequence of his being an officer in that. His discharge of the work of a bishop is limited by, and confined to, the particular congregation which appointed him to office. If he should travel abroad and visit another congregation, even of the same views with that of which he was or is bishop, he is then no bishop; he is then in the capacity of an unofficial disciple.

To suppose the contrary is to constitute different orders of men, or to divide the church into the common classes of clergy and laity, than which nothing is more essentially opposite to the genius and spirit of christianity. We have seen some bishops, ignorant of the nature of the office, acting very much out of character, placing themselves in the bishop's office, in a church which they might occasionally visit, and assuming to act officially in an assembly over which they had no bishopric. They acted as absurdly and as unconstitutionally as the president of the United States would do, if, when on a visit to London, he should enter the English parliament and place himself on the throne, either *solus*, or in conjunction with his majesty George IV. and that, forsooth, because he is, or was president of the United States. But of this more afterwards. In the meantime, we conclude that one of those means used to exalt the clergy to dominion over the faith, over the consciences, and over the persons of men, by teaching the people to consider them as specially called and moved by the Holy Spirit, and sent to assume the office of ambassadors of Christ, or ministers of the Christian religion, is a scheme unwarranted by God, founded on pride, ignorance, ambition, and impiety; and, as such, ought to be opposed and exposed by all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

HOW PRINCES BECAME HEAD OF THE CHURCH,

OR THE "UNION" CONDEMNED BY HISTORY.

Abridged from Baptist Noel's Work.

No truth is more prominent in the New Testament than that we are saved by faith in our Redeemer.

Since this doctrine has been preached, men can no longer receive the creed of their fathers or of their country without investigation; but each one is bound to search after truth, to receive it, to maintain it, and to promulgate it in the world, in opposition to all error, however venerable or popular.

The Christian principle of individual inquiry, belief, and profession, was exactly the opposite of the pagan principle of unexamining conformity. The gospel made conscience every thing. Heathenism made it nothing. According to the gospel, every one was bound to reject the religion of his country if *false*. According to Heathenism, every one was to conform to the religion of his country in all things. Christianity invited men to form a voluntary society, upon conviction as men; heathenism herded them, by law, as animals, within the inclosure of a national ritual.

The Greek legislators, wishing to secure for the republic the greatest military force by means of the most complete social unity, forbade dissent from the popular superstition. A man who disbelieved the power of fictitious and corrupt deities was thought to be a bad citizen, and was as such condemned. Draco punished dissent with death; Plato would have it denounced to the magistrates as a crime; Aristotle allowed but one established worship; and Socrates was sentenced to death as a nonconformist. In the Greek republic the union between the state and the religion was so complete, that the right of conscience was wholly disregarded. Men did not inquire what was true, but what was politic. The republic must be a great unity for attack or defence, and the religious independence which would break that unity must be exterminated.

Heathen princes had powerful motives to unite themselves strictly with the priesthood. Despotic rulers have ever sought to extort from their subjects all possible advantages for themselves, and for this end to retain them in the most complete servitude. They have chiefly depended on their armies; but the fears and the hopes excited by superstition have been too obvious a support not to be largely employed. Well-paid soldiers have been their first instrument of power; their second has been a well-paid priesthood. Priests have lent to despots, in aid of their selfish designs, the portents and the predictions of superstition; and despots have in return invested the superstition with death. Heathenism presented no obstacle to this union. The superstition being a corrupt invention, offered nothing that was disagreeable to corrupt rulers; and the vices of rulers were not uncongenial to an equally corrupt priesthood. By the aid of the superstition the despot fortified his tyranny, and by the aid of the despotism the priest gave

currency to his falsehood. Thus the union of the state and the pagan priesthood was an alliance of force and fraud. Neither party was strong enough to rule alone. But when the priest preached for the despot, and the despot governed for the priest, both the more easily kept upon their feet upon the necks of the people; and made the universal degradation subservient to their greatness.

When the Christian churches began to be corrupted by the increasing wealth of their ministers, this pagan union of the State with the priesthood was extended to them; and emperors with the Christian name sought the aid of a corrupt Christian priesthood, as heathen emperors had sought the aid of augurs and of heathen priests. Constantine, who first openly protected the Christian churches, can scarcely be supposed to have done so from religious feelings. The progress of christianity had been very considerable. The splendor and ambition of the clergy manifest clearly that the Christians were become a powerful body, whom Constantine would desire to attach to his cause, and their number renders it very probable that policy was the earliest ground of his Christian profession. "His conduct to the Christians was strictly in accordance with his interests; and it is very probable that the protection with which he distinguished them may, in the first instance, have originated in his policy." But if it began in policy, political considerations would still more powerfully urge him to continue it. He had learned, no doubt, from the disturbances continually excited by Licinius, that neither himself nor the empire could enjoy a fixed state of tranquility as long as the ancient superstitions subsisted; and, therefore, from this period he openly opposed the sacred rites of paganism as a religion detrimental to the interests of the state. On the other hand, it is too plain that he was an irreligious man. It was in the year 313 that he published the edict of Milan, by which he proclaimed universal toleration, and secured to the Christians their civil and religious rights. But, in the year 325, he ordered his rival, Licinius, to be strangled; and the same year in which he convened the Council of Nice was polluted by the execution, or rather murder, of his eldest son. "It is not disputed that his career was marked by the usual excesses of intemperate and worldly ambition; and the general propriety of his moral conduct can not with any justice be maintained." *After his conversion to christianity he still continued, as supreme pontiff, to be the head of the religion of heathen Rome. and thus continued to be invested with more absolute authority over the religion he had deserted than over that which he professed. But, as he had been the head of the heathen priesthood, it seemed to him right that he should make himself equally the head of the christian priesthood. He therefore, assumed a supreme jurisdiction over the clergy.*

One of the earliest objects of his policy was to diminish the independence of the Church. For which purpose he received it into strict alliance with the State; and combined in his own person the highest ecclesiastical with the highest civil authority. The entire control of the external administration of the Church he assumed to himself. He

regulated every thing respecting its outward discipline; the final decision of religious controversies was subjected to the discretion of judges appointed by him; and no general council could be called except by his authority. Though he permitted the Church to remain a body politic distinct from that of the State, yet he assumed to himself the supreme power over this sacred body, and the right of meddling and of governing it in such a manner as should be most conducive to the public good. *Thus he exercised at once a supremacy over the heathen and the Christian priesthoods.* He was at the same time the chief pontiff of heathenism and the chief bishop of the Christian Church. And this State episcopate (superintendency) he exercised many years before he was baptised; and *long before he was a member of the Church he was its summus episcopus (chief bishop);* and only a few days before his death received from Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, the ceremony of baptism.

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?

THE BAPTISTS AND DISCIPLES—THE POSITION WE OCCUPY.

LETTER FIFTH.

ELDER DAVIDSON—Esteemed Sir:—Upon the subject of open and close communion much has been said, much written, and much disputed. Like all other subjects, the question of communion has its extreme advocates. Some argue stoutly for the duty of putting a mark so broad and deep upon the sheep of their pasture, and keeping the gate of their sheep-fold so well guarded, that all sheep not having that certain mark must be strictly and unceremoniously excluded. They are ready to acknowledge that there are other sheep, over whom the Great Shepherd watches, in whom he takes delight, and who will finally number with those who shall be gathered together in the everlasting fold. These rigid logicians, and double safety-valve communionists, are justly styled strict Baptists, or as they call them in one of the Carolinas, “hard-shell Baptists.” Excellent spirits! They expect to sit with some in the kingdom of God in glory, with whom they now refuse to sit at the Lord’s table in his present kingdom of grace!

Then, on the other extreme, we have the loose or open communion advocates. They are a pliant race of professors, more zig-zag in their reasoning, as well as in their practice, than the wanderings of the Israelites in their wilderness journey towards Canaan. Some of these unscrupulous fold-keepers throw open their gates wide enough for both sheep and goats, and calves and horned cattle, never thinking it among the “essentials” to calculate where the church ends and the world begins; or rather perhaps taking for granted, as a part of their creed, that

the world is all church and the church all world. Many of them, however, only go so far as to admit the pious, not considering that there are pious infidels and worldlings as well as pious professors.

Neither of these extremes, by divine authority, is to be approved. It is unnecessary to philosophise upon which should have the preference. To oppose one extreme by introducing another, or to make a choice of evils, has long been the policy of the learned, the great, and the wise; but the kingdom of Christ and its laws are very different from great men's fancies concerning expediency. Whatever is scriptural is right; whatever is unscriptural is not right—no matter whence it comes, or by whom practiced or plead. We care not for customs or popularity. The apostles are good leaders, and the primitive church a good model. We pass Edinburgh, Westminster, Geneva, and Rome, with all their Doctors both living and dead, with all their creeds both old and new, and with a firm foot go up to Jerusalem.

And, as respects communion, what did they do in Jerusalem? Think you, my friend, had they a party table? My persuasion is that you will respond with me, *No; they had the table of the Lord!* It was the Lord's table, on the Lord's day, for the Lord's people. With them, it was not close communion, nor open communion, nor mixed communion, nor any communion of the kind; but the communion of saints, or the saved in Christ. Party doctrines, party prejudices, party reasonings, party interpretations, party lovings or hatings were not "essential" to their feast at the Lord's board. It was Jesus and his dying love that brought them together. They loved their Saviour. They had obeyed him. They therefore delighted to remember him in the supper he specially appointed for this purpose; and no human alliance or earthly affinity operated as a bond of union or communion at the table of the Lord. The proof of all this, permit me to say, is in good keeping, and if called for will in due time appear. It is my opinion however that most if not all that I now assert you will not feel disposed to gain-say; but if I am mistaken, my defence is ready.

The disciples, in their weekly gatherings, in imitation of the primitive model, spread the Lord's table, seat themselves around it, and invite all who number with the saved—all who acknowledge the "one faith, the one Lord, and the one baptism"—to partake or commune with them. We have a supreme eye to the Lord, and to his institutions, and not to human confessions or sectary alliances, when we receive the loaf and the cup. It is with the Saviour's chosen people, those that the oracles call brethren in Christ, that we associate and commune, according

to the express injunction of Christ himself, and the example of his followers when corruption and sectarianism had yet no place in the church.

But perhaps you ask how we know our brethren in the Lord, or what rule we follow when sitting at the table of fellowship. Our infallible Guide-Book prevents all difficulty. To it we appeal, and abide its commands and models. Our own feelings, views of expediency, theological opinions, educational prejudices, and religious likes and dislikes, have nothing to do in settling the question; but it is settled for us, and we submit both with pleasure and profit. If you ask for a more definite knowledge of our practice, and desire to ascertain how we know who are our brethren in the Lord, the answer is also at hand. Every one who believes that Jesus is Christ—who has confessed him as the one Lord—and who has openly obeyed him in having submitted to the baptismal death and resurrection,—every professor, I say, who has thus shown that he has the “one faith,” acknowledging the “one Lord,” and yielded to the “one baptism,” is divinely and not humanly introduced into a state to receive all the privileges found in the Christian church; for through faith, and the obedience of faith, he has passed from the world into the Lord’s kingdom, where every subject has a divine right to all the “means of grace” which this gracious kingdom affords.

Our fellowship, then, you perceive, is not Baptist fellowship, neither, in the party sense, is it Disciple fellowship; but it is the Lord’s fellowship for those who fellowship the Lord. In other words, to commune with any one who is called a brother, we ask not if he is a Baptist, or a Disciple, or neither; but we ask if he believes in Jesus, confesses him as the only Lord and Saviour, and if he has put on Christ after the primitive fashion. Thus you see that we stand upon lofty ground, far above the peaks and pillars of partyism. All who are “in Christ” are our brethren; God has received them, and we receive them; and the New Testament tells precisely who are in Christ so plainly and palpably that doubt and wavering are excluded. Whether, then, you call this close communion or open communion, is, to me, of little consequence; it is doubtless the communion authorized by the Head of the church, and vividly recommended by the apostles’ practice.

You Baptists, on the subject of communion, are almost as consistent as other parties. In advance you are not. To go no further back than the last two years, and to go no further from home than our own country, what shall be said of the twenty-eight thousand Baptists of Canada

quarrelling and splitting into distinct fellowship on account of the Roman rigidity of some, and the looseness and waywardness of others? I ask not who is the most to blame in this affair; this has no true relation to the real question itself; for if the Baptists as a body had been well instructed in "the doctrine of the kingdom," no such rupture and division could have transpired. But apart from the facts connected with the making of two bodies of Baptists in this country, east and west, I was about to say that the Baptist bible had lost some pages in this western section of the province, if we may judge from their "theory" and "practice." At present I will only allude to one circumstance, to show how certain it is that your brethren have become minus some pages of scripture, and the necessity you are therefore under of resorting to other counsel. Here is one proof:—

Elder Bettes, one Lord's day last June, after preaching where the disciples meet, took a seat with them at the table of their weekly feast, and partook with them of the divine emblems. Not many days after, two Baptist Elders, one whose name is Piper and the other Davidson, halted at the place where Mr. Bettes usually preached; and then and there, friend Bettes, if I am correctly informed, was called upon to make a special confession of the sin of communing with disciples, and promise, for the future, to be a more *Regular* Baptist. Is this true? I shall be happy to learn that you acted differently and more scripturally. But if otherwise, let me inquire of you, as a candid man, if you once thought of acting in accordance with the Bible, or whether you had not supreme regard for "Baptist practice?" I will not however dwell upon this circumstance; for it has been introduced only by way of illustration; for I have not laid up anything against you or against the Baptists on account of it. Still, so far as the gospel as preached and exemplified by the apostles instructs me better, I am willing to "show a more excellent way." Should you be with us a Lord's day in Oshawa, the fault will not be mine if you sit not with us at the Lord's table. You will be made welcome; for the Lord has made us "free indeed" by his truth.

There is a singular scrupulosity among all parties in relation to communion. Not-unfrequently we find professors of different denominations praising and praying with one another as Christian brethren, treating and viewing each other as the chosen of the Lord; and yet, when the emblematic supper is to be observed, the one is to the other "as a heathen man and a publican." This is partyism in its freshest bloom, and its perfume is anything but pleasant. Its doctrine and

its language to others may be interpreted thus:—‘ You are dear brethren, beloved on earth, and will finally sit with us in heaven; but it would be painful, inconsistent, and sinful to fellowship you now in Christ’s church!’

Now, on account of the confusion of our religious phraseology, and the complex nature of party questions, I am not sure that you will understand me. If you have supposed from anything I have said that we hold loose views of communion, or that our views lead to a loose practice, I will at once protest against your interpretation of the language I have employed; for while the disciples freely fellowship all without exception who number among the saved, they consult not party opinions or human confessions to learn who “the saved” are, but look into the “word of grace,” the “sure word,” in order to govern them in this important item of behaviour in the house of God.

Enough, however, at present, on the subject of communion. My next will probably touch upon Baptist conversions and revivals, and Baptist associations; after which I shall make a pause to hear from friend Davidson.

Yours both with respect and Christian sympathy or love.

D. OLIPHANT.

Oshawa, 1st Nov., 1849.

CAUSE OF DECLENSION OF VITAL RELIGION.

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

Niagara Falls, 15th October, 1849.

It is to be borne in mind, that as the association did not meet in 1846 in London with the determined, nor even avowed object, of seeking to be of one heart and mind in conformity with the teaching of Christ and his apostles; therefore they have no claim to the name Evangelical, since not in their collective capacity doing the work of the Evangelists; as full and implicit obedience in all things will alone find acceptance. Those denominated Evangelists in Scripture, all taught the same thing, in all the churches. Paul says, “Follow me as I follow Christ.” 1 Cor. xi. 1. No compromise to retain any opinion or practice differing one from the other, or from the teaching of Christ or the Apostles.

An Evangelical Alliance may be sure of the presence of the Head of the Church, in all their assemblies, when they come together to teach and observe the “*all things*” Christ enjoined upon the Apostles, as promised Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20,—the promise of Christ being

with them, is on the terms set forth, and unless they assemble to obey, there is no promise; and we find that whenever even two or three meet in the name of Christ, he has promised to be with them—"I am with thee."

These reflections are submitted to all those who design to obey Christ; and should another meeting of the so-called Evangelical Alliance take place, may they be led to come together with "fasting and prayer," determined in the fear of the Lord to attend to the "all things" taught and practiced by the first Churches, and to seek to be of one heart and one mind in all things. See the following passages, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12; Jer. xxxii. 39; Acts iv. 32; Rom. xv. 6; 1 Cor. i. 10; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Phil. i. 27, ii. 2, iii. 16, iv. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 8.

The sinful doctrine, now so widely acted on, and countenanced by the Evangelical Alliance, as to holding different ideas as to obedience in all things, is the work of Satan. Full and implicit obedience is duty; and the Lord does not require what is impracticable. May the Lord lead all his faithful followers to lay it to heart. As to obedience being impracticable, in reply, let me say, the Lord enjoins it. The Apostle holds forth that Christ was the "author of salvation to all that obey him;" and Christ tells his sheep to obey and follow him. The Scriptures abound with injunctions to obey—which would be cruel if impracticable. The wisdom of man has so obscured what is required, that it is deemed impracticable.

J. BUCHANAN.

(For the Witness.)

EVIL SPEAKING.

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer."—JOHN

Much good methinks would result from a pointed and well written article on the above subject. But a stronger mind than mine must compose such an article. I however beg to offer a few reflections, trusting they may prove profitable to the brethren.

Speaking evil of the brethren in general, and of the Overseers in particular, is condemned in the strongest terms in the holy scriptures. Paul, when arraigned before the high priest, said, "It is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler." An occurrence in Jewish history serves to illustrate the danger of evil speaking among the brethren. (See Num. 16 chap.) Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with "two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown," rebelled against Moses and Aaron, speaking evil of them in the

words following—"Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" The catastrophe which happened those bold sinners affords warning to others of similar transgression. The earth swallowed those, and wrath awaits these.

Our Saviour when on earth presented lively examples of the most tender, sympathetic, and inoffensive expressions ever found on record, as a few specifications will show. "He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and *I will love him*, and will manifest myself to him." "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." "I have *compassion* on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days and have nothing to eat, and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way." [How frequently opulent professors with frowning looks send away the hungry to "faint in the way."] "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." "Jesus wept." "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together," &c. A celebrated writer of the present age has said, "The reason why no truly great men appeared among the pagan nations of old, is because they were destitute of a proper or perfect model." But the same cannot be said of us. We behold in our Master every thing worthy of admiration and imitation. O that we would in our conversation both to and of one another, imitate "the meekness and gentleness of" our gracious Lord.

The New Testament in the following style condemns evil speaking. "Lie not one to another." "Be kindly affectionate one to another, with brotherly love." "If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." "If any man offend not in *word*, the same is a perfect man." "But if you have bitter anger and strife in your hearts, do you not boast and lie against the truth?" "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." "My brethren these things ought not so to be."

Should we visit a brother, we not unfrequently must hear unfriendly remarks concerning this one or that one, or perhaps fault is found with the Overseers, whom we ought to remember to honor and obey; or peradventure we are doomed to hear something contemptible either

told or read, rather than making the topic of conversation the glorious theme of redemption. "My ear is pained, my soul is sick" in hearing this crude, chilling, frost-bitten style—more becoming the Arabs of the desert than the followers of him who "hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." We might conclude, judging from the conduct of some Christians, that the following is genuine scripture—"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have hatred one to another." "Have bitter feelings one to another with practical hatred." "For where envying and strife is, there is harmony and every good work." "If a man bridle not his tongue, his religion is genuine." This may answer the Mormon Bible, but not the holy Bible. By our *words* we condemn the latter and approve the former teaching; but by our *conduct* we condemn the former and approve the latter declarations. Brethren these things should not be thus. Let us be humble before God and gentle towards men. When we speak of a brother or sister, let us do it in words of love and true Christian affection, avoiding that grating and unchristian style so common among many professors.

DIFFIDENCE.

October, 1849.

FACTS TO THINK ABOUT.

1. There are in the world about 800,000,000 of souls.	
Of these christianity is professed by Roman Catholics,--	80,000,000
Protestants, -----	70,000,000
Greek Church, -----	50,000,000
	<hr/>
	200,000,000

2. There are who never hear the gospel, Jews, blinded by unbelief,-----	5,000,000
Mahommedans, deluded by the false prophet,-----	140,000,000
Pagans, sunk in idolatry and superstition,-----	450,000,000
	<hr/>
	600,000,000

3. Amongst these 600,000,000, there are only about 1400 Protestant missionaries, independent of native catechists and schoolmasters, and including those of America, Great Britain and the Continent of Europe; or one missionary to every 423,571 persons.

4. The entire sum of money raised by the churches of Great Britain for missionary purposes is about £350,000, and by those of America £150,000; making together £500,000; a sum only equal to the annual gifts of idolaters at Hallee's temple at Calcutta.

5. If every Sabbath school in Great Britain would collect only one penny per week for Christian missions, it would raise £433,333 6s. 8d. per year; which divided amongst the different missionary societies, would enable them to print twice as many books, establish twice as many schools, support twice as many missionaries, and occupy twice as many stations.

6. Of the heathen world,

30,000,000 die every year;

54,794 die every day;

2,283 die every hour;

38 die every minute.

Reader, what influence should these facts have upon your mind? Let them lead to holy effort for the speedy conversion of the world.—*London paper.*

EVANGELIZING.

It is with more than ordinary pleasure we announce to our readers the interesting news that the brethren chosen to travel and labour as Evangelists have responded favourably. They accept of the appointment. Many will take courage at this announcement, and many more, we doubt not, will, ere long, arise and call the efforts of the co-operation blessed. We have for years, personally, been speaking and acting in favour of the object now attained, or rather the object now in the way of being attained. But without further preface, we hasten to lay before those who are interested the following two letters, which, in part at least, will explain what has been done and what may be expected:—

Oshawa, 30th September, 1849.

BRETHREN ANDERSON AND KILGOUR: *Brethren Beloved in the Lord*:—Being appointed by the brethren to correspond in behalf of the co-operation, allow me to inform you, with much Christian interest, that the representatives of the churches who met on yesterday, in Bowmanville, have been pleased to call for two Evangelists, the names of which are—brother Alexander Anderson and brother James Kilgour. We all trust that brethren Kilgour and Anderson will as readily consent to labour in the gospel field as we have been unanimous in calling them to this important, responsible, yet honorable work. The brethren of the co-operation engage to remunerate your labours to which they have appointed you, by paying to you the sum of three hundred dollars each per annum—six hundred dollars for your united services per twelve months.

There was the most united sentiment and feeling in reference to your appointment, and it is earnestly desired by us all that no obstacle will intervene to prevent you from complying with the unanimous expression of the churches represented. Please reply to this short note as speedily as convenient, as we are desirous that those who labour should enter upon their labours as soon as practicable.

In behalf of the co-operation,

I am

Yours in divine bonds.

D. OLIPHANT.

REPLY.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—Yours of September 30th was duly received by us, and the reason we have not answered you sooner, is, the weighty importance of the subject, including the responsible and solemn work we have been requested to engage in, along with the many changes that must take place consequent upon us leaving our farms, and our families.

You stated that the request for us to labour as Evangelists was unanimous from the brethren representing nearly all the churches in the province. Such a call as this is certainly stamped with authority, placing us under great responsibility. We fully believe that when a church or churches (governed by the living oracles) in their calm deliberations decide upon any matter affecting the interests of Zion, it is the same as if the Lord had commanded or enjoined. It is the authority of our Lord and Master. This being a truth believed by us, we dare not "withstand God," notwithstanding the many duties devolving on us as parents, as husbands, and as members of a Christian Church. Trusting that we have carefully weighed all these matters, we have come to a decision, which is—

That we agree to labour as Evangelists for one year upon the terms proposed by you as the brethren have requested. We commit ourselves and our families to the Lord, praying that we may be kept and guided by the word of his grace, and realize that God never leaves nor forsakes those that put their trust in him, and also that our labours when begun may be abundantly blessed by the Father of Mercies; to whom be all the glory and praise through Christ.

It will be the beginning of January, 1850, before our arrangements will be so far completed as to admit of us entering upon the field.—Will you please to lay this before the brethren appointed to act in behalf of the churches in co-operating, along with our Christian love.—We will expect to hear from the brethren concerning how and where we are to proceed. Having learned that the Evangelists should visit the back country, such as Owen's Sound, St. Vincent, &c, we would suggest that it would be better to do so in the winter season, when there is sleighing.

Submitting these things to yourself and the brethren, and waiting your reply,

We remain, Dear Brother,
Yours in the Lord,

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.
JAMES KILGOUR.

Eramosa, Oct. 27th 1849.

Agreeably to the request aboved expressed, to furnish a plan of proceeding, the necessary intelligence will be forthcoming at an early day, or at least in time for the first of January.

It has been all along understood that the Evangelists thus called out by the congregations would labour little among the churches; or if much labour would be bestowed upon any, it would be for the benefit of those churches requiring special aid by reason of being feeble or in a state of decline. We intend keeping this prominently before the congregations—that the scriptural duty of Evangelists is to labour to convert aliens, and to form new churches, and not, primarily, to visit, labour for, and build up old and well established churches. True, it is necessary that the brethren generally should see, hear, and become more or less acquainted with the heralds they support in the gospel; and it is altogether expedient and wise, at times, for Evangelists to visit, edify, and enliven by their presence and exhortations even the best churches. Still, there is a most pernicious and popular fault among almost all orders of religious congregations, namely, that when a church or churches choose a person called an Evangelist, they strictly keep him among themselves, as though his brethren amongst whom he labours required re-evangelizing!

We have, indeed, in some instances, seen an opposite extreme. Those who are of this spirit, feel so rich, dignified, and exalted in the religious scale, that they have no need for the religious visits, up building labours, and edifying assistance of the Evangelist. Cases of this kind, however, upon the whole, are rare. They are generally Ishmaelites—their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them.

The co-operative churches, then, have two Evangelists who will take the field on the first of January. Let the churches rejoice, and, with their rejoicing, resolve and prepare to sustain these brethren honorably. While they comfort others, let us not loose sight of administering comfort to them. Their hands are to be held up while they raise the down-trodden and the degraded. A day approaches when all these things

will be strictly inquired into, and hence the necessity and the wisdom of keeping good "watch." The Master himself will reckon with us all before the reckoning be complete.

It will be among our chief duties to farther the labours and attend to the interests of our Evangelists. The correspondent who signs himself "O," in recording, last month, his vote against our removing to publish this work out of Canada, alluded to the greater utility of the "Witness" remaining to carry forward the objects of the co-operation. So fully are we impressed with the importance of sustaining the workmen appointed, and such an interest have we taken and still continue to take in the labours of travelling brethren for the good of the cause in this province, that we shall, for the time being, keep perfectly silent upon the subject of removal, at least to the public, and lend a willing hand to aid the present movement which contemplates sounding forth the gospel of Christ. When the co-operation becomes stronger, and when the "Witness" has tested the verity of a few more pledges, which fade with the autumnal leaf, the brethren, we have pleasure in thinking, will be relieved from farther deliberation, burden, or responsibility as it relates to this work. Meantime we shall endeavor to show activity in supporting the cause by supporting those who lay themselves out for public advocates and public benefactors.

D. OLIPHANT.

RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF NORWAY.

There has been for the last few years, a revival of religion in Norway, promoted by a class of lay-preachers, which have borne relations to the regular clergy, similar to those of the Methodist preachers of England to the established church. Most of these preachers are stationary, operating as exhorters, each in his own locality, while others having greater preaching talents, travel about.

When one of those wandering missionaries reaches any locality, notice is immediately given to the neighboring peasantry; the parish minister is generally invited to the meeting, but attends very rarely indeed. The service begins by a hymn; then a prayer, a passage of Scripture with the comment of Luther, Arnd, or Spener; after this, a sermon, another prayer and a hymn. Their influence with the people is very great indeed. There is a natural religiousness in the Norwegian character; the people have a great respect for the Bible; German Rationalism has made no inroads upon them; they are disposed, on

the contrary, to retain vestiges of Popish and even heathenish superstitions; and are so fond of traditional observance, that many peasant families still celebrate fasts which were officially abolished by the church eighty years ago.

They, like the Wesleyans in England, continue united to the Established Church, and all religious persecution has been abolished since 1842; yet the lay preachers and the clergy are kept asunder, by a feeling of mutual distrust; indeed, there is little sympathy between the clergy and their parishioners generally,—it had even become necessary to establish a royal commission, (Nov. 13, 1843,) to substitute a fixed salary for the voluntary offerings, of which the minister's income has been in some measure composed.

The jealousy between the religious public and the clergy broke out in open strife a few years since, upon the occasion of the revision of Bishop Pontoppidan's Catechism; the commission appointed for this purpose introduced into the new Catechism a paragraph purporting that Christ descended into hell, to preach to the spirits there;—by a royal ordinance of July 14, 1843, the new Catechism was to be substituted for that of Pontoppidan in all schools, and for all official purposes. Forthwith arose such a storm as neither the crown nor the clergy were able to lay; the sturdy orthodox Norwegians would hear of no conversions after death, and the introduction of the obnoxious Catechism was obliged to be—nominally postponed—really given up.

If the positive cure of souls has, in some measure, got out of the hands of the Norwegian clergy, one reason is the want of intercourse between them and their parishioners. Visiting from house to house is a thing almost unknown even to the pious minister; but this is not altogether his fault—he is overcharged with purely temporal avocations. The minister has to keep the books of the parish poor and schools; to draw up the taxation and election lists; and to attest the home manufacture of all goods exported into Sweden! Poor Levite, he should be glad that others have time to preach Christ. Add to this, the extent of the parishes: In Demark, parishes on an average occupy about twelve English miles square, with about 1,200 inhabitants; in Sweden, 140 miles, with 2,000 inhabitants; in Norway, 340 square miles, with 3,500 inhabitants.

A COURTEOUS RETORT.

A Baptist minister from England, who was settled some years since in this city, was distinguished in his native country for disinterested

labor, and ready wit. He devoted several years of the last part of his life to gratuitous labor in a populous town, about three miles from his residence, to which he walked every Lord's day morning, preached three times, and then walked home. On one Lord's day morning, as he walked along meditating on his sermons for the day, he met one of those important personages, called parish priests, a race happily unknown, at least in the plenitude of his persecutive power, in this country.

"Well,——," said his reverence, "I suppose you are on your way to your preaching again?"

"Yes, Sir," was the modest reply of the humble Baptist minister.

"It is high time the Government took up this subject, and put a stop to this kind of travelling preaching; indeed, there is something like it intended."

"They will have rather hard work, Sir," said the imperturbable Baptist.

"I am not very sure of that," rejoined the priest; "at any rate, I will see whether I can not stop you myself."

"I judge," said the worthy man, "you will find it more difficult than you suppose. Indeed, there is but one way to stop my preaching, but there are three ways to stop yours."

"What, fellow, do you mean by that?" asked his reverence, in a towering passion.

"Why, Sir," replied the little Baptist preacher, with most provoking coolness, "why, Sir, there is but one way of stopping my preaching; that is, by cutting my tongue out. But there are three ways to stop yours; for, take your book from you, and you *can't* preach; take your gown from you, and you *dare not* preach; and take your pay from you and you *won't* preach." The parson vanished.

SPECIAL NEWS.

Wainfleet, Oct. 16, 1849.

BROTHER OLIPHANT:—The annual meetings in Erie county N. Y., were of a joyful character. I attended one of them. Many friends from this vicinity were in attendance. Two among the happy converts belonged to the company from this place. The Lord be praised for all these sources of spiritual happiness.

A. CLENDENAN.

Euclid, Ohio, Oct. 15th, 1849.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—Yours of recent date, (not very recent—pardon me) is received. Sorry you were not at Wainfleet. I could not be there. They were probably disappointed somewhat. I regret it, but could not help it.

I have just returned from a meeting at Wellsburg, Virginia. I was there five days. A good time, but was not there long enough to get the dry wheels in order. Two were baptized. Was at Bethany one day. Brothers A. Campbell, Richardson, Pendleton, Mason, Prof. Milligan of Washington College, W. Lanphear, Loos, and others, all at Wellsburg, as well as many of the students.

I saw the venerable elder Thomas Campbell at Bethany; he enjoys uninterrupted health. The College is more than usually prospering, one hundred and thirteen students already in attendance.

Through the labours of brethren Perky, Errett, Belding, Smith, and others on the Reserve, some fifty persons have within a few weeks been brought into the fold of the good shepherd. Our winters' campaign has fully commenced. May we have strength and grace equal to the demands of the good work.

I have just ordered 50 Melodeons to you. The 3rd edition is about exhausted. They may have to print another before these are sent; if so, they cannot come to hand so soon as desirable; but I will see to it that the delay shall not be needlessly long. The book is going—please help it; and may favor crown your efforts in all things.

Your constant, and I hope I may say, tried friend and brother,

A. S. HAYDEN.

OBITUARY.

Wainfleet, Oct. 17, 1849.

DEAR BROTHER OLIPHANT:—It becomes my painful duty to impart the mournful intelligence of the death of our beloved brother Jacob Cook, who departed this life on the 15th inst; aged 67 years. Brother Cook as a citizen was esteemed by all who was acquainted with him—as a Christian he was beloved by all the brotherhood.

The manner in which he received the truth, is worthy of record. During one of brother A. S. Hayden's eloquent appeals, when volunteers for the Saviour were solicited, he arose, and gave his hand to brother Hayden, saying, "I am ready, for one." Ever since that time the source whence flowed his chief happiness was to meet with the

brethren on the Lord's day. Brother Thomas Bradt conversing with him concerning the future, asked if there was any thing of this world for which he desired to remain. He replied "There is nothing—I am ready to die." The church and his family feel his loss; yet we sorrow not as others who are without the gospel hope.

A. CLENDENAN.

ANOTHER SECESSION FROM THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

A Lancaster correspondent of the *Patriot* writes:—"The extraordinary 'Essay' of the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel is effecting a great work. Amongst the friends of the State-Church who have read the book, and on whose minds its contents have had a telling and practical influence, is the Rev. John Dodson, Vicar of Cockerham, near Lancaster. Convinced by the facts it details, and the arguments it supplies, of the evils and unscriptural character of the present Establishment, he has nobly imitated the example of Mr. Noel, and for ever abandoned it. Last Friday or Saturday, he sent in his resignation to the Bishop of the diocese, which was accepted, and in the afternoon of last Sabbath, preached his farewell sermon to a crowded congregation. In taking this step, Mr. Dodson has made many sacrifices. He has left a living worth £650 a-year, and given up a beautiful residence.

WRITERS FOR THE WITNESS.

To the few correspondents who aid in making the pages of the *Witness* valuable, in tendering our thanks, we have a word of explanation. It is seldom that we accompany a letter, article, or essay with any or many comments. We have no taste and certainly as little talent for extra commendation, either within or without the precincts of flattery. Hence we say little in praise of our fellow-helpers who correspond. But we appreciate them. The community, too, puts a just value upon their labours. Of this we have the best evidence. D. O.

☞ We anticipated hearing, ere this, from the Williamsville, Tully, and Cicero meetings.

☞ As will be seen by reference to another page, we shall shortly have a fresh supply of the "Christian Melodeon," by A. S. Hayden. Those desirous of securing a copy of this favorite work, should speak for it in time. It sells cheap. We shall speak definitely of the terms hereafter.

☞ The brethren in St. Vincent will please let us know, as frequently as possible, their state and standing, conflicts and progress.