revive his work: his children begin to be encouraged, and their cries are ascending to God, and I have no doubt but that God, who is merciful and gracious beyond our limited conceptions, will hear and answer and pour out his spirit to the abolishing of all things that now hinder or impede the progress of his kingdom on earth. O how long before the time come, when love shall be the bond of union and bigotry and superstition fail to rise no more! May the Lord hasten the happy day. Amen."

We have just received a letter from brother D. Hathaway of Adams county Ohio. He gives us joyful accounts of a good work in his bounds, at Cabin Creek in this state. He says, "I have within the last two months seen the Methodists, the united brethren and the Christians, uniting around the table of the Lord; party walls appear to be falling to the ground. May God send love and union every where!"

This is as it should be.

EDITOR.

From brother E. D. Moore of Ala. we have just received the minutes of C. Conference in that state near Florence, consisting of 14 Elders and 7 unordained preachers, together with the messengers from the churches. We are sorry we have not room in this number to present the letter entire to our readers. The accounts of the continuance of the revival there are truly cheering. Minutes at that Conference professed faith in Jesus, and 30 were baptized straightway. About 300 communed together at that meeting. In the next number we may present the whole letter with the minutes of Conference. From reading the letter we are reminded of the great revival in our country more than 20 years ago. O that the Lord would carry on his work till all shall submit to his government, and become united in one body in Christ Jesus our Lord!

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THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY BARTON W. STONE,

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."—PAUL.

VOL. I.] GEORGETOWN, KY. OCT. 25, 1827. [No. 12.

HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN THE WEST—NO. VIII.

With diligence we searched for the truth on the Doctrine of atonement; the result of our inquiries was published soon after, and are well known in the West. As this doctrine, and those of trinity and the son of God (the *orthodox* notions of which were relinquished generally by us) may be laid before our readers in our subsequent numbers, we shall omit a particular notice of them now, and proceed to the history.

About this time, or soon after the dissolution of Springfield Presbytery, Matthew Houston a popular preacher among them, united with us. The revival still progressed, and new churches were forming in Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee.—In the midst of this prosperity, some of our leading preachers began to indulge in wild, enthusiastic speculations, and hesitated not to publish them abroad. One proclaimed that the Millenium was come—another said, that christians would never die, but be made immortal by some extraordinary operation of the spirit; and plainly hinted at the denial of the resurrection of the body and of a future judgement. These things to me and others were the cause of great distress. They portended great evil, which soon came upon us from a quarter the least expected. This we shall now state.

A people, called Shakers, living in New York, hearing of the remarkable revival in the West, sent a deputation of men to reconnoitre among us. The mission consisted of Mitchum, Bates and Young, men eminently qualified to execute the purpose for which they were sent. Their appearance was grave, humble and interesting. Perfection in holiness was their theme, to attain which the people were urged to receive their testimony, and submit to their direction. As many among us were breathing after perfect holiness, they were disposed to listen to any proposition by which they

might advance to that desirable state. The bait therefore was taken by many, and many were ensnared to their ruin. Among those taken were Richard McNemar, Matthew Houston, and John Dunlavy, who became very zealous to make prosolytes to the shaker-faith, and were too successful in their attempts.

This was the first serious check to our progress; and it was humiliating in the extreme. The opposition to our course before had been so violent and ill-directed, that it rather increased, our influence in society, and inclined many to unite with us. But now the Shakers under the mask of friendship, were drawing the multitude after them and many for fear of them fled from us to the different sects for refuge. What added to our grief was, the spirit of rejoicing, manifested by many of our sectarian opposers at this event, so ruinous to the souls of many. Their conclusion was, that our doctrine was thus demonstrated to be false, because so many of its advocates had embraced Shakerism.—But this argument was soon taken from them; for many of the various sects, both preachers and people, were also ensnared, and united with them.

Those of us, who stood firmly fixed in the faith of Christ, encouraged each other, and were indefatigable in our exertions to rescue the Churches from the snare of the Shakers, and to establish them on the Gospel. The storm, so tremendous in its first appearance, soon passed over. We have thought that this distresting occurrence has eventuated in good, great good to the Christian Church; for by it we are taught to check our mind from indulgeing too freely in vain speculations, and to examine well by the Bible, every doctrine presented for our acceptance. We are also taught our entire dependence upon the great Head of the Church for all good, and that he only can keep us from falling.

We humbled ourselves under the mighty hand of God—day and night, in public and private we called upon God for his Holy Spirit to revive us and bless us once more. The Lord hearkened and heard, and poured out his Spirit upon us. Our ranks, which had been thinned by the Shaker-storm, were soon filled and the churches were multiplied. Peace, love and union increased, and abounded every where. Many who had been our opposers began to see that God was with us, and either united with us, or ceased from their opposition. A few happy years we thus enjoyed in the service of our Lord. But tribulation yet awaited us. Some of us saw evidently another storm gathering and began to prepare to meet it.

A number of us from reading the Bible had received the conviction that immersion was the Apastolic mode of baptism, and that believers were the only proper subjects of it. The Elders and brethren met in Conference on this and other subjects of importance. It was unanimously agreed that every brother and sister should act according to their faith; that we should not judge one another for being baptized, or for not being baptized in this mode. The far greater part of the Churches submitted to be baptized by immersion, and now there is not one in 500 among us who has not been immersed. From the commencement we have avoided controversy on this subject, and directed the people to the New Testament for information on this matter. Some of our preaching brethren appeared rather uneasy and dissatisfied that their congregations were submitting to this ordinance, while they could not be convinced of its propriety; yet they said but little. Some of them began to urge the necessity of making a stand upon the truth we had already learned, and desist from farther search. It was understood that we should have some other bond beside the Bible and brotherly love; that these were insuffcient to unite our growing churches, and keep them pure.—It was urged that there was already a diversity of opinion among us on the doctrines of trinity, the son of God and atonement, and therefore it was necessary that some *formulary* should be made and adopted, by which uniformity might be promoted and preserved among us. Some of us saw plainly that these were the arguments used for the introduction of every human party Creed, which has ever been imposed on the world, and therefore opposed *formularies*, from a full conviction of their injury to the cause of Christ.

At Bethel, August 8th, 1810, we met in Conference.—After some time spent in conversation, a plea of union was agreed to, and the following instrument was proposed and generally adopted. "At a general meeting of ministers of the Christian church at Bethel, in the State of Kentucky, August 8th, 1810, the brethren, taking into consideration their scattered, local situation, their increasing numbers, and the difficulties arising in the execution of their office, agreed to unite themselves together *formally*, taking the

word of God as their only rule and standard for doctrine, discipline and government, and promising subjection to each other in the Lord, have hereunto subscribed their names, according to their present standing in said connexion."

At this conference it was also proposed, and agreed to that a committee be appointed to write for publication, a piece, embracing those points of doctrine, respecting which, there was so much noise throughout the country; hoping by this to remove from the public mind those strong prepossessions against us, and to obtain some degree of communion with brethren of other denominations. The committee was appointed, consisting of R. Marshall, B. W. Stone, J. Thompson, D. Purviance and H. Andrews. The subjects on which they were instructed to write, were the trinity, the Son of God and atonement. They were to report to a general meeting at Mount Tabor on the 2d. Monday of March, 1811.

On the day appointed, a very general collection of the preachers met at Mount Tabor. The committee with leave of Conference, retired to compare their writings, promising to report next morning. The committee soon found that they disagreed among themselves on the atonement the first point on which they compared their writings. Marshall, Thompson and Andrews, having relinquished the views entertained by the Christian church generally for some years past, advocated those contained in the *orthodox* creed, with regard to this doctrine and that of trinity—Stone and Purviance had written and spoken in opposition to them. On next morning we reported our disagreement among ourselves, and could not do the business to which we had been appointed by Conference. The Conference agreed to hear what the committee had written. After we had read our several pieces, a motion was made to enter into a public debate on the doctrines but the general voice was against it, supposing that they had heard enough, and declaring that the difference of opinion need not break fellowship.

Marshall and Thompson, in failing to reform us, and bring us back with them to believe what we have long since rejected, became from this time our opposers. They wrote a book against us, and in justification of their conduct, with regard to us. It was by us considered a harmless production, beneath the talents and high respectability of the authors, and therefore scarcely noticed by us. In this book they give their reasons for leaving us. One was that they could

not reform us—that by some years experience, our church had not increased in number and holiness, as they had expected—that they had thought that the Millenium was just at hand, and that a glorious church would soon be formed, &c., but they were disappointed. We pretend not to blame our brethren for acting up to their convictions. We are not to judge another man's servant, and therefore pass no uncharitable judgement on them. We believe them to be christians, driven from some points of precious truth into errors, which must and will be relinquished by Christians of every sect not long hence. These brethren, Marshall and Thompson and F. Monfort, soon after were received into the presbyterian church; and S. Westerfield and H. Andrews, not having a classical Education, were left at the door, and joined the Methodists.

The loss of these dear brethren we greatly lamented; but we less sensibly felt it: Because our number of preachers and churches had greatly increased; and the influence of the brethren in society was greatly diminished; their weight against us was almost imperceptible. From that time we have lived in peace & harmony among ourselves—our numbers from a handful have swelled to many thousands, and many churches have doubled their numbers every year for some time past. At the present time there is a greater increase than we have ever yet known. We are yet warmly opposed and spoken against every where. We trust in the living God, and labor to be accepted of him not doubting but that on the ground we now occupy, the whole church of God on earth will ultimately settle.

W.

From the minutes of the 13th anniversary of the Franklin Association of Baptists in August 1827, we notice the following article:

"The fruitless assualts of Elders *Thomas Smith, Barton W. Stone* and *Alexander Campbell*, upon the *Circular* of last year, create a demand for it unprecedented and surprising. Three impressions are exhausted, and still the demand increases. It carries within itself its own defence. It needs no other.—wherever it appears, the garbled extract and base misrepresentations of its enemies are perfectly harmless.

The Circular takes a distinction between Creeds formed and enforced by civil authority, and those formed by voluntary associations of Christians, and enforced by no other

sanction than exclusion from Church privileges. Mr. Campbell says, this is, "a distinction where there is no difference;" that is, to exclude from Church privileges, and to *exclude, imprison, torture, gibbet, burn*, mean the same thing; and to make a distinction here, is "to distinguish where there is no difference." Thus he insults the common sense of his readers, and proves his cause desperate. Will our Unitarian neighbors give the Circular a place in their Arian Messenger? Will Mr. Campbell give it a place in his Christian Baptist? Will they allow the circular to speak for itself?—We think *they will not*. This would give those puissant pugillists some labor."

On this article we beg leave to make a few remarks.—They state that B. W. Stone, with others had made fruitless assults upon their circular of last year. This is declared by B. W. Stone to be a mistake; for he has never seen nor read that circular, nor has he at any time assaulted it. They are pleased to call the able productions of Elders Campbell and Smith against the doctrines of that circular, "fruitless assaults." Time will disclose the fruits, which, we think, will not be very pleasant to the taste of Creed-mongers.—That man must be very unobservant, who does not see the spirit of reform mightily working in the various orders of Christians in the present day; in a little time it will break every human fetter which has long bound and enslaved the Christian world; and then will they all flow together in Christ Jesus, and become one, even as the Father and the Son are one.

We are well assured that Elder A. Campbell is fully able to cope with the author of that circular, though the association affects to think that in his former attempts "he insults the common sense of his readers, and proves his cause desperate."

The association asks a question difficult to be answered,—"Will our *unitarian* neighbors give the circular a place in their Arian Messenger? We know of no body of people in the West who call themselves *Unitarians*; nor have we ever heard of a periodical, called the Arian Messenger. We suppose the Association means by *Unitarians* the Christians; and by the *Arian Messenger*, the Christian Messenger. We are sorry to impute this illiberality to them; but their conduct too plainly evinces the fact. It is childish (and from children it is learned) to give nick-names. When I was a child, no-

thing offended me more than to be called by a nick-name; but when I become a man, I put away childish things, and have learned to pity them, who profess to be men, and yet are acting the child in this respect. Such things coming from an association of D. D's. and elders, we think, have no good tendency to exalt their wisdom nor candor in the view of the intelligent. Our lord and Master was called by the Clergy in his day, a deceiver, a melefactor, a devil. If these things were done in the green tree, what may we expect to be done in the dry? We are learning to imitate him, "who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."—

We ask not the association to call us christians, if our works contradict the profession; but if our works accord with the christians character, "woe to the man that despises one of these little ones—woe to the man by whom an offence cometh; it were better for him that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and he drowned in the depths of the sea, than to offend one of these little ones that believe in me."

The Association know, or should know that we christians in the West have rejected the name *Unitarian*, *Arian*, and every other party name with equal abhorence. They should know, as we have proved from the press, that we have retrograded from the paths of error and mysticism, long trodden by the Christian world, and have settled permanently on the divinity of the scriptures, which, with regard to the Father and the son, was received and believed by the christians of the first centuries. From this divinity Arius departed and we think with him the generality of the existing sects in the present day, have far, very far wandered.

Should the Association, among whose minutes we have found the atticle already quoted, or should any distinguished members or member of that association, in a christian style request us to publish their circular of last year, and should they send it directed to the editor of the Christian Messenger, we will give it a place in our work, provided it be not too lengthy. EDITOR.

QUERIES ANSWERED.

We have examined the queries of the "Enquiring stranger," proposed in our 10th number, and do not think them difficult to be answered.

Q. 1. Is there a gospel church now existing in the world? If there be, where is she?

A. Yes; there is a gospel church now existing, has existed, and will exist to the end of time. For said Jesus "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail agasnst it." Daniel prophesied respecting this kingdom or church, that "In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed—it shall stand forever." Dan. ii, 44. The scriptures being true, a gospel church does exist. "Where is she?"

A. "In the wilderness." Rev. xii, 6.

Q. 2. Are the present divisions and subdivisions of all the professed christians in the world, the wilderness into which the woman fled &c.

A. We think so; for the woman or church of Christ, when she shall came up out of the wilderness, is represented as being in Babylon; for saith the voice from Heaven "come out of her (Babylon) my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not her plagues." Rev. xviii, 4.—Now Babylon signifies confusion, and O what a wilderness of confusion are the many divisions and subdivisions of the christian professors in the world! how confused their language! they cannot understand each other! they cannot build together! Yet in this wilderness—in this Babel of confusion, is the true church of Christ, concealed and protected from the furious rage of the Dragon. Humble, obedient believers are found in all these divisions, who are kept from enjoying followship with each other by the artifice of man. They begin to hear the voice of God "Come out of her, my people." They are breaking the man made fetters by which they have been long bound, and are leaving the wilderness. In every division, with which we are acquainted, there appears to be an uncommon stir; and christian liberty, fellowship, and union is the theme. The division-walls, which are human authoritative creeds, are falling, fast falling in America and in Europe. Who does not see the signs of the times?

Q. 3. Is the present administration of the ordinances of the Lord in any denomination a gospel administration?

A. It is impossible that the administration by every sect can be right, because they all materially differ—they administer the word differently—they administer baptism differently, and with different views of its design—they administer the Lord's supper differently, frequently denying it to the saints, and giving it to such as profess not to have been regenerated, because they are attached to their creed, party and name. This we are sure is not a gospel administration. Yet we cannot say but in one denomination, the ordinances may be administered according to the gospel.

The fourth query we presume not to answer.

Q. 5. Shall we from the face of scripture look for a period of time in which primitive order and ancient gifts will be restored to the church, and all the people of the Lord be consolidated in one body?

A. Yes: or the prayer of Jesus will remain unanswered, "that all believers should be one." If by *gifts* be understood *miraculous gifts*, we find no authority in the Bible for their restoration—nor can we well see the use of them, seeing revelation is established.

EDITOR.

ELDER NANCE'S QUERIES.

These queries respect the office and work of an evangelist With regard to these we have no particular information. The office is but three times mentioned in the New Testament. Acts xxi, 8. Eph. iv, 11. 1 Tim. iv, 5.—From neither of these can any thing certainly be determined of the office nor work. The word Evangelist signifies a gospel preacher; and such a preacher may be, or may not be a pastor, elder or bishop. Timothy was an Evangelist, and at the same time, it appears, he was a bishop of the church at Ephesus.—On this subject we have given a few thoughts in a preceding number. EDITOR.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

A word to Professors—As published in the CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE, a weekly periodical work, published by the Methodists in New York.

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" Let us then strive to provoke one another to love and good works; let our object be, not *merely* to build up a particular sect or denomination, but to bring sinners to the knowledge of the truth, to promote Christianity and godliness; let us try to hasten on

the time, when all shall know the Lord, when the will of God shall be done here on earth, as it is in heaven. But if Christians are guilty of envy, jealousy, hatred, and desesn tion can they charge those that are not christians with the same evil passions, with any consistency! If they do, will they not condemn themselves? "And thinkest thou this, oh man, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, thou shalt escape the righteous judgement of God?"—We should treat persons who differ from us in their religious opinions, with candor and moderation. If we think that they are wrong in their opinion, we should not condemn them rashly, we should not condemn them at all, "for it is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" We should tell them their faults, between them and us, entreat them in a Christian manner, not to be deceived. We should remember that we are not infallible; that possibly, we may be in an error in regard to our belief. Perhaps we may have received some of our opinions upon trust, and not examined the subject as we should have done. We should examine our own hearts, and see that they do not deceive us, for "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." If there is any subject that we do not understand, we should examine God's word, and pray to him that he would direct us in our examinations, for our Lord commands us to "search the Scriptures, for in them we think we have eternal life, and they are they that testify of him." If religious controversy must be carried on, is it not the duty of Christians to do it in meekness, forbearance, and love? If others revile and persecute us, is it the spirit of a Christian, of a follower of Christ, to revile again, to return railing for railing? Our blessed Master, when he was reviled, reviled not again.—What was his conduct towards those that spit upon him, mocked and scourged him, and nailed him to the cross? Although accused of blasphemy, and that in a false and malicious manner, without the shadow of evidence, arrayed in robes of mock royalty, to their false accusations he answered not a word, insomuch that Pilate, the Roman governor, marvelled. "He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."—What a lesson is this for Christians to learn! and it ought to be the lesson in the school of Christ. It was a lesson that he taught in the hour of death, a lesson that every sincere follower of Christ should teach, not only by precept, but by example. Let us judge no man, "but rather judge this, that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's way."

Extract of a letter from Elder Daniel Long, a Christian preacher, to the Editor, dated

MECHANICSBURGH, (O.) Sept. 15, 1827.

DEAR BROTHER,—As cool water is to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. I left home on June 7th, and joined company with Elder J. N. Long at Dublin in a preaching tour as far as Allegany County, Md. We passed through Westchester, Ohio, where brother John Secrest labors. His labors are greatly blessed at this time. He batized 14 the day before we arrived, and since last winter he has baptized in that section of country some hundreds. We thence went to Smithfield Ohio, and visited elder E. Palmer. Here we found a great reformation, and the work gloriously spreading.

About 30 souls have been added to the church in this section since last winter. Thence we came to Alleghany, Md. Here none of our preachers had ever been. We labored a few weeks among the people with success, though greatly opposed by the Baptist and Methodist preachers. Before we left them we had baptised 58, and constituted them a church, with deacons and exhorters. Some of these bid fair to become workmen that need not be ashamed. I trust to see them again shortly. Yours in the bonds of the gospel.

D. LONG.

Extract of a letter from Elder John Jones, to the Editor, dated

CASEY COUNTY, KY. Aug. 10, 1827.

Being much gratified myself with what my eyes see, and my ears hear, I concluded it would be pleasing to others to hear how the Lord is carrying on his work in my little circle.

Since our last conference in September, I have seen many happy souls following the Lord in the ordinance of Baptism, from the child of 11 years old, to the great grand-mother of 80. In the upper end of Adair and Green counties, the work commenced about last December was a year, and has been spreading and increasing ever since to the very great destruction of party-spirits. At the meetings appointed for worship, may be seen the Baptist, the Methodist, the Presbyterian, with the Christian Brethren all united; and if a strang-

er were looking on, he would not hesitate to say, they were all of one society.

We had a communion in May and another in July near the line between Green and Washington counties, which were truly refreshing seasons. All the Lord's children were invited to the supper, and they generally accepted the invitation; the feast was blessed with the presence of the Lord.—The good work has at length reached my own neighborhood. In May last it first appeared among some little children to the surprize of many, while some opposed, and persecuted, and even threatened them with stripes. But the poor little things still cried to the Lord, who was a present helper, and caused them to be successful in awakening some of their connexions and neighbors. On the 27th of July we baptised 13, in the presence of a numerous croud. About the same number were baptized the week before by brother Price, a separate Baptist, with whom I labor much in the gospel. Bro. James Lunsford, a Christian Preacher in Wayne county, baptized 11 last Friday and three more were received by the church, and many were crying, what shall we do to be saved? In the upper end of this county there is a considerable revival among the separate Baptists. 12 were a few days ago baptized near Riffe's Mill. The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. Yours,

JOHN JONES.

FLORENCE AUGUST 15, 1827.

DEAR BROTHER,—Our annual meeting commenced, at Antioch, Jackson county, Ala. on Thursday, 26th of July, 1827, under the most convincing evidence of divine favor, and continued until the 31st, at 1 o'clock. During that period, there were devotional exercises, in some way, almost without intermission. I have been trying to preach 20 years, have attended many Conferences and Camp-meetings, but thankfully acknowledge the one at Antioch, far surpassed any thing of the kind I ever beheld. Prejudice, partyism and sin, seemed to fall prostrate before the Ark of God, while the assembled multitudes were pierced to the heart with the darts of truth. The laboring brethren seemed to have lost sight of defending the truth, and to content themselves with letting the truth defend them. Multitudes professed faith in Jesus, and about 30 were baptised in his name. I had the pleasure of administering the supper on the Lord's day, about 10 o'clock, P. M. It was one of the most heavenly scenes I ever witnessed—there were about 300 communicants.

At the close of the meeting, it was not easy to find a non-professor on the encampment, and what few remained, seemed to be buried in distress, like those returning from the interment of their friends.

Conference sat on Monday. The Lord being our law giver, has kindly saved us the labor of legislating; of course we had but litte to do, only to make the necessary arrangements for the execution of his laws, and the administration of his word, in which the brethren appeared entirely cordial. We thought proper to limit our conference to the bounds of our state. It is the wish of the brethren, that there be a general Conference, for the purpose of a more general union & uniform understanding. Our Conference, and meeting throughout, was expressive of the most perfect harmony.—Our next Conference, will be held at Huricane, Madison county the first Lords day in February, 1828.

I subjoin the names of the preachers belonging to this Conference.

ORDAINED.—*Elisha Price, John H. Parkhill, Elisha Randolph, Mansel W. Matthews, John M'Daniel, Thacker V. Griffin, Isaac Mulkey, William Clap, Crocket M'Daniel, Robert Baits, Jonathan Wallis, James E. Matthews, Reuben Mardis, E. D. Moore.*

UNORDAINED.—*James Anderson, Lorenzo D. Griffen, Jonathan G. Ward, Wm. J. Price, Mm. W. Wilson, Andrew Russel, Jonathan Parker.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Brother Stone,—It may perhaps be acceptable to some of the Brethren in the church of Christ to present an item or two in the Christian Messenger, of the proceedings in the Indiana Christian Conference. This conference, met Thursday 6th Sept 1827. At the Blue Spring, Monroe County, Ia. We subjoin the names of the Preachers present.

ORDAINED.—*Lewis Byram, David Steard, Joseph Berry, Henry D. Palmer, Persius E. Harris, John Herrod, Richard B. M'Corkle, Thomas Wood, Thomas C. Johnston.*

UNORDAINED Preachers & Exhorters—*Richard Empson, Conrad Kern, Samuel Wood, John Duncan, John Smart, David C. Steward, John C. Collins, Elijah Goodwin, Wm. Conway, John M. Belzer, J. Nicholas.*

The Conference are happy to have it in their power to state that peace and union have attended all their deliberations, for which they feel truly thankful to the great head of the church. This Conference unanimously agree and desire that a general Conference should be appointed in the west for the purpose of more effectually uniting us together and of spreading truth on the earth. Our next Annual Conference to be holden in Bloomington, Ia. Begining on Thursday before the 2d. Lord's day in September 1828. We desire as many of the brethren as conveniently can to attend with us there.—Done by order of the Conference Sept. 7th, 1827. DAVID STEWARD, *Clerk*

P. S. I have just a moment to inform you of our Meeting — I never saw a more solemn time throughout. There was the greatest collection of Communicants I ever have seen at one place. About twenty have professed faith in the Lord Jesus and have been baptized. The great work is yet going on, and I do not know when the Meeting will come to a close. All our young people in the community have been slain in battle, together with all the young people boarding with us going to school.

J. NICHOLS.

Brother Stone,—The following extract, from the minutes of the Madriver Christian Conference, met at Burlington meeting-house, on the first Monday of September 1827, are now forwarded to you to be published in the Christian Messenger.

But before we insert the extract it is necessary to observe, that this Conference was appointed for the special purpose of investigating these three points.

1. The propriety of holding Conference.
2. Of whom should Conference be composed; and
3. What should be the business of Conference?

After having a year to search the scriptures, and deliberate on these important subjects; the Conference unanimously adopted the following resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That it is useful and proper to hold regular Conferences.

2. *Resolved*, That in the opinion of this Conference, a Christian Conference should be composed of Elders licensed preachers, exhorters, and male messengers.

3. *Resolved*, That in our opinion it is the duty of Conference to attend to the government of the ministery, and such other things as may be interesting to the churches in general, relative to the administration of the gospel and its ordinances.

4. On motion of Elder Adams, Elder Joseph Thomas was received as a permanent member of this our union meeting, or Christian Conference.

5. On motion of Elder Adams; *Resolved*, That we advise all the christian churches in the bounds of this conference to correspond with it by letter and messengers.

6. *Resolved*, That our next Conference be holden at Union meeting house, near Franklin on the Monday after the first Sabbath of September, 1828.

LEVI PURVIANCE, *Mod'r.*
WILLIAM KINKADE, *Clerke*

THE CHRISTIAN EXPOSITOR.

Rom. viii, 25. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God &c."

In the verses immediately preceding, the Apostle was viewing the high privileges to which the children of God are exalted. "If Children then heirs, heirs of God and jo nt heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together." These are their privileges. But they must suffer in this world before they can reign with Christ in Glory. But their sufferings are so short, and their glory so great, that they cannot be compared. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

"For the earnest expectation of the creature, waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." By the *creature* is evidently intended the child of God, no other character being spoken of in the chapter, and no other earnestly expecting and waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God, which is equivalent to "waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body."—Then, and not before, shall the sons of God be fully manifested; for *now* says John "the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not appear, what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. "1 John iii, 1–2. No doubt the apostle referred to that immortality or redemption of the body, which is the object of the saint's earnest expectation.

This is that which God predestinated as the portion of the saints, who lived before the coming of the Messiah; "For (says Paul Rom. viii, 29) whom he did fore-know (or approve of before, or of old) these did he also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren" (the first born from the dead to immortality.) The saints expect this because God has promised it.

V. 20. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him, who hath subjected the same in hope:"

By *vanity* we understand the sufferings and death to which the sons of God, and indeed all the sons of Adam are subjected for the offence of one man. Rom. v.— But a query arises, What subjected them? Some say, the old serpent, the devil did. This cannot be true; for had he subjected them to suffering and death, it was a subjection to absolute despair, and not in hope. Some say, they were subjected by Adam to suffering and death. If so, they were not subjected *in hope*, but in despair; for what ground of hope did sinning Adam present? Some affirm that the Devil by deception subjected them by presenting to our first parents the hope of becoming wise as God, if they should eat of the forbidden fruit. By a little attention to the text in connexion with the subject, it will evidently appear that this was not the object of the hope presented. In the verse following, the word *hoti*, translated *because* should be rendered, *that*; for this is the common translation of the word. Then the reading is this. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same, in hope that the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." That is, God hath subjected the creature to death, but immediately presented to it the glorious hope of immortality. "For it is appointed unto man once to die." "Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return." Had not God presented in *the seed of the woman* the hope of the resurrection from the dead to immortality, life would be intolerable. But now in Christ Jesus, life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel, as the certain portion of all that believe and obey him; and on this condition they are freely offered to the world. The sons of God are now imprisoned in the dark and corruptible prison, the body—They look through the grates

of their prison, and see the liberty which awaits the children of God, and earnestly expect and wait for it, at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

V. 22 "For we know that the whole creation (*pasa he ktisis*, the same word as is translated creature in the preceding two verses and in Mark xvi, 16. "Every creature," meaning, every creature of mankind) groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body."—All without exception are subjected to suffering and death, all are groaning under the weight; nor is the saint, the best saint exempted from them, while he is imprisoned in corruptible flesh; but soon he shall receive the redemption of the body; when corruption, sickness, pain and death, shall be known no more to eternity.

EDITOR.

THOUGHTS ON ROM. VIII, 29, 30.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

In the preceding verse, the apostle in speaking of the great privileges of the sons God, says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose."—Then he introduces the verses under consideration as a reason why he knew that all things work together for their good,—"*For* whom he did foreknow, whom he did of old approve of. The apostle had his eye on the saints of old as Moses, Elijah, Abraham, & others—he saw their afflictions, & how, thro' the kind providence of God, they had all eventuated in good to them, and that a greater blessing yet awaited them. The word *foreknow* signifies often in the old and new Testaments to approve of—Thus says the Saviour. "Then will I profess unto them I never *knew* you; depart from me." Matt. vii, 23. The meaning of the word *knew* must certainly be, *I never approved of you.*—So Rom. vii, 15. "For the evil which I do I allow not," (*gignosko*) *I know not.* Quotations to this effect might be multiplied, but it is deemed unnecessary, as it is admitted by all parties of christians.

X

We remark that the words *foreknew*, *predestinated*, *called*, *Justified*, and *glorified*, are all in the same tense or time, and this in the tense or time past, and not in the present nor future. We therefore think that the passage has been perverted from its true meaning by the various expositors of it. The Universalists try to press it into their service, by affirming that God foreknew the whole fallen world, the evil as well as the good, and whom he foreknew, he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son—and whom he thus predestinated he *will* call, *will* justify, *will glorify*. This perverts Paul's language from the past to the future tense—a latitude unwarrantable. The Calvinists do the same. For say they, God foreknew from eternity his elect—them from eternity he predestinated to the image of his Son—them in time he *will* call, *will* Justify. *will* glorify. If this latitude be admitted, the scriptures may be wrested from their true meaning, to mean any thing. The Arminians have done the same. They say, God from eternity foreknew who would love God in time, these from eternity he predestinated to bear the image of Christ—these he *will* call, *will* justify, *will* glorify.—This exposition is still more absurd than the former, if possible; for the persons foreknown are such as love God—these in time are to be *called* and *justified*: as if no other character is to be called and justified by the gospel! Were we to take the word *foreknew* in its common acceptation, and not to alter the tenses, as others have done, we should be driven in to endless absurdities. Thus God from eternity foreknew and predestinated—from eternity called, and justified, and from eternity glorified! and yet the subjects *called*, *justified* and *glorified* not in existence for countless ages after!!

Taking the meaning of the word *foreknow* as we have shewn to be, *to approve of*, there is no difficulty in the passage. It will read thus: For whom he aforetime approved of, them also he did predestinate—call, justify and glorify. Abel, Enoch, Moses, Abraham, and all the old saints God *approved* of; He predestinated that they should be raised from the dead to immortality, and thus bear the image of the immortal Saviour. But it was also predestinated that this blessing they should not enjoy until Christ should rise first from the dead, and be the first begotten from the dead, that he might be the first born among many brethren, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. These he also called and

justified—called to a participation of the gospel then preached—and justified them who believed and obeyed the call, as he did Abraham and a host of others. These he also glorified—he took their justified spirits to the paradise of glory, while their bodies were lying in corruption and dust. Thus many centuries after the death of Moses, he appeared in his glory conversing with Jesus on a certain mountain. If God has glorified the old saints, who died thousands of years ago, it follows that the doctrine of materialism cannot be true—The Sadducees denied the resurrection of the body, and the existence of spirits, and believed that the spirit or soul died with the body and both ceased forever from existence. But said Jesus to them, quoting a passage from their law, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; but God is not the God of the dead but of the living."—The inference is irresistable, that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, are living, not their bodies, but their souls or spirits. Surely we may safely conclude that the souls of all the saints are also living and waiting for the redemption of their bodies, which are to be fashioned like the glorious immortal body of Jesus at his coming. EDITOR.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BROTHER STONE,—When I forwarded my second piece on the government of the church, it was my intention to have prosecuted the subject further; but having been *measurably* anticipated by you, in your editorial remarks—I thought it unnecessary, and therefore declined it. The observations however of a correspondent in your last number, has called forth the few remarks that follow, in addition to your answer. "*Frochorus*," while he "*occupies the place* of an *enquirer*," has entered into a tolerably minute investigation of the subject, and has assumed some positions from which I beg leave to dissent. He is no doubt bound to admit that each church has the privilege of choosing its own officers—for the plain and positive word of God, to which I referred, & upon which I relied in support of the position; has not been opposed nor even attempted to be explained away by him.

Had "*Prochorus* attended to the import of the language I used as quoted by him, it would certainly have rendered his first query (as noticed by you) unnecessary. My expression was that "*each church had, and selected its own officers.*"—Now if a church *selects* its officers; it must certainly be the

proper, and only tribunal that ought to jugde of their qualifications—this is no less scriptural than reasonable. Hence we find the qualifications so particularly and minutely stated, that each church might be in the profession of that knowledge essentially necessary to enable them to elevate suitable persons to those offices, created with a single view to their edification and benefit, and the dissemination of *light* and truth.

I admit that the saviour in his own person, "*called*" and qualified his apostles for their great and responsible duties—but are ministers in the present day, or have they been since the days of the apostles, "*called*" in a similar way?

What preacher now on earth ever heard the saviour say (as he did to his apostles) "*follow me*"? Will we admit it for fact that all are "*called*" of Jesus, who profess to be preachers? If so then he calls men to preach contradictions—divide his flock—promote strife—spread discord and division—and oppose that for which he most devoutly prayed. Does Prochorus himself believe this? If the Saviour does not "*call*" all who declare it, (and I presume there is no man on earth can believe such absurdity.) Who are the particular ones "*called*," and how, and by whom is this important matter to be determined? And if Jesus "*yet calls and qualifies his ministers*" as he did the apostles, why are any instructions given us upon this subject in the scriptures?

If ministers be called now, as the apostles were it would of course render it perfectly useless to give any instructions upon the subject in the New Testament. To be plain, if mankind had followed the scriptures more, and their *whims* less, much of the division, jargon, and confusion of speech amongst christians, would certainly have been obviated. I do not believe that any *special* trust has been vested in the *Elders* to examine, judge, and determine on the qualifications of Elders—I think, that I established the fact in my second No. that it is a matter, that specially concerns the church, Bishops, (or Elders,)Deacons and brethren, altogether. The Elders of course will not participate in ordination, without a belief on their part of the candidate's ability, "*to teach others*," nor is it to be supposed that a church will ever desire any one to be set forward without entertaining a similar opinion. If a church have elders, and desire others, the elders in that particular Society, can proceed to set them apart by the *imposition of hands*." Or should there not be elders, in that particular society; elders from any other society, can proceed to comply with the wishes of any church by ordaining any individual that may be chosen without the aid of a synod, Conference &c. &c. See Tit i, 5.

If every church was now organized as the apostles set them in order, would not each one have its own officers? And if preachers are a kind of "*common property*," will Prochorus include all from the "*Holy Catholic church*," and her relations down to those who claim no relation with her?

Far be it for me to limit the labors of any preacher, to any particular church, I would rejoice to see them extend their usefulness; crying aloud and sparing not.

Prochorus again says "*if each church is absolutely independent, and authorised to make or choose her own preachers and depose or silence them at pleasure, it would be difficult for preachers to fulfil their mission*, and act in *concert* as fellow laborers *in the harvest of the Lord, and to preserve unity* and harmony in *the churches*." The sentiments indirecly advanced in the above paragragh will justify every high handed and tyranical attempt that has ever been made to Lord it over God's heritage. If the above sentiments be correct, then the synod of Ky., in order to "*unity and harmony*" was justifiable in expelling Marshall, yourself and others for preaching those truths that thousands have since found to be the power of God to their salvation. And if the doctrine had then been universally admitted that a *special* trust was vested in the ministry, where would have been that religious liberty now enjoyed by thousands? You and your co-temporaries must have sunk beneath the cruel edict of an ecclesiastical tribunal unknown in the word of God—this would have been proper to maintain "*concert, unity, harmony*, &c. Yes if it be true that the church is not "*absolutely independent*," and that the preachers are a superior order of people, then will there be a higher tribunal than the church.—Yes, Episcopacy with all its odious, despotic traits will be entirely justifiable. I cannot think that Prochorus does believe the sentiment he advanced in the above extract, it must certainly have dropped unguardedly. As I stated before, I believe that every member whether preacher or not, is responsible to the church, and to the church alone—in proof of which I referred to some scriptures, which I should like to have explained if I am not correct. Should a church become dissatisfied with the doctrine of a preacher, he will not be tolerated as a public speaker, though he should not be denounced for mere

pinion, but ought to be borne with as a private member while his walk is holy and pious.

The Conference to which Prochorus alludes in Acts xv, cannot be a precedent for us at present. Preachers are not now placed upon *thrones*, as the apostles were. The history of the acts of the apostles embraces a period of about 30 years, and this is the only account, we have of a special Conference, and this was from the fact, that elevation was not complete—hence say the apostles "*it seemeth good to the holy Ghost* &c. Paul in his second Chap. to the Gal. mentions a visit he made to jerusalem, and speaks of some brethren he met with, as he frequently does, but no intimation of an ecclesiastical court, for the transaction of any "*special trust*"—In conclusion I will assure Prochorus, that I shall regret to see the day when our annual meetings, (for the purpose mentioned in my first number) shall be discontinued; but I hope never to see a meeting among us, arrogating to itself the "*special*" trust, or right of setting forth preachers, or of controling the churches in any manner whatever.

PHILIP.

TO POSTMASTERS.

☞SOME Postmasters have been in the practice of charging double postage for this work. This is improper—the "*Christian Messenger*," is printed on a single sheet, of duodecimo form, (24 pages to a sheet,) and is consequently only subject to a postage of 1 1-2 cents a number, when not sent over 100 miles, and 2 1-2 cents over 100 miles. Post Masters are referred to the following letter from the Post Master General to the Editor of the "*Christian Baptist:*"

General Post-Office Department, Aug. 2, 1827.

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Yours respectfully,

Rev. A Campbell, JOHN M'LEAN.

Bethany, Brooke county, Virginia.

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