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FIRST PRINCIPLES.

NUMBER III.

HITHERTO we have attempted to show that man is not Divinity, and is not capable of spiritual self-government. Our argument is an assault upon the Platonic and Cartesian speculation recently revived by infidel theologians, who maintain that every human being possesses sufficient native divinity for safe spiritual guidance. But having thus contemplated the subject negatively, it becomes our duty to our readers to present it, if possible, in an affirmative form. We rejoice in the belief that God is our Creator—that we have been placed upon this earth upon a trial of our conduct—but as our Sovereign, our Guardian and Guide, our kind Father has left us not to ourselves. To be sure he has permitted man to work out many inventions, and construct many “cisterns which hold no water,” but it has been for the purpose of teaching the world dependence, and especially to satisfy us that we are not to look *within*, nor in each other's faces for spiritual light, but to God alone, the giver of all good.

The great question of our times pertains to the *inspiration* and *authority* of the book we call the Bible, and we shall therefore take some pains to state these points in a clear manner. A revelation from God implies something made known of which we were previously ignorant, and without which revelation we should have remained profoundly ignorant. For illustration, it is stated in the Bible that “man was made of the dust of the earth, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul.” Also, that “woman was made of a rib taken from the side of man.” These we regard as most unphilosophical suggestions, and, indeed, most unreasonable propositions. The imagination of man was never sufficiently extravagant to have arrived at such conclusions, and yet we believe them most heartily. But upon

what ground do we acknowledge their truth? God has given us ability to examine testimony, human and divine, and the monstrous declaration that man was made of clay, comes to us in a voice from heaven, as a revelation from above, and upon proper examination of the report, we receive it as one of those extraordinary or miraculous truths, which it is in the power of God alone to communicate. In the Old Testament we have 39 books, professedly written by inspired historians, prophets and poets, and in the New Testament there are 27 books, avowedly written by inspired apostles and evangelists. The two parts constitute the Bible, and all Christian people believe they contain the revelations which the Heavenly Father has seen proper to make to the world.—We regard the book as not partly inspired and partly the work of man. To be sure all admit slight interpolations and mis-translations, but as a whole, we receive the Bible as bounding the sphere of our spiritual knowledge, and as being in fact the only perfect system of religion in existence.

As to the *manner* in which the Father inspired his servants, we deem it important to make a few suggestions. They wrote not their feelings, impressions or opinions; and as strange as it may appear, it was not to satisfy mankind that they *believed* what they said, though doubtless they did so. Hence they never intimated that they "*believed*," or thought they felt or were satisfied that a proposition was true or false. They professed to deal in *facts*, and found no place for speculation or reason. Neither did they imagine themselves under the influence of the spirits of the dead, or that it was possible for such spirits to give revelations to beings of earth. The idea of *inspiration*, from Genesis to the close of revelation, is that of a *communication in words by the Holy Spirit* of matters which we could not have learned otherwise. Hence the prophets declared, "The word of the Lord came, *saying*," or in words which the Spirit enabled them to utter. Jesus Christ said to his servants, "study not what yon shall say, for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of my Father that speaks in you," or through you. He was to be "mouth and wisdom to them," which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay. And the Apostle Paul, in speaking of the great secret which "eye had not seen," nor "ear heard," or had "entered into the heart of man," says, "which we make known not in words of man's wisdom, but words which the Holy Spirit teacheth," "explaining spiritual things"—in a good translation, "by *spiritual words*." This is our meaning of the inspiration of the Bible, and therefore we most certainly regard it as an infallible document. In the words of a living writer,

"Here is the rock of the Christian's faith—an inspired communication, an infallible revelation. Here is the life and power of the Christian ministry—they have a voice of God to echo, an infallible "thus sayeth the Lord" to form the soul of their oratory and the power of their appeals."

"We must take the Bible, not, however, as the book of Moses, of Daniel, of Isaiah, or of Paul, but as the book of God. In every line, every word, we must see only our Father, hear only our Savior, and we should desire no more to think of Paul and David, any further than their various circumstances and feelings are employed by God for illustrating truth, than of the man who printed, bound and sold the volume."

If, then, the book of God is inspired, and is a perfect revelation in reference to all matters, subjects and practices, in regard to what it is important to have spiritual information, it presents itself as a volume of transcendently superior authority to all others, as it is in fact an infallible directory from earth to heaven, and as containing all we are able to bear in regard to the future.

Furthermore, if "the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament," in Protestant language, "are the only infallible rule of faith and practice," the bare admission that something else is possibly true or necessary, begets, first, doubt in the mind touching the inspiration and authority of the Bible; and practically, enervates, paralyzes and renders nugatory all that is in the volume of inspiration, or that is dear to man as a religious being.

Concede, though, the point that the Scriptures are from God, are perfect, and contain the only authorized system of religion, and we shall feel prepared and encouraged in our next to examine the first lessons of the holy volume.

T. F.

TOUR NORTH.

WHEN we closed our notes on a tour South in the August number of the Advocate, we did not so soon anticipate the pleasure of furnishing the reader with a few incidents of a trip to the North. Seven years ago, a brother in the flesh was taken from his wife and four helpless children, in the State of Iowa; but before his demise, he requested us to look to the welfare of his family, with the desire that his children should dwell on "free soil." With the last request, we were not prepared at the time to comply; but, for educational purposes, we

brought the little family to Tennessee, and after a sojourn with us for several years, the mother and we thought it proper for them to reside in a section better suited to their circumstances than this.

Having determined as to the course, we left Franklin College on Thursday, July 12th, at 4 o'clock, A. M.; and at 5 we took the stage at Nashville for Louisville, Ky. The wire bridge on the Cumberland having recently let through, at a distance of a hundred feet from the water, a wagon and team, with other smaller vehicles, we were compelled to cross by means of a slow ferry-boat; but, on leaving Edgefield, opposite the city, we were so delighted at the luxuriant crops kindly given by our Heavenly Father, that we soon forgot all bridge disasters and dry seasons. Fortunately, we had a pleasant company and a safe passage to Louisville, a distance of 180 miles, where we arrived on Friday, the 13th, at 5 P. M., having made the trip in 36 hours. After tea, we made our way to the Christians' meeting-house, to witness some of the manifestations of one of the most remarkable meetings of modern times. The services had been conducted daily for nearly three months, mainly by Brother D. P. Henderson, of Missouri, assisted for several weeks by Brother S. S. Church, of St. Louis. Brother Church was preaching when we entered, and in a few moments we discovered that the leading thought of his discourse was the unphilosophical character of the Christian religion. The object of the speaker was to show his audience that nature teaches not spirituality—that man's reason and philosophy penetrate not beyond the veil, but we are exclusively indebted to supernatural light for all correct religious knowledge. Brother Church handled the subject in a manner which made an impression upon the audience most favorable to the Christian revelation and the authority of Jesus of Nazareth. At the conclusion of the discourse, Brother Henderson gave an exhortation of some twenty minutes, which seemed to thrill through the hearts of the people. Two little girls made the good confession; but it may surprise our readers to learn that over two hundred persons, generally of the finest intelligence, were added to the Lord during the meeting, which closed about the 1st of August. Many and strange have been the conjectures as to the *secret* of success in Louisville. The very eminent Doctor S., Secretary of all the missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, remarked to us that the clergy of the city had been to hear "this man Henderson," and, said he, "we do not think he is very learned, logical, or rhetorical, and we are at a loss as to the secret of his success." We could but intimate that there might possibly be

something in the *matter* of our Brother Henderson's discourses far above all the logic and rhetoric of the schools, upon which preachers are wont to rely for success. The apostles of the Savior were neither learned nor eloquent, in the world's opinion, but they were men who spoke the truth in the love of it. Hence their extraordinary success. Brother Henderson lays no claim to the gorgeous and chaffy eloquence for which ignorant ears are ever "*itching*," but in his plain, forcible, and earnest manner, he clearly satisfies his hearers that he *believes* the Gospel which he preaches. He feels that it requires no embellishments to make it effectual in the salvation of all who receive it.

There is an immeasurable distance between the word of life as set forth in the Divine Oracles, and the light material served up in the popular sermons of modern times. There is power in the Lord's word to save all who believe it.

Success will always attend the preached word, but it will bear no admixture or dilution.

If the movement at Louisville should ever become the subject of history, the power of *co-operative* effort will appear most conspicuous. The disciples soon became fully alive to the work, and the secular papers of the city, through the agency of Brother Doctor T. S. B., became, for the time, powerful engines for good. But we forbear to give details.

Three thousand became obedient to the faith, from a single discourse uttered by a fisherman of Galilee, and we live in hope the word of the Lord will yet have similar effects.

At 6½, A. M., on Saturday, we stepped upon the steam ferry-boat for Jeffersonville, on the Indiana shore of the Ohio river, from which point we took the cars for Indianapolis, the Capital of the State, 108 miles distant, which we reached at 11½, A. M. To us, the surface of the country from Jeffersonville to Indianapolis, was singular. We had been accustomed to hills, valleys, and crooked roads; but the surface was, most of the distance, level, and the road direct. For 30 or 40 miles after crossing the Ohio, we noticed indications of what naturalists call the "Devonian" formation; but ere we were aware of it, all the structures—with which we were familiar in Tennessee—were covered by drift of granite boulders, felspathic, hornblendic, and quartzose rocks, with a due portion of slates and limestones, to the depth of some 6 or 8 feet. The soil upon this drift we found, in most parts of the State, of unsurpassing fertility. A more lovely country we have not seen than is found around this beautiful Capital of the State. Soon

after our arrival, Brother L. H. Jameson, pastor of the first Christian Church, called to see us, and we are happy to bear testimony to his Christian courtesy during the ten days we remained in the city. We also met Brother J. M. Mathes, editor of the Christian Record, whom we had favorably known. The kindness manifested by these brethren, in services rendered our widowed sister, especially, will not be forgotten; and for them, the Lord doubtless has in reserve an appropriate reward. We were also pleased to make the acquaintance of Brother John O'Kane, and renew our acquaintance with Brother New. They are able evangelists.

We spent two Lord's-Days with the brethren, and gave five addresses in regard to the Christian economy. Owing to the superabundance of laborers, in word and teaching, the brethren have two places of worship; and we are of the opinion that if large congregations everywhere were disposed to divide their forces, much more might be accomplished.

THE NORTH-WESTERN CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY.

We were happy, in company with Brother Jameson, to visit this promising infant institution. It is located $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the business part of the city, near the residence of its most efficient friend, Brother Ovid Butler, in a very handsome grove; and judging from the architectural appearance of the left wing, we regarded it as the beginning of one of the noblest college edifices in the West. Brother Benton is at present managing a preparatory school in the building, and the brethren think they will be able to open the University during the approaching autumn or spring. The best success attend their noble enterprise.

VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE CITY AND EAST GERMANTOWN.

On Monday, July 23d, we bade our friends of Indianapolis adieu, and were kindly attended to the depot by Brother Jameson and Brother J. M. Tilford.

Having long heard of the profound learning and many amiable qualities of Brother S. K. Hoshour, we determined to make an effort to see him; and by means of the steam-cars, we stood at his door, 52 miles from the Capital of Ia., midway between Cambridge City and Germantown, in Wayne County, at 10 A. M. Brother H., we suppose, is about 50 years old, and is not only a scholar of no mean pretensions, but is emphatically the courteous gentleman, and a dignified and highly gifted minister of the word. Should he properly direct his great abilities, he will leave his impress upon his age and country.

At 4 P. M., we bade the pleasant family of Brother H. farowell,

and started for Cincinnati; and after a dashing pace of 40 miles per hour, we found ourself in the "Queen City" at 9 P. M.

Tuesday, July 24th, we spent the forenoon with Brothers B. Franklin and W. W. Eaton. Brother Franklin is giving his time and energies to the ministry of the word, and Brother Eaton is laboring in the office of the Christian Age. Whilst he is proving to the brethren that his business qualifications are superior, we are inclined to the belief, it would be better to give his powers mainly to the editorial labor.

In the afternoon, in company with Brother Franklin, we spent half an hour with our venerable brother, Walter Scott, at the Covington College, of which he is at present proprietor. It is most encouraging to witness the increasing confidence of one of Brother Scott's age, experience, and labor, in the truth of God.

At 3 P. M., we left Covington for Lexington, distant one hundred miles, and after feasting our eyes on one of the most productive and lovely sections of our Father's great dominions, we reached the city at 8½ o'clock. After tea, we were attracted to the Christians' meeting-house, near our hotel, by the sound of many sweet voices. Some of the younger members of the Church were exercising in singing; and on entering, we were happy to meet Brother A. B. C. Jones, a graduate of Franklin College, who has spent the present year as preacher in the congregation at Lexington. Although our brother feels considerable diffidence on account of his youth, should he devote himself to his high calling, we predict for him a most useful career. He presents a remarkable instance, of one so young in years and in the ministry, occupying so important a position.

We spent a day or two in the city and neighborhood, and none of our moments were more agreeably bestowed than those spent with our students, C. N. Anderson, an honored graduate, and teacher of one of the city schools, and Dr. J. B. Morton, who prefers giving himself to a business profession.

Thursday, the 26th, in company with Brother Geo. W. Elly, we left Lexington at 2 P. M.; spent a few moments at Midway, and a sufficient time to change cars at Frankfort, and reached Louisville at 7 P. M.

Friday, the 27th, at 4 A. M., we took the stage by Elizabethtown and Bowlinggreen for Nashville, and reached home in health, at 8 P. M., Saturday, July 28th, 1855, well repaid for the labor of our journey, and with a heart filled with gratitude to God for his fatherly protection.

T. F.

CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE.

WE are fully aware that much that is written or spoken at this age, upon the subject of Christian benevolence, is the sheerest beggary, and is prompted by the deepest selfishness. The sole object in many a appeal to Christians for liberality, is to forward under a cloak of righteousness some pet scheme or darling plan of pure individual profit. So much has this been the case, that men have become suspicious of all that has been written or spoken in regard to this delicate subject.

But apart from all the abuses which are practiced under the garb of Christian benevolence, the Christian religion is an institution of the highest and deepest and mightiest benevolence ever exhibited on this earth. It was established by the God of Heaven in the most merciful philanthropy to lost sons and daughters of want. In benevolence, "Christ who was rich in heaven, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." In benevolence, He traversed in sorrow this sinful earth, visited its hovels and dens of degradation and suffering, offered the balm of health and consolation to the miserable, the broken hearted, the degraded and out-cast. The scenes at the tomb of Lazarus, at the gate of Naim, in the midst of the family at Bethany, in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the summit of Calvary, and the thousand acts of kindness by which he won for himself the title of "the friend of publicans and sinners," all stamp the life of our Savior with the impress of the purest and highest benevolence ever known among men. The deep submission with which he says "not my will but thine be done"—the majestic patience with which, in the agony of death, he bore the scoffs of the impious multitude, and the taunts of the blaspheming priest, present to us a benevolence that heaven and earth combined cannot equal. And that he should thus live in suffering and die in ignominy for our sakes, commends to us an example which we alone can imitate or approach by receiving and nurturing in our hearts continually the Spirit of our blessed Savior. At His feet, wretched, guilty and degraded humanity, of every tribe and tongue, for more than eighteen hundred years, has poured its faith and love, and has found a peace which "the world can neither give nor take away," for the simple reason that he is a kind, merciful and benevolent Savior. These rich and priceless tokens of love and sympathy are the highest motives to us, brethren and friends in the kingdom of grace, of active, vigorous Christian benevolence. If the pure and Heavenly example of our Savior, the abundant memorials of love and sorrow which he has left us, do not guide our hearts in true Christian benevolence and

liberality, then no fictitious schemes or extravagant appeals can in any degree lead us to do our duty. If the remembrance of the love of our Savior, the sacrifice of himself for the sins of the world, of the sufferings and self-denials of his apostles, is not enough to expand our hearts with feelings of true philanthropy, and cause us to willingly contribute whatever we possess to the cause of our Master, then we must look for no power on earth to do it. If men who profess to believe in the words of such a Savior as is offered to the world by the gospel of God's beloved Son, have not hearts sufficiently enlarged to cause earnest, active and unceasing christian benevolence, they are far, far indeed, from the possession of a spirit that can claim any acquaintance with that spirit of Love and Humanity that encircled and animated every act of our blessed Savior. If there be one sight contemptible in the eyes of a just God above all others, it seems to me it must be that of a grudging, illiberal, parsimonious member of God's fold, with nothing of a cheerful, willing and thankful liberality, but with a meanness of spirit, that regards every mite put into the treasury of the Lord as so much loss. Such a spirit has but little part or lot in that heavenly expansion of heart that is the daily joy and life of the true servant of our Lord. His object is not the honor and glory of God, but the only inducement for his profession is a base and cowardly fear. God has not bestowed his love grudgingly upon us, but though we were lost, wretched and utterly hopeless, He has blessed with riches and abundance of heavenly favor in the present, and invites us to more exalted beatitude by promises and hopes of a bright and radiant immortality. And shall poor weak man endeavor to cheat the King of Heaven out of the small service which he requires at our hands? What has *this worm of the dust*, which God his Maker did not give him? O that he had gratitude enough in his heart to render to his Maker and his Redeemer a service of whatever he has received only through the love and bounty of a beneficent Creator!

W. L.

REPENTANCE.

IN our discussion of the great leading features of Christian obedience, the next subject is that of Repentance. Faith is not the only requirement made by the Oracles of Heaven of sinful men, in order to acceptance in Jehovah's sight. Though men, bewildered with human speculation, and having more regard for human traditions than the word of Heaven, believe in the absurd dogma that man is justified by faith

alone, no clear and unprejudiced examination of the Oracles of Heaven can for a moment sustain such a theory. Man's heart is made anew—turned from the things of this world to the love of God, by the living, vital power of faith in the gospel of the Son of God. But without a conformity of life and action to the standard of heavenly excellence, offered for the redemption and elevation of humanity, there can be but little profit in the sincerest and most earnest profession of faith in Jesus Christ. Repentance toward God is the second requirement made of man in order to an entrance into the fold of Christ, and a full participation of the joys of Christian life. Man's infidelity has so confused and bewildered that subject, that a few words are necessary in order to remove the errors that beset the hearts of the people. By long habit, the idea of repentance has come to be associated with bodily and mental agony, suffering, ravings, and doing of penance as an atonement for past offences. Such a notion has its foundation not in the Oracles of God, but in man's cunning or weakness. While we admit that the deepest and most earnest feeling must characterize every Christian act, we do not believe there is the slightest foundation in Heaven's teachings for the vain extravagancies which have been and are practiced by the men of this day, under the name of repentance. The excitements of the mourning bench—the long agonies of deluded mortals, seeking through vain mournings and prayers the peace of Heaven, are no part of the repentance of the gospel, or such as was enjoined by the delegated messengers of Heaven. Repentance, then, might be the work of a moment. The heart opened by the reception of the gospel, and conquered by the glorious and transcendent love of the blessed Savior, might in a moment stop short in a career of wickedness and rebellion, and resolve to change the entire life and character. Such a repentance—such a determination to a life of righteousness, we have presented to us on Pentecost. The murderers of the Savior of mankind, convinced by the power of the gospel in the mouth of Peter, cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The Apostle replies, "*Repent* and be baptized for the remission of sins." It was not the work of days, weeks, or months, but in a moment—when convinced of Heaven's Truth, they resolve before God and man to change from the deeds of sin to works of righteousness. Such a repentance can, it is true, be the result only of the deepest sorrow and contrition of heart for the past life of sinfulness and rebellion, but to spend days and weeks in mourning rather than hastening to the performance of the requirements

of our Master, is as senseless as it is disrespectful to the authority of High Heaven.

How many a deeply penitent soul has thus sought peace with God, but by long continued failure has finally been driven in utter despair to a rejection of the whole mercy and grace of God? It is, indeed, a sad thought that leaders and teachers of the people will still blind their eyes to the truth, and will not let the bright radiance of Heaven illumine their hearts. That men with the word of Heaven before them will call to the "altar" or "mourner's bench," or send to the solitary grove, men and women desiring to know the way of salvation, is a delusion too gross for the enlightened Protestantism of this age. It may linger for a while, but we believe that the tottering fabric cannot long stand before the power of God's unimpaired and uncorrupted truth.—To anxious enquirers in the Apostolic day, the word of the Lord was ever ready, and to all who received it taught, the way of salvation without any human aid or appliance, more than voices of utterance by the accredited messengers of Heaven. To the Ethiopian nobleman, Philip did not say go to yonder grove and spend long hours in agonizing over your past offence before you are ready for the reception of God's word. He spake unto him as he found him in the proper use of his mind, unmoved by extravagant and fictitious excitement, and in this state he received his teachings, obeyed the commands of heaven, and went on his way rejoicing. (Acts viii, 34–39.) We fear that this plain, direct and simple plan of Philip would be scouted at as heretical, by the "*orthodoxy*" of this age. God, however, delights to address man in simplicity, but man's proud, rebellious heart seeks for mystery and wonders. "The Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom," and we fear the world and the church are full of both Jews and Greeks even at this day. But there is in all matters of Heavenly obedience and Christian life, a simplicity and unmistakable way of truth, to which all men must come, or they are forever bewildered beyond all hope. Till they come to this, there is little hope of benefit even from the plainest instructions of the word of God. But when they once lay human tradition aside, and come to the word of God in the spirit of earnest enquirers after the way of redemption, the Chart of Heaven is perfectly clear and sure.

W. L.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

BY ELDER B. FRANKLIN.

For years we have sensibly felt the necessity and vital importance of a full discussion among the brethren of the subject of Church organization, and in commencing the Gospel Advocate we determined to give the matter much of our attention. We are pleased that Bro. Franklin has taken it in hand, and we especially recommend a careful study of his positions. If the views submitted are correct, our brethren in many sections will be compelled to modify their practices. In our recent travels through Kentucky, and two States north of the Ohio river, we learned that the brethren are taking up this discussion in good earnest, and we trust there will be no cessation of effort till we all learn the true teachings of the Bible on this very important question. T. F.

"WHO HATH REQUIRED THIS AT YOUR HANDS?"

BROTHER FANNING—My Dear Sir: There are two points now occupying an unusual share of the attention of the brethren. They are the following:

1. Ordaining men to preach the gospel.
2. A general and perpetual organization, beyond what is contained in individual congregations.

Touching these points, some brethren appear impressed and desirous to impress others with the idea, that we, as a religious body, have arrived at a crisis, and that important changes must take place, or very serious and disastrous results follow. On these points, I hope we shall be extremely cautious how we experiment.

1. Where, in the New Testament, do we find authority for ordaining men to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances of Christ? It is easy to find authority for ordaining Bishops and Deacons. We can also soon find authority for ordaining preachers—men who had been preachers for years, to a *certain mission*. But where authority is found for ordaining young men, who have been reading and acquiring literature with the intention of preaching, as a kind of finishing touch, or consummating act, in completing a preacher, authorizing him to preach and administer Christian ordinances, is another thing! If any brother knows where, in the Christian Scriptures, there is an intimation that the ordinances of the New Institution shall be wholly administered by preachers, bishops or deacons, ordained or unordained, it would be a very appropriate time to point it out. Before we slide into the practice

of ordaining young men to preach, there are several things that should be explicitly understood, such as the following:

1. Is ordaining the consummating act, in making a preacher? If it is, we have many old preachers who have never been thus finished off, who have ever been destitute of whatever official grace is imparted in this way.

2. Is it giving these young men authority to preach and administer ordinances? If it is, then all who have been preaching and administering ordinances without this ceremony, have been doing so without authority, and all they have done has been unauthorized.

3. If ordaining gives authority to preachers, &c., this authority, of course, must be in those who ordain. Where, then, did they get it? Not from a succession of ordinations, for there is no such succession. Not immediately from heaven, for they are not inspired. It is, then simply assumed on their part.

4. Where is there anything in the word of God that we can stand upon as authority for such a practice? If the Lord should say, "Who hath required this at your hands?" what answer could we give? I know of no passage that I would dare to mention as an authority.

"It is a solemn and impressive ceremony." Yes, so were many fasts of old solemn, that were despised of the Lord; and the most solemn matter of all is to produce the authority for it. I have more confidence in the Lord's ways than in all the solemn parade of men; more confidence in the New Testament than all other authorities, and would rather have it on my side than all the world. The weakness of God is stronger than men, and the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the simplicity of the ways and works of God does not suit the pride and vanity of men under worldly impulses. I am aware that there are awful sanctions thrown around the gospel of Christ, to deter men from adding to or taking from it, perverting and handling it deceitfully, but if there is one word in it prohibiting any human being from publishing or proclaiming it from the rivers to the ends of the earth, I know not where to find it. It is certainly not found in the practice of the first Christians, when "they were all scattered abroad except the apostles," for "they went everywhere preaching the word."

2. We can say but a few words upon the second point, as we intended but a short article. I know of no organization beyond the individual congregation, of a permanent or perpetual character. The reason men make such lame efforts in finding some extended system of government and combination, is simply that there is no such system as they are

looking for in the Bible. Jesus Christ did not come into this world to establish a kingdom of *clergy*, in the modern sense of that term, nor a kingdom *for the clergy*, but to establish a kingdom *for himself*. He was so different from all the notions formed of what the Messiah should be by the most distinguished religionists of his times, that they knew him not as the Messiah at all. His system of government, in its main features, precisely opposite to all earthly systems, is not thought to be adequate at all. The thought of him who is greatest among you being servant of all, is too humiliating to worldly pride and ambition. But, however repugnant to our feelings it may be; however humiliating to aspirants for emulation, power and authority, the kingdom of God is not designed for worldly show, and does not govern men by synods, councils, conferences, assemblies, &c., but by the law of the Spirit of life, written upon the hearts of the subjects.

I am perfectly aware how repugnant to the feelings of some men it is to have no influence, power and authority, except what their own well known and established Christian characters, with their labors, sacrifices, and integrity to the Lord and his cause—their own intelligence, ability and usefulness will give them in the public estimation. It is a shorter road to prominent stations, power and authority to be promoted to it in some office, though that office is unknown to the New Testament, than to obtain it through persevering labors, sacrifices, and devotion to the work of the Lord. But, not farther to extend general observations, we make the following objections to a general and perpetual organization:

1. No organization is known to the New Testament except the individual congregation, of a permanent and perpetual character.—Churches co-operated in contributing to poor saints and in certain missions, but these were but temporary arrangements to meet certain exigencies, which the disciples have a right to make, or similar ones, in all ages and countries.

2. It is impossible to form and carry on an organization, including all the children of God in all nations, in one nation or one state, without a class of officers unknown to the New Testament. The creation of officers not known in the law of God, was the establishment of Anti-Christ.

3. The New Testament and all history assure us that bishops and deacons were officers in individual congregations, and had no subnational jurisdiction beyond their limits.

4. Evangelists are public proclaimers of the word. Their business

is mainly with the world and newly established churches, either through their own or their associates' labors. They are to preach the gospel to the world and set the young churches in order.

5. Evangelists are so far from having authority over bishops, deacons and old churches, that they are *under them*, sent out *by them*, and *amenable to them*. They are no governors of old, well established churches, long since set in order, but made, sent out, controlled and governed by them. The young converts made by them are naturally and spiritually under them, and should be taken care of by them, till well established and set in order.

6. The idea that some writers are giving currency to, that an evangelist is superior to a bishop, is as unscriptural as it is unreasonable.—The expression, "against an *elder* receive not an accusation," by no means justifies arraigning a *bishop* before an evangelist to try him. *Elder* and *bishop* are not precisely synonymous terms.—There were seniors, or elders, in the young churches not set in order, to whom deference was to be paid, but no bishops. Even the apostles, though evangelists, and much more than evangelists, gave the law of God, and instructed churches how to act, but assumed no such authority as some speak of now for evangelists.

BENJ. FRANKLIN.

For the Gospel Advocate.

REMISSION OF SINS OUT OF CHRIST.

BOSTON, WILLIAMSON COUNTY, Tenn. }
 July 18th, 1855. }

DEAR BROTHER FANNING—Seeing your remarks in the first number of the Gospel Advocate, in regard to the brethren refraining from sending their communications in consequence of their bad orthography, syntax, etc., and having your motto before me, "*Open columns, and free discussion of all questions calculated to advance the spiritual interests of society,*" I the more readily introduce a subject of discussion in the columns of the Gospel Advocate, which I think deserves attention.

It is now maintained by some persons in the Christian Church, that the sinner is pardoned and justified antecedent to baptism—that the faith of Abraham is accounted to him *alone* for righteousness, without any *obedience* of faith. Peter commanded the people to *repent* and be baptized not *for* the remission of sins, but because their sins were forgiven in the *mental* act of believing. Paul told the Gala-

tians, as many as had been baptized *into* Jesus Christ had *put on Christ*—that, however, only means they had put him on by the act of faith, and that they had become the children of Abraham antecedent to baptism by faith. The whole man has undergone a physical, metaphysical, and philosophical dissection, and it is ascertained that he is composed of body, soul and spirit! The soul and spirit believe and are pardoned independently of the house in which they live! The above notion is not, as we apprehend, peculiar to this age or any man in it, but was entertained by the Gnostic philosophers, Movarians, Lutherans, Wesleyans, and is entertained by a majority of the religionists of our age. I am one that believes the line should be drawn between Christianity and all species of skepticism, infidelity, and all seeking after popularity, that we may know who are on the side of the Savior and his teaching. The faithful can then see what is their duty. I have been induced in part to write the above by one who is my senior, and who feels a deep and an abiding interest in the welfare and prosperity of the cause of our common Master.

If you think this worth noticing, insert it in the Gospel Advocate, and call for some able defender of the *alone* system.

Yours in the one hope,

G. W. CONE.

REMARKS.

The suggestion that any member of Christ's kingdom should countenance the speculation, that aliens are forgiven and saved before they take the yoke of our Lord in baptism, is well calculated to show the influences at work in our skeptical age. There are two errors which combine to drive men into such wild conclusions. In the first place, fancying that they are growing philosophical, they forget that the mind is connected with the body, or is in the least dependent upon fleshly powers for action; and secondly, having made this a state of independent spirit activity, the *material* word, as they denominate the gospel of Christ, loses all its literal significance, and the ordinances of Heaven to them have no meaning. All speculations have a like origin. They are the out-growth of that ancient Epicurianism, which fed and feasted the flesh in order to give the soul independent activity. But every phase of it tended anciently, as it does at this day, to the subversion of religion and all right rule or good conduct. There is but one step from the precincts of belief and the Church of God, into the deep mire of infidelity and sin.

T. F.

For the Gospel Advocate,

THE BIBLE.—NO. I.

Most wonderful book! The history of God, angels and men! The *inspired* history of all nature, of all nations, and of all religions! The *divine* history of all time and all eternity!

THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

A revelation from God to man is *possible*. The God of *creation* can be the God of *inspiration*. The *infinite* can communicate to the *finite*. God is *Spirit*, and can reveal himself to the *spirit* of man. God is *love*, and consequently willing to instruct all dependant intelligences. He is infinite in *wisdom* and *power*, and, therefore, *able* to accomplish all the dictates of his infinite wisdom.

A revelation from God is *necessary* to the accomplishment of his benevolent designs in creation, providence and redemption. Man, in his creation, was endowed with intellectual, moral and religious capacities, that cannot be developed, cultivated and perfected without a divine revelation. Did nature perfect the religious capacities of the *Egyptians*, *Persians*, and *Romans*? Does she now, with all her internal and external lessons, meet the demands of the religious sense of the *Pagan* world? By all their wisdom, derived from nature, and added to a perverted, primitive revelation, they "know not God." Where in all the volumes of nature do we find the ideas of *creation* and *immortality*? All nature is full of *generation* and *mortality*. The Bible, and the Bible only, reveals the *Creator*, the *creation*, and the *immortal* destiny of man. We have the intense desire of immortality, and if the Bible is not from Heaven, there is no provision in the universe to gratify the supreme aspiration of human nature. Nature is the history of *death*. The Bible is the history of *life*. The Bible is the history of *revelation*. Nature is the book of *confirmation*.

All nature, all nations, and all religions are monumental proofs of the divine inspiration of the Bible.

Infinite wisdom, power and love have connected man with three states or worlds—the *natural*, the *political*, and the *religious*—and so connected the narrative and prophetic histories of the Bible with them as to convert them into *monumental* proofs of its divinity! This is the wonderful work of the Lord our God, and wisely and benevolently designed to give to man "the full measure of faith."

THE NATURAL WORLD.

The Bible assumes the existence of God as a primitive revelation, and affirms the *creation* of the heaven and the earth in the *beginning*.

Have we eyes to see? Look at the wonders of creation and behold the confirmation of the first divine miracle! God said let there be *light* and there was light. In this glorious light we can read the sublime lessons of confirmation. God spoke again, his Spirit moved on the great womb of waters, and the globe was born of *water*, word and Spirit. Thus water became the mother of creation, and the earth, her first born, is to this day full of *geological* phenomena indicative of its *aqueous* origin, and confirmation of the divine history.

The Bible reveals the sublime secret that the families of plants, animals and men came from a *created* parentage. Do not the waters, the earth and the heaven swarm with innumerable attestations of its divine truth? Reason could never discover the fact of *original* families by *creation*. The very best we could do without divine revelation, would be to travel back from effect to 'cause till we became lost and overwhelmed with the incomprehensible idea of *eternal succession and generation*! But the blessed Bible gives the bewildered reason of man a resting place and safe retreat, "in the beginning of the creation of God." The sixth day of the creation week came, and *man* was made in the *image* of God. This *intellectual* and *moral* superiority and grandeur, in all ages and nations, confirm the crowning part of the creation.

Then the divine *Sabbath* was born as the arching, monumental and commemorative institution of all time. Thus one seventh part of all time, in all ages and all nations, confirms the truth of the divine history of the creation! This is too grand, sublime and God-like to be the work of man's imagination. These Bible truths of creation are the *elements* of all natural moral science. Without them we have no beginning, middle nor end. But when received as first principles, we have a sure and satisfactory basis on which our reason and faith may stand to survey the wonders of creation.

THE POLITICAL WORLD.

The sacred history of the Bible, narrative and prophetic, is so interwoven with the profane history of the world, as to convert all nations, ancient and modern, into monumental proofs of its divine inspiration. The *three* great divisions of our race, since the days of Noah, confirm the inspiring history of *Shem*, *Ham* and *Japheth*.

The existence and present condition of the *Arabians*, *Idumians* and *Jews* prove the inspiration of the history of *Abraham*.

The history of the *Egyptians*, *Assyrians*, *Persians*, *Grecians* and *Romans* confirms the inspiration of *Moses* and the *Jewish prophets*.

The history and character of all modern nations, *Pagan, Jew, Mahomedan and Christian*, confirm the divine inspiration of *Christ and the Apostles*.

Why are *Christian* nations in advance of *Pagan* nations? They have the Bible. Why in a better condition than Mahomedan nations? They have *more* of the Bible. Why superior to the Jews? The Jews receive the *Old Testament* only—Christians receive both the *Old and New Testament*. Why are *Protestant* nations superior to *Greek and Catholic* nations? The latter are involved in the *apostasy* and encumbered with the rubbish of *tradition*. The former proclaim, "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants."

Thus God makes all nature and all nations his witnesses to prove the inspiration of the Bible.

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

Man was made to worship. All nations have worshiped, and still worship. Religion, then, is a moral necessity and natural propensity of man. The Bible reveals the true religion, and its history is so connected with all false religions as to convert them into monumental proofs of divine inspiration.

The *patriarchal* religion was the first divine religion, and *Paganism* is its *counterpart*. The *Sabbath* and *sacrifice* and *circumcision* are its positive institutions, and world-wide and all-time monumental confirmations.

The *Jews' religion* is the second divine religion of the Bible. The *Passover*, the *Pentecost*, the *Jubilee*, the *Sabbath*, the *circumcision*, the *sacrifices*, ordained by Moses, and the first apostate state of the *Jews* in all nations, are the typical, commemorative, and monumental proofs of its divine origin.

The *Christian* religion is the last and best religion of Heaven. The *Lord's Day*, the *Lord's Supper*, and *Baptism*, are its positive, commemorative, and monumental proofs of its divinity.

Now, when we look at *Paganism*, *Mahomedanism*, and the *Greek, Papal and Protestant apostacies and heresies*, in the divine light of the Bible, we are compelled to believe that they are *counterfeits* of the *Patriarchal, Jewish and Christian* institutions, and consequently monumental proofs of the inspiration of the Bible.

Great and marvelous are thy works, Oh Lord God Almighty!

J. J. TROTT.

For the Gospel Advocate.

THE ALMOST CHRISTIAN.

"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

THIS is the language of King Agrippa, after listening to the Apostle Paul set forth the facts concerning Christ and his kingdom. When we have given this sentence a second thought, we find it embraces really more than we would suppose from a slight examination. He did not say he was almost persuaded to become a religious man, for doubtless he was already a religionist after the straightest sect—perhaps more religious than the apostle, for the apostle could not have been more religious than he was previous to his conversion to the Christian religion, and we must grant Agrippa as much zeal as the apostle. Although the apostle was a strict religionist, in full fellowship with his brethren, and in full possession of his religion, he informs us that he persecuted the Christians even unto death, and still he was not more wicked than the majority of religionists in his day and time. Religion was propagated then by the sacrifice of human beings—the orthodox demand as a right was the life-blood of the heterodox. Hence we see that it did not require a man to be very pious to be religious in the days of King Agrippa, and righteousness did not seem to be a very necessary attribute of religion then, but a form of worship and a strict tenacity for that form were the main requisites, consequently it did not require such an effort to get religion then as it does now. Again, we are not to suppose that Agrippa was ignorant of the religions that were then practiced by the Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians—he being a king, it is but reasonable to infer he was conversant with all these and their superstitious appendages—he had witnessed their tendencies and results, but when he heard the apostle portray the beauties, the grandeur and the sublimity of the Christian religion, he saw a beauty and a decided superiority in it above all other systems of religions with which he was acquainted, and he confessed to the apostle that he was almost persuaded to be a Christian. He desired to be something more than a mere religionist—he wanted that holiness of heart, that love, and that purity of motive and thought which was essential to pure Christianity—he wished to practice a religion that was propagated by love, and not by the sword—he wished to adopt the maxim of doing to others as you would have them do to you—he saw by this means all could live in peace and harmony—in a word, he wished to be a Christian. This embraces everything that is pure and holy. Although King Agrippa

was convinced of the Christian religion, and its superiority over the idolatrous worship of the Greeks, Romans, and even the Jewish worship, owing to its being very unpopular, and to the fact that it subjected men to bonds and imprisonments, he was only almost persuaded, and not altogether, to be a Christian. D. A. V.

THE THIRD OF JOHN.

McMINNVILLE, TENN., May 20, 1855.

BROTHER FANNING:—Some two years ago, you gave a discourse in this place, on the third chapter of John, which was to my entire satisfaction; but I wish to have your conclusions in a form which may be serviceable to others, as well as myself. In your examination, please embrace all from the 1st to the 8th verse.

Your Brother in Christ,

H. L. WALLING.

RESPONSE.

It is probable there is no passage in the Bible in regard to which men have differed, and still differ, more widely, than the first eight verses in the third chapter of the Gospel of John. Whilst we profess to have made no remarkable discoveries, we think, upon a careful examination, most candid persons will come to similar conclusions. At present we feel no disposition to offer the reader a lengthy dissertation, learned criticisms, or detailed arguments in favor of our conclusions; but we wish to submit the result of our reflections, and we ask an unprejudiced hearing.

The subject is *the new birth*—the passage from the world into the Church of Christ, or kingdom of God. Note well—there are not two births, one of *water*, and another of *spirit*, taught by the Savior; but a single birth, which he attempted to explain by a fleshly birth, and which he pronounced "*earthly*." This is a birth by water and spirit, as truly and inevitably as every child is at the same instant born of father and mother. It would be, to say the least, most unnatural to speak of a birth of father or mother alone; and it would be equally preposterous to speak of a birth of water without the spirit, or a birth of the spirit without the water. Perhaps the confused and unmeaning theories of the water-alone birth of the Romans, or spirit-alone birth of some of the Protestants, have arisen from a failure to discover that it is quite as essential to have both a father and mother in religion, as to have them in the flesh. God is our father, and "Jerusalem"—"the

free-woman"—"the Church," "the bride, the Lamb's wife—is the mother of us all." With these data, we are ready to draw our conclusions. The child after the flesh, before birth, is quickened into life, and at the mother's delivery, is truly and literally born of mother and father at the same moment. God operates by the spirit in quickening dead sinners into life. The word of life, given by the spirit in the gospel, is the "*good seed of the kingdom*," sown by the Savior into "honest and understanding, or good hearts," and we are, as sinners, thus quickened, or made alive: are next buried in the womb of waters, and are for the moment as dead to the world as the child before birth, and we come forth children of the kingdom, and are truly and certainly "born again"—"born of the water and of the spirit," and can, for the first time, claim God as our father and the Church as our mother, by adoption. But more on this great truth in religion, we care not at present to speak.

Many object to so plain a construction, and insist that the 8th verse authorizes us to conclude the new birth is a profound mystery. If it is a mystery or secret, why speak of it at all? No man on earth can possibly comprehend mysteries; but what is revealed, belongs to us and our children.

We admit there is some confusion in reading the 8th verse; arising, as we think, first, from false views of religion; and secondly, from a slight defect in the translation. It must not be forgotten that this is the chief verse in the Bible to establish the dogma that religion is too great a secret for mortals of earth to comprehend. Is not such a conclusion strange, in view of the surprise exhibited by the Savior at Nicodemus' failure to understand the new birth? Said he, "If I have told you earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" But it is still more surprising, that those who quote the passage to prove the Spirit's agency in the new birth is an inexplicable mystery, do not believe it themselves. They tell us that "the operation of the Spirit in conversion is like the mysterious wind which blows, we know not in what direction, and comes we know not whence," and contradict their theory in the next breath, by dogmatically declaring that "the Spirit of God comes directly from heaven, and goes into their hearts without doubt." All persons know both whence the wind and Spirit come, and whither they go. The child says, "The wind is from the North, and blows to the South;" and, *vice versa*, the Christian says, in most perfect confidence, "The Spirit is from God, and dwells in my heart."

But a plain reading of the verse, we conclude, will remove the apparent difficulty. Although we doubt whether our Lord had the idea of *wind* in his mind, for our present purpose, we do not care whether we employ, in the first of the verse, the word *wind* or *spirit*. A fair translation would read thus: "The Spirit inspires [the wind blows] where he pleases, and you hear his sound, [voice,] but you cannot see [till by seeing] whence he comes or whither he goes; so is every one quickened by the Spirit."

Notwithstanding we cannot see the working of the Spirit, we understand most perfectly the *manner* in which he enlightens the world and comforts the hearts of the saints. Furthermore, we *know* who are Christians, by the *fruits* which they bear. All who exhibit the "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, and fidelity" recommended in the Divine Oracles, "are branches" of the true spiritual vine.

T. F.

A RELIGIOUS DISCUSSION.

WE are clearly satisfied that religious discussions, conducted in a Christian manner, are attended with the best of consequences; but there are so many evils connected with most of them, we often tremble to hear of them. We publish below a brief statement in reference to a recent discussion at Alexandria, Tenn., with the hope that the example of Bro. Sewell may have good effect upon the brethren. But few men are sufficiently pious to have anything to do with public debates, and all men who have not control of themselves act wickedly in engaging in them:

MESSRS. EDITORS:—The usual monotony of our quiet little village has recently been broken by a theological discussion between Elder J. L. Sewell, of the Christian Church, and Rev. Thomas Wainwright, of the Methodist Church. It commenced on the 17th ult., and continued three days, during which time three propositions were discussed, embracing Spiritual influence, Prayer in reference to the unconverted, and the Design of Baptism. As is usual in such debates, different opinions prevail in reference to its merits.

The more pliable partisans commenced boasting before the debate commenced—they kept it up while it was in progress, and continue the same course still. All of which is well understood—it is to try to bolster up the waning fortunes of a superannuated theology, and to pander to the incorrigible bigotry of a very arrogant man. Elder Sewell's friends are well satisfied with his defense of the truth, and their opin-

ion is fortified by the concurrence of many who are of no sect, and of some who belong to other denominations, particularly the Baptists.

Good effects will doubtless follow this debate. It was conducted without any unpleasant personal collisions between the immediate parties, which was doubtless owing largely to the gentlemanly deportment and Christian forbearance of Elder Sewell towards his opponent.

Elder Sewell's manner and spirit should be a model in such discussions. He makes no pretensions to much scholarship or great learning; he is, however, well read in the Scriptures; has had considerable experience, and is possessed of a well balanced mind; all of which blended together, make him a pointed, a perspicuous, and a logical debater.

His opponent is of very different material—his look is self-important, his manner swaggering, and his pretensions pedantic—while his language is inelegant, his ideas muddy, his periods awkward, his general arrangement bad, and his theological acquirements very superficial.—His barrenness is but the more manifest in his abortive attempts at wit, which he abundantly displays towards his opponent in the use of such plautation epithets as the following, "I will trot him through," "I will take off his comb and gills," "I will dry up all his ponds and creeks," "Face the music," and other phraseology of like coin. Notwithstanding the forbidding sketch above given of one of the debaters, the occasion afforded Elder Sewell an excellent opportunity of presenting the truth to many who had never heard it before.

SPECTATOR.

Alexandria, Tenn., August, 1855.

SALEM, July 23rd, 1855.

THE Christian Churches in the Mountain District of Tennessee, will meet in co-operation in Woodbury, Cannon county, Tenn., on Friday before the fourth Lord's Day in September next—Bro. Fauning requested to preach on Friday, and Bro. W. D. Carnes on Saturday.—All the Churches within the bounds of this co-operation are earnestly requested to meet us in consultation by sending delegates, with letters giving number, increase, condition and wants of the Church and neighborhood, together with the amount they are willing to contribute for Evangelizing during the year 1856. Brethren, shall we not make one united, earnest effort to do more than we have ever done. The cause of our Master and the interests of humanity demand it at our hands.

By order of the executive committee.

DAVID LIPSCOMB, Secretary,

THE INFLUENCE OF EARLY TRAINING.

WE believe that there is no subject of Christian duty of more earnest moment, or deserving more serious consideration from every follower of our Savior, than the subject of early training. We call attention to the subject with the sincere hope that brethren whose age and experience qualify them for its proper discussion, will give attention to it.— We feel confident that the subject receives not that attention which it demands from those who write and speak on the great matters of Christian life. We fear the brethren have not yet been made to feel the solemn earnestness and weight of the responsibility in this matter.— While the precept of the wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," and the command of the Apostle, "Fathers, bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," are ready upon every flippant tongue, still we fear these solemn injunctions have not sunk *very deeply* into the hearts of the people.

Either both Paul and Solomon were wrong, or the professed Christians of this day are sadly recreant to their duty. If there be truth in the precept of the wise king of Israel, then would we see the children of the servants of God, who had been trained in obedience to the command of Heaven, so soon as they arrive at years of maturity, showing the fruits of the heavenly instruction imparted to them by submitting to the authority of Jesus Christ, and walking in obedience to every command of our Savior. We believe that the child into whose heart the lessons of wisdom and love contained in the word of God had been instilled in childhood, could not refuse submission to the yoke of King Immanuel. An irreverent man, or frivolous, light-minded woman, shows most clearly that there has been a woful neglect of duty in early years. The fire-side, instead of being the scene of lessons of gentleness, goodness, and piety, has most surely been the place of petty strife, idleness, wrangling, and parental disobedience; and these are but bearing their natural fruits in producing men and women devoid of all respect for the authority of Heaven, and utterly unfit to receive or appreciate any of that pure spirituality and heavenly beauty, so characteristic of the gospel of God's grace.

While we have the strongest confidence in the power of the gospel to bring all men to Christ, and make them pure and holy in life, who receive its teachings "into honest and good hearts," we must contend that the greatest barrier that can be offered to the spread of the gospel

is that gross ignorance, sensualism, and selfishness, which shut up every avenue for the reception of any thing above the grossest feelings and desires. Where every thought from the earliest youth has been directed to what is grossly animal, earthly and selfish, what hope can there be that this incubus of darkness can be removed, and the light of heaven have any effect upon the heart and life?

Where the childhood has been spent in the merest trifles and frivolity, in waywardness and disregard of all authority, or where nothing but plans and schemes of gain, or ambition, have been presented to the early understanding, we can reasonably expect nothing but an after life of haughtiness, selfishness, and rebellion against all law and authority in Heaven and on earth. While the truth of Heaven stands sure, the child's character is the surest index of the fidelity of the parent, and the influence of the humblest subject of the Messiah's kingdom is fraught with consequences of the greatest blessings or misery. While time lasts that influence will be felt, and the consequences alone will be known at the great and awful day of reckoning before the Judge of Heaven and earth. The mother's influence, untold and unseen as it may be, is beyond that of the most eloquent proclaimer of the gospel. The sense of responsibility to a higher power—the duty of respect to superiors, the lessons of justice, peace, wisdom and love instilled in the heart of the innocent prattler by the mother's knee, the life and character of the Redeemer of man unfolded in language of simplicity to the earliest understanding, will produce in life the richest fruits of holiness and Godly devotion, which will hang as clustering blessings around the whitening head of age, and give its last days a purity and sanctity of joy not to be attained by the greatest gains and honors of earth.

W. L.

APOSTOLIC PREACHING.

THE apostles were content to tell the world, in plain terms, that he who believed should be saved, and that he who believed not should be damned. And this was the dialect that pierced the heart, and made the hearers cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" It tickled not the ear, but sunk into the heart; and when men came from such sermons, they never commended the preacher for his taking voice, or gesture—for the fineness of such a simile, or the quaintness of such a sentence; but they spoke like men conquered by the overpowering force and evidence of the most concerning truths—much in the words of the disciples going to Emmaus: "*Did not our heart burn within us while he opened unto us the Scriptures?*"—Rogers.

THE CHURCHES IN SUMNER COUNTY, TENN.

We had the pleasure of spending a few days with the congregation at Hartsville, in Sumner county, in the month of August, and we are thankful to our Father in Heaven to be able to bear testimony to the fidelity of the brothers and sisters. They have not failed, since the planting of the Church, to meet on the Lord's Day to keep the ordinances. The results are acknowledged by all conversant with their history. They are growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. We set in order some "things wanting in the Church," and ordained elders and deacons. There were ten additions during our visit. Our constant prayer to God is that the beloved disciples may be preserved from harm. We spent the 3rd Lord's Day with the brethren in the vicinity of Castalian Springs, and we rejoice in the belief that the meeting was not in vain. It perhaps is known to some of our readers, that a very rank weed of infidelity, under the name of "freedom," "liberty of conscience"—modern Spiritualism—has been growing in that region, to the great annoyance of the disciples. Indeed, the difficulties had produced a coldness which had for months stopped the worship of the congregation. But the brethren determined to rally upon the declaration, that "The word of God, as set forth in the Bible, is the only rule of Christian faith and practice." Of course those who troubled the body were left without aid, and it would be difficult for us to see on what terms they could be saved. They place the Bible on no higher ground than the pretended revelations of the abandoned Spirit rappers of our country, and profess as full fellowship for men who regard Jesus Christ as a mere man, as those who receive him as the Savior from Heaven. We feel ourself justified in saying, that any pretended Christian act of such persons must appear to all good men as most blasphemous. We confidently believe the brethren have the cause of truth at heart, and that the Lord will bless their efforts.

T. F.

ORPHAN SCHOOL.

BROTHER Nich Hackworth writes from Dayton, Ala., that he will soon establish in the South, an "Orphan Girl's School." We most heartily approve of the object, and we will be glad to give Bro. H.'s plans to our readers. We respectfully suggest, however, that it strikes us we shall object to any system of orphan schools, which excludes *physical industry* from it.

T. F.

SUBJECTS SUITABLE FOR DISCUSSION.

BY ELDER WADE BARRETT.

Brother Barrett writes under date of July 16th, 1855, to the Editors, in regard to what he thinks most needed in his section. "First," he says, "we want a few articles on First Principles—secondly, a few on Open Communion—and thirdly, a few articles on Family Culture." He adds, "Some of our preachers have insisted and urged on Pedobaptists to commune with us, and these same preachers have communed with Pedobaptists, and have influenced others to do so."

The subjects suggested by Bro. Barrett for discussion, we not only deem appropriate, but "First Principles and Family Culture" we regard as most important for the people in whose service we are engaged. As time and opportunity permit, the results of our reading, observations and reflections upon these topics will appear in our pages. At the intimation of what is usually termed "Free Communion," we confess surprise. The words imply communion without limits or restrictions—a communion to which all men, irrespective of character, are invited. Such an idea is a plain admission that there is no communion in the Church of Christ. The Lord's table belongs to the Lord's house, is consecrated for the Lord's people, and no Christian can go out of the Church to commemorate the Lord's death, and it is very gross profanity for persons who have not yielded themselves, heart, soul and body, to the authority of the Prince of Peace, to partake of the bread and the wine, or to invite others to do so. Such as have believed with all the heart on the Savior, repented of their sins, "put on Christ" in baptism, are exhorted to "examine themselves and so partake," but no others.

ELK RIDGE, Giles County, Tenn. }
Monday morning, July 16, 1855. }

DEAR BRETHREN FANNING AND LIPSCOMB:—Yesterday was my regular time of preaching at Lynnville. In the close of the meeting three persons came forward, confessed their faith, and were immersed the same evening. Prospect good for more additions at that place.

Your brother in expectation and strong hope of a better day,
WADE BARRETT.

CO-OPERATION MEETING IN GEORGIA.

BROTHER P. F. Lamar, of Griffin, Georgia, requests us to say that "The Georgia State co-operation meeting will be held in Clark county, Ga., commencing on Thursday before the 2nd Lord's Day in October, 1855. All who can, are invited to attend."

CORRESPONDENTS.

WE are very happy in being prepared to lay before our readers, in the present number, many encouraging suggestions from our friends.

Elder JAMES EDMUNDS, of Louisville, Ky., Corresponding Secretary of "The Bible Revision Association," writes:

"We have had the pleasure of looking over your monthly, and we are much pleased with it, and wish it success. We desire an exchange, and our annual and semi-annual reports, Bible Union Reporter, specimens of the work of Revision, and all other documents on Revision, will be forwarded to you from this office."

Brother JOSEPH D. DARNOW, of Valley Forge, Jasper County, Mo., writes:

"I have been preaching in this county about twenty-one months, and the labor has resulted in 80 additions to the Church, and prospects are good for many more."

The brethren of Tennessee will rejoice in Brother D.'s success.

T. F.

Elder JAMES HOLMES writes, Aug. 15th:

"BROTHER FANNING:—During the month of July, I labored in Obion, with Brother Banton, and had some good meetings. I returned to Gibson and commenced a meeting the 5th Lord's-Day, and immersed ten, and the brethren constituted with 32 members. Brother Banton gained 12 at Liberty Grove the 1st Lord's-Day in August. We commenced at Mason's Grove, Friday the 10th, and have had one immersion. Brothers McGwin and Banton are with me."

Elder JESSE L. SEWELL, of Putnam County, Tenn., writes, August 7th:

"I have recently immersed seven persons, on a profession of their faith, in Jackson County, Tenn."

Elder WADE BARRETT, in a letter of the 29th of July, says:

"On yesterday, Brother J. Hootan and I closed a meeting at Robertson's Fork, with fifteen additions. We greatly need preachers who are *intelligent, mild, and uncompromising*, and who will preach the Gospel to a dying world because they love God and their fellow-men, and not for the loaves and fishes." See John vi. 26, 27, and 66-69.

A good suggestion this. If we receive full wages in the world, by means of salaries, is it not possible our reward will not be very desirable in the future state? Men who love the truth, and preach it in the love of it, the Lord will support.

T. F.

"COTTON-GIN PORT, August 1st.

"BROTHER FANNING:—I have been at this place preaching several days, and I find the church here, and in many places, in a disorganized condition.
W. H. HOOKER."

REMARKS.—It will always be the condition of such as attempt to feed on sermons, instead of performing the service which the Head of the Church has ordained for the spiritual growth of his people.

T. F.

"WAYNESBORO', August 11, 1855.

"BELOVED BRETHREN:—Your soul-stirring Advocate is the very thing. I have been wanting to see it for a long time, and, by the grace of God, I will do what I can to circulate it in this section.

"Some of the persons whose names I send you, are Cumberland Presbyterians, others are members of the old Baptist Church, and others are men of the world. The brethren generally want the paper.

"W. H. KIRKPATRICK."

QUERIES IN REGARD TO PAYING PREACHERS.

BY. N. HACKWORTH.

BROS. FANNING AND LIPSCOMB—How would it answer to enter into resolutions to this effect, viz:

1st. To pay a preacher with a family, \$500 per annum for his services?

2d. To pay a single man \$300?

3d. To pay a stationed preacher just in proportion to his merits?

N. H.

ANSWER.—If we have no laws on the subject of supporting ministers, I suppose it would answer very well to make laws for the regulation of all such matters by *resolves*. I most respectfully ask Brother Hackworth, and all others concerned, if the Lord has given no rule of action on this matter? It is most probable the whole "hireling system" is just upon the borders of a thorough examination. All men who "labor in word and teaching"—indeed, in every department in religion, or in the world, should receive according to their labor and real merits; but we question very much if the system adopted by many, to "hire out the service" which God has ordained for their spiritual health, to salaried clergymen, does not prove ruinous wherever attempted. The times demand an examination of this subject. We ask Bro. Hackworth, and the brethren generally, to send us their views.

T. F.

THE GOSPEL ADVOCATE.

THE brethren and friends have most cordially welcomed the Advocate, in every section of our great country from which we have heard. They have our most sincere thanks. We are more than satisfied the disciples have a zeal for God according to knowledge, and we trust in God we shall still be enabled to deserve their confidence. T. F.

REVIEWS.

VARIOUS books and publications have been received, but which, for want of space, cannot be noticed in the present number. In due time they shall all have attention. T. F.

STATE MEETING.

THE Christian Evangelizing Association of Tennessee will hold its next annual meeting with the Church of Christ at Philadelphia, near Hickory Creek, in Warren County, commencing on Wednesday (the 19th) before the 3rd Lord's Day in October.

By a resolution passed at the last meeting, the following brethren were invited to address the Association:

Elder T. Fanning, on the Reformation.

" Wade Barrett, on Love.

" W. D. Carnes, on Christian Union.

" J. K. Spear, on Prayer.

" J. J. Trott, on the Authority of Churches.

It is earnestly requested and urged upon the Churches and brethren throughout the State, to take an interest in this meeting and see that they are represented. We are confident that much good will result from the brethren meeting and conferring together in a spirit of love and encouragement, regarding the interests of Messiah's Kingdom. The great questions of the conversion of the world, the Spiritual health and welfare of the people of God, and the advancement of the Kingdom of our Lord, are of common and equal interest to every follower of our Savior. Many indications at present lead us to hope for a brighter and more prosperous day for the cause of our Redeemer in the land.

Beloved brethren, let us awake to a full sense of our duties to God and to the world.

W. LIPSCOMB, Secretary
of the C. E. A. of Tenn.

JULY 28TH, 1855.

BRO. FANNING—I received the first number of the "Gospel Advocate," and I hope it will prove to me a pleasant and instructive companion. I have been wishing for something of the kind for a long time. It is not often I enjoy the pleasure of meeting with a congregation of disciples. Hence, with me, the necessity of the "Gospel Advocate" to cheer amid crooked and perverse doctrines.

We have three congregations of brethren in Dyer county, but I live eight miles distant from the nearest. Recently we organized in Dyersburg with only eight or ten members. We thought these would be a nucleus around which others might be gathered. Bro. Bantan promises to preach for us once every month. He is quite an intelligent minister, and is listened to with much respect and attention by the citizens of the village and vicinity. His Christian deportment and social qualities command their respect, and even their affection. There is a fair prospect to do good, though as yet there have been no additions.

B. W. LAUDERDALE.

OBITUARIES.

Departed this life, at Mason's Grove, Madison County, Tenn., July 21st, 1855, ROXANA A., daughter of Robert and Frances Billingsley, aged seven years and ten months.

We would be gratified to publish the lines written by the afflicted mother, but we lack space.

T. F.

ELK RIDGE, TENN., Aug. 9th, 1855.

DEAR BRO. FANNING—With a sad heart and weeping eyes, I have seated myself to inform you of the death of my daughter, LUCINDA CAROLINE MOORE, who departed this life on Lord's Day the 5th inst., after a severe illness of nearly five weeks. She has left a disconsolate husband and four motherless children. She was nearly 29 years of age, but when seventeen she bowed to the authority of the Lord, and although she has left us, we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

WADE BARRETT.