

## Christian Guardian.

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## ORIGINAL.

For the Christian Guardian.

## HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

The doctrine contained in the above words, we shall not now wait to prove, but offer some brief remarks to exhibit it in a clear, full, and impressive light.

As man is a compound being, in whom are united matter and spirit, depravity must exist in one or the other of these, or both; it cannot exist in matter, inasmuch as it is incapable of thought, volition, and action, and therefore unaccountable, hence then when sin is ascribed to the flesh or said to exist therein, we must understand the word "flesh" as figuratively signifying the corrupt mind; it will therefore be at once perceived, that sin exists only in the soul, the immaterial part of man—that it exists only where, in the nature of things, it can exist, and that we should ever be guided by this axiom in speaking of man's corruption.

Sin then exists or has its seat in the soul, here it lives, reigns, rules, and increases, and hence sends forth its maddening streams through every thought, word, and act, exploding all purity, and infecting all around that comes within its reach.

In the Scriptures of Divine truth, the immaterial part of man is represented by the terms soul or heart, and spirit, the former signifying the passions or affections, and the latter the powers of mind by which we think, understand, discriminate, judge, and remember; between these we should ever remember there is a difference, the former being real feelings, the latter powers of action.

Here the question arises, does depravity equally or in the same sense exist in each of these? to which we unequivocally answer no, for this reason, that we cannot perceive how depravity exists or can exist in the mere power to do a thing, but in the actual performance thereof.

It would be very, nay extremely, difficult to show how the power of eating, hearing, seeing, walking, &c. is depraved, and it is certainly equally difficult to show how the will, or the power of choice and refusal, the memory or the power of retaining ideas, the understanding and judgment or the power of perceiving and deciding are inherently depraved; that all the faculties of the soul or spirit are weakened and rendered very defective by the fall, we readily admit, but that they are themselves corrupt, we constantly deny, not because the depravity of man is not sufficiently extensive to admit this, for it is total, but because it is impossible in the nature of things, and this it will be perceived is in conformity with the axiom already expressed.

It follows then, that to talk of the stubbornness, obstinacy, &c. of the will, is to convey erroneous ideas, and that the right view of the subject is this, that sin exists in the dispositions of the heart, the whole of which, without the least exception, are depraved, corrupt, unholy; and that with respect to the faculties of the mind, sin lies in the improper use or exercise thereof, and that we are not sinful because we have the power to choose and refuse, but we sin when the object of our choice is sinful and the object of our refusal good and commanded to be received; so with respect to man's power of thought, understanding, judgment, and memory.

This doctrine is in perfect harmony with Scripture, which, when speaking of man as corrupt, ascribes his corruption solely to the heart; e. g., "The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts," &c. "Their heart was not right with God." "A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things." But it is unnecessary to multiply passages, seeing that this is the constant phraseology of the word of God.

2. We have thus endeavoured to remove from the subject those enormous ideas that would perplex or obscure our views, and to point out that sin lives in the dispositions, passions or affections; hence all its noxious vapours proceed and spread their deleterious influence over the whole man, who becomes in consequence a most deplorable creature.

How hideous! how shocking! how abominably corrupt! would the heart of man appear, could it be so exhibited as to enable us to behold it clearly and fully! It would appear indeed a receptacle of ravenous and ferocious monsters, a cage of unclean birds, the abode of all that is filthy, vile, and detestable; in a word, the enemy of God, and therefore of all good, and the dwelling-place of every disposition that is fitted to embitter life, render us unhappy here, and engulf us in the blackness of darkness and the anguish of endless torment hereafter.

Man is capable of loving—but he loves not God, his Creator, Redeemer, Preserver and best Friend, he loves Him not at all, and those whom he should love subordinately, he loves sinfully, supremely, so as to displace God; he loves the creature, sets up his idols in his heart, and this is done in despite of instruction and threatenings to the contrary.—

Man is capable of hating,—but he hates not sin which he ought to hate, which every thing great and good urges him to abhor; he hates truth and righteousness, he hates the righteous; nay, Hears-O heavens! and give ear, O earth! he hates the Being who gave him life and every blessing, who daily loads him with benefits, whose love towards man is boundless and blessings numberless; surely this is the blackest ingratitude, the basest corruption and the most astonishing wickedness of which we can conceive. Man can rejoice, but he rejoices in iniquity, in the world, and not in the truth or in God, to whom he owes every thing, and who is the bestower of every blessing, but he rejoices in the gift, nay, frequently in an enemy of the giver. Man can sorrow, but he sorrows not because of his numberless crimes, but because of his want of wealth, because of blasted schemes, disappointed expectations, and frustrated designs; his sorrow is that of the world, which worketh death and is odious to God. Man is capable of anger or displeasure, but he is not angry at sin, but at something frivolous or light; instead of being ambitious to attain real usefulness, true righteousness, and the favour of God here and hereafter, his ambition is directed towards some withering object, something that must perish in the using, and can render no real pleasure, no solid comfort. And thus it is most strikingly apparent, that the "heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."

Who can picture the dark and deep-rooted malice, the deadly revenge, the shameful uncharitableness, the despicable envy, and other unholinesses which rage with unbridled sway in the heart of man, stalk abroad with the utmost shamelessness, usurp that throne which belongs only to God, hurls righteousness from its place, bars the door against the truth, shuts out all that is good from the unfortunate soul, rivets its fetters, chains, and bonds with merciless cruelty to the wretched votary of Satan, who leads the sinner captive at his will, and plunges him deeper and deeper into the gloomy abyss of darkness, wretchedness, and woe. View the unfortunate slave through the Gospel glass, and contemplate his real situation. His mental eyes are closed against the truth; not a cheering ray gains admission to light up the gloomy mansion, all is darkness, thick darkness, that may be felt; his ears are deaf to the voice of God, in his word and works, by his Spirit and Providence; he has no relish for chaste, pure, and heavenly delights, no appetite but for the things that are earthly; he feels no holy sensations of gratitude, love, hope, and fear; his heart is hard as the nether millstone, callous and insensible; all his spiritual senses are closed against God and godliness, and he remains, while in his natural state, "like the wild ass's colt," fierce, savage, and untractable.

Mark also how sin, that most savage tyrant, employs as his servants all the powers both of body and of mind; he commands and they obey; hence man chooses death and refuses life—understands error and sin, and not truth and righteousness, or rather understands nothing right; judges erroneously, remembers evil and not good, and exerts his bodily powers, his eyes, ears, tongue, hands, feet, in a word, the whole man, in the service of the devil; all is wrong, nothing as it should be.

In this condition, the slave of sin, the servant of the devil, the enemy of God, an heir of hell, an outcast from his father's house, ready to perish, blind, deaf, dumb, without feeling, possessed of ferocious monsters who rage within, led on and surrounded by fiends who rage and rule without, man walks on the edge of a dark, dreary, and frightful precipice, without light to guide him. Beneath his feet the gulf of hell yawns horribly to receive him, the heavens gather blackness, darkness, and a horrible tempest above him. The Almighty frowns, hell moves, justice uplifts his glittering fiery blade, and death advances; hung over the fiery, black, and awful gulf, where devils howl, damned spirits wait, and sulphurous liquid fire rolls its waves with fury, see the wretched sinner exposed to the awful storms of God's tremendous wrath. Stay thy hand, O Justice! and let the sinner in at least expiring accents cry for mercy and live: Hark! the sinner cries for pardon. See, the Saviour turns away the sword of Justice! life is prolonged! Jesus pleads! God is reconciled! Rejoice ye heavens, and ye saints of the Most High, re-echo the praises of God and the Lamb, while everlasting ages roll and peace and happiness abound to the ransomed of the Lord.

This is the pleasing side of the picture. We should remember that the wages of sin is death. God hath whet his sword, bent his bow, and prepared the instruments of death. He is angry with the wicked every day. Will you—can you, sinner, procrastinate? This moment is thine, now return and live; the next, God may hurl against thee the javelins of destruction, and sweep thy guilty soul to ruin, to drink the cup of his wrath to the very dregs, and that without mixture of mercy. Turn then and live; give to God each moment as it flies, and secure a mansion in the regions of unsullied glory. M. N.

## SELECTED.

## EXPOSITION OF SCRIPTURE.

## MATTHEW XII.

Verses 31, 32. All manner of sin and blasphemy, &c.—The importance of a right understanding of this passage renders the most careful consideration of it necessary. Sin is the transgression of the law; blasphemy, when applied to men, is injurious and calumnious speaking; and when considered as a crime against the Divine Majesty, it consists in reproachful speeches uttered against God, or in a denial to him of those attributes and excellencies which, according to the revelation he has been pleased to make of himself, he is known to possess; and thus in both cases includes in it the idea of wilful and rebellious enmity. For all such blasphemy there is,

however, forgiveness upon repentance; but for that particular blasphemy which consists, as expressed in the next verse, in speaking against the Holy Ghost,—that is, saying, in opposition to all evidence, and against reasonable conviction, that the "Spirit of God," by which our Lord cast out devils, was the unclean and evil spirit, Satan himself, and doing this from enmity to the kingdom and truth of God, which by these miracles the Holy Spirit attested and established,—there is no forgiveness. Nothing can be more clear, than that this is the unpardonable blasphemy of which our Lord speaks, and that these are the circumstances under which it was committed.—Blasphemy, or speaking against the Son of Man, was remissible; such as denying his Messiahship, calling him a wine-bibber and gluttonous, &c.; all which, though high and dangerous crimes, yet were not excluded from the divine mercy. But when, after the Pharisees had always admitted, according to the faith of their nation, that devils could not be cast out but by the Spirit of God, and had seen how intimately connected all the works of Christ were with a holy doctrine and a holy life, they were so far influenced by their wicked passions, as to resist that evidence of a divine power in his case, which they admitted in other cases, the cases of their own children or disciples, to be conclusive; and when they audaciously attributed that power exerted by Christ to Satan himself, of which they had sufficient proof, even upon their own principles, that it could only proceed from the Spirit of God, and yet, after all, wilfully and most wickedly, said of the power of the Holy Spirit, "This is the working of Beelzebub himself," this fatal offence was committed. Our Lord had thrown a veil around him by his humility, which often hid the glory of his majesty, so that men might for a time question who he might be. Not so the Holy Spirit; he fully revealed himself in the works of Christ; so that had they been performed by the meanest of their prophets, the Pharisees would have acknowledged in them the finger of God, which now they denied; and therefore they sinned directly and wilfully against the Holy Ghost. This was their blasphemy and their crime, and our Lord solemnly declares that those who had been guilty of it should not be forgiven, neither in this life, nor in the world to come.

This phrase is equivalent to, "Shall never at any future time be forgiven;" hence Mark expresses it, "Is in danger of eternal damnation." There is no reference in this expression to the notions of the Jews, that some sins would be forgiven to the seed of Abraham after death; for it is not probable that our Lord would seem to sanction so unscriptural an opinion by even an allusion; nor is "the world" or age "to come" to be understood, with others, of the age of the Messiah; for that had already commenced. The expression, as appears from similar phrases in the later Jewish writers, was proverbial for never; or, if there was in it any reference to a future state, it signifies, that as in this life that sin could not be forgiven, so, at the day of judgment, there could be no declaration of its having been forgiven, though the forgiveness of sins of every other description will then be made manifest and publicly proclaimed. So clearly is the nature of this sin marked, that it is somewhat surprising that there should have been so much difference of opinion respecting it. One of the least defensible notions is that which refers it forward to the rejection of the gospel after the Holy Ghost had been shed forth in his miraculous gifts; whereas, the very occasion on which our Lord uses the words, and the particular character of the crime itself, which consisted in attributing the casting out of devils by the Spirit of God to the agency of Satan, proves indubitably that the sin might not only at that time be committed, but was actually so. The chief differences of opinion have, however, arisen, not from any difficulty in ascertaining in what the original crime consisted, but from the questions, how far others beside the Pharisees could be guilty of it; and from what its irremissibility arose. As to the first, it is difficult to say whether those Jews who might see the miracles of the Holy Spirit wrought by the apostles, and ascribe them to Satan, did not also commit precisely the same offence. They probably did; but still we have no authority for saying that this sin could be committed by any but the eye-witnesses of the miracles themselves, or at least by those who fully admitted them as facts. We are likewise to recollect, that there are blasphemies often committed against the Holy Ghost of a deeply aggravated and dangerous nature, by infidels and scoffers and apostates, which are not true blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; and these are not to be confounded with it, though awfully criminal. As to the second question, in what the irremissibility of this sin consisted, perhaps it is best for us at once to confess our ignorance. Certain it is, that the pretended solution of those who make it merely a consequence of the nature of the offence, cannot be admitted, because in that respect it stands on the same ground as many other offences. The Pharisees, they tell us, by resisting the strongest evidence put themselves beyond the possibility of being convinced of the truth, because no higher evidence could be given them; but this was equally true of all obstinate unbelievers then; though many of them were not charged with this particular offence; and it is also equally true of all unbelievers now, who have received all the evidence which God intends to afford. The only satisfactory conclusion on this awful subject is, that God was pleased to make this exception from the mercies of his gospel as a warning to all mankind, who, if not capable of committing that precise sin, may all make dangerous approaches to it. It was designed to exhibit the evil of spiritual pride and bigotry; to show that there are sins of the intellect and will, as well as of the senses, most hateful to God, because leading to a malignant opposition to his holy truth; and that a state of heart is attainable by perseverance in sin, from which the insulted Holy Spirit, after much patience, takes his everlasting flight, and

leaves the sinner incapable of repentance. Still, while it operates as a warning, by showing how awful a degree of depravity man is capable of, there is no just ground for any apprehensions to be entertained by pious and scrupulous minds; for, not to urge that the fears of such persons are a sufficient proof that they have not committed this greatest of offences, it may be confidently concluded, that as those only are charged with the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost who saw the miracles of Christ performed, and yet attributed them to Satan, so no one in these later times can be guilty of this particular crime, and no one is therefore, on that account, excluded from forgiveness. We have no right to enlarge an exception from the mercies of the gospel, beyond its strict letter. If any exception to a general rule demands a severely rigid interpretation, it is this, which stands in direct opposition to the general character of the covenant of grace.—Rev. R. Watson.

## THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL.

The Revelation which has been mercifully made to man, is addressed to him in language adapted to his capacities, and established upon evidence whose force he cannot, without violence to his conscience, resist. When we take up the production of any modern writer, say for instance the Rambler, we feel as perfect an assurance with respect to the source of its sentiments, as though we heard them from the lips of the author himself. If we go back to Cicero, or Tacitus, or Josephus, the strength of the assurance is not in the least degree weakened. There has never yet been found a skeptic on this point. If we pass to the writings of Paul or Peter, of Luke, or Matthew or John, the character of the evidence surely undergoes no change, or if it be changed, it is an increase of force. Knowing then the writers (under Divine direction,) of most of the books of Scripture, we give our attention to the subjects which they present. These are of such a character, and so treated, that it is impossible not to believe that the authors were good and holy men, supremely anxious to promote the welfare of their fellow creatures. When, therefore, they inform us of facts which occurred before their own eyes, facts with respect to which no man of ordinary intelligence could be deceived, we must place implicit reliance upon their statements. "Wicked men," it has been remarked, "would not have written a book which so awfully condemned their whole conduct;" and good men would never have imposed upon the world falsehoods of whose atrocity they must, (upon the supposition of falsehood,) all the while have been sensible, even when yielding life itself in attestation to their truth. The statements of the sacred writers being received, we have immediately the assurance of a supernatural attestation to the truth of the Gospel, such as could proceed only from Him who has framed the laws of nature, and to whose control they must ever be subject. "We have not," says St. Peter, "followed cunningly-devised fables, when we have made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty." For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. This is the evidence of miracles, any one of which among those recorded in Scripture, would be sufficient evidence of its divine origin. What then must be the accumulated weight of the whole?

But St. Peter continues, "we have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well, that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth into a dark place, &c." The testimony from this source is independent, and irresistible. It is, in fact, a standing miracle, an indubitable proof, not only that the scriptures are from God, but that he possesses the attributes of almighty wisdom and power, which they attribute to him. That he foresees all things and controls all events, the prophecies which he has inspired assure us; they are indeed "a light shining in a dark place," a ray of light from the throne of God, whose brightness will continue to increase, while the world endures.

The sufficiency of the evidence from these two sources to prove the truth of the Scriptures, few will undertake to deny. That it does not produce its adequate effect in dispelling every degree of skepticism, that it does not produce its full and proper impression even upon the minds of Christians, is attributable only to the moral obliquity which prevails in the natural heart, and from the influence of which even the spiritual man is not entirely exempt. "If any man will do his will," said our Lord, "he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." And just in proportion to our interest in spiritual things and our fitness to enjoy the contemplation and experience of them, will be our assurance of their truth and reality.—Episcopal Recorder.

## SOLEMN INQUIRIES.

Remembering that I am one of the countless multitudes, who, in the last day, will stand before the bar of God, I beg leave, to make a few solemn inquiries. Am I prepared to die? Am I what the word of God requires me to be? Have I examined his word, to know what it does require? Have I improved the privileges which God has given me? Have I neglected no opportunity of doing good? Have I never refused to stretch out my hand to relieve the sufferings of others? Am I, as willing to relieve the sufferings of an enemy as of a friend? Have I done all I could for supporting the Gospel and for evangelizing the world? Have I made such sacrifices for this object as the gospel requires? Or have I only contributed of my abundance so as not to interfere with my own ease and indulgence? Am I constantly looking abroad in the world, to see

what good I can do, or do I confine my narrow views to beloved self? Do I exercise the same love towards others, that I would wish in return? When I am viewing the faults of others, do I at the same time remember that God is viewing my own? If I attempt to speak in the name of the Lord, do I have an eye single to his glory? If I have but one talent, do I improve that or do I neglect it, and envy those who have more? Am I reproved when I see others active in the cause of Christ, or do I excuse myself by saying that they do it to be seen of men? Do I visit my closet daily for the purpose of pouring out my soul to God in fervent prayer? Do I examine my heart to see where I must point the sword to keep off the enemy? In fine, do I love the Lord Jesus Christ with a pure heart fervently? Have I ever been born of the spirit of God? Or have I treated with neglect the blood of the Saviour?

O, dying sinners! stop and answer these solemn questions. The hand that is now writing will soon be laid in the grave. The eyes that are viewing these lines, will soon be closed in death. The Saviour is entreating you by all that is virtuous, by all that is lovely, to hearken to his dying groans. The hands that were nailed to the cross, are the only ones that can guide you to heaven. O be entreated to embrace the Saviour. Time is short. Plee to the ark before the door is shut for ever against you; "for I say unto you, that many shall seek to enter in, but will not be able." Let the shortness of time induce you to delay no longer. Let the blood and agonies of the Saviour affect your heart and lead you to embrace him as your friend. Death may now be standing at your door. Perhaps in yonder shop lies folded the cloth that is destined to be your shroud. Your friends may close your eyes when the spirit is fled; but alas! 'tis all they can do. They cannot follow your departed spirit to the bar of God. Then, if you have not Christ for your friend, you have just entered upon the dread realities of a miserable eternity to endure the pains of hell for ever. Think of those who a few days ago mingled in your society, whose eyes sparkled with joy. View them in the eternal world! They were young, and alas! as thoughtless as you are now. When you pass through yonder grave-yard, read the inscriptions there; see how many in the bloom of life have been called to meet their God. There the cheek that bloomed in health, the eye that sparkled in beauty, are alike mouldering to dust; many, who for the fleeting pleasures of this world have sold their immortal souls. The bell that tolled for them, will soon echo the mournful sound for you. O, dying sinner, listen to the Saviour's gentle voice—hear his dying groans, repent and live, lest you sink down to hell, there to bewail your awful condition for ever and ever.—Watchman.

## HEATHEN INSENSIBILITY.

From the "History of the English Baptist Mission to India," by Rev. Baron Stow.

Mr. Stratham mentions an occurrence at Howrah, of which he was an eye-witness, that indicates most touchingly how much the Hindoos need the gospel to produce in their hearts a spirit of kindness and sympathy towards their suffering fellow creatures. A small native hut had accidentally taken fire; and as it was situated to the windward of the village, comprising about twenty thatched huts, these were all in imminent danger of being destroyed. "The fire," says Mr. Stratham, "was very brilliant, from the nature of the materials, bamboos, mats, and straw. I perceived it from the verandah where I was sitting, and immediately mounted my horse and rode towards it. Before I got there, about 5 dwellings were totally consumed, and two others were on fire. It was astonishing to see the apparent and total want of sympathy in the minds of the natives present.—Though above a thousand of them were assembled from the neighbouring village of Sulkea, not one would assist in extinguishing the flames, but all seemed to enjoy the bonfire. No means were adopted to arrest the progress of the conflagration, except by those wretched creatures whose huts were burning. On my remonstrating with the spectators, and entreating them to lend a helping hand to their neighbours, these were the answers—'My house is not on fire'—'Who will give me RAY?'—'What power have I over fire?'—'To be burnt will be worse than to see fire.' Thus they suffered the flames to spread, until they had now consumed nearly half the place, when from one of the huts which had just taken fire, a dreadful screaming and lamentation issued. On inquiry, I found it was from a poor, decrepit old woman. I urged them to fly to her rescue. Oh, the horrid feelings they evinced! 'She is not my mother,'—'She is too old to gain salt'—'Her time is come'—'We shall see a suttee.' I offered them gifts if they would go into the house with me and bring her out. The name of rupees had something of an electric charm upon them, for no sooner was this heard than so many ran to her relief, that they could not all even touch the cot on which she lay. However, the poor creature was saved for that time; but none except the one of the lowest caste dared, even for 'lucre's' sake, to carry a sick person. The lofty Brahmins stood unconcerned spectators, and reproached the conduct of some lascars from the ships, whom I had prevailed upon to endeavour to extinguish the flames, which was soon effected by pulling down a small hut that was in the line of communication with the others. With regard to the poor woman thus saved, she had been so terrified that her illness was increased and her merciless sons conveyed her to the river side to die. There I found her three days after, just able to speak once but no more; she died in about half an hour. Her room had been filled with mud.

He that hath pity on another man's sorrow, shall be free from it himself; and he that delighteth in, and scorneth the misery of another, shall one time or other fall into it himself.—St. W. RALLIGH.



## RELIGIOUS &amp; MISSIONARY.

WESLEYAN METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.  
Extracts from the Annual Report.

## SOUTH SEA MISSIONS.

VAVAU.—We have had a considerable increase in our schools the past year. This is owing partly to the people being dispersed over the island to their respective places.

"The teachers are generally punctual in their attendance; and most of the scholars give reasons for absenting themselves from school.

"This people have not much difficulty in learning to read and write. Many can write tolerably well, and would write much better if they could procure slates, pens, ink, and paper. We have not the means to supply them. If the friends of Missions would have the goodness to give some such things for the use of this interesting people, their progress would be much more rapid. We have fixed native teachers, in every place where there are schools, to conduct them, and to lead the classes. This they do without any remuneration. We endeavour to convince them that it is our duty to do all we can for him who has done so much for us.

Printing.—In the course of the year we have printed several portions of the word of God; but, as we have been short of paper, we have neither printed so many books nor so many copies of each kind as we desired. We earnestly hope that this evil will be remedied in future by an ample supply. Books printed this year, namely:—Book No. 7 is from the Psalms 1-17. Book No. 8 is from John's Gospel, from 1st to 5th. Book No. 9 is from Genesis 9-14; each of them contains 12 pages of 12mo. We have printed a new Hymn Book, 64 pages of 32mo., containing 73 Hymns, chiefly new ones. We have struck off about 4500 of each of the three last books. Besides these, we have printed a few thousand Alphabets of 4 pages, and have just struck off a small School Book of 8 pages.

There is a great thirst for books; but the people are so very poor that many find it very difficult to purchase them. This is an evil which we cannot remedy at present; for we think it only just that the people should be required to pay for their books. At this time we have Scriptures ready to print from Genesis, Exodus, Psalms, Isaiah, Samuel, John, Matthew, &c. &c., but have no paper to print them; however we live in hope of being supplied shortly.

The Tejeos islands have been visited by native teachers, and a Missionary has been appointed to them. A society has been formed on Kibele's Island by the means of a native assistant; where also the people are expecting a visit from the Missionaries. "We hope," say the brethren, "you will continue to pray for us, and for the thousands who yet remain in heathen darkness, that the name of the Lord may be glorified in us and them; and we trust that as the way opens before us you will send us more men, fully devoted to God and to his cause, to offer their lives to this work, and to cry, 'Behold the Lamb of God!'"

## MISSIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

## CAPE DISTRICT.

Cape Town.—Messrs. B. Shaw and James Cameron; and another to be sent.

Khames Berg.—Mr. E. Edwards.

Great Namaqualand.—Mr. E. Cook.

Several School Teachers: number not specified.

The Cape Town Mission is in a state of growing prosperity. The abolition of slavery has greatly enlarged the sphere of Missionary usefulness in the colony; and increased exertions are necessary in order to meet in any tolerable degree the moral wants of those who have recently been delivered from thralldom. With a view of providing in part for this new state of things, premises have been purchased and a chapel fitted up, as well as a school established, at Somerset, Hottentots' Holland, where access can be had to a large body of people now made free. That this place may have the attention paid to it which its importance demands, it has been made the residence of an additional Missionary. Other openings present themselves, which the Missionaries are anxious to embrace; but, with their present strength only, that will be impossible. They are already doing all they can. In their anxiety to make their labours more extensively available, they have accepted the kind offers of Ministers of other denominations to supply in part their lack of service in the Wynberg and other chapels, that they themselves might be enabled to visit occasionally various places where good congregations are formed, which but for such arrangements must have been almost wholly neglected. The best thanks of the Committee are due to those excellent Ministers for their labours of love.

The Mission at Khames Berg, in Little Namaqualand, continues to prosper; but no such unusual occurrences or movements have taken place as would render an extended notice of it necessary. Several persons during the year have evinced a serious concern for the salvation of their souls; and, although the Missionary has had to lament a few instances of misconduct among the members, the society generally are increasing in scriptural knowledge and piety. While Christianity is thus steadily advancing in the oldest station of the Society in Southern Africa, the social condition of those who are the subjects of its saving influence is equally improving, and the delightful scene is exhibited of a people rising from a state of barbarism into happy and civilized life.

The past year has been marked by the commencement of a Mission in Great Namaqualand. The first visit of Mr. Cook in search of a suitable place on which he might settle was attended by an encouraging circumstance. Having crossed the Great Orange River, he directed his course to a place called the Warm Bath; in the country belonging to the Bundel-Zwarte, where he met Abram, the Chief of the tribe, on his way to Khames Berg, in search of a Missionary. This providential meeting was affecting to both parties. Mr. Cook hastened back to Khames Berg for his family; and, by the advice of the Chief, has now fixed himself near the spring, the name of which he has changed to Nisbett Bath, in honour of the gentleman whose munificent donation of £200 encouraged the Committee to undertake the Mission. At the date of his last letter, Mr. Cook was employed in erecting a temporary place of worship and a school-room. Several families had come to reside at the station, and an invitation had been sent, by the sanction of the Chief, to the whole tribe, to repair thither as soon as possible, that they and their children may be taught the words of life. The Governor of the colony has taken a lively interest in the commencement of this Mission, and has promised the Chief to make him a handsome half-yearly present, so long as he shall continue to conduct himself well, and engage in hearty co-operation with the Missionary. Thus has a Missionary of the Society at length established himself in the country where the bones of the lamented Threlfall and Links are mouldering; and the friends of Missions, remembering their untimely fate, will not fail to pray that He, whose kind providence has guided the footsteps of Mr. Cook to so promising a field of labour, may constantly watch over him, protecting him from danger, and crowning his endeavours with success.

In society in the Cape District, 203; under education in the schools, 245.

## ALBANY DISTRICT.

## ALBANY.

Graham's Town and Salem.—Messrs. Shrewsbury and Young.

Bathurst.—Mr. Haddy.

## KAFIRLAND.—I. AMAPONDO.

Wesleyville, Peka's Tribe.—Mr. Shepstone; another to be sent for the Baka Kafirs.

Mount Coke, Isimbie's Tribe.—Mr. Doyce.

Butterworth, Hlatse's Tribe.—Mr. Ayliff.

## 2. AMATUMB.

Clarkesbury, Vossan's Tribe.—Mr. W. I. Davis.

Morley, Dope's Tribe.—Mr. Palmer.

3. AMAPONDO.  
Buntingville, Fakus's Tribe.—One to be sent.

## 4. AMAZULA.

Port Natal, Chaka's Tribe.—Two are requested.

BUCHUANA COUNTRY.  
Thaba Uchuu and Corannas.—Messrs. J. Edwards and T. Jenkins; and an assistant.

Buchuanap.—Mr. Archbell.

Mr. Giddy also has proceeded to the Albany District. Several Assistants and School Teachers: number not specified.

The Missions in the Albany District are at present exciting a deep and painful interest, in consequence of the sudden and unexpected invasion of the colony by the Kafirs. Previous to this distressing event, the work was steadily advancing. The Committee, in answer to the pressing application of Mr. Shepstone, alluded to in the report of last year, had appointed an additional Missionary to the Kafirs settled on the Beka; and arrangements were making for carrying into full effect the new and important plan of education for the benefit of the native tribes. The afflictive circumstances which have interrupted the operations of the Missionaries are not however altogether without alleviation. Every succeeding communication increases the probability that the war is confined to the Kafirs of the Amatosa nation, and consequently strengthens the hope that the more distant Missions at Clarkesbury and Morley among the Amatumb, and at Buntingville in the Amapondo country, have remained undisturbed. The fidelity of the Wesleyan Chiefs, Pato, Kama, and Congo Kohas, is cause of especial thankfulness. Through urged by the hostile chiefs to join them, and threatened with the consequences of refusal, they have continued to manifest an unwavering attachment to the Missionaries, and have afforded important assistance in the defence of the colony against their own countrymen. Their decided conduct has placed them in a situation of great peril; and at the date of the last accounts fears were entertained that they would be overwhelmed by a combination of the hostile Kafirs before Colonel Somerset, who had hastened with a body of British troops to their assistance, could make a diversion in their favour. The preservation of the lives of our Missionaries calls for a more than ordinary expression of gratitude. The Mission chapel at Bathurst is destroyed, but Mr. Haddy has effected his escape with the inhabitants to Graham's Town. Mount Coke has also been burned, after having been vigorously defended for a considerable time by the Chief, to whose guardianship Isimbie, when dying, confided it; but before the place was given up, Mr. Dugmore was safely conveyed, with all the movable property, to Wesleyville. The Missionaries still however remain exposed to great peril. The last letters state that Wesleyville was considered to be in imminent danger; and Mr. Shepstone, the Missionary there, has been especially marked out for destruction by one of the Chiefs, in revenge for the death of his two brothers, who have fallen in the war. The circumstances of the brethren appear most powerfully in their behalf to the sympathy of the Society, who will not cease to pray that He who has hitherto graciously "delivered them" will continue to "save them from bloody men."

This desolating invasion of the Colony has been the means of proving the genuineness of the piety of many of the English settlers. The religious services in the Mission chapel at Graham's Town, on the first Sabbath of the year, were rendered remarkably solemn and affecting by the presence of the country members, who had just escaped from the ruthless invaders, and by the circumstance that an attack on Graham's Town was daily expected. Forgiveness of enemies is the most difficult duty which the Christian has to perform; but although many had lost their worldly all, and some their dearest relatives, and all were contemplating the possibility of being involved in one common ruin, nearly the whole Society, previous to their repairing to the table of the Lord, united in making a formal declaration of their forgiveness of the Kafirs, and their resolution to be more fervent in prayer for their conversion to the Christian faith. Nor has the supporting influence of religion been wanting in this trying emergency. One of the members of the society from the country, on being told as he was leaving the chapel that his house had been burnt by the enemy, replied, "I would not give the blessing bestowed upon me in the means of grace for my house and all that it contains."

Destructive as is the storm which has burst over this interesting portion of the Mission-field, the hope is not extravagant that it may serve to prepare the way for the introduction of a healthier state of things. A better frontier system has long been called for; the present distress will prove the necessity for the immediate introduction of a new and equitable system of intercourse with the Kafirs; and the beneficial effects of Missionary operations among them, it is hoped, will be so clearly demonstrated as to show to all parties the importance of affording the most ample encouragement to the various Christian societies who labour for their good. To the philanthropy of our suffering countrymen—the English colonists, and their readiness to promote every religious and benevolent institution in favour of the aboriginal inhabitants, the Missionaries have ever borne the most honorable testimony—and when once the claims of justice and humanity are harmonized by an improved frontier system, and the interests of the colony as well as the rights of the Kafirs are settled on a solid and permanent basis, then may it be expected that the light of the gospel, which has already been reflected from Albany on the surrounding native population, will increase to moon-tide splendour, and that the various warlike tribes of the Kafirs will take their place among the regenerated and civilized nations of the earth.

THE BUCHUANA MISSION.—The location of this Mission has undergone an important change. The country in which Plantberg and Buchuanap were placed having proved, in consequence of its aridity, inadequate to the support of the growing population, the people found it necessary to seek a more advantageous situation. Having purchased of the Bushata Chief a fertile and well-watered tract of land, which had been nearly depopulated by war, lying in an easterly direction at the distance of six or eight days' journey, they removed thither at the close of the year 1833. Thaba Uchuu is the new station of the Plantberg people. The Corannas, with whom one of the Missionaries had for some time resided, have settled in the neighbourhood. The Buchuanap people have placed themselves still further towards the south-east, on the Caledon river. The removal appears to have been favourable to the interests of the Mission, as it has enabled the Missionaries to extend their labours among other tribes to whom previously they had no access. A party of the Bushata, two thousand in number, are settled near one of the new stations; and such is the enquiring disposition manifested by the remnant of this people, who formerly occupied the whole country, that scattered parties come from a great distance to hear what they term in their own language, "the good and sweet news." The new stations are also in the neighbourhood of the Mantatees, a numerous people, occupying an extensive tract of country, whose Chief and principal persons have shown so much anxiety to have a Missionary that an Assistant has been sent to them. He has commenced his labours with an encouraging prospect of success. Already his congregations average 800 persons, who hear the word with great attention, the effect of which is seen in the establishment of the Christian sabbath. The people at that place now all rest from labour on the sabbath day. Within an hour's ride are nine other places of importance; some of which are large towns, which Mr. Allison was preparing to visit on a regular plan. The new site of the Mission is also in the neighbourhood of another people, to whom the Committee have long been directing their attention. While the other Missionaries are advancing towards the Zoolahs through Kafirland, the brethren of the Buchuana Mission have now placed themselves upon their north-west border. Dr. Smith, the Director of the central expedition, who has treated the Missionaries with great kindness, and attention, calculates that they are not farther distant than 110

miles from Port Natal; and, as every probability exists that a considerable trading intercourse with the Zoolahs will be maintained, the hope may be indulged that the time is not far remote when that fierce though interesting people will bow to the yoke of Christ.

Since the removal of the Plantberg and Buchuanap people to their new situation, the work of religion has considerably prospered among them. Several instances of the power of the Gospel to change the heart and reform the life have occurred, while some have experienced in death its cheering consolations. Among the number of converts during the past year, the Missionaries reckon their Chief Moroko. He has long been the steady friend of the Mission, but has not till lately fully embraced Christianity. The Committee have recently sent another Missionary to this important field of labour; and happy shall they be if the liberality of the friends of the Society enable them to embrace all the openings for usefulness which are offered in that part of Africa.

STATE OF THE MISSION, GRAHAM'S TOWN.—At this place the congregations are large, respectable and seriously attentive to the word preached. The members of the society have in general held fast their profession without wavering. The native congregation and society are exceedingly interesting, because of the variety of their nations and of the languages which they speak. Many of them are now learning the language of Zion, and give evidence of a work of grace being begun in their hearts.

## INTELLIGENCE FROM THE FLATHEAD INDIANS.

It will perhaps be recollected by many of our readers, that the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church have sent missionaries to the Flathead Indians, under the superintendence of the Rev. Jason Lee. The last intelligence from this gentleman was when he had reached the top of the Rocky Mountains, and was dated, we believe, in the early part of July 1834. The following letter is from a member of that mission, written in November, at Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia river. The letter was addressed to a brother of the writer, and was received via the Sandwich Islands:—

Oregon Territory, Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia river, 45 deg. 47 n. lat. 123 deg. 39, west long. November 8, 1834.

Dear Brother and Friends.—When I wrote you last, we were encamped at Ham's Fork, on the Rocky Mountains. In a few days from that date, viz. on the 23d of July, we resumed our journey, and, after a rough and toilsome travel, arrived here on the 15th of September, all in health but much fatigued by the length and weariness of the journey, having slept in our clothes, either in a tent or in the open air, one hundred and fifty-two nights! But, though weary in body, we have never regretted that we left our home and comforts for the purpose of coming to benefit the poor natives in this remote and secluded region; but rather rejoice that we are permitted to labour in the glorious work before us, relying on Jehovah alone for the increase, after having done our duty toward these red men, who are our brethren by creation, yea, one of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. I assure you that I feel more than ever interested in the natives; and more than ever willing to spend my strength and life in labouring for the bettering of their condition, both spiritual and temporal. An acquaintance with some of them and their character is much calculated to interest me in their behalf, and the prospect of usefulness among them is very encouraging.

We have witnessed many natural curiosities, in passing over the mountains and deserts, on our way, and have also had an opportunity of seeing many animals in their wild state, to which we were strangers before, except by description. A number of warts and hot soda and spouting springs, were to us objects of curiosity. I have seen some which rose in temperature to boiling heat. Some of the bluffs, hills, and mountains, are of the most curious and pleasing construction. The land generally, till within a short distance from this place, is a dreary desert for six or seven hundred miles—sometimes scarcely affording verdure on the rivers, for the sustenance of our animals. We have left our horses, mules, and three neat cattle, at Fort Wallah-wallah, some distance up the Columbia; and came thence to this place in a boat belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, who own that fort, as well as the one from which I now date my letter. The Company is composed of English, Scotch and Canadian gentlemen, who have long been engaged in the fur trade. They have stations all through the country, from Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Ocean, and have become immensely rich. They have here a large farming establishment, several hundred cattle, sheep, horses, goats, and swine, and raise in great abundance, wheat, barley, peas, potatoes, garden vegetables, and melons, together with some apples, peaches, grapes, &c. They have been established here about nine years. Indian corn flourishes tolerably well, but is not extensively cultivated. I have tarried here since our arrival, to take charge of the school at the fort, (the former instructor having left,) which is composed of half-breed children, having French Canadian fathers, and Chenook mothers. The Chenooks are a tribe who inhabit from this place to the shores of the Pacific. These children have now some of them been at school nearly two years, and what is rather singular, have always been taught by Americans. I intend leaving next week to join my brethren on the Williamam river, known on Olney's maps by the name Mullenmah, where they are busily employed in erecting a log-house, for our winter quarters. I earnestly long to be with them; and shall feel home-sick, till the anticipated time arrives.

I intend sending this by the way of the Sandwich Islands, which will be the way for you to send letters to me. There will probably be some information given in the Herald, how letters should be directed, and where left, in order to have them come to me. A vessel passes from this place to the Islands, and back again, as often as once in two months. My health is better at present than it has been for years, and to all appearance is likely to remain so. During a great part of the journey, I suffered considerably from a diarrhoea, attended with considerable pain, which reduced my strength quite low, but not so that I was unable to labor. Brother Jason and Daniel Lee and myself were sick at different periods of the journey, being all seized alike, with violent pain in the head, back and limbs, attended with high fever. But the kind care of Providence was manifestly visible, in that there was but one of us sick at a time, and our sickness happened when we were staying in our camp, or when we were making only short journeys daily. The debilitating effects of our sickness we did not get over for several weeks.

For more than two months we were destitute of bread, and subsisted on buffalo meat. We however kept a little flour in case of sickness, and were never entirely destitute of sufficient to thicken broth, except a day or two before reaching Wallah-wallah. The reason however, of our having it so long, was, that a gentleman from this place, who overtook us in the mountains, where he had come on a trading and trapping excursion, gave us at two different times, about a dozen pounds each time, of excellent flour, raised on the Columbia. We also received several other presents of food from him, although an entire stranger. From the Napierce and Kionse Indians, we also received the present of six good horses, for which brother Lee afterwards made them suitable presents in return. Horses among them are very plenty, and are valued at eight dollars a piece.

After coming to the Kionse camp, we purchased a quantity of the cammas root, which in shape, resembles a small onion. The Indians dig them in large quantities and having them previously prepared a hole in the ground, lay in a quantity of wood, and cover it in a similar manner. The wood is then fired, and the root is roasted. After roasting, it tastes much like baked pumpkin, and is very nutritious. To preserve it for future use, they pound it with a kind of black moss, which grows on the trees, and make it into small cakes, in which state it is kept good for months, and, with

dried salmon, serves them for food during the winter. Trout were caught here (at Kionse camp) weighing from ten to twenty pounds. They are very different from our trout in the states. During the latter part of our journey we subsisted considerably on salmon, which we purchased from the Indians. Farewell, dear friends—more particulars when I write again.

Yours in bonds of love, CYRUS SHEPARD.

In the London Church Missionary Register for July, we find a letter from the British Consul in New Zealand, bearing witness to the influence, and effects of the missions there. It is well known that a few years since, the inhabitants of New Zealand were sunk in the most abject and degraded state of barbarism; and that cannibalism prevailed. Such a testimony as this which follows is of great value:

## NEW ZEALAND.

## CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Testimony of the British Consul to the Missionaries and their success.

The following statements were addressed to the Rev. W. Innes, of Edinburgh, by James Busby, Esquire, British Consul or Resident in New Zealand:

"As you keep up an acquaintance with missionary proceedings you will be well pleased to have my testimony to the eminent usefulness of the Church Missionary Society's Missionaries here, and their entire devotion to the duties of their high and honourable calling. I believe a secular minded man, if unhappily placed among them, could not continue to be associated with them; so entirely devoted are they to their master's work, which they have pursued with a singleness of aim above all praise.

The fruits of their labours are beginning to appear, far and near. The change which has taken place, in the character even of those natives who make no profession of listening to their instructions, is highly gratifying. The light of Christianity falls on the minds of those among them, who listen to the ministrations of the Missionaries, like light from Heaven. Even the secular knowledge which the teaching of Christianity conveys is a new creation in their minds; and it has not to contend with the false lights of worldly knowledge or worldly wisdom, which form such powerful obstacles to the spread of truth where it has long shone.

The Missionaries have secured the entire confidence of the natives, and their influence is extending wherever their names have been heard. The country is becoming rapidly Christianized. In most of the villages within many miles of this place the Christian Sabbath is established; not only by rest from labour, but by acts of worship, conducted by individuals who have been educated by the Missionaries. Many are decided Christians; many more are influenced in their conduct by Christian precepts. A very few years of such progress as the last will make the country as well entitled to be called Christian, as many countries which have enjoyed the light of the Revelation since it first dawned on the world.

## SOUTH SEA ISLANDS.

## A Temperance Reformation begun.

It is now nearly two years since the London Missionary Society sent to the United States their affecting appeal against New England Rum. The prosperity of the missions had been interrupted, and all the good that, by the blessing of God, had been effected at the Society Islands, seemed in danger of being almost completely swept away through the influence of ardent spirits, sold to the natives by English and American whalers, chiefly the latter. The force of the appeal was felt in this country, and the facts on which it was founded led to the introduction, among the natives, of the principles of the American Temperance Society. The attempt was successful, and the results are full of promise. Mr. Williams, who has been a missionary on the Islands for nearly twenty years, after mentioning the formation of Temperance Societies, says:—

"The vacant seats in the church began again to fill, the schools were well attended, and attention to religion revived; the happy state of things prior to the introduction of ardent spirits re-appeared. This gave the people so much delight, that they called a meeting of the inhabitants of their populous district, and came to an agreement among themselves, that they would not trade with any vessel or boat that should bring ardent spirits to their shores. Officers were appointed to examine every boat that came to their part of the island, and if that boat had spirits on board, it was ordered away, as the people would not trade with it."

"The chiefs and people of other districts, seeing the favourable results of abandoning the use of that destroyer of human happiness, began to follow the good example."

"One of my brethren says, 'The queen and most of the governors have joined the Temperance Society. The Iriti Ture or law-makers (these are persons delegated from each district annually, for the purpose of framing, arranging and modifying the laws) are now assembled at Papea, (the queen's district or head quarters). They have just enacted a law to prohibit the importation of spirits: those who are law spirits on them, all remaining on that day is to be thrown away. I trust Tahiti has been at its worst. The queen has cast off her former followers and is now attended by chiefs of respectability and character."

"Another brother says, 'Ardent spirits are now prohibited by law. Tahiti is a very different place from what it was when you left us.'"

## CHRISTIAN GUARDIAN.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1835.

## ON CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

In a former number we offered a few remarks upon the spirit and temper in which that authority should be exercised, which God has vested in the pastors of his Church. We have been profited by the perusal of "The Second Address of the Annual Assembly of the Congregational Union of England and Wales," lately published in London; which has for its principal topics the necessity of "scriptural purity of membership" in the Church of Christ, and as "intimately connected" with, and essential to this, "a faithful administration of scriptural discipline." While we heartily respond to the general sentiments expressed on these important subjects in the admirable document before us, we have been led into a train of reflection on the unequalled adaptation of the Wesleyan Methodist economy to the attainment and preservation of both.

The condition required of all who propose themselves for admission into the Society, viz:—"a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins," connected with the excellent digest of scriptural morality and practical duties embodied in the "general rules," a due observance of which is to be considered the only sufficient criterion by which to judge of the sincerity of their profession, is well calculated to deter men of worldly minds from proposing themselves for church communion, or to speedily develop their real characters, and expose their lack of proper qualifications for membership, should they be admitted.

The opportunities afforded to the minister, through the medium of the class-leaders, to acquaint himself with the moral and religious character of his charge, added to the personal examinations at the quarterly visitations, enable him to adapt his public discourses and private advice to the peculiarities of their state,

and thus to keep alive the flame of piety, and to lead them forward in the paths of truth and righteousness. While, through the same co-operation, declensions in spirituality are early detected, bickering, jealousy, or any other unchristian feeling is soon discovered, and means are thus afforded to take immediate steps in a scriptural manner to arrest the progress of strife and contention; either by reclaiming offenders, or by excluding them from the fellowship which they are disqualified to hold with the pious.

Another advantage is obtained through the adoption of the itinerant system, and the frequent change of pastors consequent thereon. During the comparatively short residence of a preacher, seldom exceeding the period of two years in one place, few, if any, of those personal partialities and local prejudices can be brought into existence, which, through the weakness of human nature, may often have a tendency to pervert the judgment even of sincere and well-intentioned men; or should such partialities be formed, it is highly improbable that, on the removal of the present incumbents, the minds of their successors in office should take the same bias, and thus permit evils to pass for any length of time unnoticed, or corrected. Under this system is the ministry exempted from the danger of being induced by mercenary motives to show favour to the rich and great, by directly or indirectly countenancing any impropriety of conduct which is detrimental to the general interests and credit of religion; seeing that their personal dependence upon the liberality of any individual member, must be of too brief continuance to encourage a purchase of favour by a deviation from rectitude of principle.

We do not mean to insinuate that such prejudices, and even mercenary motives have never exerted an influence, but the probability of the frequent occurrence of such evils is less under such a system than any other with which we are acquainted. Nor do we mean to say, that the Methodist Church has never suffered in consequence of the neglect of proper strictness of disciplinary administration. She has, doubtless, suffered much. Yet this laxity has been more frequently attributable to a mistaken charity, leading to an unwarrantable degree of lenity and forbearance, than to any other cause. And although we may rationally conclude that, under the overruling providence of God, the evil effects following the latter cause would be more limited than if flowing from the former, yet they are much to be deplored. Every minister of Christ is responsible in a very high degree for the results of his own apathy as a ruler of the church, as well as for the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of the doctrines which he inculcates. We earnestly recommend to the reader a careful consideration of the excellent extract subjoined; from which we have detained him much longer than we designed on commencing these introductory observations.

"It is our acknowledged conviction, that they only who have embraced the Saviour, and have tasted that he is gracious, are entitled to Christian fellowship, or qualified for its duties and enjoyments. The admission of others who are strangers to the power of the gospel is in every way injurious. It is disastrous most frequently to the individuals themselves; having a tendency to quiet the conscience, and to deceive with unfounded hopes of salvation; and a serious evil to the church which receives them; being the sure means of lowering its spiritual character. We are plainly bound in kindness to them, as well as in faithfulness to the cause of God, to withhold encouragement from such as give no evidence of genuine piety, or are actuated by improper motives. Repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, are the only indispensable qualifications required. They are the proper foundation of mutual confidence, without which fellowship is but a name. On the scriptural evidence of these, often associated with great diffidence and timidity, we should rejoice to hold out a cordial welcome to our Christian fellowship and love. In seeking such evidences, we plead for the employment of no painful inquisitorial process; the establishment of no harsh, and to some, impossible, requirement; nothing that ought to offend the delicacy or repel the approaches of the most timid. Let the existence of true piety be only ascertained, in the judgment of charity, and we are satisfied. We deem it of great importance to abide by these scriptural requirements. Every departure from them is dangerous, whether it proceed from causes of the most evil, or from a mistaken sense of duty. It will deteriorate the character of the Church by the admission of persons who have no sympathy with the grand objects of its institution. It will place in jeopardy the spirituality and efficiency of the entire body, by the almost certain infusion and ultimate prevalence of a worldly spirit, which will imperceptibly neutralize the privileges, and disincite to the duties, which communion involves. The elements of discord will be introduced, where agreement should reign; edification will soon be lost sight of, or cease to be practicable; and the very intention of the institution will be perverted and abused. To this cause, we suspect that much of the contention which occasionally prevails among the churches, and the consequent evil effects, are to be ascribed. When he who is admitted into the Church, is in a state of spiritual feeling exists, the differences which arise amongst brethren may easily be accommodated. It is only when selfishness, passion, and worldliness take part in the strife, that confusion and every evil work follow. We introduce and foster these elements, when the requirements of Scripture are dispensed with, and a wide and open entrance to church privilege, irrespective of spiritual qualifications, is allowed. It is admitted, that even with the greatest prudence and circumspection, hypocrites and deceivers will unawares creep in; but this is no reason why we should directly and systematically provide for the increase of these evils. Why, we would invite hypocrisy and encourage deception by a careless, and still more by an indiscriminate, admission to Christian fellowship. Keeping equally aloof from harsh and unnecessary restrictions, and from a lax and injurious course of proceeding, let us adhere to the directions of the Sure Testimony. Duty, interest, and experience combine to enforce this recommendation upon us. Selecting precious materials, living stones, in the building of the Lord's temple, we shall be recompensed for our labour in the increasing spirituality and peace of our churches now, and in the permanency of our work. It shall abide, for the day shall declare it, when the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

Intimately connected with this subject, 'permit us to urge the necessity of a faithful administration of scriptural discipline. This is indispensable to the continued prosperity of our churches, though we fear that, in some quarters, it is not sufficiently understood. The ability of any church to accomplish the objects for which it exists, very much depends on the earnest desire for spiritual improvement, evinced by each member, and the consequent character imparted to the whole body; the combination of sympathy, watchfulness, and prayer, directed towards the increase of every holy attainment and Christian grace. In such healthful circumstances, there will readily be found every needful encouragement and assistance, amidst the trials and difficulties of our spiritual course, and those self-denying habits which the service of the gospel demands. When, however, from any cause, the character of the church suffers, when it declines in piety, even without any departure from sound doctrine—a very possible case—the very end of fellowship will be endangered. It will be of little avail to boast of our scriptural constitution; when, in consequence of an allowed and growing indifference to divine things, the objects which it contemplates have been neglected or forgotten. We shall only the more effectually bring it into disrepute, and increase the contempt with which the entire subject is too generally regarded. We mention this, to remind you, that the form and constitution of the church, however scriptural and well adapted as a means, must fail in the furtherance of holiness, if its laws be not faithfully administered, and the end of its creation be not steadily kept in view and perseveringly prosecuted, in the spirit of meekness and love. The constitution of the church is not designed to supply living principles, or to supersede, by a power inherent in itself, the necessity of their dis-



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long credit, to actual settlers only.

**GEORGE KEEFER**  
310 6

-Thorold, October, 1835.



