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VOL. XIX.

MARCH & APRIL,

Nos. 3 & 4.

MESSAGE

—OF—

GOOD-WILL TO MEN.

DESIGNED TO PLEAD
THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST.

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

PETER AND JOHN.

CONDUCTED BY

D. OLIPHANT, Dr. YOUNG AND OTHERS

Religious Correspondence Courteously Solicited.

TERMS :—ONE DOLLAR A YEAR.

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TEACHERS.

Every church primitively, under the order of God, was a theological school, and a school of christian practice. The public preaching of the gospel constituted, and should now constitute, a very small part of the teaching of a church, or of its members. In the public preaching of the gospel, as it has been for ages and even centuries past, the preparation of sermons, orations, and essays, rather than Christian teaching, is very nearly the whole of it. From Christian pulpits orators display themselves, and are rewarded according to their ability to please the fanciful; sermon-makers display their ability to arrange discourses under systematic forms; and essayists philosophically consider the cool abstractions which have occupied their hours of meditation. The groaning, suffering, starving Church of Christ calls for *teachers*, MORE TEACHERS, TEACHERS OF THE SCRIPTURES. It is impossible that a church shall become established, according to the New Testament, without its qualified teachers, male and female. The great, evangelical command, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit," was followed in the very next sentence by the command "to observe all things whatsoever" the apostles themselves were commanded to observe.

With the order of the New Testament, and of the primitive church, every talent in the church, of male or female. was to be trained and

cultivated for service, as every character also was to be perfected by instruction and discipline. Authorized evangelists were the first teachers of infant churches in *public instruction*, and "from house to house," as Paul, the apostle and evangelist, did in Ephesus, or others in other cases. Timothy, the evangelist, under the most solemn and awful charges ever addressed to man, was commanded to commit the teaching of the things which he had heard of Paul, among many witnesses, to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also.

As God required in the beginning he requires now, that every one shall come under special and full Christian instruction, under appointed and faithful teachers, and that talent shall be converted to his service. There were female teachers; but Paul would not suffer them to be teachers over men. They prophesied, or prayed, in the church; but, as to teaching, they were not permitted to speak. The aged women were commanded to be "teachers of good things," and to "teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of god be not blasphemed."

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GOSPEL INFANCY—GOSPEL MANHOOD:

[J. W. Cox wrote the following language. Brother Cox, of Maysville, Kentucky, is a disciple of more than ordinary power in the gospel.—D. O.]

How many try to preserve the mere ideals of the new-born soul as the only heart-experiences of the true life of god, in the present state. This is a sad blunder—a sore mistake. It is like trying to preserve infancy or childhood forever—to keep the first startings of the soul forever in their germinal state. Certainly the memories of childhood are sweet. They are not to be despised—since "heaven lies about us in our infancy." Those happy dreams when our being is half asleep and half awake, are delicious, and beautiful as the morning glow of heaven, when the dew is upon the earth. But manhood, with its full strength, its large knowledge, practical experience, and power to triumph over circumstances and antagonistic forces is far better. And

the joy and conscientious self-renunciation of the new convert are good ; but the perfected faith, made perfect by many real conflicts, through dark sorrows, sore tribulations, and actual confidence in christ, is incomparably better ; because in the first we have but the bud ; in the second we have the foliage and the ripe fruit among-it. The one is the beginning, the other is the end. In the one we commence the journey to our immortal home ; in the other we stand on the Delectable Mountains, and catch glimpses of the pearly gates and the lovely spirits of the city of God. The one state contains the young child of God ; the other the perfect man, whose glorious countenance reveals angelic affinities.

But, sooner or later, the initial state of the new life gives way to the sober silent tests which the round of events apply to faith in Christ. The mere poetry and song of religion disappear. The imagination cools and folds its wings. Everything is now seen in a very different form and dress. A sober spirit settles over earth and sky. Memories, somewhat more deeply tinged with sadness, float through the heart. A much loved friend has fallen ; childhood's happy home has been broken up, and passed into the hands of strangers ; wealth has taken to itself wings and has flown away ; friends have failed just in the very moment of greatest need ; cherished hopes have been scattered like winter clouds, and, in a world full of people, we feel, for the first time, that we are alone. Perhaps, too, all earthly interests begin to totter, and the world shows itself too frail a thing to lean upon. The storm rages—and the future is an impenetrable darkness. This is no mere fancy. To thousands these lines will fall far short of the reality.

To Christians in this stage of the journey there are many sore temptations. Poverty, wealth, the love of life, and ease, the hope of future good, or blank despair ; the inability of man to know the future, the power of imagination—all these will Satan employ to crush the heart's trust in God, and reduce the soul to hopeless bondage. Here the senses can do no good. The ordinary experience on which worldly wisdom builds its temples is unavailing. The maxims of philosophy, theories of governments, and the tact of business are of no worth. One thing must be done, or we perish ; and that is, our whole being must be surrendered to faith. The speculative reason and the imagination must be subordinated to the promises of God in the Gospel. Our own weak-

ness must be forgotten in the contemplation and the belief of that almighty power and goodness of our Father that are revealed and treasured up in Christ against the evil day. In no other way can we be made strong to suffer and endure. God is ever present with his people. Evil days are no sign that Christ has forsaken his church. We should laugh at the man who should deny the existence of the sun, because dark clouds are passing through the sky. No, the clouds are but mists from the earth, and the sun is still shining. No clouds gather about the orb of day. And no commotion of earth shake the throne of the living God—or diminish his love for his children. Amid the storm is he still present; nor shall the most furious enemies be permitted to wrench from His hand the guidance of humble faithful souls. Believest thou, this? Is not life more than food and raiment? Shall God, who gave his Son to die for us, withhold his sustaining hand, and fail to give whatever is necessary for our salvation? Surely not. He still numbers the hairs of the heads of his children, still interposes in our behalf, still binds up the broken heart. The future is his—his to order it, to control it, for his people's good. The past is full of demonstrations of our father's love and faithfulness. Let us be glad to trust him for the few coming years of life. We shall find him true; and he will lead us in safe paths, and give us light in darkness.

“Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.”

There is infinite bliss, even the highest and holiest raptures, in surrendering our whole being in trust to God. Such shall see the cheerful dawn: they shall hear the bird of morning sing, and find that earth's burdens, fears and sorrows, renew the soul, and work out an eternal weight of glory. Let us strive to get nearer to Christ: and pray against our evil heart of unbelief; for we walk by faith—not by sight. Soon our trials will be over, and we shall see the Lord as he is.

—: o:—

The Jews would not set their foot upon a piece of paper, lest the name of God might be written upon it. Take care, lest you set your foot upon a man; for the name of God is written upon him

RANDOM THOUGHTS ON THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

For the Message of Good Will.

In this world of contention, where self is, (or appears to be,) the predominant trait in the human character—where wicked men are daily taxing their ingenuity to devise ways & means whereby they may the more effectually scatter death, devastation, desolation and misery, through the land; Is there not a fight for the christian? Most assuredly. Paul, the apostle, exhorts his son Timothy to “fight the good fight of faith” and “lay hold on eternal life.” And to the same he speaks in another place of “warring a good warfare.” Then, surely if Paul thus speaks, there is fighting for the christian to do—a warfare in which he, too, may engage. Yes, it is the imperative duty of every one who has enlisted under the banner of the cross, and acknowledged the Saviour for his captain, to gird on his armour even, the whole armour of God, and go forth to fight the battles of the Lord.

And what are they but to deny self, ungodliness and worldly lusts, and do good, (not evil,) to all around us—to fight against sin, wickedness and all the long train of vice, and evil passions, even all things that hinder the progress of the Redeemer's cause here below. Such as jealousy, envy, hatred, variance, malice, back-biting, whispering, evil-speaking &c. Such things were never indulged in by our great Captain. But he has left us an example of meekness, forbearance, long-suffering, forgiveness-of injuries; gentleness, patience. And not only example, but precept too, that we should do likewise.

If a brother or sister trespass against or offend us, is there that exercise of patience and that labor of love with them, there should be? I very much fear there is not. Self is so predominant with us—the pronoun I of so much greater importance than you, that the offender must come to our terms, yield to our demands or requirements, or be treated as a heathen and a publican. Is this fighting the “good fight of faith?” Is it warring a “good warfare?” Is it carrying out the principles of the gospel of *peace*? Or is it not, rather, following, or carrying out that very course of action whence all wars and fightings arise?

Or if a speaking brother comes into our vicinity, who happens to be a stranger in the place, and teaches things a little to straight for us,

telling us plainly of our faults and failings, or holds forth some things, in some points a little different from what some other good brother or brethren have done before, and which we do not fully comprehend—or does not in all points, in *every particular*, both in public and in private, exactly fill *our* measure of a christian preacher, is it exhibiting the spirit of a true christian soldier, to rake the country far and near, to gather up all we can lay hands on that can be turned to his disadvantage, and then retail it out again, using our own, and every influence we can bring to bear, to poison the minds of the people, out of the Church as well as in, against him? Or, are we doing our Master's cause, that cause we profess to love and honor, any good thereby? None whatever; but an amount of evil that never can be computed in this world, which eternity alone will fully develope, has been done; the chariot wheels of the gospel clogged; its free course hindered; and its progress retarded rather than hastened.

This may be thought by some to be speaking too plainly; but it is done without malice; without thought or wish to injure or grieve (unnecessarily) the feelings of any; but with a desire rather to benefit, myself as well as others. And if a writer or speaker must not be allowed to denounce that which is evil, of what use is it for him to write or speak? Or what shall he say? He may as well keep silent. And it certainly is not a very happyfying or soul-cheering reflection to one who loves the Lord—loves to see his cause flourishing, to think that he must ever be a drone in His army, when there is so much to be done—so much that needs correcting, and so much need that every follower of the Lord should stand “steadfast, immovable” in the ranks, *though thousands fall and falter around him.*

In the battles of the world the valient and well-disciplined soldier will not flinch nor turn back till his leader bids him return, though comrades fall fast and thick on every side, and leave him comparatively alone. And shall not we do well to imitate his example? We have more to fight for than he; even “everlasting life”. A nobler, more enduring crown; a “crown of righteousness that shall never fade away”. A brighter laurel-wreath, and of sweeter fragrance than ever decked the “victors brow”. Nor will every passing breeze as it rustles through the leaves of the forest bring, to our ears the echo of the widow's wail for the beloved partner of her bosom—the lamentation of a mother over

her darling son whom we have slain on the field of strife—the weeping of sisters for dearly loved brothers slain in battle—the cry of starving children for bread of which we have deprived them—nor the crackling of fires, which our hands have kindled, to destroy the houses of the poor and deprive them of shelter from the stormy blasts of winter, render them homeless, and send them helpless wanderers through the land dependant upon the “cold charities of a heathen and unfeeling world for subsistance”. But if we have been faithful and true soldiers of our Heavenly King—have followed him wherever he has led, and observed all his directions, we shall, on the contrary, hear the echo of the widow’s prayers, the mother’s blessings, the sister’s rejoicings, and children shall send forth a glad cry after us for acts of kindness shown, and deeds of benevolence which we have shown.

A glance at the weapons of our warfare, and I shall have done for the present. Paul says “though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but “mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds,”—2 Cor. x. 3, 4. The strong holds of sin—in ourselves as well as in the world around us. For until we are grown to be perfect men and women in Christ (which we should earnestly and diligently endeavour to become) we shall have much that is sinful in our own hearts to contend against. “For if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,”—1 John, 1, 8. compare Jas. 3, 2. And what more powerful weapon can we use than the “sword of the spirit, which is the word of God,”—the word of truth, a sword which, though sharper than any two-edged one of steel that was ever wielded by crested warrior.

“Though it pierces deep,
And then makes the sinner weep,”

was never stained with the blood of any fallen creature.

Then let us wield it faithfully, valiently; so that we may come off conquerers, and more than conquerers, through “Him who died to save us,” over all that opposes itself to the advancement of his kingdom; and when the war is over, the battle of life ended, he will take us home to reign with him in his everlasting Kingdom—

Pelham, March, 4th, 1865.

OZIAS.

TO THE BAPTISTS.

DEAR BRETHREN :—You stand in the van of the army of truth. For the most part you have made considerable sacrifices to attain that position. You have sacrificed old friendships and associations to be able to say that you are on the Lord's side, respecting the ordinance of baptism and the constitution and order of his house. You stand as compared with the surrounding denominations a small and feeble sect. Your ecclesiastical isolation is complete, except where you temporarily escape it by merging your influence in that of some larger body.—You have no equal partnership with any of the sects, If your services are accepted by them, it is on the understanding that what is distinctive in you shall have no recognition in their midst. You have no recourse from isolation save that which results from the non-distinguishing of that truth by which you are distinguished. To have borne all this and more for the truth's sake—truth unpalatable, as it is despised and rejected by professedly the wisest and best of the people, is evidence of a courage worthy of the highest of causes and capable of the greatest achievements, Your faithfulness to the Lord, and to this his truth, has done great things, though but seen here a little and there a little: and even were seen as the outcome of your fidelity, not always credited to you—not, this to say, by men; yet doubtless so by Him whom you serve. For he who has given you to know, doubtless knows himself that in the contest for the "one baptism," there is and must be much action taken in defence also of the one Lord and the one faith, as well as the one body, one Spirit, one hope, and one God and Father. The question of baptism is not an issue that terminates on itself. The simplicity of the gospel, the directness of its appeals to the sinner, his individual responsibility to the Saviour, the necessity of conversion, the personal character of the good confession, the purity of the Church of Christ, the sacredness of its membership, their relatedness as children of the divine Father, the spirituality of New Testament worship, and other inalienable principles of the Christian covenant, are all involved more or less directly in the right understanding and practice of the initiatory ordinance. To you, then, as the advocates of the scriptural against the unscriptural in this issue, rightly belongs much of the credit of that advancement which has been made throughout the world, from that

gross darkness that covered the people under the reign of the apostasy as to the true nature of the economy of salvation.

But you have not attained to all the truth, and you do not profess to have done so. You do not say that the perfect has come either in your knowledge or your practice. It is yours, therefore, to advance—to perfect that which is wanting. Your history, your position, your future; your principles and your profession call alike for progress. You stand committed to the truth and its Author and his watchword to you is “Follow Me.”

Sensible that in the good fight of the faith the truth is everything—the instrument of its conveyance nothing, I offer no apology for thus addressing you, but remain faithfully and affectionately yours,

Edinburgh.

THOMAS HUGHES MILNER.

—:O:—

THE STORM CALMED.

For the Message of Good-Will.

And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us; we perish —Matt. viii. 25.

The narrator tells us, immediately before this, that the disciples had entered into the ship for the purpose of crossing the sea. He also tells, that there arose a great tempest, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves; and that, during this time our Saviour fell asleep. Though the disciples feared that their lives were in danger; yet the Lord Jesus slept calmly. Storms that the disciples feared so much, were no alarm to him. His repose was gentle, as when fanned by the summer zephyrs in safety on land, with no troubles to annoy, and no cares to trouble him.

Such was the condition in which the Lord of glory was when the disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying that they were in danger of perishing. After which, he comes forth, in almighty power, and commands the tempest to cease. Now give attention to what follows—there was a great calm. The boisterous water, that seemed ready to engulf the ship and all its company, now was calm and still. The waves that agitated its surface a short time before, had now receded to their origin. Now, all this change was produced by the word of Jesus.

Let us here ask, who it is that would despise what has so much power? Who is he that would say that such a word is inefficient to quell the troubles that rise in the heart of man? And is not a word, with such mighty power, all that we require to build our hopes?

There are periods when troubles, afflictions, trials, sorrows and disappointments, rise up in our way, which was once clear and free from sorrow and care; and are ready, as it were, to engulf the ship. And where do we go to help ourselves? Is there no place to heal the broken heart? Is there nothing to cheer the fatherless and the widow, the sorrowful and the afflicted? When darkness encircles us—when our brightest and happiest prospects on earth are blasted and gone—when all the future is sadness and gloom—and when oceans of trouble are ready to bear down upon us—where do we go for aid? Where do we look for support? Are we here, looking for aid or support from our own minds? If we are bereaved of friends, and are still taking comfort in the friendship of those that are yet left us, we must remember that they, too, must leave us, or we must leave them; for death will break the dearest and nearest ties. Then, where is our comfort to be found? It is to be found in Jesus. Remember, that Jesus stilled the tempest for his disciples. Have you asked him to calm the ocean of trouble in which you are? If not, ask him now. He did for his disciples; he will also do it for you. Come to him with all your troubles and sorrows, and he will speak words of peace to your soul: words that will dispel all darkness and gloom, leaving your pathway clear; words that will still the tempest in which you are tossed. Oh! think of the sufferings he endured; and remember all this was endured by him, in order to make your suffering less. Where now are your sorrows gone? Do they not seem to vanish away, as unworthy of being compared with what Jesus endured on Calvary's cross? Or, if compared, are they not but trifling? Yet, oh sinner! do you ever think of the love that led Jesus to do so much for you? It was his love to you, and to all, that brought Jesus the Son of God to this sin-tainted earth. He suffered, he bled, and he died for you. And more, he is willing to ease you in trouble, he is ready to still the tempest in your soul, and to calm the wave of your trouble. And why will you not permit him to do so? It is true, that Jesus did bring the storm to a calm for his disciples; but, remember that they first came to him,

and asked him. Then, let your troubles be what they may, unless you come to Jesus, he will not assist you.

In life, we might perhaps be able to do without a Saviour; but even then, we cannot be happy without him. If we do not fulfil the object for which we were created, and that was for the glory of God, we cannot be happy. Now, we cannot worship God, or give him glory, and yet live in sin, or without a Saviour. Therefore, in life, we cannot be happy without a Saviour; and we cannot come to death, with any degree of resignation, when Jesus is not our friend. By death an end will be put, to all preparation, for eternity. It will bring our bodies to the grave, and our souls to judgement. There is no change in the grave. The one that is sinful in life, will be sinful in death. Think you O! Sinner, that you can calmly face the dark domains of the grave, unassisted by the Saviour? Can you, with pleasure, go down to the dark valley of death, having nothing to depend upon, but your own frail arm for support? And can you stand to justify yourself, in the presence of a long-grieved Saviour, who shall judge in righteousness, to the truth of whose judgement your own conscience will testify? Do you wish to be driven off, with shame, from the presence of God, and the glory of his power? Do you feel that you must perish, if Jesus does not assist you? The disciples did; for they came to Jesus, and told him, "Lord, save us; we perish." If you feel, that your condition is such as theirs was, come to him, and ask him, in all humility, to save you. He is ready, with out-stretched arms to save you. He is beseeching you and all, not to die, but to turn to him, and live. He extends his Almighty hand to save you from death, to which you are fast hastening, with seeming willingness. Oh! the mercy and goodness of the Saviour, when he offers so much. How great is the love of God when he, not only, offers pardon to us for our rebellion, but also beseeches us to accept it. Sinner, grieve not away such loving-kindness; but thank God that he is so very merciful, as to extend pardon, and be saved from the wrath to come, by accepting the terms upon complying with which, he offers to forgive all past sins. Will you, dependent on God for your very breath, refuse him service, and reject the offers of restoration to his divine favour? Let me ask you to value the love of God; and avail yourself of this opportunity that life affords, to secure the eternal crown of righteousness. Or, will you make yourself con-

tent in the enjoyment of the pleasures of sin, during life; and then, when your days on earth are ended, you will have no pleasure to look for in the future? Nothing will then await you, but the blackness and darkness of the anger of the Almighty.

Then, dear reader, let these stern facts have their proper influence upon you, and fashion your conduct accordingly. If you have professed to be a follower of Christ, remember your profession, and turn not to the "weak and beggarly elements of the world," which will destroy your soul, but continue steadfast, and your labour will not be in vain. But if you are not a christian, listen now to the voice of mercy, yield to its call. O! turn to God, and live. Do not delay. Hear what the Saviour says—"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; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls. And remember that the Spirit hath said—"now is the accepted time, and now the day of salvation."

Erin, Nov., 1864.

A, McKinnon.

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PRAYER BEFORE CONVERSION.

[An esteemed brother has sent us the following extracts. We give them a place as desired, and append a few reflections on them:—]

"Is it right to pray with and for the penitent sinner inquiring the way of salvation?"

"If, when the apostles came to a penitent sinner inquiring the way of salvation, they commenced praying with and for him, and exhorting him to pray for himself, is it right for us to do so too? Is it right for us to follow them? Let us take a few examples. A vast multitude of sinners, cut to the heart, once said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, **M n! Brethren! What shall we do?** And Peter answering said unto them, repent and pray, and let us join in prayer with and for you—every one of you—in the name of Jesus the Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. And as many as gladly received his word prayed and were prayed with and for; and the same day there came to the altar of prayer about three thousand souls. Again, Ananias said to Saul, arise and pray, and let me pray with and for you, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord. Paul said to the inquiring jailor, Believe on the Lord Jesus—the Christ—and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And

the jailor took Paul and Silas, and washed their stripes, and prayed and was prayed for the same hour of the night. Again—The eunuch said to Philip, See, here is a mourner's bench, what doth hinder me to pray and to be prayed with and for? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest. He answered, and said, I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they both went down to the mourner's bench, both Philip and the eunuch, and he prayed with and for him.

"I am not quoting from King James' version, but from a new one made for the occasion. This reading suits the general practice precisely; and we ought to change the Bible or the practice in order to be consistent, if for no other reason. When we find inquiring penitents, the best thing we can do is to answer their inquiries as the apostles did. When we find a man inquiring for anything, we tell him—if we know—where he can find it. Peter did this at the Pentecost. Ananias did so when he came to Saul. The apostles did the same in every case, and never failed to show a sinner the way to pardon. They never mind a failure. Not so the modern seeking system. Many under this system continue to seek and mourn till the day of their death and find nothing.

"It is the duty of Christian parents to teach and train their children to pray before they make a profession of Christianity?

"We do not know of any instance where the apostles ever enjoyed any such duty. The apostles first made disciples, and then taught them prayer and every other part of Christian practice. The first thing with our children, and all others, is to come to Christ enter his school, become his scholars, and then practise as he directs. Prayer is for those in Christ. The right of petition belongs to the citizen. Before some have known how to become citizens, they have petitioned, as in the case of Saul, to know how to become citizens. ("Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?") But every Christian ought to be able to tell his child what to do to become a Christian. Prayer is an item in Christian practice—and not a converting institution—for those in the kingdom, and not to translate them into the kingdom."

Prayer by the unconverted is not Christian prayer, it is not such prayer as the apostles inculcated. Yet we have New Testament records of the acceptance of the petitions of the penitent Jew and the pious Pagan. Acts ix. 11 records of Saul of Tarsus, while no more than the convicted persecutor—"Behold he prayeth," and chap. x. 4 affirms of the Roman centurion, that his prayers and his alms had come up with acceptance before God. How, then, are we to reconcile these and other such facts with the express declaration of the Messiah, that no man cometh to the Father but by him, and the no less express

reminder of the apostle that through him we both—Jew and Gentile disciples—have access by one Spirit to the Father (Jo. xiv. 6; Eph. ii. 18).

An explanation may be offered thus:—The merely pious or penitent sinner approaching God in all sincerity, and according to the knowledge possessed of God, is *not* in Scripture forbidden, nor is he sent empty away; yet his coming to God is not that of a child to a father; not that of the disciple of the Son, into whose heart is sent forth the Spirit of adoption—the Spirit of the Son, crying, Abba, Father. The truth is, that many come to God who do not and cannot approach, simply because of their non-christian standing—their not being found “in Christ.” It thus remains true, that no man cometh to the Father—save through the Mediator; and also true that persons like the anxious though imperfectly informed publican, exclaiming in the agony of his convicted spirit, “God be propitious to me a sinner,” go away justified rather than the better-informed formalist.

It is not our duty, therefore, to discourage prayer on the part of any such. It is doubtless within the compass of duty that we remind the sinner—the formalist and impenitent—that the prayers of the wicked are abomination to God. It is no less dutiful that as regards the young, the teachable, the inquiring, and the anxious, we direct them to the Saviour, so that coming to him, they may through him draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies laved with pure water.

As to praying “with and for” the unconverted, we are not left in any doubt that it is our duty to pray “for all men.” The duty is expressly enjoined 1 Tim. ii. 1. And if by praying “with and for” another, is merely meant that said person is present listening to, and, as far as he can, concurring in the petitions presented in his behalf; it would be a nice distinction indeed, that would authorise the petitioning Christian to turn round and say, Recollect you must not concur with me! We cannot suppose otherwise than that Christian parents will pray daily thus “with and for” their children, so long as under the parental roof.

There need not in any such instance be such ambiguity of language as would mislead those on whose behalf the prayers and intercessions are made; it will be the petitioner’s own fault if he give or confirm the notions that too commonly prevail on this subject. T. H. M.

CHURCHES IN AMERICA TESTED.

[The British *Harbinger* carries to its readers the following. It may be studied to advantage.—D. O.]

The American churches are now passing through a period of double trial—trial by adversity and trial by prosperity. That of the first kind, arising from the dreadful national strife, demands that the heart of every true Christian be lifted up to God on their behalf. Without doubt many disciples have been wrecked on this troubled sea—some have fallen by the sword, some are reduced to poverty, and others have fallen lower, having made shipwreck of faith. Still it is to us abundantly evident that the churches of the apostolic way have gone through thus far with damage very small—small, indeed, when compared with that sustained by surrounding sects—and further, that however long the storm may last, when the calm comes they will be found still more favorably to compare with their many rivals. This is said on the ground of ascertained facts. But even this trial of affliction has in it an element of prosperity—that they sustain it better than others, gives them a present power and will in the end prove an immense advantage. But prosperity has its dangers and evils. When a cause numbers its *hundreds of thousands* many half-hearted opponents declare on its side, and in the case of a religious reformation many of its truths are forced upon communities and adopted, one here and one there, and then another and another, until the more advanced opponents and the least advanced of the reformers are not very unlike. The next step is that of effort on the part of the last-named to yield a little so as to bring in the other class, more particularly those of them who have a considerable share of this world's goods, and then comes the struggle, and then is the decisive day. If the men who stand to the *old* way and the *whole* way prevail, the reformation as a compact movement stands, if not the faithful minorities struggle on in their small circles, and what should have been a world-mastering movement takes its place among the worn-out and useless dummies that exist upon the past, protected only by the mantle of respectability which the god of this world charitably throws over them. There is no room to doubt that by the very force of large prosperity the accommodationists have a place in the American churches, and that in some churches they prevail. But when the most is made of this admission

the cheering fact remains, that the great heart of the brotherhood is firm and right, and this is evidenced by the manly attitude of the leading periodicals, which speak out the whole truth as freely as the most uncompromising could desire.

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FLATTERY.

“ A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet.” *Spreading a net for the feet* of another—laying snares and traps for him, is what no man ever thinks of doing but for some purpose of mischief. And such is the evil of *flattery*. It is a snare spread for the feet. And it is often spread very dexterously. The experienced flatterer knows well what will *take best* with different characters. You have heard possibly of the man who tried everything he could possibly think of, but without success; and who finished the whole of his insinuating address by telling the object of his adulation, and whom it was his interest and his aim to win,—that he was the first he had met with in all his experience, who was *proof against flattery*. This was the very flattery that gained the day:—and all that had gone before was only an artful preparation for this. Be *jealous then of flatterers*, and *jealous of yourselves*. There is no flattery of which it can be truly said that it is harmless. In the verse before us, Solomon does not refer solely to the *intention of the flatterer*; he refers also to the *tendency of the flattery*. The latter may be far from harmless, even although, to a great degree, the former may. Injury may be done, and many a time is done, when no harm is meant to the party and when there is no interest of our own to serve. And there is no little guilt on the part of those, who, seeing vanity to be a man’s failing, set themselves of purpose to feed it,—pouring into the ear, merely in the way of an amusing experiment, every description of fulsome adulation, trying how much, and in what variety, it will be taken in. The experiment is a cruel one. But it has another and a more direct ingredient of evil—*falsehood*. You cannot flatter thus without lying;—and it is much to be feared, there is no small amount of falsehood uttered in this way, of the turpitude of which they who are changeable with it never think.

FIRST EPISTLE TO W. A. PALEN, OF ATHOL.

Twenty years ago, Brother Palen, we met for the first time on the south shore of East Lake. You will remember the decent little School House on the hill by the Thompson place where we assembled with others to communicate sacred lessons one to another. At that period, not only were the disciples few and feeble in Prince Edward county, but they were few and feeble in the province. If my memory be reliable, there were in all Western Canada precisely five meeting houses belonging to the Brotherhood; one at Jordan, two in Eramosa, one in Esquesing, and one in Toronto. Of these, the one in Esquesing and the one in East Eramosa were log houses, their "outward adorning" being something after the fashion of the "natural man"—the Indian—in the forest where they were erected.

The West Lake School House, a short distance from the residence of brother Lambert, was less inviting than the School House at the East Lake; but the meetings were none the less edifying and joyful.

You recollect that for quite a little time after arriving in the county of Prince Edward, my labours were directed chiefly toward securing unity, kindness, and love, among the disciples. Very unheavenly influences had previously prevailed. So considerable were my sympathies enlisted in the work of peace and brotherly favour, that beloved men were heard to say that I was less acquainted with the first principles of the gospel than with the after principles. Not heeding these comments and devoutly desirous of teaching the disciples in that vicinity what they never had been taught, my labours were continued until alienations were healed, unhallowed feelings modified, and animosities either softened or subdued.

Time went on. It was believed to be wise for the disciples in all that region to maintain their power and keeping together in one congregation known by the name of the church at Athol. You became an overseer. Two other disciples were overseers with you. After a season you were pleased to discontinue acting in a public capacity, for reasons which were unrevealed. Unwilling to be a spy upon any man's liberty, the Lord did not make it my business to ascertain why you were no longer an overseer at Athol, seeing you were disposed to keep the reasons within your own mind.

Meanwhile the disciples at West Lake, and at East Lake, increased in number and in power. In my travels I occasionally called to see you all, and was cheered while ministering cheer to every one as opportunity offered. "He that watereth shall himself be watered" is a law as sure as any law of the divine government; and as my most youthful labours were principally with the disciples in that region, it was both natural and spiritual for me to cherish very fervent sympathy in behalf of the well being of all.

The years 1848 and 1849 dawned and closed. Chosen to be a scribe to a fervent company of disciples seeking to devise ways and means to sustain proclaimers, my studies were directed to the action of disciples at work in primitive days as described in the sacred writings. After my best attention, I concluded that my readings and reflections did not fit with many beloved men, and my studies were measurably laid away in silence.

Years passed away. Led step by step, not knowing where truth might take me, I finally found myself in the midst of the Athol church submitting an epistle relative to disciples working with one another to convey the gospel of Jesus to the people of Canada. This was in the autumn of 1860. Sent forth by a church united to a man, this epistle gave joy to many whose aim was to learn, and love, and live the truth of Heaven; yet, there were chosen disciples who were uneasy after reading it. Shall we in the meantime draw the curtain of reflection, and partake for a season of the blessing of silence?

As a disciple of the Saviour, yours,

D. OLIPHANT.

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SECOND EPISTLE TO W. A. PALEN, OF ATHOL.

Revolution attends reformation. They are evidently as near alike as twins. The overruling power of Jehovah is seen in every revolution in the history of Adam's family, from the day that Cain wrought a bad personal revolution down to the autumn of 1860, when millions of men in America put themselves in motion for a new financial, political, and general government. That revolutionary storm, which, in its direful working, was destined in the great designs of God to

break the yoke of enslaved millions, relieved many an honest man on this Continent from crushing defeat, while pleading the cause of love and truth. Please excuse me if no pause is made to illustrate or prove this position. There is a sense in which it is strikingly true that the Lord "causeth the wrath of man to praise him."

God works slowly. He is never in haste. He never errs. He knows principle. He is as careful of his truth in a single man as in a church, and as careful of it in a church as in a host. Truth wherever deposited, is heaven's jewel.

Connected with the Athol epistle of 1860, a variety of events occurred in 1861 three of which allow me to note. 1. A pledge to beloved disciples in Eramosa, that one hundred dollars would be paid within twelve months for evangelizing. 2. A visit from two general laborers. 3. The unction of ordination ministered to four men as overseers.

In 1862, the extended membership of the Athol congregation called for two churches instead of one; and while the meeting house was to be used by disciples adjacent to the East Lake, another meeting house was erected at the West Lake for the use of the brethren at that point. The first assembly in the new "sanctuary" was held in July 1862.

The next year you will recollect we all were privileged to welcome two John's as members of the church at East Lake—John Taylor, and John Harvie. These men, though they proved themselves to be unacquainted with the government of Christ as we understand it, were very useful to test us all anew, so that we could tell with the assurance of faith, where we all are religiously, how much we loved Christ and how much we loved each other.

Of the people like John Taylor and John Harvie, neighbor Spurgeon, of London, says. "These people will not hear preachers." Again he says. "These friends have a perfect right to secede from us, and hold their own views and principles, but inasmuch as they have always amalgamated with our churches, and then seceded, causing heart-burnings and bitterness and I know not what, I can but look upon them as hindrances to the spread of the gospel.

There are two reasons why churches are disturbed by what Mr. Spurgeon calls "these people." The first is, that the churches are not always composed of genuine material, the "lively stones" being far

too scarce, and therefore easily thrown out of order. In the second place "these people" understand not the gospel, and have not been taught the government of the Lord Jesus according to the inspired oracles.

You know, brother Palen, that for year's I have put myself with the race of simpletons who believe that no man can permanently injure another. From Paul to Peter Waldo, and from Peter Waldo to Roger Williams, and from Roger Williams to Alexander Campbell, the history of the noblest men, evinces in the clearest terms, that no man is able to minister abiding injury to his fellow. But a man can injure himself. This was always so. Jesus plainly told Paul in sending him to labour, that in proclaiming truth distastful to the people he would suffer. Why did not Paul act more prudently by letting out less truth, and keeping himself more popular and comfortable?

But it is witnessed that the world is better than formerly. We are a refined race who live in this age, if we can accept our own opinion of ourselves. Faith has become genteel and the gospel is dressed in broadcloth refinement! Shall we look all over the world and see the number of soldiers equipped to take life—shall we look the second time and see the ecclesiastic organizations striking in deadly antagonism against one another—shall we take a third look and see the best men dwelling upon sixpenny opinions, instead of the testimonies inspired of God, which give spiritual vigor and health, and then shall we look again and calculate the grace and loveliness in the present living population of our world?

Your brother in grace, truth, and love,
Lake Shore, Clinton, March 31st. D. OLIPHANT.

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REPUTATION.

Some people have the misfortune to have a very thin skin. Every insect that bites, every scratch they receive, every rub they get, makes quite a sore spot. You will sometimes see such chasing or hunting after some report that has been connected with their names, or some insinuation that has been dropped prejudicial to them, as they think. By the time they have one such creature fairly traced, another will be started. Such sensitiveness is a great calamity to a minister.—

There are so many watching him, so many who cannot understand his duties and labors, that it is utterly impossible that he should not sometimes be misunderstood, and, of course, misrepresented.

A young friend of mine was in precisely these circumstances. He was most anxious to do right, and tremblingly alive to every temptation to do wrong. When he first came to his field he was hailed as a bird just alighted from Paradise, and every movement was grace and everything he did was perfect. But there's a teething time, especially to young ministers, and in about three years their people find them not angels, and they, in withdrawing their over estimation, deduct too much, and weigh them too lightly. There was one man, never professing to have much religion, and no hope, except that of running the blockade, and getting into heaven with everybody else. This man found he could torment my young friend, and that he could fill his skin at any time, by setting this and that report in motion, sometimes insinuating that he was once in a certain place, under another name, or that his scholarship in college was very low, or that he never paid his washerwoman at all, the while he was studying theology, or that he lamed Mr. Hubbard's horse, and refused to pay any damage, &c. It was in vain to deny and kill one of the stories. By the time he had killed one another was sure to be started. It was fighting hornets. While you killed one,—one, two or three more would be after you. What to do he didn't know. And so in his distress he went to an old minister to ask his advice.

“So this Mr. Tins keeps you scalding in hot water, does he?”

“Indeed he does. And I don't know what to do. People think there is some fire where there is so much smoke. Some of my best friends say I owe it to myself and to the people to bring him before a court of justice, and see if a jury won't shield me. I have thought much of this as the only thing left me to do. But I thought I would come first and ask your advice.”

“Well I am not sure that my advice will be grateful to you or your people, and so I will give it in the form of a very simple story. When I was a young man I had occasion to go to a certain place, and in fact, Newburyport was the place. Whether I was going on a courting visit, or for something else, is not material now. But I recollect that I was in a new ‘Boston chaise.’ I don't remember about my hat and coat, but I do remember that my boots were very glossy. Well, as I enter-

ed the city, there came out a rough, shaggy, villainous looking dog, and with a loud roar, he began to bark at my horse. Then he would try to bite at his nose, I raised my whip and struck at the brute, but of course he was just out of its reach. This made him bark the louder, and turning toward me vented his rage directly at me. It now became a regular battle. I tried to see if I could hit him, and he tried to see if he could torment me. My success was poor—his very great. He not only annoyed me, but by his roaring and jumping, and my trying to thrash him, we drew the attention of the whole street upon us, and every face seemed to say, 'which is the greater fool?' Not to be undone and shame by a dog, I stopped my horse, got out, tied, and was ready for a regular battle. I was determined to show all the street that I was not to be beaten by the dog. Up went my whip, and for a moment the dog seemed determined to make fight but he soon concluded that 'discretion was the better part of valour,' and ran just fast enough to keep out of my reach. He ran and barked, and I followed and struck, and the boys shouted. But as I pressed him too hard, he turned down into a narrow, dirty alley, where he was evidently at home, and I fairly hit him, and made him screech and sneak into his kennel. There, now! you are whipped, fairly whipped, my good fellow, and I hope you will learn better manners next time! —by this time the owner of the beast came out doubling his fists and swearing like a pirate, and every old woman in the street came out, and every one took the dog's part!

"'Pretty well, Mr. Shine boots,' cried one, 'you have scared him, haint you?'

"'At him again, Mr. Longwhip, for he won't remember you next time,' cried another.

"'Did I ever!' cried a third. 'To think that poor old Shag should be worth all this notice, and this chasing from the main street.'

"Just then a bucket of the dirtiest water was dashed into the street, and whether by design I never knew, but splash it went on my newly brushed boots and on my pants! Their glory was dimmed! Very meekly I went dripping back, and resumed my seat. Well, said I to myself, I have whipped the brute, and what then? Why, after all, its only a dog that I have whipped. I have soiled my clothes, have been laughed at, have sunk in my own self esteem, and I am the loser by

that game! Ever since I have better understood the text, 'Beware of dogs,' and have been very careful not to make fight with them. I have often had them bark at me, but have found that if I go quietly along, and pay no attention to them, they soon become tired of barking, and go back to their kennels. Whereas, if I carried a cane or whip, and made fight whenever one barked at me, I should have my hands full. Some dogs will even bark at the moon, and the fuller the moon is, and the brighter she shines, the louder they bark. But the moon keeps on shining.

"Now you have my story, and you have preached long enough to make 'an application,' have you not?"

"You advise me then to let the law alone, and pay no attention to my friend Tims?"

"Certainly I do. 'A good minister of Jesus Christ' need have no anxiety about his reputation. Let him be right and do right, and there is nothing that can hurt him. Your Master will take care that nothing hurts you. 'Be careful for nothing,' *i. e.* not anxious."

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PROPHECY.

Many readers of this work, no doubt, will feel somewhat reluctant to peruse any articles on the above subject, although they may be warm friends and ardent lovers of the truth as regards other matters of the Christian religion. The reason of this can in some measure be accounted for, from the fact of a great many different works having been written on them by authors with a view to establish some favorite theory of their own, and hence often appearing in the character of guessers rather than that of earnest enquirers after truth revealed by others, of not being sufficiently versed in the nature and form of figurative and symbolic language, so as to realize and explain its obscure and hidden meaning, and of not being able to understand the connection and relation of important historical events that happen in the shifting scenes and mazy web of national and religious affairs. And, therefore having an inability to see how those events harmonize with things and facts foretold by prophets, it is hence natural to suppose that they are inclined to look upon efforts of this nature with disfavor, regarding them as vain, and not imparting useful instruction.

But any one who has given them some attention, and has had the patience to look into their nature, observing prophetic words fulfilled in the facts of history, must come to the firm conviction that they were not intended to be idle and unmeaning tales, only got up to please the fancy and excite the curiosity of those who gave them their attention, and that they were given for some highly important end in the work of salvation to fallen man, who hearing and studying them, and being convinced of their divine origin, may be edified in belief and knowledge—strengthened and built up in the precious faith.

Who, with God's word in his hand, and having steadfast faith in its author, dare say that the prophecies which it contains are unworthy of being studied, or useless and vain to those who study them and endeavor to penetrate into their hidden mystery? The fact of their being the word of God demonstrates their importance and utility. All the teachings of the Word of God are useful. There is nothing in it superfluous; nothing vain; nothing but what is intended to minister to our necessity in the work of redemption. In the natural world who can find anything superfluous or vain? anything indispensable to the life, welfare and happiness of animal and intelligent beings? In the mundane sphere we need a moon, as well as a sun, and the elements, air, fire and water. Annihilate any one of these, and philosophy with her prophetic tongue would herald the extinction of our race. If then, the Creator has thus made a natural world, perfect in its various parts, it is reasonable to infer that his word is just as perfect, and that all its parts are necessary to the edification and spiritual growth of his people.

Opening the New Testament, and examining its pages, what do we find? that prophecy holds an important position in establishing the claims of the Christian religion. With regard to the forerunner, John the Baptist, the prophet Zacharias, under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, says, "Thou child shalt go before the Lord to prepare his way by giving a knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God." And just in harmony with the prophetic teaching of Zacharias, so John came immersing in the wilderness and publishing the immersion of reformation for the remission of sins. A people was now prepared by pardon to receive the Lord—the way before him was made smooth. But how

was this personage to be known, for, as yet, John did not know who he was, whose shoe-latchet he was not worthy to unloose. "This is he," says John, "concerning whom I said, after me comes a man who is preferred to me, for he was before me. As for me I knew him not, but that he might be made manifest to Israel, I am come immersing in water. John testified further, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and remaining upon him. For my part I should not have known him, had not he who sent me to immerse in water told me, upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending and remaining, the same is he who immerses in the Holy Spirit."—John i. 30-33. Then John goes on to say that he saw the Spirit descend, and therefore testified that he was the Son of God

———On him baptized

Heaven opened, and in likeness of a dove
The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
From Heaven proclaimed him his beloved Son.

Milton's Paradise Regained.

Summing this evidence up, we see how the prophetic declarations of Zacharias, of John the Baptist, and others, harmonize in their fulfilment to establish the claims of the truth of Jesus being the Christ; and by analyzing a great portion of the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments we would find that they centered on the Messiah, that they are all beams of the same rays of light that only tend to make his pathway more clear and bright. The apostle Peter referring to that voice which he heard from the excellent glory, "this is my beloved Son," says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts."—2 Peter i. 19, 20. Paul to the Ephesians also would have them realize "that they were fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple unto the Lord."

F. H. Y.

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He who seldom thinks of heaven, is not likely to get there; as the way to hit a mark is to keep the eye fixed upon it.

PRESIDENT MILLIGAN'S WORDS.

It has been alleged—

1. That the Missionary Societies do not always rest on a Scriptural basis; that the Constitution of the American Christian Missionary Society, for example, admits to life-membership, any person, on the payment of £25; and to life-directorship, any one who will pay \$100.
2. That these Societies sometimes transgress the law of Christ, by introducing themes that are wholly foreign to the Missionary work.
3. That the Papacy and sundry other politico-ecclesiastical establishments of evil tendency, have grown up from just such a centralization of power as the aforesaid scheme contemplates.

In answer to the first of these objections, I need only say, that if the allegation is true,—if any of our Missionary Societies does rest on a false or unscriptural basis, it should of course be speedily changed; for other foundation can no man lay than that which has been laid by the apostles and prophets. Much, of course, in the administration of such Societies, must ever be left to our own sense of expediency and propriety. "Let all things," says Paul, "be done decently and in good order." But this very precept may require, that in many instances the Rules of the American Congress or of the British Parliament, should be adopted; especially in the government of large assemblies. But nothing that is contrary to the letter and spirit of the New Testament should have any place in either the organization or the government and administration of our religious Societies. And hence I am clearly of the opinion that the existing popular scheme of life-memberships and life-directorships should at once be abolished as unscriptural and of evil tendency. The propriety of admitting any one to membership in a Missionary Society even during good behavior, on condition of his paying a certain sum, is, to say the least of it, a very questionable policy. But to receive any one as a member or a director *for life*, on the payment of a certain sum, is to my mind clearly in violation of the letter and spirit of the New Covenant. And I therefore hope that the American Christian Missionary Society will see to it, that all such objectionable rules and regulations are rescinded at our next Annual Meeting; and that the Constitution be merely a *Directory* for the transaction of business according to the law of Christ.

In reply to the second and third objections, it is perhaps enough to say, that the power to do good implies also the power to do evil. And such is our natural and habitual propensity to err, that all human power, and especially the power of union, is very liable to be abused and perverted. There is not, perhaps in Christendom, a church that has not in this respect transgressed. Complaints are made even against the church of Jerusalem, of Corinth, and of Rome. But the Apostles did not on this account recommend their disbanding. Nor did they recommend the churches of other provinces to withdraw fellowship from them. Nay, verily; but just the reverse. The burden of their prayers, and of their teachings, and of their admonitions, was that all might be ONE, that the world might believe and be saved by and through their instrumentality.

These admonitions then, dear brethren, were written also for our instruction. Let us too have the ONE BODY. And let this body not be a lifeless carcass, nor an organism for demons, nor for Beelzebub, the prince of demons. But let it ever be animated by the Spirit of Christ; and then "love, and joy, and peace, and long-suffering, and gentleness, and goodness, and fidelity, and meekness, and temperance," will ever characterize our social life and deliberative assemblies; and God will bless us, and make all our labors to abound in his praise and glory.

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A LETTER TO EVERYBODY.

To the Disciples and their neighbors in the Province of Canada:—
A meeting is appointed to be held in the grove of Isaac Dennis, four miles north-east of St. Anns, beginning on the second Friday in June, to continue four days. Those who travel by Great Western Railway, are invited to halt at the Beamsville Station. A number of able proclaimers of the gospel are expected to address the people who assemble.

One week after the opening of the above meeting, on the third Friday in June, a meeting will begin in Pickering, in the vicinity of Duffin's Creek, to continue several days. Travelers from the east who take the Grand Trunk, may halt at the Duffin's Creek station, while those who travel from the west can halt at Frenchman's Bay. We learn that the beloved Franklin, of Ohio, will be present to take part in the labors of the meeting.

D. O.

CONDITION OF THE JEWS.

At the present moment there are about 20,000 Jews residing in the Holy Land. From the commencement of this century an unquenchable thirst after knowledge has manifested itself on the Continent amongst the Jewish people, which has no parallel in the history of any nation. Colleges, universities, and higher schools are attended proportionately by a much larger number of Jewish than Christian students throughout Germany, Austria and France. In Prussia seven times more Jews than Gentiles devote themselves to the higher branches of knowledge, arts and sciences. The fields of polite literature, journalistic, arts, and science, are filled with Jewish aspirants. Some of the best literary, political and scientific periodicals have been, and still are edited by Jews. Several of its most celebrated painters, engravers, medallists, musicians, and composers are Jews, while there is scarcely a university but one or more chairs are occupied by Jews; and we thankfully add, many more by believing Jews.

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INTELLIGENCE.

BRETHREN PLATT AND HICKS, AT WEST LAKE:—The writings of the New Covenant are mainly in the form of letters. Nearly all the New Testament is composed of this class of writing. Allow me to address you in this familiar manner, sending news not only to you but to a multitude.

Good tidings from Eramosa, for which we may all rejoice. About thirty have recently vowed by the gospel to serve the Lord Jesus.

Several have been added to the saved in Bowmanville. Brother Lard is hard at work in Bowmanville and in Oshawa. The churches in the rear of these places—Charlesville and Butterfield—need help. Let us hope they will obtain it.

Brother Ross, of Cooksville, informs me that when W. Thompson was there, before departing to Scotland, he took the confession of thirteen.

The disciples at Smithville and at the Lake Shore, Clinton, appear to be progressing.

Word comes to me from a brother in Nova Scotia that the disciples in the town of Milton are erecting a meeting-house which is estimated to cost six thousand dollars.

Brother Creath, in a letter lately written, is pleased to employ this language: "Clerical assemblies were the ruin of ancient christianity—they have ruined the sects—and they will *ruin us*!"

The very fervent Garraty, writing from Lubec, Maine, says that the disciples on the Island of Grandmanon, New Brunswick, are about opening a new meeting-house.

While mingling with beloved brethren at various points, my opinion respecting brother Kemp is solicited. My reply is, that brother Kemp is still a stranger, and that more knowledge of him is needed before a safe opinion can be expressed.

Brother W. Ainsworth gave an acceptable address to the people east of Brighton some weeks ago.

Negotiations are going on between J. D. Benedict and R. Miller for a discussion. They are to meet each other, the one to maintain the creed of Christ and his apostles, the other to maintain the creed of Wesley and his apostles. Such, at least, is the substance of the intelligence which has reached us.

In glancing back upon what I have written, it seems a little stiff for a letter, but your charity I am certain will not fail to overlook defects.

Your brother in the one gospel,

D. OLIPHANT.

Lake Shore, Clinton, April, 1865.

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BRIEF LETTER TO A DEACON.

ESTEEMED BROTHER KETCHUM, OF ATHOL:—Several years since you were appointed a deacon in the church of disciples at East Lake. Say that you were in the presence of the Lord Jesus to-day, and he would question you relative to what you have done as a deacon, would your honest reply be wholly satisfactory to yourself? I take for granted that you have carefully examined the gospel creed touching the work of a deacon—a very responsible, a very honorable, and a very profitable work.

Stephen, the first bold disciple who had the honor of being persecuted to death because of his love of the Lord of Truth, was a deacon. His address before religious accusers, as recorded in the seventh chapter of the Acts, gives evidence that he was, humanly speaking, one of the largest minded men. Jesus never places a man of noble intellect in a small place; and it is hence justly argued that in Stephen's day a deacon was required to perform large-minded work.

Philip was another deacon in the same church. The fact that he became an evangelist is presumptive proof that he was a man of ability. It would not be difficult to show, both from the class of men chosen and the breadth and variety of their work, that deacons were among the largest workmen, intellectually, socially, and spiritually, in the assemblies of the sacred, anciently.

Several years ago I read a pamphlet by a Baptist preacher on what he called "the office of deacon." He took the ground that in these days of modern wisdom the office of deacon is lost. No doubt he was either wrong or right. I charge nothing for the expression of my judgment. It appears to me he was right.

May we pay homage to the Head of the Church, learning his will and yielding to it.

In the meantime I am your fellow-laborer in the gospel.

Affectionately, D. OLIPHANT.

Jordan, 3rd April.

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"NOW CONCERNING THE COLLECTIONS."

BRETHREN are divided in sentiment and practice with regard to how collections should be made. True, they generally, whether they have any "poor saints" or not, put for them a few cents into the treasury upon the first day of the week. But collections are and must be made for other purposes; and with respect to these no order is observed. Some resort to the subscription list, some to "agencies;" others to monthly or quarterly meetings, when the "hat" or box is sent round, etc. Is there no light in the Bible? Is there no lesson taught there? Why then do not the people of the Lord take the divine plan? During the first of "these last days" many of our brethren were driven from their homes and were in destitute circumstances; and our Lord willed that relief should be sent them. The divine plan to raise this contribution was as follows: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God has

prospered him ;" "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, nor of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

Will brother Black or brother Anderson tell me why we should not follow this divine model in raising all our contributions? Either have one general treasury, or separate ones.

Brethren frequently have money they would *cheerfully give* to the Lord's cause, but having no poor among them, and no treasury in the church for the support of evangelists, building meeting-houses, etc., it somehow or other, "according to the fashion," slips out of the pocket, or purse, and when the "collector" comes they are minus, according to the present loose and disorderly plan.

Brethren are in danger of unintentionally cultivating a parsimonious spirit, or of running into the "credit system;" and preachers of establishing the "pick-up" practice; all or any of which will eventually prove inimical to the cause that lies near our hearts. A desire to be brief prevents me from alluding to many passages of Scripture, etc.

August 3, 1859.

SIMON.

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MODERN ELIJAHS.—It is not well always to look on the shady side of affairs. There are men who came into existence under a shadow, and the shadow has dogged their lives, and all that is bright, and pure, and beautiful, takes the sombre hue of their own fancies. Their religion consists in bemoaning the evils of the world, in lamenting the gradual decadence of good, and in regarding all home evils and foreign complications as "signs of the times." They are the Elijahs, who retire into the wilderness of their own contemplations, saying, "I, even I, only am left," unconscious that all the time there are not only the "seven thousand who have not bowed the knee unto Bael," but that multitudes are everywhere obeying the gospel call. They are the Jonahs sitting under the gourds of their own security, amazed that the judgments of God do not descend upon a guilty world.

SELF-DENIAL.—Are you called upon to exercise self-denial? Abraham looks down from heaven upon you, and tells you that he was ready to sacrifice his beloved Isaac. Are you afraid of the scoffs and jeers of a fleeting world? Noah builded an ark; Moses rejected the honors of Pharaoh's court, and underwent as many taunts and scoffs as it is likely you do. Are you called to lay down your lives for the testimony of Jesus and a good conscience? Stephen tells a storm of stones fell upon him.

A MONTHLY: A WEEKLY.—There are beloved disciples in Canada who desire a monthly paper; there are chosen men who want a weekly.

D. O.

CHRISTIAN RETIREMENT.—Social devotion is no substitute for closet duties, for only by secret communion with God are the best elements of christian character developed and matured. We are told that when the apostles returned from their first ministerial work, our Lord “took them and went aside privately into a desert place.” It was meant to teach the great lesson, that those who do public work for the souls of others must be careful to take time for being alone with God. Occasional retirement, self-inquiry, meditation and secret communion with God, are absolutely essential to spiritual health. The man who neglects them is in great danger of a fall. To be always preaching, teaching, speaking, is unquestionably a sign of zeal. But it is not always a sign of zeal according to knowledge. We must take time for sitting down and calmly looking within and examine how matters stand between ourselves and Christ.

DOING GOOD.—There is something inexpressibly delightful in the reflection that the purest and sweetest joys of which the human heart is capable, come from conferring benefits upon others. In the very fact we discover a proof of the benignity of that Divine Being who so framed and attempered our spirits that the happiness which we are the means of imparting to others, should, by a sort of reflex influence, become our own. While selfish gratification always contracts and enfeebles the spirit, benevolent philanthropy like this elicits its powers, draws it out, nerves and sustains it, and makes it seek the intercourse of others. In how few instances do we see the luxury of doing good exemplified! The very conception of plans of benevolence carries its own reward in it, while their execution imparts to the benevolent a joy only second to that which is experienced by the suffering object of our kindness. Verily, it is “*more blessed to give than to receive.*”—*The Evangelist.*

Men, who have eyes, believe in the sun, and none but the blind can seriously question the Creator's goodness. We hear indeed of men led into doubts on this point by their sufferings; but these doubts have generally a deeper source than the evils of life. Such skepticism is a moral disease; the growth of some open or lurking depravity.

A very excellent man, with us, uses the following language: “O that we could all take hold of the truth in right earnest, and convert men to Christ, and stand living witnesses for Christ. What a power we would wield.”

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Queries by several chosen disciples will be answered. It is hoped that no brother will judge that he is slighted because a question he sends may be permitted to remain unanswered for a season. Silence on our part must be the response to a query or two recently sent. The Perfect Teacher did not answer all questions. D. O.

Sundry letters are deserving of immediate reply,—will the writers give us a little credit, even if they usually reject the credit system? While engaged in posting from place to place among the churches, our time is largely occupied. To fervent and reasonable men we say, "Have patience with me and I will pay the all."

Jordan, April, 1865.

D. O.